

CHATTERBOX

www.lochwinnoch.info

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What's On

● **Tues 25th March Lochwinnoch Country Dance Club Silver Jubilee reunion.** Contact Isabel Templeton on 01505 843316 for further details.

● **Tues 8th April , Public Meeting, McKillop 7.30pm . New houses in Lochwinnoch building debate.**

Events Diary

Don't overbook your event! If you are planning to hold an event, make sure yours is the only event on at that particular day and time.

The McKillop Institute are now operating an events diary. So you can ensure you don't overlap with any other events.

A Path Round the Loch

SRANI – what on earth is that? Well, it is a proposed path right round Castle Sempole Loch and the reason it's been given the a rather formal name is to highlight the fact that it will allow access to the loch from a region larger than just Lochwinnoch.

As many people may know there has been talk of a loch path and improved access to the railway station for many years, however, now £21,500 has been raised to fund a 3 month feasibility study. The factors that have made the difference are 1. the presence of the Sustainable Community Project and 2. the will of Scottish Enterprise Ren-

frewshire to be a part of the project.

A partnership group has been established and includes LMEG – the group responsible for the Sustainable Community Project, RSPB, Clyde Muirshiel, Renfrewshire Council, Sustrans, Scottish Enterprise and Scottish National Heritage.

The study brief was sent out for tender and we received 4 bids for the work. Presentations were held at the end of January and the tender was won by local businessman Ross Anderson. Ross is working in partnership with Liz Parsons of Starling Learning, and Glasgow based Consultant Engineers D. C. Farquhar & Partners.

Work has already started on the study and it is anticipated that it will be finished by May 2003; we hope to have the findings available as soon as possible thereafter.

After the study is complete who knows what will be possible?!

Public Meeting

A follow up to the last public meeting regarding new house building in the village will talk place in the McKillop Institute on April 8.

If you have an interest in this matter you are invited to come along. The meeting starts at 7:30pm

Flats

Hate to go on about this - well, actually, I don't - in terms of houses we need flats in Lochwinnoch.

I was in Paisley recently and I noticed builders are building a substantial number of new flats on the road up to the RAH. And they are all nice, and they are selling like hot cakes.

So why doesn't any builder out there see the opportunity of building nice modern flats in the village?

Or even why doesn't any builder want to turn the old cooerage into flats?

I know there are problems with flats. Factor's fees are often close to daylight robbery as you are ever likely to see. But people can get together and be their own factor.

The plus side with flats is that you don't have the dreaded garden to worry about, you can have long chats with your friendly neighbours on the stair heed, or you can be as private as you like.

So builders, come on - we want flats

If you want an article, letter or information published in the Chatterbox. Then leave copy in the Chatterbox dropbox in the Library.

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Head Scratcher

Here's a head-scratcher. The sign for the new houses in Church Street says the houses on the site will be '4/5 bedroom quality houses'.

Does this mean the houses are built to bedroom quality, or the houses will be quality houses with 4/5 bedrooms? Someone has forgotten the all important coma.

Silver Slip

Betty McKellar's evocative poems have been twice set to music by English/Scots composer, Sally Beamish, now, local musician, Gordon Rigby will take up the challenge to supply music to fit the poet's words.

Gordon Rigby, professional timpanist and conductor of the St Winnoch Singers, is composing a piece using the words of the poem Silver Slip.

Gordon Rigby's composition is written for choir and orchestra and features a prominent part for oboe.

The piece will be given its first performance during the St Winnoch Singer's spring concert. I've had a sneak preview and can tell you it is well worth hearing.

T.U.R.D.

About the largest number of Complaints Councillor Alistair Nimmo has to deal with relate to these unedifying little packages our dogs deposit on the pavements.

We have all suffered from the dreaded 'mess on the foot'. We

have all at one time or other stepped on something someone forgot to stoop and scoop. We've all walked recycled Laddie into our house and onto the Axminster. It ain't funny. It ain't healthy and it ain't on.

This is where T.U.R.D. comes in. It stands for Try Uplifting Rover's Droppings. You can get free scoops from the library and there are dog bins dotted around the village. Those who set the dog bins alight - a totally mindless activity - may also bear this in mind.

They may also bear in mind that the money for dog bins comes from the budget that awards grants to small groups.

During the February Community Council meeting Councillor Nimmo said that dog wardens will be active in the village from time to time.

A speaker at the meeting added that those who allow their dog to foul the footpath should be prosecuted. Perhaps a few prosecutions might force dog owners to be more careful of where their dog stoops to poop. This is a sentiment Councillor Nimmo does not agree with.

A police spokesperson, however, said: 'It should be pointed out that it is an offence in terms of Section 48 of the Civil Government (Scotland) Act 1982 for any person in charge of a dog to al-

low it to foul any pavement, grass verge adjacent to a pavement, children's play area and any area used for recreation or sporting purposes. Any person found guilty of this offence will incur a substantial fine.

Oh, incidentally, someone out in the open wilderness is still filling up a poly bag with their dog's dirt and tossing it in a hedge. Incomprehensible. The best option would be to leave the dirt where it is and allow it to biodegrade.

Anyway, the main thing is - remember T.U.R.D when you walk your dog.

How to Write a Thesis

Local academic Rowena Murray went to the top of the class with her book How to Write a Thesis. After only a few months in circulation the book is now being reprinted.

The first three thousand copies flew off the shelves as quick as the latest Harry Potter novel.

Not bad for an academic book. Normally a book on the art of writing a thesis would be lucky to sell in the hundreds.

Rowena is now writing a second book that will be on sale in December.

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Letters

'This story is true, though you might have a problem believing it. I would have found it impossible if I had not seen it happen.'

On December 3 last year, I wrote to the Roads Department a complaint about the potholes in Calder Street and at Linthills. Usually I would expect such a letter to meet with deadly silence. The most I would expect would be an acknowledgment to my letter.

I did not get an acknowledgment. Instead a few days later a lorry loaded with steaming tar, tools and two intrepid operators appeared and patched the potholes.

The did not square the holes off or seal the repairs so the repairs won't last long. Also the pothole patchers were choosy about which holes they patched. They left some major holes in Calder Street, nevertheless a kind of job had been carried out.

So, two cheers to the Roads Department. We should rejoice they have done some sort of job, and done it in local government terms, in a heartbeat... so thanks and well done.'

Graham Lait

Crime Figures

Lochwinnoch Community Council Crime totals for January were seventeen:

1 Robbery - this was a serious

crime.

4 Breach of the Peace.

4 Thefts.

1 Drugs offence.

4 Vandalism

2 Tax disc offences

1 Malicious phone call.

Seven crimes were detected. One member of the Community Council said the conditions of the roads throughout Renfrewshire were a growing cause for concern. They are, he said, a disgrace. He added, he had no confidence in Renfrewshire Council to maintain the roads to a decent standard. The Community Council agreed to write to Renfrewshire Council and make known their concerns.

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Books Books

The latest library editions are:-

David Baldacci	The Christmas Train
Celia Brayfield and Friends	Mister Fabulous
Clare Chamber	Back Trouble
Anne Douglas	Ginger Street
Sarah Harrison	The Dreaming Stones
Sarah Harvey	Postcards from Wits End
Nora Kay	Cuckoo in the Nest
Bernadine Kennedy	Chain of Deception
Robert Ludlum	The Jason Directive
Ed McBain	Fat Ollie's Book
Jefferson Parker	Black Water
Alan Russell	Exposure
John Smolens	The Invisible World
Danielle Steele	Sunset in St Tropez
Minnette Walters	Fox Evil
Vaallery Wood	The Doorstep Girls

This is only a small selection of the new book that arrive in the library on a regular basis. Our reserve system gives greater access to an even greater number of books. This service costs 20p. For further details call in at the library.

NOTE: Due to work on the heating system the library will be closed from February 26 until Friday March 7 - at 2:00pm. A mobile library will call in at the library car park on Saturday, March 1 at 10:00am - 1:00pm and at 2:00pm - 4:00pm.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Lochwinnoch Village Website. The page features a logo for Lochwinnoch, Renfrewshire, Scotland, and a navigation menu. The main content area includes a 'Website Stats' section reporting 2000 hits and a 'Children's Hospice Appeal' section requesting donations of inkjet cartridges and old mobile phones. A 'What Next?' section mentions work on a local art group and photo gallery. Contact information for Barbara@lochwinnoch.info and a website dropbox location are provided at the bottom.

Evenin'All

The newly appointed village PCs, Collette Pryde and Graham Barclay, have written to introduce themselves.

Both have more than a decade of experience in various posts throughout Strathclyde Police Force. They are looking forward, though, to working with the people of Lochwinnoch.

If you have anything to talk about with the police, don't hesitate to stop either of them and have a chat.

If you want to discuss anything in private, leave your name and phone number in the police office in Calder Street or call 01505 321113 to make arrangements.

Both Constables Pryde and Barclay are very approachable.

Big Birdwatch

The biggest birdwatch in the world took place on the weekend of 25-26 January. The overall results are still being collected but most of the results from observation at the RSPB Nature Reserve are available.

The top bird to show up was the chaffinch. Twenty eight were spotted feeding their beaks. Number two was the blue tit, ten were seen feeding on peanuts.

One surprise occurred when a great spotted woodpecker landed in the reserve on a flying visit.

Those who took part in the Big Garden Birdwatch helped to create a pic-

ture of how well - or otherwise - our garden birds are getting on.

So far over nationwide over 20,000 people have returned the results of their hour spent watching birds.

Lochwinnoch Community Internet Group

A new community group is looking for members. The aim of the group is to provide Broadband Internet access to residents and businesses within Lochwinnoch.

You may have seen the adverts for Broadband Internet from BT, AOL, Freeserve or a host of other companies. The adverts all show how you can access video, music, educational materials and all sorts of other good stuff on the Internet. Businesses are able to communicate with customers and suppliers more easily etc etc.

So why aren't you already using it? The answer is simple, no matter which company you want to buy Broadband from, they must buy the connection from BT, and BT have not yet upgraded the Lochwinnoch exchange to support Broadband. So, even if you want it, you can't get it. We are all stuck with dial-up connections, or if we are really lucky, rather expensive, and not much faster, ISDN lines.

When will BT get round to up-

grading the exchange? Well, they say they are upgrading exchanges according to demand, and if the upgrade is viewed as being commercially viable. This means they are upgrading the larger exchanges first. For some smaller exchanges they have set trigger levels, if say 400 or 600 people sign-up then they will upgrade the exchange. Currently they have not even set a trigger level for Lochwinnoch, so there is no way to tell when BT will upgrade the exchange, but it doesn't look like it will be any time soon.

What can we do about it? There is new technology based on satellite and wireless communications that allows fast connections to the Internet and does not require BT lines. The goal of the group is to use this technology to provide Internet connections of similar speed and cost as Broadband to residents and businesses within Lochwinnoch.

The group needs people to become involved in the administration and implementation of the project. No technical skills are required, just enthusiasm.

**If you are interested in joining, email
graeme@lochwinnoch.info
or phone 01505 842768.**

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