

A DECADE OF PUBLISHING A VILLAGE NEWSPAPER ENDS WITH THIS ISSUE

Ten years ago at Christmas the new Portknockie village newspaper was into its 3rd trial version appropriately headed “The Millennium” issue and the future still seemed uncertain. So it is with considerable pride that all those associated with The K’nocker, whether writers or readers, can feel some real satisfaction in achieving a full decade of publication of this voice of Portknockie.

Back then, in the nineteen nineties, the village was experiencing a period of doubt following some criticisms in the national press about Portknockie’s community cohesion. Questions were being asked about how welcoming the village was to incomers. One new resident interviewed had described Portknockie for the media as being “the village from Hell”.

The K’nocker was started as part of a strategy by the Community Council to celebrate the better things about living in Portknockie. Since then The K’nocker has focused on the many, good news stories of our community.

In fact the good news is that there has always been so much to be proud of in reporting Portknockie over the past 10 years. Consider for example, the Millennium Garden, the Festival of Fishing, the Restoration of the Coat of Arms, the 2009 Mosaic and the fight to keep the village school open.

The K’nocker has served its purpose but is it still needed? The present editorial team

feels that it has done its utmost for the village and now it is time to re-consider whether we still need a village newspaper and how it might be managed for the future.

THE McBOYLE HALL CLOCKS UP 25 YEARS AS THE VILLAGE HALL FOR PORTKNOCKIE

The silver anniversary of the building of the McBoyle Hall occurred on the 16th November this year. Following much fundraising by the then Portknockie Amenities Association the small McLeod Park Sports Pavilion was enlarged and transformed in 1984 into the present McBoyle Hall facility. Practical help and encouragement was given to the village project by local, retired environmental health officer, Alex McBoyle who drew up the plans for the extension which included the large main hall, the kitchen and improved storage areas.

Currently, the Hall is managed by the Portknockie Community Association.

VILLAGE NEWS & AROUND:

Outrageous damage at the Hillhead Cemetery:

There was an act of wanton desecration on Thursday night, the 22nd October when 19 headstones in the NW corner of the old cemetery were pushed over. Many families in the communities of Portknockie and Findochty were both distressed and disgusted by this random attack. How is it possible to understand that such a special and sacred area to the local community could have been vandalised in this way?

Remarkable local weather: A wet autumn creating saturated soils culminated on 1st November in a day of rains which generated torrential floodwater flows down the Cullen Seatown Burn resulting in serious damage to the bridge pilings carrying the A98 road. The subsequent closure of the A98 road necessitated a 20 mile diversion of through traffic over the Braes

of Enzie to Keith and the B9018 to Cullen. Essential repair work to the bridge involved a considerable amount of work and the disruption of the Moray – Aberdeenshire link for 12 days created significant social and economic problems for Cullen and its surrounding communities. Thankfully, the road was opened to single-lane traffic on the 19th November.

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Kerry, Susan, Claire & Joanne

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Help with information wanted by Graham Mair (Cullen): “I am writing a book called ‘A Fisherman’s Final Voyage’. Some of you may remember I compiled a book called ‘The Fisherman’s Gospel Manual’. The new book is partly about my late father, William Mair and how he, as a believer in the Lord Jesus, faced his illness and dying. It is focusing on a Christian facing death. He was born in 1940 and I want to intertwine the story of the Christian heritage of Portknockie with events in Portknockie that shaped his life.

I wonder if any of the readers of The K’nocker could help on any of the following or anything else which may be of relevance:

- Revivals in Portknockie
- Different Churches and Brethren meetings (how they began, how many attended the different places?).
- Life in Portknockie in earlier days
- Different boats that fished out of Portknockie
- The Evangeline
- Annie Goldie and the various Sunday schools
- John Innes who preached at the Heid o’ the Brae

My phone number is 840579 and my address is 7 Old Church Road, Cullen AB56 4VZ.”

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Farewell to Portknockie Brownies: Pat Hill (Brownie Guider) writes: “I would like to thank all those who have helped me over the past 8 years; we have had a lot of fun during that time. I would also like to say to Brownies past and present good luck in all they wish to do in the future. If anyone would like to become a Brownie Guider please contact Janet McDonald (District Commissioner) on 01542 833816 who can let you know how to proceed.

WORLD-WIDE WEB LINKS:

Margaret Bazaud e-mails: Dear Mr Croucher, it is with great pleasure that I send to all readers of “The K’nocker” my warm wishes for a Happy Festive Season and good health throughout 2010. As a point of interest the motto “Portknockie, Aye Afloat” has its equivalent in Paris – “Fluctuat nec mergitur” which means to pitch and toss but never sink. Thank you for the many happy hours of reading over the past years. It has been a great joy to me. Yours very sincerely, Margaret Bazaud.

In October David Wood e-mailed the Banffshire Advertiser from Vancouver with praise for Geoff Roberts and the “Homecoming Mosaic”. He had just received a copy of the village leaflet on the Mosaic and was delighted with the memories of Portknockie brought back by the imagery on the two fishes.

THE BOMBING OF PORTKNOCKIE IN 1941

Jean McLeod née Wood from Golspie has e-mailed another personal description of this infamous event in Portknockie’s history.

“The two stories of the accounts of the bombing of Portknockie in the Autumn 2009 issue of The K’nocker were very interesting and brought back many memories.

I too wasn't in school that day, but my best friend, (Mabel) was on her way to school, this would have been about 10am. Her dad was on the back steps, seeing her off, she remembered him saying "Oh my will ye hae a lookie at yon manny in that plane wi his goggles and his helmets and gauntlet gloves." Mabel too, minds seeing it as clear as day – a plane with a big black cross on the under side of the wings and the swastika on the tail clearly visible. She remembers hearing the machine gun fire from the plane as it flew over head towards the cemetery. Previous to that my mother, had been visiting at 17 Samson Street (Mary and Ded's) and was leaving the house as the plane flew over, she too remembers the sight of the young man in the cockpit, and the sounds of machine gun fire coming from the plane. She flew into the house where I and my younger sister were sitting on the bed playing. I remember seeing the front of her pinny being soaking wet, but before I could ask what had happened, she grabbed me and Doris and flung us under the bed, followed by the quilt. We were then told to stay there till she came back, with that she hot footed it out of the house to round up my other siblings who had been at school that morning.

She ran to the corner of Jubilee Terrace (**Editor:** now Craigview Road) and was turned back because of the havoc at the top of Admiralty Street although it was Seafield Street which took the brunt of the explosion. She then ran through the gardens to the corner of Falconer Terrace where she found my 7 yr old sister, Betty. She, along with some other kids, was running down Admiralty Street, screaming their heads off. The kids had been let out of the shelters at school and were terrified. I think it was a father and his daughter who were killed, the father was home on leave from the Navy or maybe the Merchant Navy. There was also a neighbour killed. Two bombs were dropped, but only one exploded. The unexploded one was taken to the Den and "disposed" of by a bomb disposal team. Residents were well warned that the bomb was going to be detonated, but I can still remember when it did go off, how terrified we all were!

I also have vivid memories of the house at no 7 Jubilee (Finlay's) (**Editor:** now Craigview Road) the window frame swinging out the way, bird cage still hanging from its hook and not a bit of glass left in the window and roof slates lying in the gardens. I remember being frightened to go upstairs to bed for a while after. My dad was in the Navy, and as I was second eldest in the house at the time so it fell to me and my older sister, Isobell to help mum and try to be brave for the others!! But I will never forget the day

the Jerries, bombed Portknockie.

I did eventually find out why mam's pinny was wet, she had thrown herself into the gutter on first hearing the bullets!!"

NEW PEOPLE TO MEET AND GREET:

A warm, village welcome is extended to Pat and Graham Schofield and their son Matthew who are presently renovating 24 Harbour Place. The family plans to move in for Christmas and the New Year. The Schofields, originally from Chesterfield, Derbyshire, now live in Aberdeen and will use their house in Portknockie as a week-end getaway place. Pat is a nurse lecturer in Pain Management at the University of Aberdeen and Graham is a painter.

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PRAISE FOR THE K'NOCKER:

"To Bob and his team a very warm thank you for the years we have enjoyed reading our local paper. It was eagerly awaited and a pleasure to read. We are sorry this is the last issue and I am sure it is with mixed feelings that you put the K'nocker to bed for the last time." (Catherine & Alex Ritchie and family)

"I really hope someone continues the great work you have done with The K'nocker." (Graham Mair from Cullen).

"I hope that The K'nocker will continue in some form as it is informative and interesting." (The Rev. Yvonne Hendrie).

VILLAGE IN BLOOM

On the last Sunday in October members from the Community Association began the winter tidying up programme. Tubs in the Square, by the school, along Church Street and in the Millennium Garden were

cleared of bedding plants (many still in flower as a result of this year's amazingly mild October) and the Ship's Wheel and the two trains were also tidied. A bag of daffodil bulbs, provided by Moray Council, was planted out around the village. Grateful thanks to Harry and Sybil from 1 Westfield Drive who undertook to plant the daffodil bulbs going into the grassy bank at the west end of King Edward Terrace.

The winter months are a good time to think about gardening plans for the upcoming spring and summer seasons so, once again, it would be helpful for folk to consider whether they want Portknockie back at the top levels of Moray villages in bloom or are we all content with the current floral efforts? We won the Best-kept large village in Moray for three years from 2004 to 2006 – we could surely do it again if enough volunteers and local expertise can be put into harness again? Is the willingness out there?

The western approach Aye Afloat arch, created by Andrew Ritchie and a long-time feature of our Village in Bloom display was downed sometime in early November. Was this a casualty of stormy winds or was it another instance of vandalism? Andrew Ritchie very kindly agreed to carry out the restoration work necessary

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DO YOU KEN THE K'NOCKER? A stroll down memory lane by the Editor (Bob Croucher) 1999-2009

The first issue of The K'nocker, Portknockie's village newspaper, rolled off the press in August 1999. Its arrival was noted by the Press & Journal (31st August 1999) under the heading "**Village gains its own voice**". The K'nocker was launched to stimulate the exchange of community news, to spread ideas and to encourage reactions from residents on priorities for action by the Portknockie Community Council. At this time morale in the village had been set back by criticisms in a national paper (Portknockie was being described as "The village from Hell!") and it was

hoped that a community newsletter would focus attention on the good news stories about Portknockie.

It was a Community Council initiative and the first editorial team included Bob Croucher, Mary Butler and Margret Wood. The first five page newsletter was distributed to every house in the village.

In this first issue there was a report on the opening of the Millennium Garden on Saturday 21st August 1999 and the burial of a Year 2000 time capsule by local MP Mrs Margaret Ewing; the news that the Gala had raised the grand sum of £4 530 and the pet show winners were Skipper, the dog, Molly, the dog and Honey, the hamster while Carol Slater (Squaw), Pearl Murray (Archbishop) and Helen Sammon (Robin Hood) had stood out in the over 10's Fancy Dress competition. This issue also reported that a long-time undesirable resident occupying space opposite the paddling pool in the harbour, a large black, ferro-concrete yacht (a feature of someone's dream to circumnavigate the world) had finally been towed away.

The issues challenging the 1999 Community Council included how to find a purpose for the empty Bank of Scotland office in Pulteney Street, where to re-locate the bottle bank – it had become an eyesore in the newly-landscaped Square – and what was to happen to the bowling green and tennis courts following the folding of the village Bowls club? This first issue also included a questionnaire that sought feedback from residents on the preferred style, layout and content of the new village newspaper.

The second issue came out in October modified somewhat by the initial reactions from 40 returned questionnaires. Typical of the responses was "I have very much enjoyed reading the first issue." It became a guiding principle for the editorial team that each issue should aim to present village news, ideas, issues and achievements gathered from the community and those interested others keen to promote the wider image of Portknockie. Over the years, with the development of the world-wide web, the K'nocker's influence was able to expand to cover the world. In this second issue there appeared features that were to become regulars for the K'nocker – What's on in the Port, the Portknockie Directory, Hame Cookin' recipes, Community Council news and heritage stories. The first advertisement in the K'nocker was a reminder from the Benefits Agency in Elgin about the 1999 arrangements for the Winter Fuel Payments.

In the 3rd issue (December 1999) charging for adverts was tried out and the initial team of 17 volunteers was

formed to deliver the K'nocker across the village. This group was extremely helpful to the Editor and remained largely intact for the next decade. This third issue contained a Millennium-inspired poem and an extract from a poem called "The Pull of Home". Poetry was a regular feature in all subsequent issues kept going by the inexhaustible Collection of Davie Mair. For the Easter 2000 issue the characteristic front page layout appeared with the seasonal logo top right. This issue introduced the setting up of the first village website, www.Portknockie.com designed and administered by 15 year old Craig Simpson.

By the summer issue 2000 the K'nocker had settled into its preferred style and format which would remain largely unchanged for the next forty publications. This issue included the first fully Doric text, the "Knocker Loons" by Eddie Anderson. These regular Doric contributions used to really puzzle the Word Spellcheck on the Editor's computer and they needed very careful transposing from Eddie's tiny, hand-written copy.

The costs of producing the first year's issues of the K'nocker were met by a Moray, Badenoch and Strathspey Enterprise start-up grant. Subsequently a subscription was sought of £3 for the four issues each year. This subscription remained unchanged until 2007 when it rose to £4 a year. Around 280-300 copies were printed for each issue and sales over the 10 years of publication never much changed. The decision to stay with a simple photocopying service for reproduction provided by Moray Council Print Room proved to be cheap and uncomplicated but it did rather rule out any regular use of colour (cost) or illustration. The characteristic text-based format of the K'nocker never generated any reaction from the readership even after the surprise use of a coloured front page for the special autumn 2006 issue that featured the story of the re-investiture ceremony of the Portknockie Coat of Arms.

What did the K'nocker achieve? 43 issues were produced over 10 years. In addition to the regular features that were built up, reports were filed on the Millennium time capsule, winning the Calor Gas Community of the Year 2000 Award (Environment), the new water supply measures in 2002, the three wins on the trot of the Best-kept Village in Moray (2002/3/4), the threat of closure of the school in 2005 and 2006, the various Head Teachers who came and went, the Fishing Festival and Memorial, the Citizens of the Year, the restoration of the village Coat of Arms (2006) and the creation of the Homecoming Mosaic in 2009. A village where things happen!

The regular correspondents were wonderfully helpful and reliable in getting their copy in on time and the content was rich, varied, accurate and distinctive. The service from Moray Council Print Room was first class and the village delivery team was always very reliable. Margret Wood and Harry Hawkes (from Christmas 2005) who made up the Editorial team were a tremendous support and inspiration and it was a great delight and surprise when the work of this team was recognised by the award of the Portknockie Citizen of the Year 2007 trophy. Earlier in May 2007 the team was delighted to receive the accolade of winning the Moray Newsletter of the Year 2007 award sponsored by the Northern Scot.

Another cause for satisfaction, stimulated by the enthusiasm and technical expertise of Neil Hedley, was the establishment of internet links which gave readers anywhere in the world the capacity to access the K'nocker on line. Later on a downloadable podcast service was set up which provided a recording of the newspaper by the editorial team (plus Mrs Croucher) that could be listened to by anyone anywhere in the world with access to a computer. These recordings on disc also provided a valuable service for anyone challenged by the small typeface of the printed version of the K'nocker.

The K'nocker was an incomer to Portknockie but it has won recognition over the years as a very reliable member of the community. Thanks are due to all those who have been faithful subscribers, to agencies such as Moray Print Room staff for reliable copying services and to the regular contributors who are so vital for any editorial team. At the risk of hurting anyone who feels left out (to any that might feel this please accept my sincerest apologies) the Editor wishes to acknowledge the following especially: Auntie Bessie and Auntie Mary (recipes), the late Eddie Anderson, Mary Butler (up to 2003), the late Margaret Dawson, Vera Findlay (Canada), Davie Mair, Ian Mair, Willie Mair, Arnold Pirie, the late David Pirie, Sheena Pirie, Bill Slater (Cults), Charlie Slater (Australia), the late Willie Slater, Mary Thorpe and, of course, Margret Wood and Harry Hawkes.

The K'nocker now goes into retirement. For future researchers there is a complete collection of the master copies kept in the village library. For any interested students beyond Moray you should be aware that every copy of the K'nocker has been accepted and stored at the Scottish National Library in Edinburgh. Regular readers will surely keep their memories of the K'nocker aye afloat.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS:

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

A new, four year term for the Community Council began with the election of office bearers at the meeting on the 12th October. The two vacant seats are being advertised with the closing date being 18th December 2009. At this inaugural meeting members were issued with an updated hand book containing a new Community Council code of conduct.

Concern has been reported to the police about teenage disturbance in the Haig Street/Firth View area but complete outrage has been expressed by members over the Hillhead cemetery vandalism which took place in October. The two community councils of Portknockie and Findochty have united in their condemnation of this incident and have agreed to offer a substantial reward for information leading to the conviction of those responsible for the desecration of the 19 headstones. The Moray Council has agreed to arrange the replacement of the toppled gravestones.

The PCC has considered the Moray Council Budget Consultation in detail and comments on behalf of the village will be returned to the Council, as requested, by December 16th. In the New Year, the PCC plans to hold discussions with the K'nocker editorial team about any successor publication for the village. On the question of a replacement Head Teacher for the village school the PCC is inclined to favour a shared head teacher arrangement with Findochty School if this is the only practical way of recruiting a Head Teacher for the two schools. As Mrs Murray aptly put it "A shared head teacher is better than a shared school." The PCC has arranged for the Fisherman's Memorial inscription to be re-painted.

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, Anne Barnes and, new member, Delia Fletcher.

Lil Urquhart is managing bookings for the village hall and supervising the volunteers carrying out the

cleaning while Jim Urquhart manages a plan of repairs and maintenance for the McBoyle Hall.

With the running and maintenance costs forever increasing, the perennial problem with the McBoyle Hall is making good use of this community asset. The village is well-endowed with meeting places and our village hall is not in the most convenient position nor does it offer much flexibility, particularly in winter when heating such a large space is not very economical. At the moment the PCA is working to find a more efficient system of space heating that could be used flexibly. The regular winter users include the Bowls Club, the Toddlers Group, the Masons, the Birds Society and an ad hoc badminton group. It would be helpful if the community could propose a more varied programme of use throughout the year so that the McBoyle Hall could be organised on a more business-like footing. Are there any budding entrepreneurs in the village needing space for a community enterprise – sports, dance, art & crafts, photography or a summer season tea room?

Fund raising continues to be boosted by the regular 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! The "100 Club" membership remains shy of its name 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 7th November was a safe and cheap way to enjoy the annual Guy Fawkes celebration. The weather was kind and Jim Urquhart and John Going lit up the sky with a fine show of bangs and bursts and there were teas and sausage rolls to warm up with afterwards. This year those attending were up on last year and the buckets for donations raised £193.09 for PCA funds!

Other activities in the Hall this autumn have included a SCARF organised "Energy Saving" session on Monday 9th November. Advice was available to those who came along on home energy saving measures and the grants that are available for keeping the home warm and well-insulated. The SCARF organisers were pleased with the attendance and want to hold a repeat evening function possibly next March.

On Saturday 21st November members of "Sigma", the Moray Astronomy Club brought their Astronomy Fun

Day to Portknockie. This was part of a nation-wide Astronomy 2009 celebration and Portknockie was chosen as a Moray venue because of its fine night sky views. The afternoon session in the Hall included family workshops to make a rocket, a sundial, a pinprick telescope with a favourite constellation and a paper planisphere – a projection of the night sky onto a flat surface. After dark club members set up various telescopes outside the Hall and guided those present around the night sky. Amazingly, the coarse weather suddenly cleared around 7.30pm and all the heavenly bodies were revealed to close up inspection. The most popular activity for the many children present was making and test-firing their own rocket. The top prize on offer was a fine pair of binoculars which were won by Anna Campbell. Around 80 people took part in this event with families coming from as far a-field as Lossiemouth, Urquhart and Banff. Any folk interested in advice about astronomy and the wonders of the night sky and who were not able to attend should contact www.sigma-astro.co.uk or Stan Barber on 01343 835795. The Club has an exciting annual programme of activity and meetings are held monthly in Birnie Village Hall, Thomshill just south of Elgin.

A party for the McBoyle Hall's 25th birthday on November 28th was cancelled as tickets were not selling well enough.

Still to come is this year's Christmas tree lighting which will take place in the Millennium Garden on Saturday 5th December at 7pm. The lights will be switched on by Tilly Osbourne, the youngest pupil at the school. There will be teas and sausage rolls afterwards in the Seafield Hall and the Nursery children have been asked to sing carols. This year's Christmas Lights set up, organised by Jim Urquhart, will probably include the usual group of George Innes, Neil Jackson, Fraser Milton, John Going, Tony Barnes, David Field and John Myles. As is the custom the village Christmas tree was kindly provided by Seafield Estate.

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MORAY CITIZENS' PANEL:

The final consultation for the year requested views on the proposed budget savings that are to be made in Council services in Moray over the next four years. A significant reduction in public funding across Scotland is expected over the next few years to deal with the unprecedented level of current UK debt. The big challenge will be to maintain essential services in a situation where significant budget savings are required yet demand for services and the cost of providing services keeps increasing year on year. At this stage the extent of the expected reduction in Council spending could amount to £20million by 2013/14. The Council is very keen to get feedback from the public on its proposed service savings to help it make the most acceptable decisions when it meets to finalise next year's Moray budget in February 2010.

EXCHANGE TRIP TO TANZANIA Part 2 by Nathaniel Clarke.

In October this year Fiona Jagger and I were accompanied by two teachers, Miss Karen Flett and Mrs Jane Stewart on an exchange trip to Tanzania. It was to be an unforgettable journey full of new experiences and diverse cultures.

We made great friends in June when the Tanzanians were here, and four months on, it was brilliant to get to see them again. We received a generous grant from the Department for International Development which helped us fund the trip. It was my first time on a plane so I was a little apprehensive. But we endured the plane journey – in-flight entertainment was welcomed! – and we arrived in Tanzania to be met by a 25°C night-time temperature!

Our first surprise was a weekend safari. It was a marvel to see so many weird and wonderful creatures such as elephants and giraffes in their natural habitats. On the second day of the safari we visited the Ngorongoro national park where we had the privilege to visit a Masai village. We learned that they are struggling to survive due to drought and pressures of living within a national park as they are forbidden to hunt the wild animals that dwell there, or farm on the land. They now fully rely on tourism to provide for their harsh way of life.

Once back in Moshi, we spent the rest of our stay teaching and observing in Mawenzi Secondary school. Fiona had prepared a lesson on the carbon footprint and I had one on sustainable development. We were all surprised that throughout the school year it was the students who cleaned and kept the school tidy. This appealed to us as it shows that the Tanzanian pupils really value their education. The partner school also hosted a concert for us to celebrate the 20 year partnership link just as we had for them. There were many enjoyable performances such as dancing, singing, a drama and a fashion show. As our trip ended we were very sad to be leaving. We had made life long friendships and the link was as strong as ever.

Next year Buckie High school is set to make preparations for 13 pupils and 3 teachers to visit Tanzania. Fundraising activities are already taking place to raise money for this life changing experience.

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

Westward Ho!

I had just arrived home from shopping the other day at around four thirty in the afternoon and had to stand and watch in awe as what I estimated to be at least five hundred geese flew overhead in several large skeins. They were all honking away to each other and it was really a spectacular sight. They were all headed eastwards and somewhere to roost for the night as it wasn't far off being quite dark. It reminded me of our visit last autumn to Loch of Strathbeg where we saw a few hundred birds all returning to roost though it was long past dusk.

A friend, who has only a passing interest in birds, seems to see all types of not very common ones! One day as she stood at the sink looking out of the window she noticed a wagtail except she said it was

yellow. Well, that is a grey wagtail I told her and the first one I'd ever seen around here. Grey wagtail is a bit of a misnomer considering its most noticeable colour is yellow but there is also a yellow wagtail. The grey actually refers to its slate grey back. It is a resident bird where as the yellow is a summer visitor.

Next, she told me about a strange little bird that had somehow got in to her kitchen. It was small and brown like a wren she told me except it had a longer curved beak. That was more than likely a tree creeper which would fit as she has a lot of mature trees in her garden. Tree creepers are usually seen working their way up the trunk of a tree searching for any insects. They have sharp little claws for gripping and stiff tail feathers to use as a prop as they wind their way up and around the tree. I once accidentally discovered a tree creeper's nest by pulling at some loose bark on a spruce tree. I was mortified at uncovering the nest complete with little fluffy babies and quickly sent my daughter to fetch her dad and a length of rope so that we could hold the bark in place. Fortunately this worked as we kept an eye on things over the next couple of weeks and saw that it stayed intact. We also saw the parent birds going in and out. What a relief! I certainly learned not to go around tearing loose bark off of trees!

I know it's not around Portknockie but I must tell you about a very exciting afternoon of bird watching we had whilst on holiday in Devon back in October. Our aunty Pat was driving us back to Westward Ho! after we'd been shopping when I noticed a spit of land going out to the sea. There was lots of mud so thought it might hold some waders. Pat turned on to a track to drive us nearer and out of the corner of my eye I saw a flash of something very white. We drove on so as to turn around and we noticed a horse galloping towards us from quite a long way off. Pat stopped the car and as we watched there was another and another until there was about forty of them all in single file and all on a definite mission coming our way at speed. They were all shapes and sizes and as we watched they carried on past us towards some barns. The next thing when we looked back to where the horses had come from there was a single file of sheep appearing out of the distance also on a mission though not at such speed. There must have been a hundred of them!

Anyway, back to the bird life. As I was watching the usual waders I once again noticed something very white flying toward the mud and as it landed I could see it was little egret! They are a heron type bird, very elegant looking with a long black beak and legs and long white head plumes. They are not at all

common but are an increasing visitor to the south of England particularly in the summer though this was the end of October. We saw another one which flew over to join the first one so hopefully they were a pair. I was so chuffed to see them. They looked so exotic!

This is the last edition of our K'nocker as we know it so I would like to thank you for your interest in my articles and thank you to the many people who have personally passed comment and given me encouragement.

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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.

A public allotment for the village

Allotments are becoming a must-have facility in many communities across the UK. Allotments rekindle community spirit, provide the public with a healthy activity and enrich a very basic life requirement in any society, plenty of good things to eat and, even drink. Around Moray communities like Cullen, Elgin, Keith, Dufftown and Lhanbryde are actively working to establish local allotments. The Moray Council has developed a policy of support for allotments in Moray and the contact officer is John Ferguson (01343 – 563404) or on line john.ferguson@moray.gov.uk

Would you seize the chance to grow your own quality fruits and vegetables and enjoy the collaborative spirit of working with like-minded folk and sharing ideas and experience? Why not consider the idea and join in what is a growing local momentum? Why in six months time you could be lifting your own early tatties and slicing your own-grown runner beans! Can you visualise where to locate such a Portknockie allotment? Perhaps as part of the proposed Seabraes housing development on the east side of the village?

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PORTKNOCKIE OLD HOUSE NUMBERS by Jim Illingworth

Now there's an enthralling title for an article! For the past few months I have been trying to correlate the Seafeld Estate house numbers with the street addresses we use today. If you get bored, skip to the final paragraphs because I'm asking for help.

Genealogy, or family history, is my hobby so use of old censuses is important for me. I have lived in Portknockie for six years and have helped several people who have roots here with their family trees. Sometimes they ask for photographs of their ancestor's dwellings. Therefore I had to find my way through the older part of the village, Harbour Place, Blantyre Place and thereabouts. The house numbers and streets are a bit higgledy-piggledy there. Our local Cullen Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group had poor copies of plans of Portknockie dated 1873. I thought it would be easy to cross-reference the old numbers to today's address, silly me!

At the start of each census enumeration district is a description of the area being enumerated. In 1881 Portknockie the first two enumeration districts which were divided by a line "from the west end of the street leading eastwards from the shore head in front of house number 179 to the corner house no 53 where said street meets the Portknockie Road.....". In 1871, the wording is virtually identical except the house 147 and 41 are used. The 1873 plan clearly identifies houses 179 and 53 to go along Commercial Road from the shore head to New Street (then called Portknockie Road), a reasonable demarcation for the two halves. Houses 147 and 53 were not reasonable, so was there a different system of numbers?

At the Group's Heritage Festival week in Cullen in June, I had a small display of my work in progress where one of our members Davy Mair gave me an A4 photocopy of a plan of part of the village. This map had house number 147 in the same place as house no.

179 in my map so there was a different set of numbers! To cut a long story short, the original map was tracked down in The National Archives in Edinburgh by Patsy Mair and she sent me a readable copy.

I now had the correlation between the two sets of Seafield Estate numbers. All I had to do now was correlate these numbers to the modern street address. I had been told that the modern addresses were adopted in 1919 so Cy Pirie and I went to the Local Heritage Centre in Elgin to look at old valuation rolls. We looked at 1913 roll and found that Portknockie houses were identified by the Seafield Estate numbers. The next valuation roll available was for 1921 which identified the houses by the modern address. The properties were listed in the same order so we had the correlation we needed.

Now I have a list of modern addresses and the two Seafield estate house numbers for properties in existence before 1921. I can, therefore, identify the modern address of people listed in old censuses. Putting it another way, I can tell current residents of older houses who lived there in 1901 and earlier. It may not be the same house, many houses have been completely rebuilt, others modified, but it will be the same site. Incidentally, has your house been radically modified? Many have had the roof raised, you can see evidence in the stone work. Large families lived in small houses in those days; times were hard for some and good for others. There must be many stories passed down. 'Can your house tell a story?' Write down the stories before they are forgotten.

Family historians can now trace the house of their ancestors back to at least 1861, (in 1851 and 1841 house numbers were not listed). Cy Pirie had been trying to trace his family in Portknockie. He knew that James Pirie 'Coull' in 1881 lived in house no 80 (19 Reidhaven Street). In 1871, house no 80 was actually in Church Street, so where was James Pirie? Using the earlier plan, 80 was now 60, Cy found James Pirie in house 59 (still in Reidhaven Street but he had moved next door between 1871 and 1881. Cy has in fact confirmed that his ancestors lived in the village as far back as the first census of 1841. I can trace the occupants of nearly all of the pre-1901 houses back to 1861, there are awkward ones which I cannot identify. Your editor's house at 23 Harbour Place is inscribed 1906 above the door but it appears as house no 209 in 1901/1891/1881 and house 175 in 1871, William Mair 'Brother' and his wife Jane lived there for the whole period, no house was recorded in 1861.

I hope, via the Heritage Group, to produce a plan of the older part of the village showing the three house numbers also where old houses have been demolished and have not been replaced. I am battling with computer graphics trying to get an auto cad drawing superimposed on top of a bitmap image; can anyone tell me how to do it?

THE "BERYL" a fishy tale by Ian Mair

During the late 1940s and early 1950s upwards of 30 boats could be seen fishing in the Firth. These boats were known as 'baldies' and fished from ports along the coast. Burghead, Lossie, Buckie, Whitehills and Macduff all had their own fishing fleets and fish markets.

The Beryl was a Whitehill's boat and usually landed her catch there. One day the Beryl caught a huge bag of cod and ling and could not haul the net onboard. The skipper decided to tow the catch to the nearest port which was Portknockie. All went well until he approached the harbour entrance. The net caught on the buss lying off the breakwater and was torn open and hundreds of fish surfaced.

Fish were everywhere and Knocker loons were soon on the scene. "We were cleekin' fish from the steps and rippin' them from the quays." Another bonanza of fish was found as the tide ebbed; dozens were trapped in Linn links pool. We did not have fridges so surplus fish were sold to Zander, the Chippie.

Editor: an ex-fisherman from Portsoy has told me that a similar huge catch was towed into Cullen harbour by the Macduff registered "Tudor Queen" (skipper, Dennis Wilson) on the same day.

THE PORTKNOCKIE DIRECTORY

Police: Emergency	999
Non-Emergency	0845 600 5 700
Doctors: (Cullen)	840272
(Buckie)	831555
Seafield Hospital:	832081
Dr Grays, Elgin: 01343	543131
Aberdeen RI: 0845	4566000
Dentist: (Buckie)	831163
Chemist: (Portknockie)	840268
Optician: (Buckie)	832239
Plumber (Portknockie)	841701
Electrician: (Portknockie)	840066
Harbour Garage	840099
Hydro-Electric: (24hrs) 0800	300999
Gas leaks: (24 hrs) 0800	111999
Scottish Water Helpline:	0845 600 8855

BT: (fault reporting) 0800 800 151
Coastguard: (24 hrs) 01224 592334
Environmental Incidents: 0800 807060
Moray Council: 01343 563000
 Out of hours 08457 565656
Buckie Access Point 837200
Uplift service (after 10am) 01343 557318
NHS24 - Health Advice 08454 242424
Crimestoppers 0800 555 111
Neighbourhood Watch (J.Myles) 840 000
Antisocial Behav. Helpline 0800 5877 197

Travel Information telephone numbers:

Bus & Coach:

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

Airports:

Aberdeen 087004 400006
 Inverness 01667 464000

Seaport: (Aberdeen)

Northlink 0845 6000 449

Trains:

National Rail Enquiries 0845 748950

Taxis: (Portknockie) 840875
Portknockie Post Office 840201
Portknockie School 840244
Portknockie Library 841149

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*Wishing all my customers a merry
 Christmas & a prosperous New Year*
HAME COOKING by SWRI members:

Salmon Part Log

Ingredients:

Large tin of salmon or fresh equivalent
 8oz (225g) cream cheese
 Tablespoon of lemon juice
 2 tablespoons of grated onion
 Packet of gelatine

½ cup of chopped walnuts
 3 tablespoons of chopped parsley
 Large tablespoon of mayonnaise
 Large tablespoon of cream
 A ¼ teaspoon of salt

Method:

Drain and flake the salmon removing all skin and bones. Mix this with the cream cheese, the lemon juice, the chopped onion, salt, mayonnaise and cream then add the melted gelatine (melted in a tablespoon of hot water over a pan of boiling water). Let the mixture set then roll in chopped parsley and the chopped nuts. Chill again in the fridge and serve with Melba toast or garlic bread.

**Chocolate Strawberries with Drambuie Cream
 Ingredients for the Drambuie Cream:**

1 pint of double cream
 1 dessertspoon of icing sugar
 2 tablespoons of Drambuie
 2-3 tablespoons of brandy

Method:

Wash and dry the strawberries. Melt plain dark cooking chocolate over a bowl of simmering water. Remove the pan from the heat and stir the chocolate until it is smooth and glossy. Then dip the tip of each strawberry in the chocolate and leave to set. Serve and enjoy the chocolate-coated strawberries with the Drambuie Cream.

POETS' CORNER:

Memories of Charlie Slater (Australia)

THE PORT

Aw richt, aw richt, ye brag an' boast
 Aboot yer bonnie "Toonie" on the nor' east coast,
 Bit must ye keep it as a local "secret" location?
 Fit wye din't ye share it wi' the rest o' the nation?

Tell the fowk thit live awa' doon sooth
 Aboot the Bow Fiddle Rock or else the Whale's
 Mooth;
 An' ahen the toon 'ere's the Knock, the Bin an' the
 Hill o' Maud –
 Tae tak' a walk or a hike up each isna sae baud.

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Bit closer at haun along the western shore
You've the Cradlies, the Tronachs an' a puckle more.
Then farrer west ye hiv' Hill Heed,
A source o' history fae them fa' deed.

History will show mony young men lost their life,
Leaving a young family an' a loving wife;
Bit ony widows or orphans o' the **Port**
Wis guaranteed they hid the toon's support.

So tell the worl' o' the fantastic support
If ye come tae bide at a place ca'd the **Port**.
'Ere's nae discrimination either creed, colour or race
'Cause the Port is an awfa' freenly place.

Editor: Very appropriate sentiments from Charlie for
this last issue of The K'nocker which for the past ten
years has championed so many of the matters raised
in this poem – like putting Portknockie on the map!

Untitled

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
That 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.

From the Davie Mair Collection.

WALKIN' by Ian Mair

Thir wis a time fin motor cars
An' tellies we wir lackin'.
Fit did we dee ti pass the time?
We did a lot o' walkin'.

We walkit on a Sunday morn
Fin Knocker shops wir clost;
Ti Cullen's shoppie at the Brig'
Jist ti git oor Sunday Post.

We walkit ower the Linn links path
Gan as far's the Whiton Fall.
An' if oor thirsty walkin' back
Hae a drink fae Corbies' wall.

We walkit ower the railway line
By the coo gate ti the Den;
Stan' lookin' doon the Link afile
Then hame bi the line again.

We walkit up by Kirkie Hoose
By the condemned tree went roon.
Oor initials fae the past noo gone
The tree's bin hackit doon.

We walkit fin oor bairns wir wee
By oor side or in thir pram.
Wid stop 'n gie the jooks a piece
Fin we walkit roon the dam.

We walkit roon by Dyce backie
Fit we caad gan up this hill.
Nae motor cars on the road hame
So we didna git nae ill.

We walkit roon by Jinny's wall
Ower the links or on the shore
Bit Knocker men wid walk for miles
Jist by walkin back 'n fore.

MYSTERY "SUILVEN TROPHY RETURNS HOME an update by Harry Hawkes:

In the December 2008 issue of the K'nocker we
reported the finding (in a car boot sale in Coupar
Angus) of a silver cup, a trophy of the erstwhile
Portknockie Boys' Brigade, engraved as "The Suilven
Trophy". By the Easter 2009 issue of the newsletter,
Moira Smith of Buckie was able to tell us that this
was a silver cup used by her brother, Colin
Macpherson, an apprentice engraver, to practise his
skills way back in 1980 – which explains why Colin
himself is given as "winner" of the cup for his
religious knowledge a dozen times, all in 1980
The "real" Suilven Trophy is still in Portknockie, in

the safe keeping of George Innes. Colin himself has for many years now lived down by Coupar Angus.

The question is: How did the cup end up in a car boot sale? Moira has been in touch with her brother and has found an answer – he doesn't know either, but could he please have his cup back? So the mystery cup has been returned to Moira, who will pass it back to Colin. All's well that ends well.

<p style="text-align: center;">SHEAR DEZIGN Hair by Lisa Open Tuesday – Saturday with late night Thursdays.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Phone 841711 for an appointment</p>

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

THOUGHTS FROM THE MINISTER by the Rev. Yvonne Hendrie

A TALE OF TWO SISTERS

The story of Jesus' visit to the two sisters, Martha and Mary, isn't one we tend to think of in connection with Christmas. However, I think it has a great deal to say to us in these days when the pressure to produce the "perfect Christmas" is everywhere. When Jesus paid a visit to Martha and Mary, they were only too aware that their guest was special, God's own son. Martha was thrown into a panic as she tried to show him the finest hospitality she could rustle up at short notice. Her sister, though, was simply delighted to have Jesus under her own roof. She sat down to listen to what he had to say. She had the King of the Universe in her own home, and she wasn't going to miss a moment of his company! Martha was very annoyed by the fact that Mary wasn't helping her, but Jesus said that Mary had chosen to do the right thing.

At Christmas, we tend to lose sight of *who* all the fuss is about. We forget to give time to the one who is the reason for all this. Jesus wasn't interested in the fine food Martha was trying to prepare. He wanted her company as he taught of the new relationship which God was offering His people, through him. Jesus isn't a kill-joy, and I have no doubt that he wants us to celebrate his birthday in style, to be hospitable to our family and friends and enjoy this special time. We must remember, however, that he should be the unseen guest at our celebrations, and we should make time for him and his message of peace and good will.

A Merry and Meaningful Christmas 2009 to you all.

EDITORIAL TEAM CONTACTS:

Bob Croucher: 23 Harbour Place, AB56 4NR
01542-841291 or e-mail rmcdram@onetel.com

Margret Wood: 34 King Edward Terrace or the Library, 01542-840747 or e-mail
Portknockie.library@moray.gov.uk

Harry Hawkes: 18 Church Street, 01542-840718 or e-mail hrhyic@yahoo.co.uk

Adverts in the K'nocker: 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, Victoria Street and Seafield 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.

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.

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WHAT'S ON IN THE PORT?

Portknockie Seniors' Group: There have been two meetings to date, both well-attended and those present have enjoyed the entertainment. Three new members have joined this year giving a total membership of 74, so the club continues to grow and provide a popular social gathering.

The remainder of the year's meetings have been arranged as follows: 17th November 2009: "Phoenix Ladies" plus a sales table. 15th December 2009: Christmas Party at the Marine Hotel. 19th January 2010: To be a Scotch Night with "3in a row". 16th February 2010: "Gan about Folk". 16th March 2010: "Mary Aitken Dancers". 20th April 2010: "Yethan Fiddlers". 25th May 2010: Morning Tea between 10-1130am. 8th June 2010: The annual bus trip will be to Montrose. (Tony Barnes).

The Harbour News - HD Reid, Harbour master:

October 24th was a busy day at the harbour with the craning out of boats for winter. Eight boats were taken out, the most lifted in a day that there has ever been. As the crane can no longer travel carrying a boat, it has to lift out a few, shift the crane and then lift them again to where they will be until April.

We usually work the same day as Findochty but there were too many boats this year to do all the work in one day. We have been having a bit of trouble with the lights down the harbour. The last three months the flood light on the middle pier has been out some nights however, once reported to Elgin, it has all been sorted. In November more of the lights were out but again repaired – something to do with the electrics! The north pontoon is now empty for the winter. It is not a good berth for winter conditions because of the surge when there is a gale of wind blowing for the northerly direction.

CHEMIST'S CORNER

Season's greetings!

Winter is here bringing with it much anticipated festive fayre, as well as the not-so-welcome colds and chills. It is now a fine time to check with your medical centre whether or not you are eligible for the flu vaccination for some added protection. Otherwise we can provide medication over-the-counter for symptomatic relief of common colds. However, if you have cold or flu symptoms, please do not go into your health surgery or any pharmacy. Instead, call the free Swine Flu helpline on **0800 1 513 513** to rule out infection before coming into contact with other people.

On a brighter note, we have a range of Christmas decorations, gifts, cards and wrapping in the shop, as well as our usual winter warmers. Also, we have calendars for the New Year which make handy gifts for posting to loved ones and old friends staying further a-field.

With regard to the festive period, please make sure you have enough of your repeat medications to last for three weeks (**18th December – 4th January**) and, if not, please re-order your medication by the **18th December**.

There will be no pharmacy services from **4pm** on Christmas Eve until **9am** on Monday 28th December although we will be open for papers 8.30-9.30am on Saturday 26th December. There will be no pharmacy services from **4.30pm** on New Year's Eve until **9am** on Monday 4th January (we will be open for papers 8.30-9.30am on Saturday 2nd January).

Should, in unfortunate circumstances, medical emergencies arise during the holidays please call **NHS24** on **08454 24 24 24**. This service will be able to direct you to a doctor or pharmacy service.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Sandra, Claire and Sarah.

Portknockie Nursery: The children are having a St Andrew's Day Ceilidh in Nursery on Friday 27th November where they are being asked to wear something tartan. Buckie High School pupils will also be in attendance to help us with dancing and music. We look forward to having a great time! We are also holding a Scottish week where we will look at Scottish poems and stories; have a Scottish interest

table and eat Scottish food for our snack.

The children will be singing in the Millennium Garden at the switching on of the village Christmas Lights on Saturday 5th December.

The Nursery is holding a festive tea and Nativity play in the Seafield Hall on Tuesday 15th December from 10am to 12 noon with the Nativity play being performed at around 10.30am.

The 2-3 group Christmas party is on Wednesday 16th December and the nursery group party is on Tuesday 22nd December. We are hoping that Santa will visit!

CATHERINE'S Christmas Shop
Now open for beautiful Christmas ceramics & unusual Christmas gifts.
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Bowling Club Notes: our busy but very pleasant outdoor season came to a close towards the end of September: after keen competition prize-winners emerged with Linda Wood taking the Singles Trophy, Graeme Ritchie and Jim Cowie winning the Pairs Competition, while the Hat Night Trophy was shared between Linda and Wilson Weir.

As the nights closed in it was nice to retreat to the warmth of the McBoyle Hall and by now we are well used to be back bowling on the carpets. Good attendances of members have been taking part in our weekly Hat nights (Monday and Thursday evenings), and the season is going well. Our winter league programme has started, and while competition can be keen we look forward to winning some enjoyable games.

While most of the outside tournaments have still to take place, special mention must be made of Linda Wood and Wilson Weir who have already won the Buckie Bowling Club Mixed Pairs Competition.

Old and new members are always most welcome: if you are new to carpet bowls and would like to try please come along at 6.30pm on a Hat night: flat shoes or slippers are needed but bowls are always available.

In order to raise funds, for the last two years the Club has held very successful sixties nights in the McBoyle Hall: these were well supported and it is planned to hold a further such night on Saturday 30 January 2010. Again the entertainment will be "Remember Then" with Dave Nash: posters will be displayed nearer the date at which time tickets will be available from Club members.

The Club is sorry to see the demise of the Knocker: it has been a very useful way of spreading the news and members extend their thanks.

Neighbourhood Watch is simply looking out for one another, though in a close-knit community that attitude tends to be present naturally. However, we are fortunate to live in a village such as Portknockie, where crime is not on the same scale as certain other areas. One perennial problem on a national basis however, is that of bogus or fraudulent workmen, and this matter occurs periodically in this area: Grampian Police would appreciate it if residents would generally employ vigilance around their property, but more so where there are elderly neighbours. Door stickers to try and deter cold callers have been produced by Trading Standards and can be obtained from Sandra in the Chemist.

Locally however, some crime does occur, though this is normally more minor. Regardless, the police would ask that this is reported, so at least the Community Beat Officer is aware of any problems. The Police call number for non-emergencies remains at 0845 600 5 700 or by email to servicecentre@grampian.pnn.police.uk.

There are two other numbers which might be useful (a) the Moray Anti-Social Behaviour Reporting Line on 0800 5877 197 and (b) Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111 – call either anonymously with information about crime.

If you would like to join Neighbourhood Watch (no charge) or simply wish for more information, please contact the Coordinator John Myles on 840 000.

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*

Fishing News: This year the local squid fishing lasted well into October for some of the Portknockie fishing fleet. Most boats are now back to the prawns and fish with the “Scotia” working the clams off the Isle of Man. The “Regent Bird” owned by Martin Miller has been sold to English owners and is being converted at Macduff Shipyards.

Legislation is crippling our boats and it is time someone sorted out the mess the industry is in. Once again it is coming to the end of the year – so good luck, good fishing to owners and crew of all Portknockie fishing boats in the New Year.

Library News: We are finally moved to the school but are open the same hours. If you did not make the official opening please come up and have a browse. An interesting story was unearthed by my boss Eleanor Kidd –

“**NEW LIBRARY FOR PORTKNOCKIE** – Gift by Mr Coats of Paisley – Banffshire Advertiser 8th December 1904 – Rathven School Board sanctioned an application from Mr George Donald, Portknockie for permission to use the Public School to accommodate the library of 650 books given by Mr Coats to the public of Portknockie. The formal opening was on the 28th November 1904 with a good turnout and presided over by Rev.J McIntyre.”

Come in and read the rest of this interesting story. Also a Merry Xmas & Happy New Year to all. Margret.

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

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

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 afternoons from 1.00 to 2.30pm 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 Joanne Wood on 842895.

The Victoria Hotel

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Our School Head Teachers on the move again: Mrs Stephanie Gibson, the school Acting Head Teacher since last August has moved to take on the headship of St Gerardine’s School in Lossiemouth.

In the middle of November Miss Karen Murray, a Principle teacher at Cullen Primary School, replaced Mrs Gibson as Acting Head Teacher of the Portknockie School. Miss Murray is no stranger to the village as she was previously a class teacher here back in 1995.

Portknockie Primary School News

As the new Acting Head
Teacher I have joined
Portknockie Primary School



at a very busy time of year. In addition to the on-going learning and teaching, pupils and staff are working on many special projects and events as we begin the count down to the end of term and Christmas holidays.

Blue Peter and Blythswood Appeals

Earlier this term 18 filled boxes, which had been donated through the school, were sent to the Blythswood Appeal. These boxes, containing toiletries, small items of clothing and toys will be delivered to people in need in a variety of countries in time for Christmas.

Primary 1,2,3 have also been collecting unwanted T-shirts for the Blue Peter Send a Smile Appeal. With a little adult help these T-shirts are being turned into simple operating gowns, which will be used in India to minimise costs for operations to correct cleft palates. The pupils are making a wonderful job of decorating these gowns to cheer up the young patients who will receive them. We would like to thank the families who have helped the pupils in supporting these worthwhile causes allowing them to consider their role as responsible citizens.

SCARF Visits

On Tuesday 24th November two representatives of the SCARF organisation visited the school and gave a presentation to the upper classes about ways of saving energy and reducing wasted energy. We imagine parents are now receiving lots of expert advice about not leaving electrical items on standby at home!

Talent Show

On Wednesday 25th November a very successful talent show was organised by pupils from Primary 5,6,7. The show was enjoyed by everyone and all the acts taking

part performed well. We would like to thank Mrs Woolgar and the P5,6,7 pupils for all their hard work in organising the afternoon proving themselves to be very effective contributors to the life of our school.

St Andrew's Day

To start our St Andrew's day celebrations we will be visited on Friday 27th November by a piper and some dancers who will perform for the school. On the afternoon of Monday 30th November the whole school will join together for a special St Andrew's day assembly and some Scottish country dancing. To add to the Scottish feel of our day pupils will be wearing a "touch of tartan".

Library Visits

On Wednesday 2nd December all classes will visit the library and spend some time learning about the library resources and working with the library staff.

Nitelite Mobile Police Office

During the afternoon of Friday 18th December staff from Grampian Police will be in the school playground with their mobile unit promoting road safety during the dark winter months. Each class will spend time at the unit and parents are also welcome to visit.

Christmas Activities

Provisional dates have been set for our Christmas activities as follows:
Tuesday 15th December - P1-3 Party
Wednesday 16th December - P4-7 Party
Friday 18th December - Christmas lunch in the canteen
Monday 21st December - Whole School Performance of "It's a Party"

Date to be arranged - Service at Portknockie Church of Scotland.

Miss Karen Murray,
Acting Head Teacher.

A FINAL FOOTNOTE: KNOCKER HEADLINES OVER THE YEARS –

A NEW NEWSPAPER FOR PORTKNOCKIE
(August 1999)

WHAT'S IN A NAME?
(October 1999)

PLANS FOR THE MILLENNIUM
(December 1999)

PORTKNOCKIE'S "SPRING CLEAN" CAMPAIGN FOR EASTER
(Easter 2000)

THE NEW MORAY WASTEWATER TREATMENT SCHEME PLANS UNVEILED.
(Autumn 2000)

PORTKNOCKIE GAINS THE CALOR GAS SCOTTISH COMMUNITY OF THE YEAR 2000 AWARD FOR "The Environment"
(Christmas 2000)

OLD BANK OF SCOTLAND BUILDING REBORN AS A VILLAGE WORKSHOP
(Easter 2001)

FIRST ENTRY IN BEAUTIFUL SCOTLAND IN BLOOM COMPETITION
(Summer 2001)

CONCERNS ABOUT TOO MANY PARKED CARS IN CHURCH STREET
(Autumn 2002)

NEW WATER WORKS DELAYED, NEW WASTERWATER PUMPING STATION BY THE GARAGE IN THE HARBOUR STARTS
(Christmas 2002)

DOCTOR MORRISON RESIGNS FROM THE CULLEN MEDICAL PRACTICE
(Easter 2003)

CHARLES SIVEWRIGHT, SCHOOL HEAD TEACHER RETIRES
(Christmas 2003)

PORTKNOCKIE'S FIRST FISHING FESTIVAL
(Easter 2004)

MEMORIAL TO FISHERMEN DEDICATED
(Summer 2004)

THREE YEARS IN A ROW BEST KEPT LARGE VILLAGE IN MORAY
(Summer 2004)

SCHOOL CLOSURE THREAT
(Summer 2005)

RECYCLING COMES TO PORTKNOCKIE
(Easter 2006)

PORTKNOCKIE COAT OF ARMS RETURNS
(Summer 2006)

SEABRAES DEVELOPMENT APPROVED IN LOCAL PLAN
(Christmas 2006)

PORTKNOCKIE SCHOOL TO STAY OPEN
(Easter 2007)

KNOCKER COMMUNITY NEWSLETTER OF THE YEAR
(Summer 2007)

MINISTER, GRAHAM AUSTIN MOVES AWAY
(Summer 2008)

NEW HEAD TEACHER MRS SHONA IDLE TAKES OVER THE SCHOOL
(Autumn 2008)

2009 THE HOMECOMING AND THE MOSAIC
(Summer 2009)

THE LAST KNOCKER
(Christmas 2009)

A REPLACEMENT VILLAGE NEWSPAPER?
Now is the opportunity to make a fresh start with a new village newspaper for Portknockie, a New Year 2010 and a clean slate. Who is up for the challenge?

