## STRATHERRICK & FOYERS NEWSLETTER

June 2022 Issue Number: 34

### THE SUN SHINES FOR THE JUBILEE





SPOTLIGHT ON THE HIGHLAND GATHERING

SIGN UP FOR THE HERITAGE GROUP'S FIELD TRIP



and... meet our new Highland Councillors



### CHAIR'S REPORT

The big story for this edition of the newsletter is the Jubilee Celebration held on the old Shinty Pitch in Lower Foyers. It was a great success attracting more than 100 people – an estimate based on the number of slices of celebration cake consumed!

The idea was floated with the Trust by Jan and Simon Hargreaves, familiar faces to anyone who shops at the Foyers Post Office and quickly became a pilot for one of the new ways the Trust is now working with the community. Jan, ably supported by the amateur dramatic group The Luvvies, had the enthusiasm and ideas for the event.

However, there are plenty of volunteers who bear the scars of running community events because of the complex logistics, bureaucracy, costs and health and safety risks! This has made many individuals, especially where they have heavy work and family commitments, reluctant to organise big community events.

To address this issue, we agreed with Jan that the Trust's professional staff

would look after the logistics for the event, freeing her volunteer crew to focus on the music, food and entertainment.

Lead director, Catriona Fraser, worked with the Trust's event team to secure the budget, funding from SSE's Stronelairg Fund, permission from SSE to use the field, acquire the relevant licences, health and safety risk assessment, banking facilities etc. With regards to staging the event, the Trust also arranged the generator, marquees, flooring and so on. All the stuff that volunteers simply don't have time to do.

As the day approached a small army of helpers emerged from the shadows. So far we have counted close to 30 people who lent a hand on the day. We'd love, alongside Jan, to thank you all by name but run the risk of missing someone off the list. You know who you are!

Not everything went smoothly, and we will have a lessons learnt session later this month. However, the proof has to be in the pudding. The feedback has been very positive and the Trust now has a template for future community events. It was great to be able to hold the event in the place where the



community celebrated the Queen's coronation 70 years ago. Meanwhile we are applying the same approach to the Community Action Plan projects i.e. led by you.

So, if you have something you want to do to promote community cohesion (and have a good time!); follow Jan's example - you lead and the Trust is ready and able to support.

Gareth Jones, Vice-Chair, S&FCT

### NEWS FROM SOUTH LOCH NESS HERITAGE GROUP

The South Loch Ness Heritage Group have organised a field trip on the 2nd July to the refurbished medieval Kirkmichael Church in the Black Isle between Resolis and Jemimavile. The Kirkmichael Trust have repaired the ancient and derelict buildings at Kirkmichael and created a unique display of medieval ornamental crosses within the refurbished building.

The trust are still actively repairing the old memorials within the adjoining graveyard. For our visit we will be met by their chairman Dr Jim Mackay who will guide us throughout our time on site. If you could let Alister Chisholm 01463 715713, alister.chisholm@btinternet.com, know if you would be interested in going to gauge numbers.

The Heritage group are looking for people interested in local heritage to join the committee as a few people have stepped down from the committee recently. Please contact Alister using the details above, or Bob Main by emailing r.main456@btinternet.com if you would like more information.



The newly renovated Kirkmichael Church, photo courtesy of the Kirkmichael Trust

Alister Chisholm, SLNHG

### INTRODUCING OUR NEW HIGHLAND COUNCILLORS

Stratherrick and Foyers are part of the Aird and Loch Ness Ward of Highland Council. It used to be called Ward 13. but now we are Ward 12. The May 2022 election was hotly contested and now our four representatives on Highland Council are Emma Knox, SNP; Chris Ballance, Green; David Fraser, Independent and Helen Crawford, the successful Conservative candidate. Our Ward has one of the highest turnouts in Highland, as usual. Following the election, the Highland Council has agreed the formation of a joint Administration between the Scottish National Party (SNP) Group and the Highland Independent Group.

Helen Crawford was the first new councillor to respond to Stratherrick and Foyers NEWS request for a short news piece about her background and interests. Chris Ballance is undertaking the training for new Councillors and has agreed to write a short article for a future edition of the Stratherrick and Foyers Newsletter.

# So Helen, congratulations on your election to Highland Council. Are you a 'local lass'?

Well, yes! I was brought up in Rossshire and attended Alness Academy. After studying law in Edinburgh and Glasgow, I spent my 20's in Shetland running my own law practice. In my 30's I worked on Human Rights and Rule of Law in Eastern Europe, contracted by the Foreign and Commonwealth Office. I returned to the Highlands about 14 years ago when I met my now husband through Scottish Country Dancing! I set up The Old School Beauly, a shop and website specialising in sustainable clothing, gifts and homewares. I source Scottish and UK made products wherever possible because the closer a product is made to the customer, the lower the eco footprint of that product. And it's vital we support our local makers wherever possible.

#### So why did you choose to stand as a Conservative candidate in Aird and Loch Ness?

As a lifelong Conservative, I believe that government should deliver good quality public services, value for money and, crucially, not saddle our future generations with mountains of debt. I am interested in how we stimulate sustainable business and good quality job creation so we can retain and nurture our talent right here in The Highlands.

#### Do you think that the Highland Council chamber is the place for party politics?

When I looked at the election leaflets from the various candidates, I was struck by the fact that most of them raised the same local issues. We can and must work together to tackle local problems and I don't feel party politics should be the main concern at Highland Council level.

### When it comes to businesses, what do you think has untapped potential?

I'd like to see more of our talented craft and food producers making the breakthrough into wholesale and mailorder sales. We have great people and great products here and the opportunity to sell well-beyond our local borders. It would be super to see more small businesses grow their output and profitability, stepping up production and widening their market to yield yearround income.

#### In your first few weeks as a Councillor, what has stood out for you?

It was a big surprise to me to be elected and I warmly thank those who voted for me. When I was visiting houses before the election, so many people spoke openly to me about their lives and ambitions. Whilst Councillors can help sort out individual problems, we also have a role in making the Highlands the best place possible to live and work. There are so many people I need to get to know and I am looking forward to doing that over time.

### How is it best for local people to contact you?

Please use my Highland Council email helen.crawford.cllr@highland.gov.uk or do speak to me if you meet me around the ward.



Councillor Helen Crawford, Aird and Loch Ness, Ward 12.



Photo – Chris Balance, Highland Council Member, Aird & Loch Ness

Steven Watson, Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT

### A NEW HIGHLAND GATHERING FOR STRATHERRICK AND FOYERS

Plans are well in hand for a community Highland Gathering event at Corriegarth this July. The Games will see a pipe band perform in the Strath for the first time in decades, and a number of events and stalls will provide entertainment and competition throughout the afternoon of Saturday 23rd July 2022.

The event will take place on the Corriegarth Estate, just a little beyond Corriegarth Lodge. Everyone from Foyers and the Strath and their guests are welcome.

Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust is providing the infrastructure and organisation. Chief Executive of the Trust Tony Foster commented 'The venue is stunning and the events are all geared round local residents and their interests. We are planning a companion dog show, because almost everyone around here as at least one dog! There will be a variety of activities and interesting stalls and stands from local community groups and businesses.'

The Trust's Project Coordinator, Caroline, has been putting all the elements in place for the event and is wishing for a dry and sunny day. Caroline, who is the 'Event Meister' for the Gathering said 'We have a couple of special attractions up our sleeves. There will be silly races, fly casting demos and even a spot of dancing. No one will be allowed to home unless they have some fun!'

We are still looking for volunteers to help run some of the activities and assist with the set up of the event as well as stewarding on the day. If you can help, please contact Caroline - pc@sfctrust.org.uk for a job to do!

The Highland Gathering at Corriegarth will be signposted from the B862 at the Drumtemple/Bunkervie crossroads and there is ample parking. The road is tarred all the way to the games field but is narrow. Entry is free of charge and all proceeds and collections at the event will be distributed amongst local community groups.

Steven Watson, Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT

## **Highland Gathering**

A summer celebration of our Stratherrick and Foyers Communities

### at Corriegarth, Stratherrick Saturday 23 July 2022 12 noon to 4pm.

All welcome

More fun than you can shake a stick at!

#### ADMISSION FREE

Stalls, games, livestock displays, ice cream, local food and drink, pony rides, companion dog show, races, crafts and much more.

Live music and events throughout the afternoon

If you would like to get involved please contact Caroline on pc@sfctrust.org.uk and let her know how you can help

Supported by Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust Field by kind permission of Mr and Mrs Henry Fraser of Corriegarth



### MORE ATTRACTIONS YET TO BE CONFIRMED

#### Confirmed events and activities include:

- HIGHLAND DANCING
- PIPE BAND
- COMPANION DOG SHOW
- LOCAL FOOD AND CRAFTS
- VINTAGE VEHICLE DISPLAY
- FLY FISHING DEMONSTRATION
- SHEEP SHEARING DEMONSTRATION AND LIVESTOCK DISPLAYS
- RAFFLE
- TUG OF WAR/ PULL THE TRACTOR
- HOME BAKING, FLOWER ARRANGING AND JAM MAKING COMPETITIONS
- BAR, BURGERS, ICE CREAM AND OTHER REFRESHMENTS
- FACE PAINTING
- FALCONRY DISPLAY

More activities to be confirmed soon!





### FIRST CRAFTERS AND CROFTERS MARKET

The Craft and Crofters Market was held at the Wildside Centre in Whitebridge at the beginning of May and several local food and craft makers joined us. Like all things we started small and decided not to chance the weather and so set up in the back room undercover! As luck would have it the sun came out and Abriachan Nurseries set up at the entrance with their fantastic selection of local plants, a great selection for budding gardeners to choose from, with the added benefit that being local you know the plants will do well in our own gardens!

A huge thank you to all the stallholders that supported and came along to kick start the series of Craft and Food Markets that we are holding throughout the year. We still have tables available for our July date and we aim to move outside so save the date for the 2nd July. We hope to see you there!

Contact admin@sfctrust.org.uk to secure a table

Sarah Byrne, Fundraiser, Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust

















### THE SUN SHINES ON OUR COMMUNITY JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS

On Friday 3rd June, Jan Hargreaves and the Loch Ness Luvvies hosted a Jubilee celebration for our community, and the event, held at the old Shinty Pitch in Foyers, was a resounding success.

Community volunteers and SFCT employees came together to create a wonderful Afternoon Tea Party and an evening BBQ, Ceilidh & Disco. And to add to it the sun came out to join us!

Locals came with their plates of food to share and enjoyed an afternoon in the sunshine – while the children played on the Bouncy Castles. In the evening the ceilidh band and DJ kept the floor busy with dancing non-stop.

Alister Chisholm and the South Loch Ness Heritage Group put together display boards illustrating past jubilee celebrations in Foyers, including a photo of the Foyers Coronation Queen (pictured on page 7). The community celebration of the Queen's Coronation also took place on the Shinty field, adding to the significance of using this venue for this year's celebrations.

It was wonderful to see everyone together after the Covid years and a chance to catch up.

Thanks to everyone involved – especially those who worked tirelessly in the preparation of and those who gave of their time on the day to keep everyone entertained and refreshed!!

A special thanks must go to Jan Hargreaves who came up with the idea in the beginning and galvanised volunteers to help.

Catriona Fraser, Lead Director, S&FCT



Cake cutting with organiser, Jan Hargreaves, and Lead Director, Catriona Fraser



Guests at the Jubilee Celebrations soak up the afternoon sun



The Foyers Coronation Queen Jill Ross with her attendants L-R Susan Munro, Pat Thompson, Alma Macleod, Jill Ross, Doreen Maclaren, Margaret Bowers, Cathy Macleod. Cathy Macleod / Stoddart still stays locally at Lochmore village. Photo courtesy of the South Loch Ness Heritage group









Celebrating jubilees past

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN OUR COMMUNITY

### HEALTH AND WELLBEING IN THE COMMUNITY

As we come out of Covid and the increase in cost of living is a worry for us all, we felt it important to promote the activities in the strath that are beneficial to the Health and Wellbeing of all members of our community. This is not just about physical activity but also about our mental health too. We are very lucky to have two fantastic community assets in The Wildside Centre, run by Stratherrick & Foyers Community Trust, and the Hub, run by Boleskine Community Care, who have regular activities that are aimed at improving both our mental and physical wellbeing.

### WEEKLY ACTIVITIES AT THE WILDSIDE CENTRE

#### Monday: Soup to Go.

Soup to Go started last spring to provide wholesome, hot meals to vulnerable members of the community during the second Covid lockdown, and has since grown to become a regular and valuable community service. A warm & friendly welcome and an inexpensive meal is guaranteed, so come along and join your friends and neighbours, old & new, for a meal, a blether, fun and laughter plus a sing along with our musicians. If you prefer, you can have a takeaway, or have it delivered. Please order your soup before 6pm on sundays by calling Lyn Woods -01456 486786, or Pam Simpson -01456 486364.

#### **Tuesday: Meg's Mindful Movement**

Mindfulness and simple movement to help stretch the body and relax the mind. There are many benefits to mindfulness; it helps reduce stress, anxiety and depression, which in turn can help reduce high blood pressure and sleep problems. For more information contact Meg Somerville via Facebook.

#### Wednesday: Pilates

Pilates is a full-body exercise method that will help you do everything better. It strengthens and stabilizes your core body, which is your foundation, so that you can move efficiently while improving your posture, flexibility, and mobility. If you're looking for functional movement—the kind that helps you move better on a day-to-day basis with everyday tasks—Pilates can train you in that too. So why not give it a go



and come along to class. Not only will you get a workout but you'll have fun doing it.

We meet every Wednesday at 10am. For more information contact Sue Fisher; susettefisher@btinternet.com or 07824 387162

#### Wildside Wednesday.

The Wildside Centre is open all day on a Wednesday to use as your workspace. Get out of the house – use the free WiFi and enjoy the location of this great facility. WiFi also available in our outdoor spaces if the weather is good. You can also meet other members of the community here and swap ideas and learn from each other!

If you'd like to use the facility email admin@sfctrust.org.uk to let us know if you are coming along.

#### Thursday: Toddler group.

Wildside Baby and Toddler group is an informal group where parents/grandparents/carers or expectant mums can come along, let the kids play with some soft play equipment and other toys, and enjoy being out of the house and benefit from adult conversation. They are a great support network for new or expectant mums and a great place to meet young families who live in the area.

We meet every Thursday morning between 9:30 and 11:30. Everyone is welcome, most weeks there is tea, coffee and if someone magically finds time sometimes there is home baking!

Alongside these weekly activities, there are regular crafting sessions, where you can learn a new skill and meet like-minded individuals. Throughout the year there are also community events, such as the crafters and crofters markets, the summer gala and winter wonderland to get involved in.

#### BOLESKINE COMMUNITY CARE

Boleskine Community Care is a local charity that successfully delivers a range of home care services, which includes befriending and other social activities, in the Stratherrick & Foyers community. Vital to achieving this are the variety of regular community social gatherings organised by dedicated BCC volunteers, details of which are listed below:

#### Hub Walks

A range of local walks are on offer, with something suitable for all ages and abilities. A chance to get out in the fresh air for some exercise and a chat. Takes place from the Hub Lower Foyers at 2pm second Tuesday of every month. Refreshments afterward.

#### **Coffee Morning**

Social coffee morning hosted at the Hub on the second Wednesday of each month, from 10-12am.

#### Movin'Aboot

Come along and exercise to music while sitting down. Great for flexibility, cardiovascular health and fun! The session is run at The BCC Hub on alternating Tuesdays at 1pm. All welcome.

#### Art Class

First Monday of every month 2pm – 4pm Run by Susan Faller for all age groups and skills level. Come along and see the projects you could undertake, you may surprise yourself.

#### **Music and Song**

Every 2nd and 4th Thursday 2pm-3pm Run by Julie Harvey

Singing for Health and Wellbeing is all about feeling good, enjoying making music with others, learning warm ups for movement, breathing and the voice which you can also use every day not just for singing. We learn new songs by ear and enjoy singing favourites too. We sing songs from all different styles and places in unison and in harmony.

Singing is an enjoyable way of improving breathing and breath control whilst you are singing but also in everyday life.

Better breathing can reduce breathlessness, help manage respiratory conditions and have a positive effect on sleep, mood, memory/concentration and thinking skills, physical movement, fatigue and pain. Singing can be energising or relaxing and provide a lot of enjoyment.

It is open to anyone of any age. No singing or music experience is needed to come.

#### **Cinema Club**

Every 1st and 3rd Thursday from 2pm (alternating weeks with music) Come along and watch your favourite films

We also offer footcare appointments and holistic therapy on a monthly basis.

Please contact the Hub on 01456 486247 to book your appointment, or to find out more information on any of the above.

#### SOSA

We are very lucky to have our own constituted group in the community dedicated to promoting outdoor, healthy sporting activity in the adult population of the Stratherrick and Foyers community council area. We aim to encourage all adults to 'try something new' and spend time outdoors, enjoying a wide range of activities at any skill level, with a great emphasis on social interaction and a sense of "Community". If you are interested in becoming a member, please email sosapiste19@gmail.com for more information.

As well as the organised activities listed above, we are also lucky to have a number of local businesses where you can learn a new skill, such as Yoga, singing or music tuition, or that offer opportunities for social interaction.

Details of some of these businesses can be found on the Business Directory on the community website www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/directory/

If you need financial help or support, The Knockie Trust offers hardship grants for those suffering fuel poverty or require food vouchers. More information on how to apply can be found here www.sfctrust.org.uk/the-knockie-trust/

#### Other useful links:

Highland Council Welfare Support www.highland.gov.uk/info/335/community\_ advice/405/welfare\_support Breathing Space Scotland – www.breathingspace.scot Mind – www.mind.org.uk MFR Cash for Kids – www.planetradio.co.uk/mfr/charity/info/gran ts-mfr/

#### MFR CASH FOR KIDS

MFR Cash for Kids supports children from birth up to and including 18 years of age who are vulnerable, come from disadvantaged backgrounds or are living with an illness or disability. In recent times the charity has raised around £4million per year across all the Bauer radio station areas in Scotland. The charity also provides a lifeline to many other charities, organisations and community groups, funding services and life-changing equipment to benefit young people.

The value of a grant is typically from £1,000 to £3,000 but 'Bauer Radio Cash for Kids' will consider applications for larger amounts.

Applications for grants to help individual children or service providers which address the needs of children can be completed online and submitted for the next round by the deadline of 31 August 2022.

Caroline Tucker, Project Co-ordinator, S&FCT







### LONG-AWAITED SKIING TRIP COMES TO FRUITION!

After three years of waiting due to not enough snow and then the Pandemic, the students at Kilchuimen Academy finally got to go Skiing in March. There wasn't the heaviest of snow falls and the wind did mean that one day was cancelled but they did get to go for two whole days!

It was the first school trip since Covid restrictions and the first time that the school was able to come together and reconnect as an extended school family in over two years. Kilchuimen Academy, Fort Augustus has several children who attend both primary and Secondary who live in the Stratherrick and Foyers Community Trust area and we are grateful for the Trust contributing towards the cost of this activity for them to attend so that all pupils were offered this equally.

Much fun was had by all, the experience was so worth while and provided a great opportunity to develop and improve on skills previously learnt for some who attended Skiing through the local Primary schools and others were complete beginners!

Topic of discussion however was not the depth of the snow or how fast they could go, it was seeing a member of staff being stretchered off the slopes! Needless to say all is well now.

Paula Page, Chair, Friends of Kilchuimen Parent Council

## 'FAIR MAID OF FOYERS' EXHIBIT AT THE BO'NESS RAILWAY MUSEUM.

It is now nearly sixty years since the little steam railway locomotive left Foyers after shunting about the aluminium factory for around four decades. The locomotive was built in 1899 in Kilmarnock and had been used by contractors who built railways around Scotland and Wales. The engine was sold to the British Aluminium Company to operate the small 3 foot gauge railway at Foyers. 'The BA' used the engine on the short length of track between the factory building and the pier. The alumina from Ireland came over in small cargo boats via the canal.

At the factory building the alumina was turned in to shiny aluminium ingots using the electricity from the hydro electric plant. Foyers was at the forefront of the manufacture of aluminium as a new metal for the twentieth century. Aluminium is light and durable and is an essential material in aircraft construction, boats and even greenhouses.

Dr Becky Peacock, Museum Director at the Museum of Scottish Railways said 'The Fair Maid of Foyers forms part of our nationally Recognised collection. It is currently on display within the Museum of Scottish Railways based at Bo'ness. The locomotive helps to tell the story of Scotland's industrial railway heritage'.

The steam engine has been preserved at Bo'ness, sometimes as an outside exhibit and now indoors at the Museum of Scottish Railways.





The Museum of Scottish Railways is open 7 days a week from 2nd April to 30th October, 11am - 4.30pm. Admission from £7 an adult, children £2 (5-15 years), under 5's are free and a family entry option for £15 (2 adults and up to 3 children). We also offer annual tickets which allows you entry for a year as many times as you wish.

Because the loco is built to run on narrow gauge tracks it has never pulled a train in over 50 years. There has been interest from Ireland, where there are preserved or tourist railways with a 3 foot gauge. One example is the Waterford and Dungarvan railway in south-east Ireland which is still looking for a steam engine to add to their collection of old diesel engines from the peatlands railways. In Donegal, the Fintown Railway runs on a five kilometre section of track on the former Glenties to Stranorlar line. Another candidate for future use could be the Isle of Man Steam Railway at Douglas which has the same gauge.

Steven Watson, Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT



### RAILWAY NEWS!

ScotRail Trains Limited took over from Abellio ScotRail on Friday 1st April 2022. There are not many changes other than who is responsible for running the trains as the Dutch firm Abellio, a wholly owned subsidiary of Nederlandse Spoorwegen, departs the scene.

ScotRail Trains Limited, the new operator is a subsidiary of Scottish Rail Holdings Ltd. Both these firms are owned by the Scottish Government Ministers and looked after by civil servants.

Here is the web link to Frequently Asked Questions about the transition to public ownership of train operation of ScotRail services in Scotland. www.scotrail.co.uk/about-scotrail

Meanwhile, work at the new railway station at Dalcross beside Inverness Airport continues apace. It will be a handy point for Strathnairn and Stratherrick folk to leave their cars for day trips to Aberdeen.

Steven Watson, Community Liaison Officer, S&FCT



### HIRE THE WILDSIDE CENTRE FOR YOUR SPECIAL EVENTS & GROUP MEETINGS



CONTACT admin@sfctrust.org.uk

### WHAT'S ON IN JUNE -UPCOMING ACTIVITIES AT WILDSIDE

SOUP TO GO! MEG'S MINDFUL MOVEMENT PILATES WILDSIDE BABY & TODDLER GROUP MONTHLY SFCT BOARD MEETING SPIN & CHATTER GROUP NEEDLES & PINS WILD CRAFTS CRAFTERS AND CROFTERS MARKET EVERY MONDAY FROM 12PM EVERY TUESDAY 10.30AM EVERY WEDNESDAY 10AM EVERY THURSDAY 9:30AM-11:30AM WEDNESDAY 1ST TUESDAYS 7TH & 21ST TUESDAYS 14TH & 28TH SATURDAY 11TH SATURDAY 2ND JULY



### AND IN THE WIDER COMMUNITY

SATURDAY 2ND JULY:

SOUTH LOCH NESS HERITAGE GROUP VISIT TO KIRKMICHAEL CHURCH, BLACK ISLE, More info can be found on page 2.

SATURDAY 23RD JULY:

THE HIGHLAND GATHERING AT CORRIEGARTH ESTATE

Come and join us for live music, local food, drink and crafts, community stalls, children's activities and much, much more! More information can be found on page 4.

Craft Stalls Croft Produce Cakes Plants

Wildside Centre, Whitebridge

Summer Crafters & Crofters Market



### JOIN THE TRUST

If you would like to become a member of the Trust then please go to. https://www.stratherrickcommunity.org.uk/join-the-trust/

### MANY THANKS TO OUR FUNDERS... AND PHOTOGRAPHER

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