

**THREAT OF CLOSURE
HANGS OVER OUR
SCHOOL ALL SUMMER.
THIS IS NOT
ACCEPTABLE!
PORTKNOCKIE FIGHTS
BACK.**

A year ago the village received written confirmation from Mr Donald Duncan that our school was not under any threat of closure. Yet under option 1 of the Moray Schools Planning for the Future consultation Portknockie School would be closed and merged with a new school to be built in Cullen. This is not acceptable!

We first heard this bombshell from a Moray Firth Radio news bulletin, this was not acceptable!

The figures on which the Education Service has based its options do not seem to match the criteria set for closure. Our school meets these criteria for staying open. We are being forced to judge the proposals without all the known facts. This is not acceptable!

There seems to be a cloak of secrecy surrounding the whole process. Why cannot local councillors and local teachers express their views and concerns about the options? They are key members of our community and we should be able to get advice from them on the wider implications of the proposals. This is not acceptable!

Rural schools are at the heart of their communities. A village without its school is just not acceptable!

If these options are merely testing us for our reactions, having to wait until October for a result is not acceptable!

**YOUR PRESENT
COMMUNITY COUNCIL
GROUP DISSOLVES ON
3RD OCTOBER 2005**

Portknockie has 10 community councillors and two student members aged between 16 and 18. Nominations for membership of the new Community Council will be possible from this August 5th. To be a member you need to reside in the village and be prepared to give time to, and have a genuine interest in, the well-being of Portknockie.

The Community Council meets monthly usually on the 2nd Monday between 7 and 9pm. The task is to represent the views of the village and to make them known to The Moray Council and other public bodies. These bodies use the community council system to consult on their local services provision.

It is a worthwhile job and it helps to bring government closer to the people. Help ensure a strong new Council for our village.

VILLAGE NEWS & AROUND:

Portknockie harbour: On Thursday 28th April a fine marble plaque was laid by the Fishermen's Memorial on Flagstaff Hill by JR Henderson & Sons Ltd from the Elgin Granite Works. It reads: *This Memorial is dedicated by the people of Portknockie to all Fishermen who lost their lives at sea. The dedication service was conducted by Supt. Ray Hall of the RNMDSF on Sunday 25th July 2004*". A hundred Scottish wild flowers were planted on the bank below the Memorial by a Community Association working group. This local improvement project, which also includes the two new flights of steps, a new bench and a

waste bin, was paid for jointly by The Moray Council Community Environmental Improvement grants and matched funding from our community.

The paddling pool was given its clean up for the summer on April 18th. Our thanks go to those volunteers who keep the paddling pool clear and clean throughout the season. An advice note on using the pool has been drawn up with guidance from Health & Safety. Remember the pool is not supervised and young children should always be accompanied by a responsible adult. Please do not take food or drink into the pool and would all dog owners make sure their pets do not go into the water because of possible health hazards.

Warm Welcomes to the Village: Loretta & Bruce Smith at 20 Pulteney Street. They have come here from Dumfries with Sebastian, their German Shepherd Dog, his friend a blind Border Collie, called Jem, three cats and two rabbits. After a longish spell being empty 4 Blantyre Place is being restored by Sheila & Terry from Braintree, Essex who moved here on 26 May. They have settled in with two cats, Sooty & Sweep, an aging guinea pig called Susy and some tropical fish. They chose Portknockie after a short stay in the Lake District and they are both impressed with how friendly everyone here is. Sheila has worked in nurseries and is very keen on gardening.

Sadly missing from the Head o' the Brae on his daily walks is the black Labrador, Benson. He died of old age (16) on the 23rd April and is now buried in the Pet Cemetery at Cullen.

A BIG THANK YOU to Scott Holiday Homes for re-instating the grass next to 1 Cliff Terrace disturbed when the alterations were being carried out and for re-building the seat overlooking the harbour. With the dolphin feature in place this is one of the "Village in Bloom" judging spots for 2005. Thanks to Lynn Selwood for maintaining a watch on this area.

The dolphin seat overlooking Cullen Bay now has a tub of summer bedding. Our thanks go to John Young who keeps a regular watch on the general condition of the footpath out there.

JAMES A. BRUCE
Carpenter & Joiner
"St. Brelade's"
4 Station Court, Portknockie,
Buckie, AB56 4LW
Tel./Fax. Cullen 841304

JOINERY MANUFACTURE REPLACEMENT WINDOW SPECIALIST

Found in Portknockie, a list of raffle winners drawn in 1977 for Portknockie Football Club:

1st Prize £100 to T Belka (Newburgh), 2nd Prize £50 to R Shaw (Peterhead) and 3rd Prize £25 to R Dickson (Brent Delta). There was also a sweatshirt for JHM (Portknockie), wine for R Henry (Brent Delta), Jane Thomson (Findochty) and JS Wark (Burghead) and chocolates for L Brown (Gt Yarmouth) and T Carter (Greenhills).

Sybil writes to claim a record. Is there anybody in the village who has been writing to a pen pal as long as I have been writing to mine? It is 70 years this year since I started writing to my friend. She is now 85 and I am 82. Her name is Lorna Burt (née Vosburg). She lives with her husband who is a doctor in Steilacoom, Washington, USA. They have visited me and I have visited them. **Ed. anyone challenge this?**

Regular summer reminder to dog owners: please ensure your pets do not foul our roads, paths and grassy places. It is a health hazard, anti-social and it loses us marks when "Village in Bloom" judging takes place. One noisome spot reported recently is on the Ship's Wheel feature by the telephone box in Church Street.

VILLAGE IN BLOOM 2005

Our village will be under the scrutiny of judges three times this summer. On Monday July 4th at 12 noon Mr and Mrs Wilson, the Beautiful Scotland in Bloom judges, will be touring the village for about an hour and a half. They will be looking at residential gardens, the park, the War Memorial, the school, shops halls and churches for their seasonal and permanent planting. They will also assess our sustainable initiatives to protect habitats minimise waste and our recycling efforts. There are also points for the local environmental quality of our streets and open spaces – are they free of litter, graffiti, fly tipping, chewing gum and dog fouling? Marks are awarded for our community involvement, fund raising and publicity.

As this issue is being prepared the Community Association committee members are working furiously to pot up and get the tubs, troughs and hanging baskets into place. Since the winter they have been refreshing and re-building a number of the village in bloom features that make up the total display for Portknockie. New for 2005 is Humpty Dumpty on his dyke outside the school – watch the bairns pat him each day.

So many of the village assist in our “Village in Bloom” efforts with ideas and practical help but **special thanks** must go to Margaret & Simon Gibbard of 6 Victoria Street and Margie & Tommy Todd of 15 Harbour Place for their kind donations and to the working group of John Mair, Helen & David Field, Shirley & “Mambo” McLean, Eric and Betty Earl, Margret & Arthur Wood, John & Tricia Barclay, John Bell, Joanie & Bill Milne, Gerry Connelly, Lorna Sinclair, Helen Sammon, Catherine & Graham Vaughn and Jim & Lil Urquhart who are leading the team this year. It is a dedicated and hard-working team. Thanks to any helpers not named above!

For the first time our War Memorial has been entered in the Royal British Legion Competition. We are in North Zone for the first round of judging which takes place by 20th July. This stretches from Perthshire to the Highlands & Islands and includes Aberdeen. The colour scheme features the British Legion colours of Navy Blue and Yellow. Final judging for the selection of National winners takes place by 31st August. Catherine & Graham Vaughn who live opposite the War Memorial are keeping the display watered and tidy.

Portknockie is also entered in the Best-Kept Village in Moray challenge and the judging for this takes place on **Tuesday 2nd August between 9.30 and 10.30am**. The competition includes a Junior entry and this year it has been prepared by the children from the School and the Playgroup. As a winner for three years running Portknockie is not eligible to win for a fourth successive year but may be granted a special certificate. It can then re-enter the competition proper again in 2006. The **Awards Ceremony** will take place in Holy Trinity Church, Elgin on Friday 2nd September 2005 at 7.30pm.

It will be a great help to the team if every one will put out hanging baskets and tubs, water any nearby community features and do anything in

their power as parent, grandparent or friend to keep the village streets looking neat and tidy. Already visitors are coming to the village to see the show and discover for themselves what a bonny place Portknockie is. The first photo of the year was taken of Bill & Ben as Jim was putting them up! Talk to our visitors and you will usually find them very envious of those who have the good fortune to live here.

COMMUNITY COUNCIL NEWS:

Your Community Council has once more submitted an entry in the 2005 Calor Scottish Community of the Year competition. The entry is in the **Community Life** category and details the active and varied number of community groups in this village, our successes in “Village in Bloom” and draws special attention to how the village came together to create the Fishermen’s Memorial on Flagstaff Hill.

For those still suffering from the Dr Gray’s Hospital parking condition there is a slight ray of hope that a further 100 parking spaces might be possible some time this year. The trick will be to ensure that the staff of the hospital and/or other Elgin workers can be prevented from taking over all the space at the start of each day!

The sudden and dramatic announcement that our **village school might be closed** under option 1 of the Moray Schools Planning for the Future plan has shot to the top of Community Council business. Portknockie responded very quickly once details of the proposals were placed before the public. An action group was swiftly formed and letters have gone to the local councillors and to the politicians. A strong delegation from the village attended the public consultation meeting in Buckie on 9th June to voice unequivocal opposition to closure. Posters and car stickers have been circulated in the village announcing “**Save our School.**” A sum of £100 has been offered from the K’nocker Account reserves to help launch the “Save our School” action campaign fund.

It was barely a year ago, when Ms Cooke was appointed head teacher that the Director of Educational Services for Moray, Mr Donald Duncan, wrote to this Council to confirm that there were no plans at all for closing Portknockie School!

The Community Council is being re-assured that there are no done deals as yet on these proposals and that any decision on school closure will be made by the elected members of The Moray Council in October after the public consultation has been heard and the Educational Services Report, and recommendations has been finalised. It has been made clear that the status quo is not an option so the best outcome that might be won is refurbishment of our school and maybe some sharing of resources with neighbouring schools. Public comment on the proposals is possible addressed to Mr. Alistair Farquhar, Head of Educational Resources, The Moray Council, High Street, Elgin IV30 1BX **by the 8th July.**

If a school is proposed for closure a further community consultation would take place to agree local arrangements. Under option 1 of the proposals Portknockie School would be closed and our children bussed to a new school to be built in Cullen.

The current term of office for your community councillors ends on the 3rd October. The process to elect new members for the next four year term is due to begin from Friday 5th August when nominations can be made. Forms will be obtainable from the Elections Office of The Moray Council in Elgin, by telephone (01343-563315 or 563459 and from online at www.moray.gov.uk Portknockie can nominate 10 community councillors and two student councillors aged 16-18 who have full voting rights. Your Community Council has a valuable role to play in partnership with The Moray Council in shaping the future of Moray.

Moray Community Planning Partnership has issued a progress report sharing its vision for Moray. Its priorities for 2005/6 affecting everyone in Moray include the following:

- Reversing population decline
- Reducing crime and the fear of crime
- Reducing accidents
- Improving diet
- Increasing levels of physical activity
- Reducing alcohol intake
- Promoting energy efficiency
- Promoting recycling and waste minimisation
- Addressing the run-down of RAF bases
- Developing rural transport
- Developing life-long learning, literacy and numeracy initiatives

- Addressing lack of affordable housing and homelessness
- Encouraging young people to have a voice and participate in local decision taking
- Integrating the planning and delivery of children's services

How many of these key priorities are important to you and our community in Portknockie?

The Best-kept Garden Competition 2005 – The arrangements for this year are as follows:

The Judging Day will be from 2pm on Thursday 4th August. The judges will be Bob Croucher and Helen Sammon for the Community Council helped by last year's cup winners as "expert" witnesses. This is a new idea we are trying out asking the two best garden winners from the previous year to help with the judging of this year's entries. This gives others a chance to take the top prize in the village best-kept gardens competition.

The Competition classes are:

- Best Private House Garden Cup and Runner Up Plaque
- Best Council House Garden Cup and Runner Up Plaque
- Best Small space display Certificate (for tiny garden areas)
- Best front of House display of Tubs and hanging baskets Certificate.
- Certificates in any class for garden displays that have given folk pleasure
- 4 Community Certificates for Village in Bloom volunteer effort (2) and special support from local businesses(2)
- Junior section display Certificate.

This year's Presentation of cups and certificates should be in the garden of the Best Private House class winner on Saturday 13th August at 11.00am. All winners will be notified by telephone and will be featured in the local press and the autumn issue of the K'nocker.

To Enter: Please nominate entrants to our best garden challenge to any Community Councillor or at The Library by **Saturday July 24th**. As is the custom if you won a cup or certificate last

year you are automatically included in this year's competition unless you advise us otherwise. Make sure you tell any nominees you have put their name forward as the judges will be trying to enter their gardens on judging day!

COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION NEWS:

An Amateur **Flower & Craft Show** and other activities are being organised for the last week in July. The plans include a sponsored walk on Sunday 24th July, A family walk around the Village in Bloom features on the Monday (25th) starting from the Library, a Sankey Night by the Church of Christ on Tuesday 26th, a Sandwich Lunch and evening Fashion Show on the 27th, a Picnic for the children in the harbour on the 28th starting at 11am, a Friday evening Gala at the harbour, the Flower and Craft Show arranged by George Stephen Jun. and a Ceilidh evening on the Saturday (30th). The Schedule of flowers, vegetables, fruit, hame bakes and handicrafts and arts classes is available and it should be handed in with exhibits at the McBoyle Hall from 6-9pm on Friday 29th July.

The **100 Club** draw for May: 1st J Taylor (Portsoy), 2nd Rachel Adam (Portknockie) and 3rd Lily Coull (Portsoy). Members pay £15 a year subscription. The June draw winners were 1st Jackie Smith (Portknockie), 2nd Paul Hendry (Portknockie), 3rd Linda Sutherland (Portsoy). To join the 100 Club contact Donna Coull or any of the Committee members.

<p style="text-align: center;">Joe Smith Roofing maintenance</p> <p style="text-align: center;">“THE SMALL JOB ROOFER”</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Free estimates</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Tel: 01542-842826 Mobile: 0797 9524571</p>
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"WILD ABOUT PORTKNOCKIE" - a series of local nature notes by Mary Thorpe:

Goldfinches Galore

I think we are being slowly taken over by birds at "Roselea". There are at least six nest sites that we know about. I spotted a little wren in the hole of an ornamental birdhouse. I had

wedged this birdhouse into a cotoneaster bush against the shed wall in the hope that something might go in it to nest, so I was really chuffed to see the wren moving in. I had heard the male singing around the garden and thought that the pair was nesting in the dense ivy. A few days after I had spotted the wrens entering the birdhouse, I was able to see a lovely domed nest through the opening made of grass, moss and fluff. It is quite hard to spot them now that the bush has come into leaf so that, hopefully, will protect the wrens from any marauding cats.

A week after I had spotted the wrens Carl and I discovered that a purpose made bird box that we had put up on the garage wall three years ago and which had never been occupied now held a blue tit family. There are two pairs of collared doves nesting in the garden, one pair in the hedge and the other in a bush right against the house. At the moment there is a pair of blackbirds actually building their nest outside the back door. We can see them at the nest through the glass panel at the top of the door. Whilst all this nest building has been going on I watched a crow with a huge stick in its beak trying to shove it into someone's chimney!

It is amazing how quickly a feeder filled with Niger seeds can attract goldfinches. I had not seen any goldfinches in our garden for a long time so I bought a special feeder, designed to hold Niger seed. The seed is very fine so the feeder has tiny slits for the feeding birds. At first, all I saw were sparrows at the feeder, which I thought was strange as I assumed their beaks were too big to extract the seed from the tiny slits. But no, they were definitely depleting the seed. It was about two months before I saw the first goldfinch feeding on the seeds and then, all of a sudden, there were six of them! The word had spread. My Mum was so impressed that she promptly bought a feeder and seed and set it up in her garden. I warned her that it would be a while before she saw a goldfinch using it but she had three visits that day and she has since had eight at one time! These Niger seeds are obviously playing an important part in sustaining our local goldfinch numbers. We buy our seed and the feeders from the Vet practice in Buckie.

I have also started putting out sultanas for the blackbirds after reading an article in the Royal Society for the Preservation of Birds magazine, "Birds". The article reported that the blackbirds become very tame after encouraging them with

raisins. It works! They soon got used to us putting out the sultanas and they would fly to the window when they spotted us and wait for their treats. They come right up to us and are very trusting. Starlings must have been watching because they now swoop down to try to get the sultanas first. We have a particular family consisting of parents and one baby and the male is very territorial about seeing off other starlings and the blackbirds. The baby has no fear of us and comes whizzing in when we rattle the sultana container.

A footnote to the Niger seed story is that I now have hundreds of thistles coming up from the spilt seed! Mind you one year we had loads of carrots growing everywhere and we certainly had not planted any. Apologies for concentrating only on our garden and the birds in this issue but having lost our dog (Brin) to old age (nearly fifteen) a few weeks ago, I have not yet got into the habit of walking just for the pleasure yet.

Away from Portknockie last week at Spey Bay we were lucky again to watch an Osprey dive into the sea and come up with fish. Our visitors were delighted having thought that their only chance of seeing Ospreys was to go all the way to Loch Garten.

THE TAME CROW:

On 24th April your Editor and Mrs Croucher met Donald Morrison walking by the Red Roadie and he pointed out to us a crow sitting on a nearby gorse bush. Donald explained that this very distinctive looking bird had once lived along Haig Street but had since moved up market to a nest overlooking the Golf course.

To demonstrate his acquaintance with the bird, Donald waved a slice of white bread at the crow, placed it by the path leading round to the Aul Laft and then walked on. Sure enough, moments later, the crow lifted off the bush, flew to the bread, picked it up and returned to his perch to eat it.

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A LETTER FROM DAVIE PIRIE LIVING IN ABERDEEN –

When I was a loon in Portknockie in the 1930s, along with my chums Pules, Craws and Doos were about the only birds we took any notice of. Any bird seen smaller than a Blackbird was called a “spuggie”.

Mary Thorpe’s nature articles in The K’nocker show how much we missed going on all around us. Nature lessons at the school were very limited and our knowledge of sea creatures was picked up in a practical way. Dolphins were as numerous then as they are today, they were called “Louper Dogs” and were taken for granted. (Ed. Tom Rowe reports seeing the dolphins leaping off the Three Creeks shore at 05.30 on 18th June) To Mary Thorpe, I say more power to your pen. To all the people who will make Portknockie bonny again this summer a big thank you. (signed an “Old Knocker Loon”).

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LIGHTING THE LEADING LIGHTS - memories of living in Portknockie stirred by the Dedication Service for the Fishermen’s Memorial last July (Ian Mair).

After the Dedication Service at the Flagstaff (July 25th 2004) my wife told me that during singing of the hymn “Let the Lower Light be Burning” she had been thinking of me as a boy helping my Granda light the leading lights. Many years ago I had told her stories of the time shared with my Granda and the words of the hymn had recalled those memories.

My Granda was John Mair (Bobbin/Shy) and known to everyone in the community as John Spunks. Born in 1874 he was to follow in his

father's footsteps and become a successful herring fisherman. By 1903 he had his house built by Johnny McBoyle, No 223 Portknockie. On the allocation of street names it became 5 Station Street and later 5 High Street. In 1910 he bought the wooden drifter Au Revoir (BF217) which he skippered for over 20 years. In 1921 his close friend, James Wood (Kin) brought the Admiralty drifter, HMD Clearing which was renamed Vernal (BF525). My Granda was so impressed by the Vernal he purchased HMD Coldblast. Both drifters were built by the Ailsa Shipbuilding Company of Ayr, yard numbers 357 and 358. The Coldblast was renamed Elsie Bruce (BF 531), the name of his wife. My Grannie, Elsie Bruce Runcie died in 1945.

In 1937 Granda decided it was time to retire and my father and his two eldest brothers were given charge of the Elsie Bruce. On their very first trip they sailed from Portknockie. As they lay at their nets that night they got into an argument, hauled the nets and steamed back to Portknockie. Granda came down to the harbour and while his sons were on the quay still arguing he took the Elsie Bruce to Buckie. There he pinned a "For Sale" on her mast and in May 1937 she was sold to the Cardiff & Bristol Channel Steam Pilot Boat Company and renamed Lady Seagar.

I went to live with my grandparents in February 1941 on the day my home in Seafield Street was bombed. Their upstairs net loft was converted into a flat. Growing up, I spent much of my time downstairs and Granda became my father figure. My Dad was serving in the Royal Navy and I have no memories of him until he returned from Burma in 1946.

Before I was born my grandparents had lost eight of their grandchildren. Most of them had died of diphtheria and meningitis. Their daughter, Katie lost two sons and a daughter during one week. Three of their grandchildren that died were eldest sons named John. Granda believed his name to bring bad luck and forbade any future grandsons to be named after him. My Dad was determined to give me his father's name and although I am John on my birth certificate, I was brought up as Ian.

During the 1940s my Granda was Portknockie harbour master. Before going out on his evening duties he would shout upstairs for me to go with him. I would grip his hand as we made

our way down the "Bakers' Brae" on our way to the gless. The gless was at the heid o' the brae, housed in a wall cupboard next to the gents' urinal. Behind the wooden doors was a glass case which housed a barometer. The barometer was a revolving cylinder of graph paper onto which a line of ink was traced. The position of the needle indicated the time and the up and down movements of the needle recorded the changing atmospheric pressure. A falling gless indicated that gales were expected so the cone at the flagstaff would be hoisted. The apex of the cone indicated the expected direction of the wind. (Ed. Anyone know where we could obtain one of those old storm cones for the flagstaff?).

The lighting of the leading lights was for me the most enjoyable of his duties. The lower light was situated in the north side of the garden between 5 and 7 Cliff terrace. The upper light was situated next to Station Road where the front gardens of numbers 2 and 4 met. The lights were oil lamps housed in boxes which were lowered and hoisted on the poles by rope pulleys. After lighting the lamps, glass coloured red or green was slid in front of the box before being hoisted up the pole. At night, boats wishing to enter the harbour would approach with the upper leading light directly over the lower light. Conditions at the harbour entrance were given by the colour of the lights. Red and green warned of difficult conditions, two green lights indicated safe conditions and when both red lights were showing the harbour was closed. My Granda died in 1960 and I missed his funeral as I was serving in the RAF in Cyprus. He was buried before I received the news.

THE PORTKNOCKIE DIRECTORY

Police: Emergency	999
Non-Emergency	0845 600 5 700
Doctors: (Cullen)	840272
(Buckie)	831555
Seafield Hospital:	832081
Dr Grays, Elgin:	01343 543131
Aberdeen RI:	01224 681818
Dentist: (Buckie)	831163
Chemist: (Portknockie)	840268
Optician: (Buckie)	832239
Plumber (Portknockie)	840052
Electrician: (Portknockie)	840066
Harbour Garage	840099
Hydro-Electric: (24hrs)	0800 300999
Scottish Gas: (24 hrs)	0800 111999
Scottish Water 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

**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
The K'nocker (Bob Croucher) 841291

PUBLIC SERVICE MESSAGES:

Waste Awareness: Moray Council has a new Waste Education Officer, Laura Taylor. Her job is to promote and encourage the spread of waste awareness, including recycling and sustainable development within the schools and the wider community of Moray. She and members of the Waste Team are available to speak to community groups on any topics related to recycling, waste awareness and the whole green agenda. They can also attend functions open to the public. Laura can be contacted on 01343-557055 or by e-mail on laura.taylor@moray.gov.uk

Greener shopping habits: SEPA, the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency, has published some tips to try to persuade you to change your shopping habits in order to help preserve world

resources. They claim that following their tips could make a difference to the environment. Check labels when buying any new electrical appliances to ensure they are energy and water efficient. Buy products from sustainably - produced wood to help preserve endangered forests. Buy products made from recycled materials e.g. toilet rolls. Buy in bulk to reduce the amount of packaging being used. Re-use plastic bags or use cloth bags when shopping. Look out for bargains in second hand furniture shops. Take your own unwanted items to charity shops or recycling units. A good idea is to use local shops thereby reducing reliance on the car.

Ed. Are there any other environmentally friendly approaches being used in the village that help to minimise waste and promote more sustainable practices to benefit the future of our planet?

Local Childminder: Are you looking for a registered childminder? My name is Toni Gill, I have a BTEC in Childhood Studies and I have spare places available. Ring on 01542-840927.

LOCAL HOLIDAYS 2005: Portknockie are – July 25th, September 5th and October 10th.

AUNTIE MARY'S HAME COOKING:

Chocolate date Crisp – You need a ½ cup of plain sugar, 1 packet of dates, 4 ozs margarine, 6 ozs cooking chocolate and 3 cups of rice crispies.

Method: Heat the sugar, dates and margarine until well mixed then add the rice crispies and spread on to a tray bake tin. Melt the chocolate and spread it over the top. Allow it to harden and then cut into fingers.

Quick Easy Ice Cream – one packet of dream topping, 3 egg whites, 1 cup of plain sugar, 2 milk flakes (optional) and two bowls.

Method: Beat the egg whites until stiff, then slowly add the sugar. Make up the packet of Dream topping according to the instructions and fold into the stiffened egg whites. If desired crumble 2 Cadbury milk flakes into the mixture. Place in a serving dish in the freezer for at least two hours. Remove from the freezer 15 minutes before serving. You can add raisins, cherries or flavouring as you wish.

SHEAR DEZIGN

Hair by Lisa

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ONE FIRTH VIEW - by Margaret Dawson. This issue Margaret writes on "The Importance of Water"

"Moray residents panic as the town's taps run dry - Lossie loses its bottle! People began stockpiling the supplies as they were delivered. Two police officers responded to a call by a local resident in relation to a potential situation regarding a lorry trying to deliver water in Lossiemouth." (As reported recently in the Press & Journal).

Some regions in Spain and Portugal have been without rain for 4 months and there are drought conditions in many parts. However, in the coastal areas of the Algarve where the rich and famous have their palatial homes (Sean Connery is one), the pristine golf courses are kept manicured and beautifully nourished behind locked gates and secure fencing! Go up into the hills overlooking the coastal areas of the Algarve and it is a different story – ground parched and dry and the rural communities doing all they can to preserve the water they have in their wells – but they share what little they have with their neighbours!

On the more global issue, well-meaning campaigners tell us that this is our last chance, through the "Make Poverty History" and other worthwhile causes, to make people aware of every life lost through poverty. It is said that 30 000 children die unnecessarily every single day – many through starvation caused by drought. Can we really make poverty history? It would not cost us much more than a cup of coffee to do it BUT can we save the world by gushes of charitable donations and pop concerts? This is a controversial subject as too much money raised in the past has stuck to the greedy hands of bureaucrats, politicians and warlords. There is endemic corruption across much of Africa and a proportion of aid does go missing. Mind, as I wrote in a previous K'nocker article, nine-tenths of the EU budget remains unaccounted for and has not been signed off for the tenth successive year!!

Can our generation really change things for the better or have some of us become so used to so much that we have forgotten how to share and care for others less fortunate than ourselves?

A CAUTIONARY TALE: by E.J. Anderson

The other morning as I used my electric shaver to remove the morning stubble and, then had to beg the aid of my wife's circular magnifying mirror to locate the last few recalcitrant hairs, in my mind's eye I was carried back over many, many years to a quiet summer-Saturday evening in the mid-1930s.

For young loons, a favourite place for changing for a 'dook' at the Sannies was a small area of short grass, at the end of a steepish slope through longer grass, nettles and other herbage below the Aul Laft, before it met the path leading from the Sannies round to the Preacher's Cave and on to the Whal's Moo. We had been led to believe that at some undefined time in the past the Preacher's cave had extended much further inland as a tunnel, which had been used by otters as a holt (**Ed.** a lair or home for otters). Also that near the top of the slope was a narrow opening leading to another tunnel extending as far underground as Cruats Farm to the south!

Two of my cousins, both 'neepers' at the time, were John Stanley, in the same class, and Alec Symon, a year younger. That summer evening we decided we were old enough and bold enough to find out whether the tales were true, or whether they were only fisher-fables told round the fire-glimmer on a cold winter's night, or round the table in a herring-drifter's cabin over a Woodbine and a mug of sweet tea after the nets were shot. None of these tales sought to explain why the sea no longer reached the caves, nor did we think of asking.

First we needed a candle and some 'spunks' (Bryant & May, I remember they were). I borrowed them from the kitchen 'press', before we set off on our secret foray, only needing to find on the foreshore a suitably-sized tin into which to wedge the candle, before climbing the slope to the tunnel entrance. There I lit the candle and held it aloft to lead my fellow-adventurers downwards into the UNKNOWN! Suddenly, as the candle lit up a wasp-bike (**Ed.** a nest) hanging from the tunnel roof, there was a loud and fearful BUZZING as hordes of angry

wasps started to emerge. I shouted “Out! Out! as fast as you can.”

In my terror I dropped the candle and hurried after my cousins towards daylight, then frantically ran after them down to the shore. About halfway down, hidden in the long grass lay a large flat slab of rock, into which I first stumbled, then tripped and tumbled over to fall flat on my face on the top of the rock slab. The resultant shock and the excruciating pain from my bloodied features were so intense that I recall little of the immediate sequel; what happened with the angry wasps; how did my cousins help me to clamber back to the top of the Aul Laft, and then back to my home at 4 Haig Street; nor why my older sister Maggie was the only member of my family at home that evening.

What I still remember with the clearest clarity, the greatest gratitude and the deepest affection is how Maggie tenderly washed and cleaned my hands and my face, even when she dabbed my cuts with that stinging panacea against cuts and bites, as widely used at the time – tincture of iodine! Lastly she took me to the large wall mirror to see, for the first time, the results of my inglorious, thoughtless and stupid adventure. Perhaps not so colourful now as then, they can still remind me of her kindness and care: just three little scars, one in the middle of my forehead, one just below the nose, above the upper lip and the third at the left-hand corner of my mouth.

Since then I have often wondered whether some trained and knowledgeable speleologists have solved the history, and explained the mystery of that blasted cave. (Ed. These caves were formed by wave action a long time ago when sea levels here were higher than now. Since then the land mass has risen because of eustatic re-adjustment following the melting of the Quaternary Ice sheets over Northern Scotland. At the other end of the UK England is still gradually sinking with rising sea levels. Trust me I am a kind of a speleologist, but not a historian!).

LT. WOOD, THE ARMY DOCTOR AND THE BABY: an astonishing story from WW2.

In the last issue of the K’nocker a request was made for stories linking Portknockie and World War 2 to commemorate the 60th anniversary of the ending of this conflict. The first to emerge so far is the amazing sequel to the sad death of Lt

Alex Wood of King Edward Terrace killed near Mollen in the allied retreat at Dunkirk in 1940.

The full story was published in the Leopard Magazine in April 1995 told by Prof. Alex Mair, also from Portknockie. In 1944 Prof. Mair was serving in a Military Hospital at Brugmann in Belgium where he was able to find out and inform the Wood family back in Portknockie how, when and where their son had died and the fact that he had been given a dignified burial in the village cemetery. Not only that but one of the villagers, without any knowledge of Lt. Alex Wood’s background, had been tending his grave ever since the burial. It was a great comfort to the Wood family to discover that a far off village community, in the midst of war, had shown such gratitude and compassion for the sacrifice made by their soldier son.

But early in 1945 this story was to take another dramatic twist. Mrs Van Handenhoven-Luyckx, the lady who had been tending Lt Wood’s grave, sought out Prof Mair in Brugmann Hospital for help in saving her six week old baby niece, Gisele who was seriously ill with Cerebro-Spinal Meningitis. The life of the baby was indeed saved with injections of a new drug, not yet generally available to civilians but now familiar as Penicillin. Thus one dear life lost led to another dear life being saved.

VETERANS OF WORLD WAR 2: The late Abbie & Maggie Wood – compiled by proud daughter Yvonne Cowie.

Abbie was a nineteen year old trawlerman when he was called up to serve his country in the service of the Royal Navy. The first few months of duty were in the North Atlantic Convoys, sailing alongside the American Liberty Ships carrying ammunition, guns and supplies en route for Russia. They would sail from Loch Ewe or Ireland and escort these ships on their journey as far as Iceland. Some forty to fifty ships would sail in convoy. Other escort ships took over as the American fleet made for Murmansk. These convoys were in great danger as they made their journeys north.

Some eight months into service, Abbie and his ship HMS Tango were moved to be stationed at Gibraltar as part of the war of the Mediterranean. HMS Tango, a minesweeper and asdic (sonar submarine tracking device) patrol vessel, took part in the relief of Malta during the German

bombardment. They saw action in the invasion of Anzio, Italy and in the seas around Sicily and Greece and carried out duties clearing the minefields of the Adriatic Sea, and would spend some time in ports such as Tripoli, Libya. He would recall with humour their trips ashore using the “acquired” American jeep they kept on ship. They would use it to stack up on food stores courtesy of the American food stocks piled high on the pier. Once, being caught out by the guards on duty, they were marched along to the end of the stores, loaded up with large tins of peaches and told “Have something worth eating.” They returned back to HMS Tango only to have their booty confiscated for the officers’ mess!

As the shipping fleet came under attack from enemy aircraft Abbie would recall with sadness the sight of the dying men in the water. They could not stop to save them as their own ship would have become a sitting target. Abbie was a gunner on deck and saw the horror of war.

He told us once how, moored up at Gibraltar alongside an American prison ship, they took on board some German escapees, they dried them off, fed them and kept watch on them till their captors took them back. He felt no anger or grudge to these men. He said, “They were just young men put to do a job as we had been made to do.”

He recalled sadly his time in Malta saying goodbye to our mother’s brother, Alex from Findochty, an engineer on HMS Santa (the skipper of this ship was a Portgordon man). They left Malta that evening for Sardinia and by morning came foul of a mine; only the engineer on duty survived somehow being thrown clear. Abbie was the last member of his ship’s crew to get home leave in 1945, a few days later HMS Tango was lost with all 52 men. From the original crew Abbie and a chap from the north of England made it home. In all he had spent three years and six months in the Mediterranean Sea.

Abbie never did forget his chums from Portknockie who did not make it home. He talked about the cleverest boy in his class at school – Johnnie Ky (John McKay). Johnnie joined the Air Force and carried out his flight training at Mount Hope near Hamilton, Canada. He flew as a navigator on a medium bomber. Johnnie lost his life in the early stages of the War on a flight over Burma; no details of this flight were ever obtained. (Ed. He is commemorated

on the village War Memorial). Johnnie and his sister Connie would lose their mother when she became a victim of the bombing of their home in Admiralty Street, Portknockie in 1941. Mrs McKay was hanging her washing on the line when the bombs struck and died along with two of her neighbours.

Abbie also spoke of his pals from the Heid o’ the Creeks, Arthur John and Billy Mair, both being lost at sea as many vessels were sunk. Abbie never did wear his war medals, we played with them and most are now lost. He went to the War Memorial a couple of times as far as I can remember. Yet he did not forget the things he saw and had to do, and survived.

Maggie enlisted one month after her eighteenth birthday on 13th November 1942 at Aberdeen for the duration of the emergency in the Auxiliary Territorial Army (ATS). Her initial training was carried out at Dalkeith, Scotland before moving on to Blackdown in Hampshire for anti-aircraft training. This included aircraft recognition, height taking and plotting the flight paths of enemy aeroplanes.

During her time in service she was stationed at a number of military camps and anti-aircraft batteries mostly in the south of England: Woking in Surrey; Reading in Berkshire; the Norfolk Broads and then Margate in Kent. However, her most important station was in Ashford, Kent as part of the defences of London. As part of the ‘ack-ack’ unit Maggie would write home to her family telling them her gun was “red hot” firing at oncoming enemy aircraft as they flew towards their target of London.. She would recall her part in the shooting down of a Messerschmitt and a V-1 flying bomb, known as the ‘doodlebug’. This, she said, put a fear through you as the engine cut out and the bomb would drop from the sky regardless of any target. She was also stationed at Whitley Bay and Sunderland before moving out to Antwerp in Belgium as part of the British Army of the Rhine (BAOR). She saw no further action there.

Maggie was proud of her service years and enjoyed her time away from home and that she could talk proper when she got back to her family. On her return home to Findochty, Maggie brought many photographs of her friends and spoke fondly of the numerous friendships she had made during the two years and seven months she had spent serving her country. She

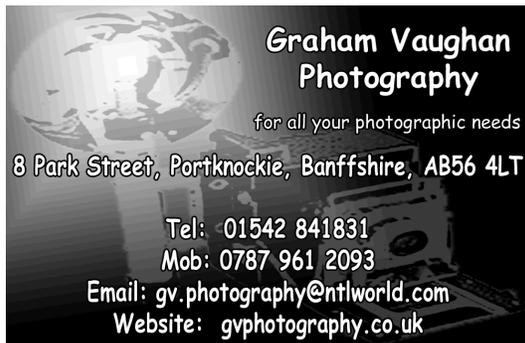
treasured her end of service card sent to her and signed by Bernard L Montgomery. It reads:

I feel I cannot let you leave 21 Army Group on your return to civil life without a message of thanks and farewell. Together we have carried through one of the most successful campaigns in history and it has been our good fortune to be members of this great team.

God Bless you and God speed.

B L Montgomery
Field Marshall
Commander-in-Chief

Maggie flew home from Brussels, Belgium for her marriage to Abbie on June 11th 1945. She claimed her war medals only a couple of years ago.



**Graham Vaughan
Photography**
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Website: gvphotography.co.uk

POETS' CORNER: A poem by Sheena Pirie that paints the strong feelings that can be aroused when a mother loses a son and gains a daughter!

The Daughter-in-Law

“Did ye see my guid-dother
On Seterday nicht?
Awa’ tae the picters
Her fag burnin’ bricht.

A’m tellin’ ye Jessie
I got sich a fleg
I’d tae lay doon my wyvin’
An’ gang tae my bed.

But here is the thing
That maks my bleed bile
When I said it tae Alexie
He jist geed a smile.

He said it was nane
O’ my business at a’
I’d tae mine that oor loon

Wis grown up an’awa’.

But it’s nae interferin’
I’m sure ye’ll agree
Tae tell ma ain loon
He’s a hame aye wi’ me.

Niver thocht that oor Johnny
Quid throw himsel’ awa’
On that painted hussy
That bides thro’ the wa’.

Ae the sorrow that only
A mither can feel
When she sees her loon ruined
Tho’ faisen up weel.”

(Poem from Davie Mair’s Collection.)

LET A LIMERICK LOOSE – is the Moray Libraries’ annual limerick writing competition this year. Entry forms from the Library are to be submitted by **Saturday 20th August 2005**. There are children and adult categories and the challenge is to complete the following limerick:

“There was a young sailor called

(Ed.) my favourite limerick is:

“There was a young man from Dundee
Who was horribly stung by a wasp.
When asked did it hurt. He said “No, not at all,
it can do it again if it likes.”

Mrs Croucher’s choice:

“There was a young lady from Ryde
Who ate sour apples and died
The apples fermented inside the lamented
And made cider inside’er inside.”

Over to you the reader for a selection in the next K’nocker!

WHAT’S ON IN THE PORT:

Portknockie Playgroup News: This term the children have been looking at farms, mini-beasts, dinosaurs and summer. The children had an enjoyable visit to Mains of Dipple farm in May. We have also taken a few walks in and around Portknockie. Perhaps, you have seen us digging for worms or looking for dinosaurs in the Preacher’s cave!

We would like to thank everyone for supporting our fundraising events this year.

We return to the Playgroup on **Tuesday 16th August**. Next session we will have 14 pre-school children and 15 three year olds.

Portknockie School Support group: The Support Group has had another successful year of fundraising for our school and our thanks go to everyone in the village who has supported us. All money raised is spent on equipment and resources for the school. At this time of the year we lose some members as their children move on to High School. We would encourage all parents with children at the school to join us – especially the new entrants.

A strong support group is a great asset to a school and with the possibility of closure and losing our own school an option for Moray Council hanging over all of us, it is all the more reason for you to join the Portknockie Primary School Parents' Support group.

Portknockie Community Association events in the McBoyle Hall: The Quiz Night with the Disco and X-Factor challenge at the end of March raised over £2 000 almost enough to pay for all the plants used in this year's Village in Bloom displays.

Tuesday June 21st featured a well attended Farmers' Tea evening with raffles and a sales table. Thanks to all those who came along and supported this evening. The money raised was £377 which will go towards the running costs of the Hall and Village in Bloom expenses.

Plans are well advanced for the Flower Show and Gala week which will involve a Sandwich Lunch and Fashion Show in the McBoyle Hall on Wednesday 27th July. The Sponsored Walk is being organised by Jim Urquhart and starts from the McBoyle Hall at 12.30 on Sunday 24th July. There will be refreshments for everyone in the Hall after the walk. You have the choice of a 5 or 10 mile walk and if it is convenient you can choose your own time over the weekend to earn your sponsorship money. Forms and money should be handed in as soon after the event as possible. The Ceilidh will be in the Hall on Saturday evening, 30th July.

HAIR STUDIO
New Street

**Portknockie
Ladies & Gents Hairdresser**

**For an appointment with Amy or Deborah
phone 841028
Gents walk in on Saturdays 10-12 noon. No
appointment necessary.**

The Portknockie Reading Group: Considering that in January a group of strangers formed this reading group, we all get on well and have gelled as a group. When we met in March, we were given Dan Brown's, 'The Da Vinci Code' to read. This led to some interesting discussion when we met in April. It was then left open for each group member to bring one or two books that were either important to them or that had resulted in a life changing experience. At our meeting in May it was interesting to see the vast difference in everyone's selection and the reasons for their choices. This month's read is Adriana Trigiani's, 'Lucia, Lucia' which is set in America in the 1950s and is about an Italian family. I have not read it yet but it is an easy read and looks interesting.

We now have a collection tin, with the donations going towards **Talking Books for the Blind**, which we felt is appropriate being that we are a Reading Group. Dorothy Poole, 5 Blantyre Pl.

"At Home with Art" – All are cordially invited to an exhibition of local artists at "Mizpah", 2 Seafield Terrace on Sunday **14th August** between 11-6pm. Entrance is £1-50, which includes a glass of wine and refreshments. Raffle proceeds and a percentage of art sales will be going to the Portknockie School Action Fund. Please make a note in your calendar and do come along and support us. Janet Creese.

Portknockie Seniors: The Summer bus run saw our two Smith's coaches head out at 11am first to Doves in Inverness for soup and sweet and then for Fort Augustus via Loch Ness. We did not see Nessie but it was wet enough for her as the clouds burst along the A82. Fort Augustus was still dry when we arrived to stretch the legs, shop a little and view the famous flight of locks on the Caledonian Canal. Then it was off via Spean Bridge to Newtonmore and a very fine High Tea. The rain set in for the evening as we headed for home where we arrived at 9pm, tired but very pleased with the smooth arrangements and the good food and company. Thanks to Mary and the Committee.

The Toddlers Group is having an evening tea in the Seafield Hall on Wednesday 13th July 6-8pm

Seafield Women's Rural Institute (SWRI)

The last meeting of the year was an interesting talk on fostering care in Moray given by Ruth Geoffreys from Keith on May 26th. The Annual Outing took place on Thursday 23rd June. We visited Aden Country Park and enjoyed a High Tea later at the Waterside Hotel, Peterhead.

Bowling Club Notes. Membership is up again this year and the Club is very grateful for the local support it receives. The extra work on the grass over the last few months has paid dividends, and the green is looking very well. So no excuse for not winning the League this year!

Ladies Bowls were an attractive feature one particular week in June – on the Sunday some 30 or so ladies from the local area SWRI used the green to play their annual summer match, while on the Friday the Club was used by the Banffshire Bowling Association to stage their Ladies Singles Final.

Passers by may have noticed the large green tank which has appeared beside the Pavilion. While there has not been a problem this year – so far anyway – any lengthy dry spell without rain has a really adverse affect on the grass. In the past a hose and sprinkler has been used for watering but, this year, it is hoped to complete the automatic irrigation system, the pipes for which were laid a few years back.

While the bowling green, tennis courts and the pavilion are all owned by Moray Council, at their behest there have been discussions taking place for some time with a view to the Council, in the future, taking very much a back seat in their running and maintenance. In common with several other local authority owned greens and properties in Moray, the Council intends to retain ownership but expect the Club to operate under a formal management agreement. The matter is still under discussion but a number of the expenses and responsibilities previously met by the Council will now fall upon the Club. In the future spending on projects and/or equipment will be considerably more difficult than it is at present.

However, this is all for the future. In the meantime let us enjoy the outdoor bowls, new and old members are always welcome, but if you have never bowled previously, yet are interested please come along and have a try.

Portknockie Tennis Courts: The courts have been fairly busy this year but there is normally plenty of room for anyone who would like a game. It is that Wimbledon time of the year! As last year, there is no charge asked for villagers.

Portknockie Neighbourhood Watch is simply watching out for one another – one for all and all for one. In a close knit village like Portknockie it is a fact that many residents do naturally watch out for one another, whether or not they are members. There has been a Neighbourhood Watch in the village since 1997 and many of the residents are members. Should you wish to join, confirm that you are already a member, or would simply like some further information please contact the **Co-ordinator, John Myles on 840 000**. And as a money saving footnote, some insurance companies will give NW members a small reduction on their annual home insurance premiums.

Portknockie Library by Margret Wood: The Library was shut for two weeks to the surprise of myself and readers. I came down one day to tidy up and was confronted by workmen starting an adaptation scheme for disabled access. I was asked immediately to put up notices in the window to advise folk about the closure!

Two weeks later it was a mad rush to get the Library cleaned and organised for re-opening on Tuesday 3rd May 2005 – sorry to any readers who were inconvenienced. The desk has been re-situated and the Library entrance has been transformed making quite a difference – the Portknockie Playgroup visited that week and most of the children said that they had not been here before, but I was sure I recognised some of the faces! They certainly thought the Library was very different.

This year children can join the **“Reading Voyage”** which starts officially on the 1st July, 2005. It has a pirate theme with a log book, stickers, colouring sheets, puzzles, bookmarks and fridge magnets, so I look forward to seeing many of the children in the Library this summer. Visitors are welcome to use the People's Network computers in the Library to e-mail or

browse the internet – they have to provide a few personal details. It is free access so come in and let me help you get a personal e-mail address.

There is a display of photographs and an article put together by Morag Reid called the **Great Storm of 2005** displayed in the Library window this month.

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

Portknockie School Class of 1999 prize-winners at the Buckie High School Prize Day, June 22nd 2005:

Ruby Roberts: 1st in Higher History and 3rd in Higher English.
Sarah Donaldson: 2nd in Higher Geography.
Fiona Johnston: 1st Intermediate 2 (Chemistry)
Laura Cowie: 1st Higher Administration and 1st intermediate 2 (Business Management).
Ella Walford: 2nd Higher Administration.
Simon Smith: 2nd Modern Studies.

A very good result our congratulations to them all. Excellent ambassadors for our school!

PORTKNOCKIE SCHOOL:

School Dates 2005/6:

In Service Closure Monday 15th August 2005
Autumn Term Start Tuesday 16th August 2005
Autumn Term End Friday 7th October 2005

Winter Term Start Monday 24th October 2005
In Service Closure Monday 14th November 2005
In Service Closure Tuesday 15th November 2005
Winter Term End Thursday 22nd December 2005

Spring Term Start Monday 8th January 2006
Local School Holiday Friday 10th February 2006
Mid Term Holiday Monday 13th February 2006
Spring Term End Friday 31st March 2006

Summer Term Start Monday 17th April 2006
May Day Holiday Monday 1st May 2006
In Service Closure Thursday 18th May 2006
In Service Closure Friday 19th May 2006
Summer Term End 30th June 2006

Portknockie Primary School Fete

Saturday 25th June 2005

12 noon to 4pm at Portknockie Primary School.
All are welcome.

Portknockie Primary School Parent Support Group

Portknockie Primary School Parent Support Group is a voluntary group which works closely with the Headteacher and all staff to support the school. A 'Bag to School Day' was recently organised and raised a total of £241.00. Thank you to everyone who handed in a bag of old clothes. The next event is a Summer Fete being held on Saturday 25th June 2005 from 12 noon to 4pm at Portknockie Primary School. There is also a Quiz Night being organised for **Friday 2nd September 2005 at 7pm**. Everyone is welcome to attend this event which is gearing up to be an excellent evening.

Mrs Heather Reid is stepping down from the position of Chairperson of the Portknockie Primary School Parent Support Group at the end of this school year. Mrs Heather Reid has done an excellent job developing the Parent Support Group over the last 2 years. The school is keen to find someone to take on this important role. If any parent is interested please contact either Mrs Heather Reid or Miss Cooke, Headteacher.

Eco Schools

In May 2005 Portknockie Primary School received the accolade of Bronze Award for Scottish Eco Schools. We were delighted to receive this award and it was a reflection of all the good work being done in the school throughout this session.

Initially I suggested to staff and pupils that the school should develop the School Grounds to make the playground more attractive for pupils. The school embarked on a three year programme of improvement and the work that this involves allows the school to apply for Bronze, Silver and possibly Green Flag Eco School Status.

To date the school has worked with the village committee for 'Scotland in Bloom' and developed a new flowerbed in the school grounds. The design was created by Scott Reid, Primary 7. Local artist Mr. Geoff Roberts came to school and worked with all the pupils to create murals for the school reception. Mr. Roberts will be coming back in the Autumn Term to work

with all the pupils to design a mural for the back wall of the school grounds using the same technique of low relief sculpting. Primary 6/7 developed a Mini Enterprise 'Breakfast for Birds' and with the profit from their Enterprise bought the first tree for the school grounds.

To complete the first year of the improvements to the school grounds, the school is now in a position to buy some picnic tables and benches, cycle racks and several more trees. During the second year we aim to carry out an environmental review of the school grounds, paint new markings in the school grounds and add to the selection of playground equipment.

Participating in Scottish Eco Schools is not just about improvement to your facility. In the process we learn about environmental issues and taking responsibility for the care of the local area. It gives the school the opportunity to extend out to the community and participate in meaningful projects in support of the village. It also allows development of Citizenship and Community Enterprise by the school children.

Portknockie Primary School Guide Dogs for the Blind

'Guide Dogs for the Blind' was the nominated school charity this session. The children raised £85.00 for the charity by having 2 'Dress As You Please Days.' Thank you very much for helping the pupils with their charity work.

Moray Council Education Department – Consultation Process

You will no doubt have heard and seen articles about the consultation process on the Moray Council School Estate Plan. There have been two consultation meetings organised by the council and the village Action Group attended the latter of the two. The Moray Councillors will reach a decision about the Moray Council School Estate Plan in October 2005. There has been overwhelming support from the village to keep Portknockie Primary School open.

Portknockie Primary School remains focussed on developing and providing high quality education.

We extend our appreciation to the Portknockie Action Group for their enthusiasm and support during this consultation process.

American Visitor

Mr. Alan Stewart who now lives in Oregon on the West Coast of America visited Portknockie Primary School on Thursday 16th June 2005. He was at Portknockie Primary School in the 1950s. Mr. Stewart brought two class photographs from the 50s to the school and he entertained the P4/5/6 classes with his tales of Portknockie Primary School at that time. He even told us that his class teacher married the Headteacher! That's one way to get the attention of the boss!

Miss Moira Cooke
Headteacher
Portknockie Primary School
01542 840244

Kut & Kurl is changing ownership. Kerry will be taking over from Susan on the 11th July. Kerry promises it will be the same scintillating mixture of flair, value and talented staff as before. Appointments on 840366.

Susan writes: "I would like to thank all my customers for the support over the last eight years and I wish Kerry a prosperous future in her new venture. See you all as normal."

LATE EXTRA:

At a meeting in Abelour on Tuesday 21st June attended by representatives from all the Moray schools threatened with closure, it was decided to form an action group called the Moray School Preservation Forum to fight school closure plans. Our representatives were Mrs Pearl Murray and Mrs Catherine Ritchie.

