

CHATTERBOX

www.lochwinnoch info
lochwinnoch no 122 February 2004

Community newsletter produced by lochwinnoch publicity committee for lochwinnoch cc

What's On

● Jan 12 -Mar 22nd

Creative Writing Group in the McKillop, 9.30am - 12noon on Mondays. FREE group - please note NO EXPERIENCE required.

● Jan 15th—Mar 8th

Parenting Matter group in the McKillop, 9.30am - 11.30am on Thursdays with a FREE CRECHE. Why not come along for a cup of tea and informal chat.

● Jan 16th—Mar 26th

Women's Confidence Group This FREE group will re-run in the McKillop, 9.30am - 11.30am on Fridays with a FREE CRECHE. Why not come along for a cup of tea and informal chat.

BASIC FIRST AID

Anyone interested in a free first aid class please telephone or speak to myself. Susan Stewart, Outreach Worker, Community Learning & Development Services, Renfrewshire Council, tel. 01505 320573

● **Sat 7th February, St Winnoch Singers, Burns Supper,** McKillop Institute, 7 for 7.30pm Tickets £10, from Brown Bull or members of choir.

● Sat 7-14th February

Wildlife Art Exhibition at RSPB Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve. Do come along to this free event and see a variety of art work by local artists. Continued back page

High Street Disturbances

At the February Community Council meeting residents of the

High Street and surrounding areas spoke about recent night time disturbances they had to endure.

In a small village like Lochwinnoch no one should be terrorised or disturbed in their homes by bands of ill-behaved youngsters.

The police advise that you should phone them immediately the moment any disturbance breaks out. They will deal with it as soon as they can.

The increased police presence in the village has led to a drop in crime figures. January's total crime figures were 7; this is a considerable decrease on the figures for January 2003 and January 2002.

The police are to hold surgeries in the McKillop on Tuesday 17 February, Tuesday 16 March and Tuesday 20 April from 7:00pm - 8:00pm. If you want to discuss any police matters go along.

The Dog Fouling Act

As of October, 2003 The Dog Fouling Act came into force.

Among other things the act: 'makes it an offence for a person in charge of a dog to fail to remove and dispose appropriately of any excrement after the dog has fouled without reasonable excuse or the consent of the land owner/occupier. This applies to the provisions to all public places.'

In other words it is an offence 'not

immediately to clear up after your dog has fouled'.

'Offenders will receive a fixed penalty of £40:00 rising to £60:00 if not paid within 28 days. Authorised council officers and police officers will issue these penalties.

Repeat offenders will be reported to the Procurator Fiscal and may be liable to a fine of up to £500:00 if convicted.

Mindless Decoration

Noticed a worrying rise in the amount of graffiti in the village in recent months.

When I moved here two years ago there was none. Over the last few weeks we've seen the walls next to the McKillop written over, the annexe vandalised and the bank at the cross has had it's doors ruined.

Surely it wouldn't take too much detective work to discover who was responsible given most of the graffiti takes the form of people's names.

Lochwinnoch is a great wee village; we'll only have ourselves to blame if we allow it to become a haven for the anti-social.

If you see any unacceptable behaviour, call the police or (if you feel able) challenge it yourself. Most kids are decent and will take a telling. The hysteria over "neds" doesn't apply here.

MATTHEW NEW & SONS

SLATER - PLASTERERS - GENERAL BUILDERS

Emergency Repairs, Storm Damage
Insurance Work, New Roofs, Flat Roofs
Roughcasting & General Building

Tel No 01505 843400

FMB Certificate No 26366

Simons Column

It's official. Mrs Simon will not feature in this year's Olympic Games. After her disaster in the snatch at the last Commonwealth Games she has decided to hang up her dumbbells forever.

Between you and me, her career in weightlifting was rather lacklustre, especially in the later stages when she suffered from chaps.

Mrs Simon is now in rigorous training for the World Knitting Championships; an event held every four years in a fjord somewhere near the North Pole.

Part of her training includes taking large amounts of the banned substance N*****n. 'Don't most athletes?' She asked. I wonder if she will fail a drug test. 'No chance,' she replies, 'a couple of chocolate gingers will mask any drugs.'

When she is in full flight her needles go like the clappers. She is like the Horovitz of the knitting needles. But be warned don't attempt speed knitting without the guidance of a properly qualified trainer. You could tie your fingers into some dreadful reef knot.

On the needles at the moment, a black and brown striped pull-over that will probably fit an elephant. Obviously destined for me to wear at the pub so I won't look so good.

Have a good month!

Auld Simon

Barking

The mystery of the big cat has, apparently, been solved. It turns out the big cat is a big dog kidding on it's a big cat.

The animal fooled a lot of people, but not the forensic experts who analysed a sample of the animal's fur. 'It's a dog', they announced.

Well, that is one mystery solved, so what is the yeti spotted foraging around Johnshill? Has anyone got any fur from that?

Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park

This is an ideal opportunity to get out, get some fresh air, meet like minded people and do something useful for the countryside all at the same time.

Tasks and activities will vary throughout the year but could include woodland management, drystone dyking or footpath maintenance. Full instruction, tools and hot drinks will be provided.

Volunteer day takes place on the LAST Sunday of the month.
Location: Clyde Muirshiel Regional

Park: Muirshiel Centre near Lochwinnoch
Time: 10:00 - 16:00
Bring: Waterproofs, old clothes, walking boots or sturdy footwear and packed lunch.

Bookable: Yes please, tel 01505 842 803

Modern Cookery

Hello darlings.

You'd be surprised at how many funny vegetables there are around. I don't mean those cruelly malformed potatoes or tomatoes that used to invoke shrieks of laughter on the Esther Rantzen show a few years ago.

I mean proper vegetables like the Jerusalem artichoke. A weird knobby old thing that had an alarming effect on your exhaust system. After a few helpings you could fly to Mars and kick-start the ailing Beagle. To cook these artichokes, peel, and boil like potatoes. They do make a nice puree.

What about celeriac? It looks like a cross between a turnip and one of my ex-husbands. On its own it tastes like mild celery (a veg I hate) but mashed with potatoes it is very acceptable.

And what is the point of salsify? Long and thin as a drumstick, it is almost without flavour. The French love it, though. But, darlings, in the absence of anything better to do with salsify you have to eat it. Here's how: peel the drumstick, rub it with a lemon to stop discolouring, and boil. Serve with parsley and melted butter. It goes well with roast beef.

Kholrabi is a veg that looks as though it may have had a close encounter with the Beagle on Mars. It's green, round and has an alien-looking antenna. Lovely to eat, though. Boil it in water, drain and toss in butter and pepper.

Having considered a few strange vegetables, I must say, that for everyday use, give me a root vegetable anytime. You can't beat a good carrot or turnip.

That's all for this month. Keep warm, darlings.

Felicity Fishlice

TUNA

Corporate Web Managers & Strategists

Proud to be from Lochwinnoch

Lochwinnoch, Glasgow, Zurich

a. Mid Lochhead t. 01505 843 823 f. 01505 843 923

e. info@tunaweb.com

w. www.tunaweb.com

Letters

I've recently been employed by Renfrewshire Council as a Community Worker with the Buddies for Learning project (see below) and have been allocated Lochwinnoch as one of my areas of responsibility.

I'd therefore be grateful if you could include the information below in the next (or a future) edition of Chatterbox, to draw attention to the fact that the project is becoming active in Lochwinnoch. Since I'll be operating in the village on a regular basis meeting organisations and individuals it would be useful to meet with you to get a perspective of community events and topics relevant to Lochwinnoch. If you think this might be possible, please let me know. (Mobile 07808 540075)

Buddies for Learning is a free and confidential service aimed at supporting adults to improve their literacy and numeracy skills using a mentoring approach.

Volunteers are recruited and trained then matched with people who want to improve their writing, spelling or numeracy. A wide range of learning resources are made available to enable learners to progress at their own pace and special computer packages can also be accessed, enabling learners to interact and improve their skills.

The service offers one-to-one or small group support in a variety of locations, such as Community Centres, and aims to be friendly and accessible. Currently, the project is recruiting in Lochwinnoch with a view to offering learning sessions in the village, but learners, by arrangement, can attend any Renfrewshire centre offering the service.

For more information about becoming a learner or volunteer contact, Buddies for Learning, 41 High Street, Paisley, 0141 889 8864, e-mail buddieslearning@hotmail.com

Illness prevented a January Chatterbox therefore may we wish all readers a belated Happy New Year and keep the stories coming.

Pop them into the Chatterbox tray in the library. Editor

'Here is a letter from an irate villager'

'This is a call to all the users of McConnell and Calderhaugh Lane as a route to and from the bus stop and railway station.

The condition of this lane is appalling - especially during winter. Since last winter the condition has deteriorated considerably with extensive puddles on soft ground.

The lane is also widely used by dog owners with, of course, consequent fouling. It does not ease the situation to direct a dog to the edges of the lane. These are the sections pedestrians have to walk on to avoid the puddles.

I wrote to the Community Council before their December meeting. So far (mid January) I have not received a written reply. I was told, indirectly, that Renfrewshire Council do not know who owns the lane and bears responsibility for its maintenance. Suspiciously, I fear this may be an excuse to do nothing.

So, come on other users, get in touch with the Community Council, Councillor Nimmo or Renfrewshire District Council and COMPLAIN!

Lochwinnoch Forum

Did you read that the website has been quoted in that august, squeaky-clean Sun?

Apparently the Forum section of the website has become famous because of it's slightly risqué content.

Bizarre, though, that comments on the mild Benny Hill-type humour in the Forum should come from The Sun, a paper famous for its lack of good taste.

Incidentally, one of the things that attracted the judges who voted the Lochwinnoch website Community Website of the Year was the lively content of the Forum. So there!

The question 'Do you think there too much smut in Lochwinnoch?' was put to readers of the Forum the results were:

Too much: 0%
About right: 20%
Not enough: 80%.
Five people voted.

Here are some of the debates raging in the Lochwinnoch Forum on the Lochwinnoch.info website:

Litter

Hello to everyone - just found this site and would like to see whether others feel passionately about the litter we see on the roads, people

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Lochwinnoch website. The page features a navigation menu with links for Home, News & Events, Information, Club & Activities, Sports, and Business. The main content area is titled 'Website Awards' and reports that the Lochwinnoch village website won the Highly Commended award at the Community of the Year awards. Below this, there is a section for 'Forum Guidelines' and 'New Sections' which lists the Lochwinnoch Art Group and Clyde Windsurfing Club with their respective website URLs. The contact email address barbara@lochwinnoch.info is also provided.

parking spaces being overflowed with litter and also generally people using our roads safely

RSPB

On Sunday 11th Jan, RSPB Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve played host to the unmistakable and elegant form of a kingfisher.

The bird was visible from the comfort of the Visitor Centre for several hours as it hunted successfully in the shallows of a pond adjacent to the centre. The bird would then fly up to perch on nearby fence posts and wires to eat its catch. There have been frequent sightings in the area in the past few weeks, with birds observed near the centre, from the hides and along the Dubbs Water trail.

Kingfishers are very distinctive birds, with cobalt-blue upper parts contrasting strongly with bright orange under parts and vivid red legs. They tend to frequent slow moving or still water with an abundance of small fish and aquatic insects and will colonise and breed in these areas if a suitable bank for the excavation of nest holes can be found.

During winter, birds will haunt rivers and lakes and, particularly in periods of harsh weather, some will move to coastal regions and estuarine areas. The species is commonplace during the winter at the reserve, being recorded in 19 years out of the past 20. Unfortunately, in past times, due to its vibrant plumage, the species was much sought after in the millinery trade to decorate ladies' hats and was a prized specimen for the taxidermy profession.

With a maximum of 5,500 breeding pairs in the UK, the presence of this individual, coupled with the recent increase in sightings, is quickly making the nature reserve one of the best places to see the species in the area. For further information please contact Jen Walker on 07713766596 or email lochwinnoch@rspb.org.uk

The 2004 events program has started at RSPB Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve

The new leaflet has just been published and you can pick one up from the reserve now!

Introduction to bird watching guided walk This weekend do come down to RSPB Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve if you fancy starting the new year by getting to know a bit more about birds.

On Sat 17th January there will be a chance to walk around the reserve on the first 'Introduction to Bird watching' walk in 2004, at an earlier time of 10am -12 midday. The following charges apply:
NON-RSPB/WILDLIFE EXPLORERS MEMBERS: Adults £3.00/ Children (under 16) £1.50
RSPB/WILDLIFE EXPLORERS MEMBERS: Adults £2.00/ Children 50p

Please book in advance by telephoning 01505 842663 or email lochwinnoch@rspb.org.uk
Optics demonstrations
Due to popular demand, there will now be an optics demonstration held at RSPB Lochwinnoch Nature Reserve on the third Sunday of every month. The first demonstration will be on Sunday 18th January from 10-4pm.

'Having a pair of binoculars or a telescope that you are happy with, makes such a difference when you're bird watching. Everyone has different requirements, so coming along to an optics demonstration lets you try out all of them and find out what suits you best' comments Jen Walker, Visitor and Publicity Officer at the reserve.

For further information please contact Jen Walker (Tel: 01505 842663 or email lochwinnoch@rspb.org.uk)
A new image of the reserve is available in digital format at no cost. If you want to volunteer to help maintain the cycle track, please contact:

Sustrans Scotland
Tel. 0131 624 7660 Fax 0131 624 7664 Mobile 07802 807586 Email derek@sustrans.org.uk

Sustrans - it stands for sustainable transport - it is a charity that works on practical projects to encourage people to walk, cycle and use public transport in order to reduce motor traffic and its adverse effects.

Sustrans Scotland, 162 Fountainbridge, Edinburgh EH3 9RX
Registered Charity No 326550
<http://www.sustrans.org.uk/>

What's On Cont'd

● Sun February 8th Wildlife Arts Exhibition.

Works by local wildlife artists. RSPB Visitor Centre, 10:00am - 4:00pm. Free.

● Sat Feb 14th MSP Bruce McFee will hold a surgery in the McKillop Institute between 9:30am and 10:30am.

Bruce can be e-mailed at Bruce.McFee.MSP@Scottish.Parliament.uk.

● Thur February 19th Lochwinnoch Historical Society, Elizabeth Main talks on The History of West Renfrewshire. Parish Church 7:30pm.

● Frid February 27th Charity Dance in aid of St Mary's Church, Bridge of Weir. McKillop Institute Friday, Tickets £6:00.

Sales and marketing Consultancy

Calder Marketing

Tel: 01505 842 681

Mobile: 07764 236 822

Email: cfraser@fsmail.net

Business Plans, Funding, Market Research, PR, Company Newsletters