



## YOUR GALA NEEDS YOU!

ALTHOUGH still in the grip of winter, the Association are looking forward to balmy summer days, in particular **SUNDAY 10<sup>th</sup> JUNE**, which will be Alyth Gala Day. Planning is at an early stage and we are asking you, the people of Alyth, to tell us what you would enjoy seeing at your Gala. Are there any events you would like to see returning? Is there anything you don't want, or haven't liked in recent years? Would you like to take a stall at the Gala day? Are there any local craft workers/artists who would like to show and sell their work? Stalls and car boot spaces can be booked at a very reasonable rate.

We are hoping to have a parade through the town of decorated floats, fancy dress, vintage vehicles and of course, pipe bands – but we need your help to make it happen! We are asking groups, organisations and individuals who may be interested in taking part in the parade to contact us now. Can anyone supply floats and suitable vehicles? These do not need to be lorries – any open top vehicle or even tractor and trailer suitable for decoration would do. The only limit is your imagination. If you cannot find a vehicle, why not walk as a group in fancy dress? There will be cash prizes on offer for the best float, fancy dress group or individual. Your organisation could benefit in many ways from this fun event. All profits from the Gala Day are distributed to local causes and this year there will be no formal charge for entry, but we will be taking voluntary donations on the day.

Please contact us as soon as possible to book a place in the parade or at the Jubilee Park, offer vehicles, ideas or inspiration! Telephone me on 01828 633521, write to me at 9 St Andrew Street or have a chat to any committee member. We usually meet on the first Tuesday of the month at 7pm in the Lesser Town Hall and everyone is most welcome to attend. Meanwhile, we will be holding a **Coffee Morning on Saturday February 17th** in the Airlie Street Hall. *Pat Parnham, Secretary*



*Do you remember the wonderful float parades in years gone by? Above is Alyth Musical Society's float circa 1980. L-R facing: Sandy Lyall, Margaret White, Alex Mitchell, Sheila Walton, Gil Jenkins, Maralyn Baxter, Derrick Young. Image by D. Todd*

### ALYTH CHORAL UNION

THIS year sees the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the founding of Alyth Choral Union. Back in 1982, Blairgowrie Lyric Choir and Alyth Parish Church Choir came together under the baton of the late Charles Mathews to form a united choir.

The aim of this union of the choirs, was to put on a performance of 'Handel's Messiah' with an orchestra of 25 musicians and a joint choir of 50 choristers. With Charles playing the harpsichord, the choir sang Handel's great work in Alyth Parish Church on December 19<sup>th</sup> 1982 and in St. Andrew's Parish Church Blairgowrie on December 21<sup>st</sup> 1982. A particular feature of the performances then, was that members of the choir sang all the solo parts. The choir was given a standing ovation at both performances. And the 'Choral' was born.

To mark this special anniversary, Blairgowrie Lyric Choir and Alyth Choral Union are coming together again to reprise that great work by Handel – 'The Messiah' – in Alyth Parish Church on

#### Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> March

This year the solo parts will be performed by invited singers from within Scotland, with an invited prestigious orchestra in accompaniment. A chance to hear this exciting performance is not to be missed and is highly commended to you all.

*Janey MacFarlane*



*James Robertson  
current Conductor & Musical Director*

### 2006 CHRISTMAS WINDOW COMPETITION

THE Christmas Window Competition, sponsored by Alyth & District Business Association every year, is a fantastic display for Christmas and 2006 was no different, with windows in, it would seem every business in Alyth. The displays were in so many various forms, from snow scenes with skiers skiing up and down hills, skaters on a lake, Santas doing various things, snowmen, angels, Christmas puppy displays, Christmas teddy bear displays, children posting their letters to Santa, snowbound villages, nativity scene, decorated Christmas family room with children, Christmas trees of so many kinds, heights and colours, and so many other fantastic displays impossible to describe here. It is hoped that many photographs were taken of all the windows. The judge Mrs Seonaid Don, Alyth's Citizen of the Year, had the seemingly impossible task of deciding the winners. She stated it was one of the hardest and most difficult jobs she has ever undertaken, and she was up and down the streets in Alyth on numerous occasions! After much looking and soul searching she decreed that the winners were: - (see pages 7 & 9 for photos)

**1<sup>st</sup> PRIZE - The Property Shop, A. & R. Robertson & Black, 11 Airlie Street, who received The Christmas Window Competition Shield**

**2<sup>nd</sup> PRIZE - Shear Success, 12 Airlie Street**

**3<sup>rd</sup> PRIZE - The Singing Kettle, 14 Airlie Street**

*All the above received framed certificates*

Thanks must be expressed to all businesses for their fantastic windows, which must be the best in Perthshire, if not Scotland, and brought such festive cheer to Alyth and to all. Thanks also to Seonaid Don for her time and effort spent on judging this event.

Thanks must also be included to the Alyth Christmas Lights Committee and all their helpers for the fantastic Christmas lights display in Alyth. Well done to all who were involved. *Michael Kay, Chairman*

## Useful Telephone Numbers

Airlie Street Hall (contact-Fiona Dorchester)	- 01828 632455
Blairgowrie Police Station	- 01250 872222
Perth Police Station	- 01738 621141
Hydro-Electric Emergencies	- 0800 300999
Scottish Gas Emergencies	- 0800 111999
Scottish Water	- 0845 6008 855
Alyth Post Office	- 01828 632301
Primary Health Centre	- 01828 632317
Alyth Primary School	- 01828 632462
Blairgowrie High School	- 01250 873445
Alyth Environmental Group	- 01828 632907
NHS 24—new 24 hour health service	- 08454 24 24 24

If you offer an emergency or breakdown service, send the Voice your name and number.

### Alyth Voice Team

<b>Paul Ramsay</b>	01828 632992	Editor
<i>paulrams@bamff.demon.co.uk</i>		
<b>Irene Robertson</b>	01828 633045	Compositor/Secretary
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<b>Margaret Stanford</b>	01828 633083	Advertising
<i>advertising@alythvoice.co.uk</i>		
<b>Paul &amp; Barbara Prettyman</b>	01828 633725	Distribution
<b>Margaret MacKenzie/ Marjory Macpherson</b>		Advertising
<b>Michael Kay</b>	01828 632252/632690	Treasurer
<i>mike@atcalyth.freemove.co.uk</i>		
<b>Derek Todd</b>		Webmaster
<i>dhtodd@tiscali.co.uk</i>		

In order to avoid disappointment please ensure that articles/ads for publication are submitted before the 21st day of each month. Note: The views expressed in the Alyth Voice are not necessarily those of the team nor can they accept any responsibility for accuracy and spelling of any article.

### ARTICLE SUBMISSION to the Voice

Please note ALL articles must be accompanied with a name and address **BEFORE** they will be published in the Voice.

On request, the name and address may be withheld from publication.

Any submission without these details will NOT be included.

### \*~\*~\* Dates for Your Diary \*~\*~\*

#### FEBRUARY

1st	Plants & Flowers - Airlie St. Hall	Alyth Parish Guild
4th	Volunteers' Party - Town Hall	Alyth Comm. Council
10th	Coffee Morning - Airlie St. Hall	Alyth Parish Church
13th	Glamis Castle Talk	Alyth Literary Society
17th	Coffee Morning - Airlie St. Hall	Alyth Gala Association
24th	Coffee Morning - Airlie St. Hall	Alyth Choral Union
27th	Putting Scotland on the Map	Alyth Literary Society

#### MARCH

1st	Craft Table - Airlie St. Hall	Alyth Parish Guild
3rd	Coffee Morning - Airlie St. Hall	Kilry WRI
7th	Falls Project - Airlie St. Hall	Perth Royal Infirmary
10th	Coffee Morning - Airlie St. Hall	Alyth & Dist. Pipe Band
13th	Annual Supper	Alyth Literary Society
17th	Coffee Morning - Airlie St. Hall	ABC Mothers Union
24th	Coffee Morning - Airlie St. Hall	Alyth Bowling Club
25th	Handel's Messiah - Alyth Parish Church	Alyth Choral Union

### - - - VOICE TEASER - - - What is a Semmit?

Answer to last months Teaser- What is Rade Up? Tidy up

### Design a Light Competition at Alyth Primary School

NEARLY all of the children from every class at Alyth Primary School took part in a Design-a-Light Competition to create a new light for Alyth Christmas Lights Display. All the entries were sent to Blachere Illuminations Design Studio. The standard of entries was extremely high and Blachere sent a letter of commendation praising the children's efforts. Blachere's Design Studio assessed the drawings and chose the best from each class. The overall winner was Brandon Scofield of Primary 2/3 and the runner up was Liam McLeish Primary 5. Certificates were presented to all the children who took part. Perth Theatre very generously donated a family ticket to Cinderella for the winner, and the runner-up received a book token. Brandon's design of Rudolph the Red Nosed Reindeer was made into a decorative light - complete with flashing nose - and was on display in Alyth Square. Alyth Christmas Lights Committee were delighted with the response and would like to thank all of the children who took part, their teachers and Alyth Primary School for their wonderful support of this popular community effort. **Anne Archbold, Secretary**

## A CHRISTMAS THANK YOU ON BEHALF OF YOUR LIGHTS COMMITTEE

THE Christmas lights were taken down on Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> January and have been put to bed in the Town Hall until November. On behalf of Alyth Christmas Lights Committee, I would like to thank so many people for helping in so many ways. All the lads, electricians, joiners, shopkeepers, farmers, drivers, pensioners etc (over 30 of them) who turn up with a smile, even when they get cold and wet, to put up and take down the lights. To the ladies who kept us going with tea & coffee, the Alyth Hotel for giving us a much welcomed & excellent lunch, to Torith Ltd Dundee, John Robertson, Pete Marshall, and David Brough for the loan of their hoists, also to everyone who gave electricity, and to the Halls committee for allowing us storage space to store all our decorations and equipment. Many people still think that Perth & Kinross Council assist with finance and labour - they do not, it is done entirely by the people of Alyth.

Fund raising is a major part of any operation whether it be large or small and in this, the town excelled. The Christmas coffee morning raised the staggering total of **£916**, Alyth & District Business Assoc. £200, Gala Committee £100, Airlie Street Bar (Geo's) Quiz night £95, collecting tins at the switch-on £194, Badminton Club £80, Quiz League £560, Blairgowrie & District Tourist Association £250, Royal Bank of Scotland Alyth branch £375, Hall Toy Sale £65, plus many more donations from private individuals from £1 to £100. Also we had a visit from Santa with his sleigh, touring the streets for two nights, visiting the local children and raising £495. Our thanks must go to Bob Smith and the Blairgowrie & Rattray Lights Committee for their help. After all the hard work, the lights team have a small party and they donated £194 out of their own pockets after working so hard all day. Without this wonderful financial support, we could not afford to put up the display which everyone so enjoys. My sincere apologies if I have left anyone out.

As you all know we changed the burn display, this was because of the man hours involved last year, we all hope everyone approved. (See our secretary, Anne Archbold's separate article below for details of the Design-a-Light competition.) The torch-lit parade was a large affair this year and led, not just by Blairgowrie & District Pipe Band, but with our own Alyth & District Pipe Band. I must admit that I had a lump in my throat when I saw and heard the two bands playing together - a sight not to be missed. Also well represented were several youth organisations from the Town, many who had made lanterns, it really added to the occasion. Next year we must have more stewards to help in the smooth running of the parade. The switch on this year was by our Citizen of the Year, Seonaid Don, and Young Citizen Daniel Gow; we were pleased that once again Provost Bob Scott accepted our invitation to attend the celebrations and assist our citizens of 2007. Several organisations and businesses helped us when we started about twelve or thirteen years ago by purchasing an advertising display; some of the plastic fronts are showing a bit of wear and tear and are now in need of replacement. We will be contacting everyone concerned if they would like to have the fronts replaced or changed, if anyone is interested in purchasing an advertising light, please contact me on the number below.

I have to report that we experienced no vandalism to decorations and lights, and we are very pleased to say that not one bulb was broken, and that is very heartening. The youth always seem to get bad publicity - it's nice to report no damage again this year, thanks. It has been noticed that all of us involved in putting up the lights have a fair bit of grey hair, and we don't seem to be attracting younger folk to join us. For the lights in Alyth to continue in the future we must address this, please give me a ring on 632284 or Anne Archbold our secretary, on 632971 if you feel you would like to help.

On behalf of Alyth Christmas Lights Committee, many thanks once again to everyone. It couldn't happen without the Alyth community coming together. **Dennis Melloy, Chairman**

# Strathmore & The Glens

PO Box 6621, Blairgowrie PH12 8YF

[www.strathmoreglens.org](http://www.strathmoreglens.org)

E-mail:- [sue@strathmoreglens.sol.co.uk](mailto:sue@strathmoreglens.sol.co.uk)

Community Markets will recommence on Saturday 17th March 2007 at the Coupar Angus Horsefair and 28th April in Blairgowrie Wellmeadow. Anyone interested in taking a stall should contact Sue on 01828 640763

## PUBLIC NOTICES

### FOR SALE

KENWOOD Mask Demonstration  
CAR CD player/radio  
250 watt speakers included  
Cost £350 new - Sell £150 ono  
Tel. No: 07999-577-325

### The Alyth Out of School Club

is situated within Alyth Primary School.  
Opening Hours 8am – 9am & 3.15pm-  
6pm. Basketball Mondays (School Gym)  
from 4pm-5pm. Tel: Catherine Chalmers  
on 07718-573-511

*Looking for a bit of exercise and light  
banter during the long winter evenings?*

Then why not come along to the

### Alyth

### Badminton Club

(more of a social meeting)

Meets every Tuesday

7.30pm - 9.30pm

Airlie Street Hall



Open to all over the age of 18. Any  
standard. *Come and give it a try!*

### Alyth Parish Church

Scottish Country Dance Group

#### February

1st, 8th, 15th, 22nd - Airlie St. Hall

#### March

1st - Town Hall

8th, 15th, 22nd, 29th - Airlie St. Hall

7.30 - 9.30 pm

For further information, please call  
Anne on 632971 or Moira on 632770

### ALYTH PARISH CHURCH GUILD

Airlie Street Hall

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Thursday 1st FEBRUARY 2007

2pm

David King talk on Plants & Flowers

Thursday 1st MARCH 2007

7pm

Major Mary Pickstone - Feed the Minds Crafts

ALL WELCOME

### WANTED

Filing Cabinet

2, 3 or 4 drawer

Good condition

Tel. No: 01828-633045

### Alyth Literary Society

Ogilvy Rooms, Commercial Street, Alyth  
7.30pm

13th February 2007

Hamish Howe - Forfar, talk on

'Glamis Castle'

27th February 2007

Diana Webster - National Library of Scotland,

talk on 'Putting Scotland on the Map'

13th March 2007

Annual Supper

Guest Speaker - David Leggat, United Auctions

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A warm welcome will be extended to anyone  
wishing to join the Society or attend any talks.

### ALYTH HEALTH CENTRE

THE GPs and Staff at Alyth Health Centre wish  
to thank all patients who handed in Christmas  
cards and gifts, and extend our warmest wishes  
and appreciation. You know who you are! Thank  
you. We decided not to send cards this year and  
the staff have instead made a donation to the  
Alyth, Meigle and District Nursing and Samaritan  
Association, who provide an invaluable  
service to patients in the community.

### Indoor Football

Coached by Paul MacFarlane

Starts Monday 22nd January 2007

in Alyth Out of School Care Group

Open to All Primary School Children

Mondays 4pm-5pm

Cost £20.00 (6 Weeks)

Children are to wear soft shoes for this  
activity and can bring a water bottle.

For further details or to book a place

Contact the club on 07718-573-511

### ALYTH MUSICAL SOCIETY

presents

*an evening of mysterious entertainment!*

**Cheese and Wine fund raising event**

in the Alyth Bowling Club

**Friday 9th February 7.30 for 8pm**

Tickets £5 includes one glass of wine

Telephone Eleanor Love 632656

### BLYTHSWOOD CARE CHARITY SHOP BLAIRGOWRIE

Require paid co-ordinator to run shop

Contact – Alan Swanson for details

Tel: Glasgow 0141-882-0585



## Alyth Parish Church

### JANUARY

Wednesday **31st** at 6.30pm  
Ordination & Induction of Sheila Kirk

### FEBRUARY

Saturday **10th** at 10am  
Coffee Morning, Airlie Street Hall  
Usual stalls - donations gratefully  
received. Tel: Audrey on 633161

[www.alythparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.alythparishchurch.org.uk)

### DAVIDSONS Chemists

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for further details



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to arrange an appointment**

Davidsons Chemist, 9 Airlie Street, Alyth

### Alyth Mother & Toddlers

would like to thank all who bought raffle  
tickets for the hamper and other prizes. The  
draw took place on Monday 18<sup>th</sup> December  
and the winner of the hamper was Kenny  
Moyes, Alyth. We would like to thank  
everyone who attended our December coffee  
morning, £520 was raised towards our  
funds. Thanks again. *Kathleen Buist*



The Scottish  
Parliament

## JOHN SWINNEY

Your local Member of the Scottish Parliament for North Tayside is here to help you.

You can contact John at 35 Perth Street, Blairgowrie, PH10 6DL

Tel. 01250 876576 Fax. 01250 876991

email [john.swinney.msp@scottish.parliament.uk](mailto:john.swinney.msp@scottish.parliament.uk)

**ALYTH LIBRARY - 23 AIRLIE STREET  
NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTIONS?**

Stop Smoking... Take more Exercise... Get Fit... Eat Healthy Food... Lose Weight... Try a New Sport... Make the most of your Digital Camera... Plan your Garden, or Holiday, or Life! **We can help you to keep them!** We have books on Nutrition, GI Diet, Detox, Keeping Fit, Yoga, Healthy Recipes, Stopping Smoking, Motivation and Positive Thinking, Digital Photography, Gardening, Travel, Sport...  
Or if you feel much too lethargic during the long winter evenings, just curl up with a good novel (we have plenty of these) and wait for Spring to arrive!  
**It's YOUR library – come along and see what's in it for YOU!**

**MALAWI PROJECT**

I WOULD just like to say a huge thank you to all the people who have so very kindly donated clothes and toys over the past year. I have been able to use some items locally, but most of the donations have been sent to Malawi via The Raven Trust (a Scottish Registered Charity) who transports items to a children's hospital and baby orphanage in Malawi. A special thank you also goes to the ladies of Alyth who have donated some of the prettiest hand knitted baby outfits - cardigans bootees, hats and mitts - in all colours of the rainbow. They have been very much admired by the volunteers who pack the boxes to transport the items. I will be continuing to collect items again this year, and if you would like to help, then here are some of the items the Raven Trust finds most useful.

*Disposable or real nappies, outgrown but still good quality children's shoes and wellington boots (0-6 years), outgrown but still good quality babies' and childrens' indoor/outdoor clothing. (0-6 years), knitted baby clothes.*

There are restrictions on types of toys that can be transported to Malawi, so some of the toys contributed have been utilised in the Health Centre. Our small play area seems to keep the children busy and at times it can be difficult to persuade a child to come out of the play area to see the GP or Health Visitor!

If you would like more information on the work of the Raven Trust in Malawi, then I do have a book that details all the ongoing work of the project. If you have items that you would like to donate, then I can arrange to collect them (01828-633954) or feel free to hand them into the Health Centre.

On behalf of the Raven Trust, may I thank you again for your very valuable contributions during 2006 and extend my best wishes for 2007.

*Christine Docherty, Health Visitor, Alyth Health Centre*

**ALYTH'S NEW MINISTER**

WEDNESDAY 31<sup>st</sup> January marks the beginning of a new and exciting chapter in the history of Alyth Parish Church, when Miss Sheila Kirk will be ordained and inducted as the new minister. I feel that we are very privileged, and have been greatly blessed by God, in attracting her to the Parish, especially at this time when there is such a large number of vacancies in the Church of Scotland. Sheila comes to us highly recommended, and there can be no doubting her very considerable gifts. We are looking forward very much to working with her in the future, and we pray that God will richly bless her and our Church in His service.

Please come and support your new minister, either at the service at 6.30pm on 31<sup>st</sup> January, or on Sunday mornings at 11am. You can always be sure of a warm welcome. *David Brough, Session Clerk*

**2ND ALYTH BROWNIES**



OUR performance of The Wizard of Oz (above) at the Christmas Tea-Party & Raffle in December was a great success, and enjoyed by all. We would like to thank everyone for their tremendous support during 2006. It is all very much appreciated by leaders and girls alike. The girls started back on 30<sup>th</sup> January and we hope to welcome new members during 2007. If you'd like to join in our fun, phone Sheena Fotheringham on 633589.

**The Voice team extend a very warm welcome to Amy, Andrew and baby Calum Skea who have recently moved into the area.**

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*\*New, Exciting Stock now in Store\**

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**&  
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### THE FAIRY DANCE by Dan Dewar

Yin day doon-by the auld stane brig,  
Beside oor bonnie gurglin' burn,  
They met, wha didnae gie a fig,  
But luv'd tae hae a richt guid girn:  
The Government wir aye tae blame -  
A' politeeshins wir fair game!

They criticised the Left an' Richt  
Wi' een fair jumpin' oot-o-sockets!  
An' curs'd the Middle oot-o-sicht -  
Thir poortith show'd wi' oot-turn'd pockets.  
Then, sudden silence... a wir' mute -  
The pair auld loons wir a' pecht-oot.

'twis noo they thocht they'd a' gang hame  
Tae luvin' wife, an' hoose a' jooter'd;  
An' Jim wis keen tae dae the same,  
So streak't aff on 'is dandy scooter -  
What wis it he'd tae bring frae Paul's...  
A loaf... or mulk... or, wis it rolls?

E' park'd 'is hot-rod by the door  
An' tried tae mind whit he wis waantin'...  
Felt faint, an' danced oot ower the floor,  
Seen' flashin' stars, an' fairly pantin'...  
Then lost 'is balance an' cam' a cropper  
An' sat doon 'mang the Special Offers!

The lassies there wir nae Girl Guides,  
An' screech't an' laughed at puir Jim's plicht,  
'is laigs wir danglin' ower the sides,  
Wi' his bahookie jammed-in-ticht -  
The lad wis trapp't, an' sair he pleaded,  
But his beeseechin' went unheeded.

The soond o' sic hilarity  
Within 'is normally, quiet shop,  
Brocht Paul, at haste, tae referee  
An' smooth things ower - or ca' the cops!  
But jings! 'e nearly blew a gasket  
Whin 'e fund a Fairy in 'is basket!

### MILLENNIUM BEACON

ABOUT a hundred people walked up Alyth Hill on New Year's Day to light the beacon and bring in 2007 in style. This year eight rockets were fired, one for each year the beacon has been lit, and also to remind us of all our service men & women who are serving overseas, or are no longer with us.

A lot of people when they see the beacon, wonder how we manage to fill it, as it is 30 feet high. Ron Tripney saves off-cut wood from his joinery business and puts them in plastic sacks, John Robertson drives Ron, Jim MacFarlane, Callum Strachan and yours truly, up in his hoist to the top of the hill, and lifts the lads up to the beacon (except me - I stay on the ground, no chance of getting me up there!). Thanks lads, we would be lost without you.

This year John Robertson's hoist broke down at Tripneys yard as we were about to gather the sacks. Pete Marshall came to the rescue, and sent his son Rowan down with their hoist and saved the day. I thanked Rowan as it was a filthy day; he said he was happy to help as he was supposed to clean out his granny's hen-house! I still don't know whether the hen house was cleaned out. Thanks Pete, Meg and Rowan. In 1999 when the community council erected the beacon as part of the millennium experience, over 4000 were lit throughout the United Kingdom to celebrate the millennium in the year 2000.

Are we the only one left out of the 4000????? **Dennis Melloy**

**1947-48 PIPE BAND NAMES** AMONG the late Pipe Major Dunc Milne's photos published in November's Voice, an appeal was made for names. Graeme Maxwell and Jack Ogilvie to the rescue!

Back row: *Doug Smith, Sandy Thompson, Jimmy Stewart, Jim Scrimgeour, Willie Welsh*  
Standing: *Graham Buick, Jack Ogilvie, Graeme Maxwell, Stewart Dickson, Neil Fraser, Gordon MacPherson, David Alexander, Willie Crichton, Frank Walker, Drew Brown*  
Seated: *Angus Goodall, Len Robb, Jim Kirkpatrick, Pipe Major Dunc Milne, Eck Kinmond*  
Front: *Ian Chapman, Kenny Erskine, Duncan Blair, Ian Rae*

### SQUADRON'S ANNUAL INSPECTION

ON Wednesday 6th December 2006, 2519 (Strathmore) Squadron, Air Training Corp, received its annual formal inspection from Wing Commander Colin McCrae RAF VR (T), Officer Commanding Dundee and Central Scotland Wing. Wing Commander McCrae was welcomed back to the Squadron by Flight Lieutenant Roy Kemp, Officer Commanding 2519 Squadron. The cadets who were on parade were then inspected by Wing Commander McCrae, who spoke with each one of them.

Flight Lieutenant Kemp then asked the Rev. Tom W Tait BD, RAF VR (T) (Retd.), the Squadron and Corp Chaplain, to enrol two new cadets into the Squadron. The two cadets were Cadet Rhian Mitchell (Meigle) and Cadet Lewis Dobbie (Alyth) (*photo below*). Wing Commander McCrae was then asked by Flight Lieutenant Kemp to carry out several trophy presentations and promotions, the trophies were;

**The Gallop Shield for Sport** - Cadet Fraser McIntosh (Blairgowrie), **The Adjutants Trophy** - Sergeant Duncan Telford (Luncarty), **The Leadership Cup** - Corporal Alan Harper (Blairgowrie), **Smartest Cadet** - Cadet Jemma Reid (Burrelton), **Best Recruit** - Cadet Iain Telford (Luncarty). Corporal Bret Gillies (Blairgowrie) was also presented with a model for coming second in the Scotland and Northern Ireland Region. **modelling competition** in the non aircraft section. The award winning model was that of Luke Skywalker's transporter.

The **promotions** were; Cadet to Corporal: Cadet Jemma Reid and Cadet Stephen Welsh (Blairgowrie). Corporal to Sergeant: Corporal Alan Harper. Sergeant to Flight Sergeant: Sergeant Hayley Sinclair (Alyth), Sergeant Mark Harper (Blairgowrie) and Sergeant Duncan Telford.

During the remainder of the evening Wing Commander McCrae visited various classrooms where he saw cadets going through different classes in preparation for forthcoming classifications exams. Wing Commander McCrae also met with the remainder of the Squadron staff. At the end of the evening at the closing parade, Wing Commander McCrae took the opportunity to address the cadets during which he encouraged them in their studies for the exams. The Wing Commander also praised the cadets for their standard of turnout.

*Ft. Lt. Michael Kay*



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## SUPPORT LOCAL SHOPS

HAVING lived near Alyth for 25 years, that is nearly half my life, I have become very fond of the place, perhaps especially in the last few years. I was just thinking recently about Alyth and wondering what it is that makes it so special. Of course it is partly the situation, the burn, the interesting old buildings and the friendly people, but one of the important things that distinguishes Alyth from many other small towns and villages is its excellent shops and the feeling that it is really thriving. We are extraordinarily lucky to have



*The Singing Kettle's prize winning display in ADBA's Christmas Window Competition*

our renowned ironmonger, prize-winning butcher, unique classic car repair centre, a good chemist and newsagent, a post office, and Margaret Ferguson's old fashioned grocer's shop selling really local produce from farms and gardens around Alyth, amongst much else. There are many other great shops in Alyth – too many to list. Twenty five years ago none of this was particularly remarkable, although, even in those days and earlier I know that my father-in-law much admired David Sim's shop and felt it would be difficult to get many of the items sold there in Edinburgh or London. But Sim aside, having a butcher, a chemist and a post office was normal back then. Nowadays it is worthy of comment. One of our visitors staying in our self-catering cottage wrote in the visitors book that Alyth had "a butcher to die for". I did wonder at the time if she would have been quite so pleased with the thought if she were a pig or a sheep ... but her comment did illustrate the fact that in the south of England, where she came from, the independent butcher is a thing of the past.

Alyth's people are loyal supporters of its shops but I think the other factor that helps Alyth to thrive is the lack of a large supermarket. Blairgowrie suffered a bit from the existence of its small Tesco: it lost its delicatessen for example when Tesco started selling all its special lines, but the damage was nothing to the damage caused by the new superstore. We have seen how many of Blairgowrie's shops are struggling to compete with the new Tesco. Isn't it appalling that the biggest thing you can see as you drive down the hill in Blairgowrie is the brightly lit Tesco sign. It makes it look as though you are in Tesco town; a town whose unique identity is under threat. Thank Goodness we don't have any such problem in Alyth. Alyth is going from strength to strength. It now has three art galleries, counting the little one in the Post Office, and the dolls house furniture shop as well. I heard that someone was recently looking for a shop to rent in Alyth and could not find an available one.

The harm that big superstores can do to small communities is only one aspect of the problems they cause. They also squeeze food producers such as dairy farmers in Scotland, paying them less than the cost of production for a pint of milk., then they buy the milk in from Poland when the Scottish dairy farms go out of business. They also play fast and loose with the livelihoods of poor farmers in the developing countries. They overpackage food and cause a waste problem that the local council has to deal with. They fly food (such as green beans) in from exotic destinations causing unnecessary carbon emissions and they truck locally produced food up and down the country causing more pollution and congestion on the roads, which ultimately leads to more road building. They keep food in cold storage until it is tasteless and far from fresh, and they waste energy in the shops by warming the shoppers while cooling the food in open-topped freezers, all inside a big overlit, under-insulated building and so do far more than their fair share of climate damage. I try not to shop at Tesco but sometimes there is one thing on my shopping list that we want that you can't get in Alyth: Goats milk yoghurt, for example. Paul insists on having it on his muesli every morning, and as a result I have, every now and then, to enter the portals of the evil empire. While I am there, I'll just have a look at the household section, get some bargain towels and a picture frame, pick up some prawns from the freezer, a newspaper, a bag of tangerines, some bagels for George and why not a couple of those Danish pastries for a treat? It is hard to deny that it is amazingly convenient and it is so difficult to resist its magnetic field. Thank goodness we haven't got one of these monsters in Alyth.

*Louise Ramsay*

## ALYTH CIVIC REGALIA

THERE is a long history of figures of authority displaying their position by the wearing of a badge of office.

In Scotland Provosts (the figurehead of the local authority) were traditionally invested with such regalia. The badge often featured the town arms and was suspended by a chain for wearing round the neck at official functions. Often the official dress was completed by a scarlet gown trimmed with ermine, white gloves and a black corded silk hat.

The oldest piece of civic regalia to have survived locally is the distinctive gold double-chain worn by the Provost of Perth & Kinross Council. It was one of a number of badges and chains of office made for Perth Town Council in 1791 by Perth silversmith James Cornfute (1751-1828) who billed the Council for £180 for this work. The chains were issued to the Provost, Lord Dean of Guild, Convenor and 4 Baillies.

A contemporary Perth Town Council Minute makes interesting reading about this regalia; "It would be proper that the Magistrates for the time being should have certain badges of distinction as is usual in other large towns in Scotland *it being particularly necessary when they are called upon by the duty of their office to quell mobs and tumults in the Burgh* that they should have some mark to distinguish them from the other inhabitants."

The badge on the Perth & Kinross Council Provost's chain features the arms of the local authority on one side and the female figure of Justice with her attributes of sword and scales on the other.

The former Alyth Town Council acquired a chain and badge of office for its Provost more recently, in 1952. The silver-gilt chain and silver-gilt-and-enamel badge were made in Sheffield and carry the full set of hallmarks for the Sheffield assay office for 1952/53. These are required by law and prove that the silver used is of the correct quality (in its natural form silver is too soft to retain its shape when worked, so has to be mixed with other metals, a practice open to fraud if not regulated). The term silver-gilt means that the base metal is silver to which a very fine layer of gold has been chemically applied.

The chain is composed of oval-shaped links each topped by a crown. Its length in total is 480mm. The badge, which is also oval, measures 132mm high by 80 mm wide. It carries a red enamel lion rampant against a white enamel cross all placed within a shield which in turn is flanked by an intertwining thistle design and topped by a crown. BURGH OF ALYTH is picked out in red enamel on a band above the central shield.

The badge is engraved on the reverse "Gifted to the Town Council for the use of the Provost by the late Charles Duncan Mitchell JP, Registrar and Burgh Procurator, Alyth, 1952". The names and dates of office of the following Provosts are recorded on the links in the chain: James Low (1950-56), David Sim (1956-59), Margaret L E Cargill (1959-63), William S Haldane (1963-64), David I Donaldson (1964-68), George P Beats (1968-72) and Robert Ball (1972- ).

On local government reorganization in 1975 the civic regalia, minute books and such like from the former small burghs were transferred to the new Perth & Kinross District Council as successor authority. The Alyth regalia and robes were included in this transfer.

Perth & Kinross District Council resolved, in recognition of the historic symbolism, importance and value of these pieces of civic regalia that they be transferred to the care of Perth Museum and Art Gallery in perpetuity, but agreed to consider any request for the chains to be displayed in the former small burghs on special occasions, subject to satisfactory security arrangements being made. Such requests to temporarily display civic regalia have been made and honoured since 1978.

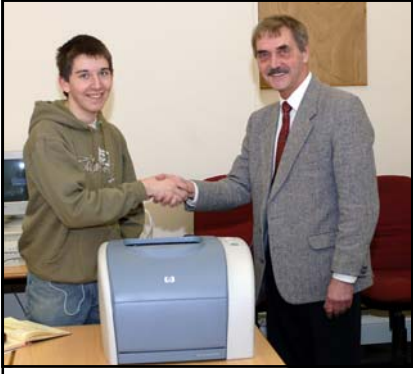
Interestingly around 1975 it appears that there was also a plan to remove a couple of links from the chains of office of all the former small burghs in Perth & Kinross, Angus and Dundee, to be incorporated into a new chain of office for the Convenor of the newly created Tayside Regional Council, but such a composite chain was never made.

The Alyth robes and civic regalia were formerly displayed in Alyth Museum. They were removed from display however following the theft of the Provost's chain in June 1989. This was one of a number of actual and attempted thefts of civic regalia which took place around the country at this time. Fortunately Tayside Police were successful in recovering the Alyth chain.

A further factor in removing them from permanent display lies in the nature of the robes themselves. Red is a notorious colour which is highly vulnerable to fading. Their organic nature also requires care to be taken with how they are displayed, to ensure that they continue to be available for study for many years to come.

*Robin Rodger, Heritage Manager  
Perth Museum & Art Gallery*

## SCYD GET INVOLVED IN THE NEIGHBOURHOOD



L-R: Kyle Beatson (SCYD), Bob Farquharson (Chairman of EPNWA). Image by Craig Cantwell.

AT the quarterly meeting of East Perthshire Neighbourhood Watch Association in Blairgowrie Police Station on Monday 15<sup>th</sup> January, Chairman Bob Farquharson presented Kyle Beatson of the Strathmore Centre for Youth Dialogue, with a colour laserjet printer. SCYD gave a presentation to EPNWA members in October 2006, and through discussion the two organisations have come together to launch a Neighbourhood Watch leaflet

for members. SCYD's young people have agreed to organise and print the leaflet on EPNWA's behalf, which will be launched at the EPNWA AGM in May. For more details of the leaflet or becoming a Neighbourhood Watch member, contact any Community Safety Officer at Blairgowrie Police Station. Anyone interested in what SCYD has to offer, pop into the centre in Leslie Street.

### \*\*\* ALYTH NEIGHBOURS CAN YOU HELP? \*\*\*

A number of areas in Alyth are lacking in Neighbourhood Watches, particularly the new house developments - would you be willing to set up a watch in your area? Or would you like to become a member? With insurance discounts, and many other benefits, what have you to lose? See the main Police Report on page 16 for further details.

## BLAIRGOWRIE & DISTRICT NEXT STEPS

BLAIRGOWRIE and District Next Steps walking group celebrated another year of success at its annual awards dinner held at The Old Cross in Rattray. Participants were presented with achievement certificates by walk leader Nick Cole. Since starting in May 2005 the group has collectively walked a total of 5,016 miles, and climbed 811,000 feet! This year it has done 2,960 miles and 488,200 feet. In addition to these significant feats, a team also completed the inaugural Jock's Road challenge with a combined age of 667, average of over 60, completing the 13 mile route an hour quicker than the next and much younger team. The group also played a significant part in this year's Walking Festival by providing walk leaders and first aiders on many of the walks.

On top of all this, 12 members have walked the entire Cateran Trail and off-shoot routes. BaDNS is an off-shoot of the popular weekly Stride for Life programme enabling walkers to undertake more challenges in more interesting and scenic environments around East Perthshire and in all weathers! More details can be found on their website at [www.badns.org](http://www.badns.org). Activities planned for 2007 involve climbing the Corbetts and Grahams around the area, map reading, first aid and some other associated events.

If you require any further information please contact Sue or Nick Cole on 01828 640763.

**31 Cambridge Street, Alyth**  
27<sup>th</sup> November 2006

DEAR Alyth Voice,

May I through the medium of your columns offer congratulations and thanks to all the volunteers, by once again providing an excellent display of Christmas illuminations throughout our main thoroughfare, and along the Burn side, and of course the householders en-route for their displays, thus providing a real community effort.

Our town motto 'A licht abune' is very apt indeed. Someone said at one time 'Let there be light'. Yes, at this time, this indeed has been truly answered.

**Mr. Robert A. Ball**

## ALYTH CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

THE Alyth Christmas lights were once again the focal point for the town during Christmas time. Without doubt, the Christmas lights contribute to the festive feeling in the town and we are lucky in Alyth to have so many local residents and businesses who give selflessly of their time, money and effort to make such an impressive show.

I believe that Alyth must be one of the best communities in Scotland in coming together and putting on events for local people. I would like to pass on my thanks to Dennis Melloy and all the team involved with the Alyth Christmas lights.

**Murdo Fraser, MSP**

## THE WIND AND THE WOODPECKER

WHILE feeding the boars one morning between Christmas and the New Year I was astonished to hear a Greater Spotted Woodpecker drumming. Generally they don't drum before February, but there it was and there could be no doubt about it. Ten days or so later I heard a song thrush singing in the morning.

The New Year arrived in a blast of mild wind. Driving home from a New Year's Eve party in the early hours of Monday, 1<sup>st</sup> January 2007, we found a carpet of twigs and branches littering the Bamff road. A couple of miles further on a blown tree had just been cleared. Further on again, by the Mill of Fyal, we crept under a beech that had fallen across the road. We drove on, determined to reach home, only to see a great fir, stretched before us in our car's headlights. Nothing for it but to reverse and try the farm road, which, too, was blocked. We abandoned the car and walked through the dark, mild night. The wind had dropped and the rain had ceased for the time being, so we had little to regret as we clambered in our finery through the branches of the fallen beech and over the recumbent trunk of a fine straight oak, and so eventually reached home.

In the morning I saw that the pigs had seized the opportunity of the Hogmanay gale to slip under the fences prised up by the roots of the blown trees. Since then some pigs have returned and we expect to lure the rest back in due course. For the meantime ca' canny as you drive up and down the Glenshee road (C464).

In one of his journals, John Muir described the excitement of climbing to the top of a giant redwood to see what it was like to be a tree in a storm. By way of contrast, my hair fell out when the wind of 13<sup>th</sup> February 1989 blew down a lot of our trees here. Since then I have become more fatalistic in accepting the power of winds over the woods, recognising that the chaos of nature calls for sudden and extraordinary change from time to time. Blown trees will let in light to allow new growth in the ground flora and light demanding shrubs and trees. Dead wood will make a home for mosses and lichens to live on, will feed invertebrates and provide rotten wood for woodpeckers to make their holes in. Prostrate trunks and flattened branches create a new dimension for the wood, particularly if it is a plantation. An under storey has been added that will provide shelter for song thrushes and hiding places: lynx like to leap on their prey from fallen tree trunks. Besides, fallen trees are not necessarily dead trees. The difficulty arises when we grow trees in plantations as crops and demand industrial uniformity for ease of exploitation.

Chaotic events in nature and our acceptance of them as natural events are one thing, but what we have done in the last two hundred years of industrialization, and our consequent, unconscious promotion of climatic change, is to add our own distortions and exaggerations to nature's discordant harmony. What was that woodpecker doing drumming between Christmas and the New Year? What business had the thrush to sing so early?

Harry Eyres put it very well in his article in the Financial Times of 6<sup>th</sup> of January ('I wish everyone would stop and listen to woody' in which he describes hearing a woodpecker drumming in his street in London during the first week of January this year). 'That insistent tapping is telling us that the harmony of seasons and species - times for mating, feeding - is slipping out of joint'.

Let us hope that 2006 really was the year in which governments and people understood, at last, the reality of climate change and the urgent need to limit and contain it. **Paul Ramsay**

## CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

A BIG thank you for making Alyth so lovely with the Christmas Lights. A big thank you to all the hard work the workers did, the result is hard to beat. Thank you to all. **Alyth Pensioner**

## ROYAL COLLECTION GIFTED

THE unique collection of photographs on display in Alyth Library window until recently, capturing the unveiling of Alfred Anderson's cairn last October, attended by TRHs The Duke and Duchess of Rothesay, has been generously donated to the Alyth Voice by Randolph Caughie. Local Royal photographer Randolph, was the only authorised photographer at the Town Hall reception, and therefore no other photos exist of this wonderful and exciting visit by Prince Charles and his wife, Camilla. Tight security restrictions have meant that few photos are available of the whole event on 1st October, but now thanks to Randolph's generosity, the Voice has a full compliment of memories from that historic day. The Voice team are currently in discussion about how best to display and/or preserve these photos for current and future generations to enjoy.

*Copies can still be ordered from Randolph Photography  
Tel: 01828-632849 with £1/print donated to Voice funds.*



## A HISTORY OF ALYTH

THE small settlement of Alyth developed at the junction of Glen Isla in the Grampian foothills and the rich agricultural lands of Strathmore. The area is studded with prehistoric sites, notably the Iron Age fort on nearby Barry Hill and the impressive remains of Pictish civilisation down to the 9<sup>th</sup> century AD. With the coming of Christianity a church was established in Alyth, ascribed to the Irish missionary, St Moluag, some time between 562 and his death 30 years later. The ruins of the later church buildings, and the distinctive arches, remain a feature of medieval Alyth on the hill overlooking Alyth Burn and the modern lower town.

The church was dedicated to Moluag and the main annual fair in his honour (the Simmalogue Fair) was held every 25<sup>th</sup> June (as it happens, the birth date of Alfred Anderson) in the nearby Woolmarket, the latter name signifying the importance of the pastoral and wool-based economy to the growing town. It also lay at the edge of the Forest of Alyth, the location of royal hunting expeditions, notably by William the Lion and Robert the Bruce, who signed charters at Alyth during their respective visits in 1201 and 1326. Royal castles were sited at Inverqueich just north of the town and another at Corb in the Forest. In 1488 Alyth was created a Burgh of Barony by James IV which bestowed greater commercial advantages.

From the mid-15<sup>th</sup> century the lands and Barony of Alyth passed from the Lindsay Earls of Crawford into the hands of the local Ogilvy family, and from 1624 the Airlie branch represented today by the Earl of Airlie, Baron Ogilvy of Alyth and Lintrathen, of Cortachy near Kirriemuir. Another notable family, the Ramsays of Bamff whose forebear, physician to King Alexander II, was awarded lands around Alyth in 1232, also remain active locally. Prominent landowners and their local retainers were occasionally involved in repelling bands of Highland caterans (lit. *warriors*) involved in cattle stealing. Little of note occurred during the turbulent years of the Reformation, although the church was further remodelled in the late 16<sup>th</sup> century to cope with a growing congregation; and a parish school was first established in the town in 1623.

The most dramatic event in the history of Alyth occurred during the years of civil and religious strife in the mid-17<sup>th</sup> century, known as the 'Onfall of Alyth' (28<sup>th</sup> August 1651). The town was chosen as the rendezvous for the Committee of Estates, effectively the Scottish government, to organise resistance to the English Parliamentary invasion forces under General Monck, then besieging Dundee. The Committee was betrayed and surprised by a force of 500 cavalry, and in the fighting that ensued the Earl of Crawford, the Earl Marischal and other prominent persons, including the Minister of Alyth, were captured and sent to the Tower of London.

Alyth was not immune to the widespread difficult economic conditions later in the 17<sup>th</sup> century and the years following the Act of Union in 1707. Various local families were involved in the Jacobite rebellions, and the Stuart standard was raised on a prominent hill behind the town in 1715, thereafter known as Loyal Hill. Alyth began to thrive once again in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century, increasing in population from 555 in 1774 to 1060 in 1792. As Thomas Pennant remarked on passing through the adjoining parish of Meigle in 1772, 'improvements in agriculture, and in making good roads, go on most prosperously', the richer soils of Strathmore given over to grain and potatoes and improved varieties of grass for pasture. Common lands were increasingly engrossed as part of the agricultural improvements from the 18<sup>th</sup> century, although friction between townfolk and local landowners has remained to this day over attempts to divide the common (legally held land with multiple owners) of the Hill of Alyth, which is a rare survivor in Scotland.

Although there were years of bad harvests, the period of war with France was generally prosperous and the manufacture of coarse brown linens (from locally-grown flax) brought good prices, which fell sharply again when peace arrived in 1815. A link with this period remains in the form of a church bell, cast at Quimper in Brittany in 1789 for 'St. Tay, in the parish of Poullan, not far from Brest'. It was captured in 1810 from the French frigate *Necessité* which had been taken by HMS *Horatio* and was sent to Alyth by John Warden of the *Horatio*, a son of the owner of the Bamff Arms. Correspondence survives between him and James McNicoll giving an account of the action and presenting the bell to his fellow citizens. This gift to the town remains on display in Alyth town hall.

After the post-war depression Alyth's prosperity again increased and its population rose to 1,846 by 1841. It became a police burgh in 1834 and the lower part of Alyth, south of the burn, was laid out and developed along the line of Airlie Street, with new houses and shops reaching

as far as the modern war memorial on Market Muir by 1861. The new handsome parish kirk was completed in 1839 seating 1,290; and an Episcopal Church in 1856 (within living memory occasionally used by Elizabeth Bowes-Lyon of Glamis, later the Queen Mother). In 1861 a railway was completed down to the main Strathmore line at Alyth Junction and new factories were established, resulting in the end of handloom weaving in the town. In the early 1880s the *Ordnance Gazetteer of Scotland* reported: 'the manufacture of brown and other linens is the staple industry, employing two mills, one of which, Smith & Sons (1873), to flax adds jute spinning ... and there is also a woollen factory'. Smith's mill alone employed 350 people from a population that reached 2,377 in 1881.

A fine public school was built in 1885 and the grand town hall was completed in 1887. At the time of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, a public park was presented to the town by the Earl of Airlie. Many pageants (for example at the time of the Coronation of King George VI) and town galas have been held in this park. A public library had already been established in the Ogilvy rooms. The local beauty spot, the Den o' Alyth, was given to the town in 1923.

Many other improvements accompanied the prosperous Victorian and Edwardian years. Increased leisure time and better transport links encouraged the emergence of pursuits such as golf (Alyth Golf Club 1892) and curling as well as hunting, shooting and fishing, attracting holiday-makers to Alyth's new hotels. The growth of car ownership helped but ultimately the competition of road transport undermined the railway that had done so much to boost trade, agriculture and tourism. Passenger trains ceased to run in 1951 and the line closed in 1965. Since the Second World War Alyth's role as a retail centre has suffered, the mills, laundry, sawmill and other businesses have closed and the population fell. In 1975 Alyth's town council was abolished as part of the wider switch to regional local government.

Agriculture remains an important part of the local economy of the parish. In the town the main former mill building houses a thriving vehicle restoration business, and with other garages, small shops and mainly service businesses, the primary school and health centre form the backbone of local employment. Others commute to work elsewhere.

Today, Alyth is a thriving community with many cultural societies (the Alyth Choral Union, the Musical Society, the Literary Society, the Alyth & District Pipe Band), youth organisations, and voluntary associations. It is a warm and friendly place where everyone greets each other in the streets; its shops, despite many closures, remain more prosperous than in many towns of similar size. It boasts a voluntary free paper of high quality, the *Alyth Voice*, which is delivered to 1,600 homes in Alyth and the surrounding villages. Alfred Anderson, who had worked on houses in the town as early as the 1920s, moved to Alyth to spend the last quarter-century of his long life here. He immediately became a cherished and much-loved citizen.

**Nigel Dalziel  
John MacKenzie**

*'A History of Alyth' was written as part of the brief given to TRHs The Duke & Duchess of Rothesay prior to their visit in October 2006. It has been framed and hangs as part of the history display in the Town Hall.*



*The winning window display in The Property Shop, A. & R. Robertson & Black, 11 Airlie St., which won first prize in ADBA's Christmas Competition.*



## DON'T GIVE FIRE A CHANCE

ROY DAVIDSON of Tayside Fire and Rescue said, "In the UK as a whole, smoking materials are the biggest cause of fire death within the home. On average, 120 people per year, lose their lives in fires which are directly attributable to smoking materials."

"The New Year would be a good time to consider giving up smoking and reduce your chances of becoming another fire statistic during 2007"

### THE FACTS

Smoking materials are the biggest cause of fire related deaths in the home; nearly a third of all households include a smoker and these households are nearly 35% more likely to have a fire than non-smoking homes; whilst a packet of 20 cigarettes costs £4.89 (on average) the average damage caused by a house fire costs £25,500 (The Economic Cost of Fire). Quite a price to pay for carelessness; in the UK between 2000 and 2005 there were on average 120 deaths per year in accidental home fires caused by smoking materials. Never leave lit smoking materials unattended and make sure they are fully extinguished when finished – Put It Out, Right Out!

Smoking causes around 5,500 house fires every year in the UK - these fires have killed more than 1,500 people and injured over 20,000 people in the last 10 years - these fires are more likely to happen at night – between 10pm and 3am - men are twice as likely to be victims as women - every year, smoking materials cause 1 in every 3 deaths of children under 16 - they injure another 500 children, every year.

### BEATING THE TREND

If you leave a cigarette, a cigar or a pipe burning on the edge of an ash-tray it can easily fall. If it falls onto a chair, newspaper, or clothing, it can start the material smouldering without you realising. And it can smoulder for a long time before a serious fire starts. Never walk away from smoking materials when they're burning – not even for a second. Make sure that cigarettes and cigars are properly stubbed out in an ash-tray – and pipes are emptied before you leave the room. Never smoke in an armchair when you're tired or feeling drowsy. It can be fatal, especially if you have been drinking or you are using drugs. Always empty ashtrays. Pour water over cigarette ends before putting them in the bin outside. Never – ever – smoke in bed. You might not wake up!

**Lighters** - Children are curious. They like to experiment. But they're not always old enough to realise the dangers. Fires are often caused by children playing with matches and lighters that have been left lying around the house. Every year, children are killed or injured.

It only needs a child to be left on their own for a few minutes with a lighter or a box of matches for a serious blaze to start. Check that your matches and lighters are not left lying around. Check that you only use one disposable lighter at a time. Check that you always put out matches properly. Check that lighters are child-resistant and matches are kept in child-resistant containers. Do you know where your matches and lighters are just now?

## ALYTH MUSICAL SOCIETY

**BLUEBEARD** - Well 2007 has commenced and we are into the run up to this year's show. Many of you will no doubt be saying, 'Never heard of it!' when you learn of the production. Well that's because it is a brand new show written by the company's Producer and Musical Director, John White and Colin Grant. This means that in April, Alyth Musical Society will be putting on a world premiere. Whether we can get the red carpet out and A-list celebrities attending is doubtful, but it is hoped that once again the Alyth public will support the Society and come along in large numbers to see this new musical.

The story revolves around the old children's gruesome story of 'Bluebeard'. Stories for children may now be much more sanitised but the tale of Count Giles de Rais, 'Bluebeard' gripped many youngsters in the past and some of you may in fact have been told or read the tale.

Our version is adapted from the story and features around 28 songs with a cast of over 30 on stage. New faces will also appear on the stage along with many stalwarts of the Society to bring you a gripping tale of a hero's fight to save the woman he loves from the evil machinations of the Count. For more details go to [www.alythmusical.com](http://www.alythmusical.com) *John White*

## OLD MUSEUM PHOTOS

THE Voice is delighted to receive a copy of 20 old Alyth photos which were displayed on the Alyth Museum stand at the 'Better Place to Live Fair' in the Town Hall in October. Many thanks to Paul Prettyman for organising the donation of these photos from the Museum. We look forward to jogging some memories in future editions of the Voice!

Part four of Peter Webster's epistle...

## MY MEMOIRS OF ALYTH

Remember once getting to go inside the carpet factory and watching, fascinated by the giant machines at work. The foreman kindly explained the web and the waft to me as the shuttlecock whizzed back and forth. Then there was the old smiddy where horses still got shod. Well recall in 1961 taking a black and white photo with my old Box Brownie Camera, on the brae up to Kilry, of a farmer with two Clydesdale horses ploughing his field. He was expert at it and the furrow was as straight as any Massey Ferguson could do. In those days tractors ran on two fuels and had a double headed feeder to the carburettor shaped like an egg timer. The tractor started on petrol then the glass was turned in the opposite direction so that it would run on the cheaper paraffin.

Saturdays we often took the bus to Blairgowrie and would go to one of the cinemas or for a walk up the Ericht by Cargill's Leap and the Falls of Freuchie, then on past the mills that were still thriving before returning via Rattray. Blairgowrie was an industrious town in those days too and the noise from the mills could be heard over a wide area. Occasionally we would go into Dundee. As I got older my father would take me to a football match while my mother went round the shops.

Only once did we take the train to Dundee – a totally unique experience. My memory, somewhat vague of the train, was that it only had two coaches, pulled of course by a steam engine. It first left the station at 10am. I say first deliberately as there was a signal about a mile down the line that suddenly dropped to red and the train ground abruptly to a halt before reversing back to the station. Almost everyone on board roared disapproval as a late passenger got on with a red face before the train then started off again. This performance happened several more times and each time the ribbing given to the latecomer got louder until eventually everyone cheered as the signal stayed at green and we headed towards Dundee. It stopped for ages at Alyth Junction while it waited on the Aberdeen train and then again for some lesser known reason at Newtyle and took over two hours to reach Dundee.

We once took the bus to Glenisla. It carried more goods than it ever did passengers and started from the Railway Station at 8.00 am stopping at Edwards the Grocers & Bakers, Lunans the Newsagents, the Post Office to collect the mail and parcels, and Sim the Ironmonger. This bus service, was in those days, the backbone of the supply chain to the Glen and the roof rack would be laden to overflowing with everything including the occasional kitchen sink before drawing into the centre of The Square to collect any wayward traveller that may have strayed into its wake. It left at, 'around 9.30am' and we reached Glenisla by lunchtime having discharged most of its load en-route. As it went up via Blacklunnans and Forter it still had some packages left to deliver on the road back via Lintrathen. We were going to visit Aunt Annie Galloway who was the School Mistress at the tiny Glenisla School for a number of years before she moved in the mid 50s to a larger single manned school on the outskirts of Forfar. Unfortunately, she went blind at the end of that decade and was forced to retire from teaching. She moved to Prestwick where she resided until she died about twenty years ago. Annie, the youngest of the eight Galloway offspring, retained her spirit and would often travel by rail to a friend of hers in Fife, undaunted by the fact that she was blind. *Continued next month...*

## ALYTH CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 200 Club

### DECEMBER 2006 Winners

£50 No. 62 Mr. J Aitken

£30 No. 119 Mrs. L McLean

£20 No. 173 Mrs. L. Gordon

### JANUARY 2007 Winners

£50 No. 54 Mr. & Mrs. J. Smith

£30 No. 102 Mr. G. Fleming

£20 No. 195 Mrs. B. Thomson

## ALYTH VOICE A.G.M.

The Voice AGM took place on November 21st 2006 in The Burnside Inn, Mill Street. The Office bearers and committee remain the same. A smaller number of Voiceteers attended to enjoy the buffet and social evening. The Voice would like to thank The Burnside Inn for the buffet and wonderful open coal fire on what was a rather chilly night!

## ALYTH OUT OF SCHOOL CLUB UPDATE

**Race Night** ON behalf of the Alyth Out of School Club, I would like to thank the following people for their kind donations and sponsorship towards our race

night on Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> December which raised a grand total of **£621.47**. Airlie Street Bar/Thistle Lounge, Paul's Spar Store, Meg's Mini Market, Alyth Pet Shop, Sheer Success, Pete Wishart MP, Ian Hughton MEP, Colin Sidley Driving School, John Swinney MSP, Councillor Ian Miller, Sims Ironmongers, Cost Cutters, Hobbies, Blackbird Inn, Pirie Butchers, Dorward's Butchers, Mike Weir MP, Colin and Cathy Ford, Scotmid, Tesco. Special thanks to the Valentine's for the use of the Lounge and to our bookies Rab Kidd and Davie Chalmers.

**Basketball Presentation** ON Monday 11<sup>th</sup> December, Alyth Out of School Care Group held a presentation for the children who attended a six week block of basketball, coached by Paul MacFarlane of Alyth Youth Partnership. The children received a medal and a certificate. We would like to say a big thank you to Paul for kindly volunteering to coach the basketball every week.

*Catherine Chalmers, Play Leader* (Mob: 07718573511 Email: oosc@alyth.pkc.sch.uk)

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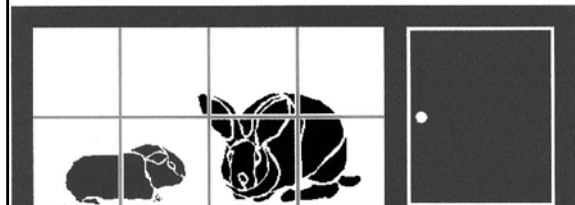
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 Alyth

**Tel: 01828 632252**



**Back:** Paul McFarlane AYP **Middle:** Jack Dickson, Ruth Saunders, Liam McPherson, Louise Dickson **Front:** Arran Fraser, Rhys Fraser, Jason Milne, Cameron McKinley, Brandon Scofield, Cameron Fraser

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## ALYTH YOUTH PARTNERSHIP UPDATE

ON Thursday the 9th of November, Alyth Youth Partnership held a very successful Bingo Tea in the Alyth Town Hall. The packed hall, full of enthusiasts, made for a special evening for all involved. Although a new venture to some of the committee, all ages - young and old - had hands on deck for what was a night full of winners. Prizes varied from Coffee Makers to Freeview Boxes, and all prizes were well received. A special mention goes out to Shona, Audrey and Jenny for all their hard work. The total raised was just over **£400**. OUR sincere thanks to Alyth Community Council for a £200 cheque, proceeds from the wonderful concert they held, with Morrison's Swing Band. It will go towards the funds for the Girls Group - held on a Thursday Night, in the Community Wing of Alyth Primary School. EVERYONE at Alyth Youth Partnership would like to send sincere thanks to all the Community Groups and individuals who have supported us over the last year. We look forward to a bright and successful year ahead. Plenty for us to do!

Best wishes, *Ashley Kennedy, Chairperson* (Mob: 07875 216 559)

## From LONDON to LOCHSIDE and RIVERSIDE

GAIL & Graham Riley are not ones to rest on their laurels. Chef Graham has worked for hotel groups in South Africa, Bermuda and Glasgow, then latterly in London for 6 years as Executive Chef at the Millennium Gloucester Hotel, so to leave the rat-race and settle in rural Angus, must have been something of a culture shock. Since December 2000, they have built up Lochside Lodge & Roundhouse beside Lintrathen Loch to a very high standard, and their latest venture is to bring daytime fine dining into the heart of Blairgowrie.

The Antiquary is situated in Roy Sim's Antique Warehouse on Lower Mill Street (beside the River Erich) and the atmosphere is fresh and welcoming. Open daily the modern menu has something for everyone. From breakfast, morning coffee and pastries, to soup & a sandwich, a full lunch or afternoon tea, the



*Above: The Antiquary interior*

best of local produce is used in a mouth watering array of dishes such as Rannoch Smoked Breast of Duck with Toffee Peanuts & Chilli Salsa or Twice Cooked Belly of Perthshire Pork with Truffle Flavoured Mash & Red Onion.

The Antiquary welcomes children with a separate selection on the menu, and the disabled facilities are excellent with easy parking and accessible entrance. If you haven't sampled Graham Riley's cuisine yet at either restaurant, it's well worth a visit! **\*\*\*Until the end of March 2007 (excluding Mother's Day 18<sup>th</sup> March), The Antiquary are offering Alyth Voice readers a 10% discount on presentation of this article.\*\*\***

## LOCHSIDE LODGE & Roundhouse Restaurant

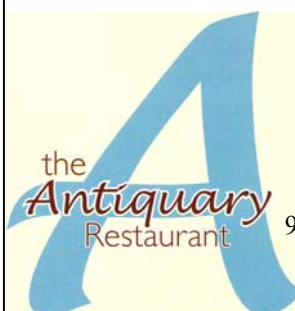
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*Alongside Lintrathen Loch, just 10 minutes from Alyth, Lochside Lodge & Roundhouse Restaurant is an ideal venue whether for Lunch or Dinner - our menus are modern and imaginative using the best of Perthshire & Angus produce, beautifully created and presented.*

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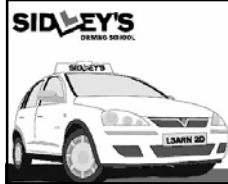
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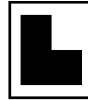
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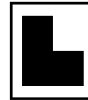
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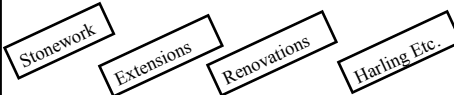
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## FIRST-FOOT

NORMALLY (as we discovered many others do!) at Hogmanay we put out the lights, sit in the dark watching TV, and go to bed after midnight – sometimes – before. Gone are the nights o' gathering in the City Square; buying gaudily dressed in crepe kippers at buster stalls; missing the last tram; and then first footing hospitable and friendly strangers frae the Sinderins tae the Stobie and back again!

Thus, it was, this New Year's Eve, different and sobering, tae party at a Blairgowrie friend's hoose amid a dozen or so folk (including Canadian, English and Danish) with the gales outside blowing down trees and wheelie bins. En-route home around 2am we passed (or did they pass us?) several speedy polis cars and then a tractor wi' men wi' brushes and shovels hard at it clearing debris frae a fallin' tree. We sneaked into the hoose not to alert/waken those twa dugs wha thocht we were a-bed upstairs. Now we still await wir first-foot – on this 2<sup>nd</sup> January afternoon. Sobering times, but guid.

Mind ye, I enjoy the clear, non-thumping head, and can now get struck into/immersed in my Christmas presents of books. Tae alleviate the 3 inch thick tome of Bill Clinton's 'Life', I have also enjoyed 'Queen among the Heather' by S. Stewart, 'Consequences of Marriage' by I. Dewar, 'Wings of the Morning' by K. MacVicar, 'Time Tram-Dundee' by M. Fitt – and now I'm back in my childhood with 'Voices in the Street' by M. Reynolds. Maybe, I should visit the Scout BookFest again!

What else to do? Chores are irrelevant! Frozen pipes are sorted. Bottles & cards have been recycled. Carpets have been again shampooed and two thrown out this time, but before new floorboards were needed, a dog-cage (from Alyth Pet Store, of course!) has been acquired – for night-time only.

Now that these twa Yorkies, at long last, are toilet-trained, thanks to much perseverance, Izal and that cage, what else is there to do? So it's back to my books until our first-foot! *Josi F', Top o' Toon*

## AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH?

LOUISE Ramsay from the Green Party, writing in December's Voice, is quite entitled to take a different view from me on the over-development of onshore wind farms, and in particular on Drumderg. What she is not entitled to do, however, is misrepresent my views and suggest that I have changed my stance on the matter.

It is not a new argument on my part to say that onshore wind farm development will take money away from other forms of renewable energy, such as tidal or wave. A little bit of basic research on Louise's part before she rushed to print would show that this is a case I have been making for years. Indeed, such a view formed part of the conclusions of the Scottish Parliament's cross-party Enterprise & Culture Committee (of which I am a member) in a unanimous report in renewable energy which was published back in June 2004.

Interestingly, the membership of that Committee included a Green Party MSP, Chris Balance, who was also happy to sign up to this conclusion. Perhaps the Greens are the ones who are changing their minds?

In reality, the threat of climate change is too important an issue to become a party political football. We must all do our bit to help reduce carbon emissions. I admit to being sceptical about the extent to which these onshore wind farms we see constructed will actually make a contribution, and I know that many in the environmentalist movement privately share my concerns. It would be a real tragedy if we thought that by putting up with a few wind turbines we were 'doing our bit' and there was no need for further action. *Murdo Fraser MSP*

## ALYTH & DISTRICT PIPE BAND

ON Saturday 20th January, nine members of the Alyth & District Pipe Band entered the Junior Piping & Drumming Contest, held at Pitlochry High School by Robert Wiseman Dairies Vale of Atholl Pipe Band. Although we did not win any 'firsts', the band members won a total of six medals! Not bad for a 'band' that did not exist a year ago!!

Well done to the medal winners; Catherine Gordon, Michael Brodie, Hamish Simpson, Jordan Urquhart, Kieran Smith and Andrew Baillie.

*Jackie Macintyre, Secretary*

ALYTH & DISTRICT PIPE BAND

**COFFEE MORNING**

10th MARCH 2007

Airlie Street Hall

10am - 12noon ~ Usual stalls

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## Committed to Junior Golf Development New Initiative – FREE Tuition

Strathmore Golf Centre are pleased to announce the introduction of FREE Golf Lessons for their Junior Members, and heavily subsidised lessons for Juniors who are not members. The programme for 2007 will run from April to October on Friday evenings and Saturday mornings. Each session will last 1hr, and will be undertaken by Margot Smith, the resident PGA Professional at the Andy Lamb Golf Academy. Normal Junior tuition rates would be £30 per hour, but the subsidised rate for non-members is only £5 per hour! Current annual Junior membership fees at Strathmore Golf Centre are £47 for the Leithie Course and £105 for both Rannaleroch and Leithie Courses. Strathmore Golf Club membership fees for Juniors is only £5, which would allow Juniors to both gain and maintain a handicap, and enter Junior competitions. Members must join the Centre before becoming Club members. For further details, please call either David Norman or Jane Taylor on 01828 633322.

## Winter Restaurant Times Sample our hospitality!

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# Your Letters

**Don't have access to email?** Alyth Library is now offering **FREE** access to the Internet for SURFING the WEB/sending EMAILS. Visit the library for more details...

**Email: smith9923@bellsouth.net**

Mississippi, USA - 7<sup>th</sup> December 2006

DEAR Alyth Voice,

On behalf of my family in Scotland and England, please accept our heartfelt thanks for your voices of condolence following the death on November 10 and burial on the 17<sup>th</sup> of our beloved dad Jim MacKenzie of Damend, Alyth. My family were very concerned that Dad's school pal Tom Boyland would not know of Dad's passing. However, the Alyth Voice quieted our concerns and contacted Mr. Boyland in the Isle of Wight. Once again, thank you.

In addition, we extend our warmest wishes for another successful year at the Alyth Voice.

*Betty MacKenzie-Smith*

**High View, Wick End, Stagsden, Bedford, MK43 8TS - 23<sup>rd</sup> December 2006**

DEAR Alyth Voice,

We were making our annual visit to Alyth in the summer, and to the cemetery where my grandparents are buried. On previous visits, their graves have been tidied, and this year plants had obviously been put there only a few days prior to our visit.

I would really like to find out who has been to the graves, because as far as I know there are no relatives who would visit the cemetery, and I doubt if there are any local people now who would remember my grandmother, as she left Alyth in 1949. Any light you can shed on the anonymous person who has made this kind gesture, would be very welcome. I appreciate it so much and would like to thank them. I have puzzled over this for so long, it would be a relief to have an answer.

The headstone inscription is:

*In Loving Memory Of Alan Pithie Laird Beloved Husband Of Mary Moir Who Died 30<sup>th</sup> April 1938 Aged 66 Years Also His Son James Alexander Who Died 2<sup>nd</sup> March 1949 Aged 37 Years The Above Mary Moir Who Died 20<sup>th</sup> August 1965 Aged 85 Years*

Best wishes. Yours sincerely, *Mrs. P. Simms*

**Email: florence@fferguson.fsnet.co.uk**

Fife, 4<sup>th</sup> January 2007

DEAR Alyth Voice,

Happy New Year. I have had two responses from my letter in the last Voice. The two together have answered all my queries about locations in and around Alyth plus some info about the McGibbon family. Unfortunately nobody can add anything to what I already know about the Cownie family. Thank you for your help,

Regards, *Florence Ferguson (nee Cownie)*

## THANK YOU

A big thank you to Alyth Bakery for selling tickets for the Doll. It made **£39.50!** One Saturday I was in Airlie Street, and made £9.00 alone!! Thank you to everyone.

*Morag McArthur*

**41 Parkside Road, Alyth - 17<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

## THANK YOU

WE would like to thank friends and neighbours for all their help during the recent power cut over the New Year period and also especially the Borrett and Mitchell families for cooking us meals and the use of their facilities, their help was greatly appreciated.

*Anne & George Mathers*

**Email: e.conley@bigpond.net.au**

Australia, 31<sup>st</sup> December 2006

HELLO,

## 1928 School Photo

The C Hindmarsh mentioned in this photo is my late mother - Cecilia Norval Reid Hindmarsh. Eldest daughter of Doug & Margaret Hindmarsh who lived in Alyth for many years.

After World War II my mother married Thomas Aitchison and moved to Queensland, Australia. I was in Alyth last year and enjoyed the few days I spent there.

Thank you, *Eileen Conley (Nee Aitchison)*

**63 Brown Crescent, Thornton, Kirkcaldy KY1 4AB - 17th January 2007**

DEAR Alyth Voice,

Re: the picture of Alyth Primary Class 4 or 5 1949. First boy could be called ???? McLeod. His Mum had the Chippie. I am sure he is now the owner of the Burns Tavern in Kennoway, Fife. I found your website through Doreen Richmond who does the marvellous job of having school reunions every 5 years. The next one is in May and I'm so looking forward to it!

Cheers, *Isobel Maclean (nee Milne)*

**Grange of Aberbothrie,**

19<sup>th</sup> January 2007

## SERVITE HOMES

I AM concerned regarding the proposed building of a huge number of houses on Strathmore golf course. The golf course in its present form is an attractive addition to the valley and community. Pat Barron, the previous owner, spent a lot of time and effort planting trees etc, to ensure that the course blended into this beautiful valley, and he did a good job. The idea of ripping out semi-mature trees and destroying the natural habitats of many wild creatures, to build 80 plus houses, cannot be a step forward.

This is a rural area where the access roads are single track with passing places, and are full, to the point of being dangerous with golfing traffic, another 80 x 2 cars is unthinkable and unworkable. I understand that the countryside must change along with the need, but not for the sake of it, and not because someone buys a golf course in order to cover it with houses to make a quick profit.

I would urge the residents of Alyth and surrounding area to oppose this development.

*George Fleming*

**Email: GBSACIC66@aol.com**

Tennessee, USA

22<sup>nd</sup> December 2006

TO all my wonderful family and friends, I would like to take a moment and wish each and every one of you a very Happy New Year. I wish for you peace and joy throughout 2007. Be sure and remember, to remember and pray for our servicemen and women where-ever they may be all over the world. I plan to take Dad to Charleston, SC, again this year. We had a good time last year and he really enjoyed being able to get out and walk in the warm salt air. Just being above ground is a good present for him at 103 and counting!

You all take care, *Gerald Burns*

Parkside Road, Alyth

## THANK YOU

ON behalf of our local Army Cadet Force, I would like to thank every one who took the time to visit our sales table at the Airlie Street Hall on November 25<sup>th</sup> 2006, and gave so generously. Between sales and donations you boosted our funds by £100. The cadets meet on Tuesdays and Thursdays at the drill hall in Blairgowrie 7-9.30pm. If interested, why not pop along. Once again thank you. We wish everyone a good New Year.

*Mrs Joyce Duffy*

**Email: d.richmond@homecall.co.uk**

Airlie Street, Alyth

3<sup>rd</sup> January 2007

## SCHOOL REUNION

**11<sup>TH</sup> MAY 2007**

CAN I through the fabulous Alyth Voice tell all the ex-pupils that the next reunion is almost upon us - you know who you are - so get your rockin' shoes out, as its on the 11<sup>th</sup> May this year. Pass on the news to the friends who usually attend, and tell them their invitation will soon be dropping through their letter box.

For those of you who have never heard of our great reunion nights, we have one every five years. Our first one was in 1982 when we were all around forty! After having had four now, the ages of those joining us are very varied, some older, some younger than our sixty four/five years, but they all want to come and join in the fun and meet friends from the good old school days. I know lots of ex-pupils click onto the Voice website, so if you are interested in hearing more, email me.

They do not allow us to pack as many people into the Town Hall now, not like they did in our day (sardines come to mind), so get in touch ASAP if you want your name added to the list. I look forward to hearing from any ex-pupils out there.

Kind regards,

*Doreen Richmond (nee Allan)*

## Ian Miller Local Councillor. SURGERY AT ALYTH TOWN HALL

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## POLICE UPDATE

I HAVE previously mentioned through this column the aspect of being a good neighbour, and the small things that each of us can do to make our community a safer, better place to live.

**INSIDE POLICE** One of the more practical methods to foster good neighbour principles is the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. We have several areas of Alyth and New Alyth covered by NHW co-ordinators. The schemes are a great way of building community relations and working together with the police to reduce crime, fear of crime, and improve the quality of life in your area.

### What can Neighbourhood Watch schemes do?

They can target local crime problems and take action to prevent them. In consultation with the local police, they can find out from local people what crimes most concern and affect them, and focus on those specific problems. Most crime is opportunistic, committed on the spur of the moment, or when a car or house is left unlocked. This means there is enormous scope for reducing chances for criminals. Traditional Neighbourhood Watch activity has focused on the immediate vicinity of homes. However, more and more schemes are now broadening their range of work. Local problems such as combating anti-social behaviour, vandalism and graffiti are well within the scope of a well-organised Neighbourhood Watch scheme. You can also take action such as fitting more secure door and window locks in vulnerable homes.

### How to set up and run a scheme ?

If you would like to set up a Neighbourhood Watch scheme in your area, contact myself or Steve Brown at Blairgowrie Police station, who will give you further information. I look forward to hearing from you in the coming months.

**Mark Stewart, CCO** - Blair. 01250 872222 CRIMESTOPPERS 0800 555 111

**2, Westfield Park, Forfar - 9<sup>th</sup> January 2007**

DEAR Alyth Voice,

Further to my Aunt Kate's letter in December's issue (Kate & Tom Boyland, Isle of Wight), please find as follows some cairn history.

MacLennan's Gaelic/English dictionary states: 'CÀRN' (pronounced - karn) masculine noun, plurals are cùirn and càrnaichen - 1. a heap of stones; 2. a rocky hill or mountain; 3. cairn raised over the tombs of heroes; 'cuiridh mise clach ad chàrn-sa' meaning - I will put a stone in your cairn (or 'I will not forget you'): verb càrnadh - heap, pile, accumulate - example:- 'a' càrnadh airgid' meaning accumulating silver or wealth. Below 'CÀRN' in this book is 'CÀRN-CUIMHNE' (pronounced carn-coonyu) - A monument. A rude heap of stones is still built on the spot where anyone is found dead. To this heap the passer-by reverently adds a stone. ('Cuimhne' means in this case - memory - 'Memory cairn' which is what all modern cairns are about, and the word 'cuimhne' is conveniently dropped. 'Monument' and 'memorial' springs to mind.)

MacAlpine's dictionary: 'CÀRN' (Karn) - a heap of stones; cairn raised over the tombs of heroes; verb - exactly as MacLennan's book.

Ian Murray, in his book 'In the Shadow of Lochnagar' about fishing on the River Don, states "Moving on then from the Balmoral visitors' car park, we soon reach Balnault Cottages. Just past here, down by the riverside (Dee) we reach Càrn Na Cuimhne (cairn of assembly). Some say 'Cairn of Remembrance'. It is pronounced locally as 'Cairn na Queen'. This was the Farquharson clan's rallying point. They used to muster here before going off to battle. Each clansman took a stone from the river and laid it in a pile to form a cairn. When they returned from battle each man removed a stone (from the pile) and the stones that were left represented those who had died in battle. These were then taken and added to the main cairn."

All the best, **Jack Ogilvie**

PS In December's issue you kindly printed an old photo of mine, showing the girls on the ML Thomas lorry. I am not sure what the parade/procession was all about. King George V came to the throne in 1910 and died in 1936, so I am wondering if it was in respect of his and Queen Mary's silver jubilee in 1935, or in respect of Edward VIII becoming king in 1936 - can anyone unfangle that little lot?!

## ALYTH COMMUNITY COUNCIL

I HOPE that all of the Voice production crew, the distributors and the readers have had a good Christmas and New Year. The break was no doubt welcome, particularly for the Voice gang. It is the run up to the presentation of the Citizen and Young Citizen of the Year awards at the Volunteers' Party, to be held in the Town Hall, Sunday 4th February at 2pm. Many of you will be aware that the well-deserved winners of the trophies for 2007 are Seonaid Don and Danny Gow. Most of you will know Seonaid, as the quiet lady who works in the Post Office. Seonaid has been involved in community work for as many years as the Citizen of the Year trophy has been presented by the Community Council. I first came across Seonaid, in community work, at the founding of the Alyth Youth Partnership in 1996. She was its first treasurer. Since then and probably before, she has quietly beavered away behind the scenes of many of our community events, and is still seen at most coffee mornings selling raffle tickets. Danny Gow, as Young Citizen received glowing citations on the nomination papers sent into the Community Council. Among other things he is praised for his valuable work with the Alyth Youth Partnership and is a volunteer on the recently re-formed Gala Committee. A college student, it is remarkable that he fits in so much work helping his peers, and the adults leading them. When we send out invitations, we are aware that we cannot know of every person or group in the town who deserves to be asked along to the Volunteers' Party. If you feel your organisation has been left out, or you know of a deserving person who has not been invited, please contact the secretary, George Durance on 632934 or myself on 633287. We also plead, for catering reasons, that all who have been invited let us know they are coming! The Community Council at its last meeting regretted having to accept the resignation of Jenni Johnston. Jenni has moved to Murthly and we thank her for her work in 2006, and we wish her well. This means that we should have at least one new face after the May AGM to fill the vacancy. Members of the public are always welcome at our meetings. We meet in the Town Hall Chambers on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm. One of the other items on last month's agenda was consideration of the outline planning application by Loyal Leisure Ltd and Servite Housing for a very big development at, and close to, the Strathmore Golf Centre. The Community Council is raising questions on the adequacy of the access roads to the development, but otherwise expressed conditional approval. We will be keeping a close watching brief. **Jim Adam, Chairman**

## SCOUT REPORT

THE festive season has once more come and gone, and was duly observed by our charges with fun and frolics abounding at the Scout Hut. Both Cub and Beaver Leaders held parties for their sections. Traditional games like pass the parcel and musical chairs still enthral our members, a visit from Santa, and a feast fit to burst, were the order of the day - and long may it continue. I wonder if Santa filled up a Disclosure (Scotland) Form?? Address - Lapland? Occupation - part time philanthropist? Age - ?????

The Scout Troop settled for a DVD of The Pirates of the Caribbean... plus eats. I trust the guys didn't get too many ideas for pioneering projects from the film like a giant size waterwheel, although I must admit I wasn't too impressed with their knotting skills.

Using the books we had left over from the summer, we had the Scout Hut open for a BookFest for 24 hours over the holidays. We raised a further £400 for our Malawi project bringing out total fund-raising to an incredible **£3,200**. A further £800 and we will reach our target, so our sincere thanks to all who contributed books, money and/or time to achieve this.

Barry and Juultje have attended several training camps, the last two at Edinburgh and Leeds where they have been working with the rest of the team on practical projects, thus gaining skills needed to undertake the reconstruction of the Scout Centre in Malawi. Put it this way, if they can cook over an open fire in December in Auld Reekie, lighting a fire in southern Africa will be a dawdle!

The Fund Raising Committee have to set dates for the coming year and are undertaking the replacement of the outside stairs with a metal structure. Assistance in their endeavours will be greatly appreciated, the boys have a great deal to be thankful for as a result of their unstinting efforts.

The Scout Troop kicks off our Centenary Year with a Bring a Friend BBQ in the Scout Hut, and we have a swimming gala with other Scouts from the area before the month is out. Which reminds me... where did I put that form?

**Ron Kirkpatrick**

## YOUR MONEY OR YOUR LIFE?!

I COULD be forgiven for thinking a night at the Casino with the Scouts would be an occasion to get dressed up for, so when Ron Kirkpatrick announced it was in the Den, I reluctantly replaced my glad-rags with combats, hiking boots, etc, and boy was I glad! You may remember in a previous edition of the Voice, I innocently asked Ron to clarify what a 'Wide Game' entailed, never for one minute expecting to experience it first hand - a lesson learned!

On the night in question, it was lashing with rain, bitterly cold and very, very dark (although periodically the near full moon popped out to add its own eeriness to the darkness!). Having met at the Scout Hut to be divided into teams, the young Scouts showed great enthusiasm for playing outside - a phenomenon, which the press leads you to believe has been replaced by computer games, but I can verify, for this pack at least, this is not the case. With a distinct lack of adults, I was given the choice of being team referee or life giver - an easy decision, and off to the Den car park we went. Had I been told being the life giver would mean standing alone, in the dark, in the rain, being a referee would have instantly held more attraction! Firstly, let me explain the object of this particular Wide Game.

Each Scout is given a woollen life (a length of white wool tied to an arm by the Croupier aka me - the Life Giver), and a playing card taken from the top of the pack. He then takes it to his base (The Mob or the Mafia) and hands it over. Base leaders will only accept one card from each Scout, providing he still has his life. Scouts can either return to base and get another card from the top of the pile, or 'steal' from the opposition's base. Once inside a 3m radius circle he is safe. He can also pick which card he is to take, but can only take one and return it to his own base. Anyone having his life taken (normally by force in something akin to a rugby tackle!) must return to the Croupier and be given a new life before they can continue. Each card holds a numeric value, with picture cards gaining 12 points, while an Ace gains 15. Are you still with me?

So there I was, in the Den Car Park, dealing lives to each out-of-breath, wet, muddy, and very polite Scout. This is not a typo, they were all, without exception very polite about asking for a life or a card (perhaps it was the boot polish on my cheeks?!). And each one patiently waited while I tried in vain to tie the wool onto an arm with very cold hands! I now understand why the Police have been called on previous occasions, because the noise emanating from the bushes and each base, would easily be mistaken for grievous bodily harm (and judging from some of the tactics I witnessed, they weren't far wrong!). In case you're wondering, there were no casualties, everyone was still smiling at the end, and The Mob won!

Thank you to Ron and Norman West, and to each of the 16 Scouts present, for a memorable night. It was very obvious that the Scouts thoroughly enjoyed themselves, and that good old-fashioned playing is not out of date! I'm sure many of Alyth's school-age boys don't realise how much fun the Scouts can be - if you'd like to join or hear more about it, contact Ron Kirkpatrick on **01828 633962** or log onto [www.alythscouts.co.uk](http://www.alythscouts.co.uk)

**Irene Robertson**