

The Original

Moriston
Matters



June 05



*A Community newsletter
serving the residents & visitors
of Invermoriston and Glenmoriston*

No 69

40p

Dear Readers.

Here we are again, a year after our first combined effort to produce the new Original Moriston Matters. As you will have noticed, we brought out three editions during the year, instead of two, as we had originally intended - basically for two reasons: first, we felt that 6 - month - old reports of events in the Glen would be ancient history by the time you got around to reading them, and second, we actually received requests for a more frequently produced magazine!

We would like to extend our thanks to all our contributors, as well as our readers, and hope that you feel that the quality, as well as the quantity of material in this issue will justify your forking out yet another 40p!

Just a little more active participation on the part of some of you, though, in the form of letters, articles, poems, puzzles, etc wouldn't go amiss - and what about a few more entries in Alan's excellent crossword competition -it doesn't matter if you can't quite finish it - your entry could still be the best of the bunch!

But once again - thank you all for your continuing support. Our special thanks to Leslie for all her hard work on our first three issues.

Any contributions or comments on this addition and future additions please contact

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Letters to the Editor

At the beginning of March yet another enjoyable musical evening took place in the Invermoriston Hall. The variety and quality of the musical events since the hall was opened are a credit to the hardworking committee.

On this occasion traditional jazz from the Ness River Rhythm Kings produced an evening of fine music and beat to set feet tapping and take to the floor for a dance. The band's witty repartee and alternative verses to well-known songs added humour to the performance. A delicious Cajun supper greatly enhanced the enjoyment and the cafe-style arrangement of the tables provided a soft yesteryear ambience. I look forward to many more evenings of top quality entertainment in Invermoriston. **Dorothy MacKintosh. Banavie**

Got your Moriston Matters today, and read it from cover to cover. Very enjoyable. I think it is excellent. I was completely bowled over by "A Crabbit Old Woman" It reduced me to tears. What a piece it is. Heart searing. No name - they couldn't record her name on it. Shame on them As found it.

Theresa Nicholas. Corfu.

...It's all highly professional. I was particularly interested to read **of the** prolific plant and animal life at Alltsaigh.

Anne Curry. Gunnislake. Cornwall.

My Visit to Urquhart Castle

I saw a film show all about the castle and the battles, which were fought there. In the castle there was a dungeon where the prisoners were jailed, it was small, dark, gloomy and very scary.

Outside there was a great big catapult for battles and great big cannon balls up to my knees. We went up to the top of the tower and looked down at Loch Ness, which is twenty-three miles long.

Leon Swatman aged 7.

Andy Jackson Memorial Paddle 2nd /3rd April

Local folk were treated to a rare spectacle on Sunday 3rd April, when upwards of a hundred kayakers braved a descent of the trickier sections of whitewater on the River Moriston.

The occasion was a sad one, but also a memorable tribute to a man who could be said to have been Scotland's most eminent Kayaker ever. Andy Jackson died suddenly late last year aged just 33, of pneumonia following a number of years suffering from Brucellosis which he contracted whilst paddling in Nepal.

Andy was a true kayaking pioneer, setting many first descents of some of our gnarliest sections of whitewater and biggest waterfalls. He literally wrote the book on Scottish kayaking, having collaborated with his partner Bridget over years to produce the definitive guidebook to Scottish whitewater.

Andy was a true activist who worked hard to improve and defend Access to rivers for kayakers in Scotland, and was instrumental in securing paddlers rights in the Scottish Access Code. The other aspect of Andy's life was community work, where he improved the lives of young people in and around Fort William where he lived.

Andy's popularity and the shock at his death resulted in the memorial paddle - taking place. Following a Friday night Ceilidh, around 300 paddlers gathered at the River Carry on the Saturday and paid tribute in the way they knew best - paddling a river. Andy fought hard to maintain our access to. The Sunday saw those who could tackle the grade 4+ to 5 sections of our local river - not always upright, or even in their boat!

The weekend was a great success, without any injuries or any problems, and the paddlers who participated felt more than welcome. The Memorial Paddle may well now become an annual event!

Special thanks must go to the Heritage Group whose soup and cakes went down a storm after a hard day on the River, to Scottish Hydro who agreed to a special release from the dam, and to all local people who helped out or came to watch and made both days a success.



Mike Adams
Local paddler, Scottish Canoe Association
River Advisor for the R.Moriston

Glenmoriston Heritage Group

This may not be a name that members of this group particularly like - but it does have the advantage of giving an immediate impression of where its interests lie! Not that they spend too much time talking about heritage, though. The emphasis is definitely on ACTION: action on the heritage sites in Glenmoriston, which are in need of restoration, on Columba's Well, on the Falls Wood Summer House, on the Telford Bridge, on any other site that is brought to their attention.

Since the group started in February, Columba's Well has been the focus of attention, with work parties getting on their wellies and hard hats (and something easily washable in between) and clearing round the spring, redefining clogged waterways and picking up monumental amounts of litter. If you haven't looked recently, its worth a short walk past The Shop to see the square border of the Well, now surrounded by clean stones, the marsh marigolds (instead of discarded wrappers and cans) blooming beside clear burns, the leaves of the elms, delicately overhanging the site and - as a matter of historical interest, the "tank" which was dug in the 1920s to supply water to the old Hall. (The pumping from which was a labour of some magnitude, required of the Committee at that time.)

But, just in case it is thought that the Group is all action and no reflection, it should be noted that it does not exclude research into historical matters as a legitimate part of its remit. The recent talk on the biographical details of Saint Columba's life, interpreted with scholarship and humour by Cathy Fforde and ably illustrated with computer photography, was a wonderful trail-setter for more treats to come.

In addition to historical matters, a great deal of research into legal requirements and sources of practical and financial help have been undertaken. The aim is to "purchase" the land around Columba's Well from the present owners and take over public liability for it. Alan and Betty, who own the land, are willing to give it away but legal conveyancing and insurance require serious money. An annual subscription of £2.50 plus some generous private donations have helped considerably but grants and initiative have played a larger part. Secretary, Val Unglass, describes one such initiative.

RECIPE FOR SUCCESSFUL FUND RAISING

First Take

A group of volunteers and set on a low light to bake

Then add

The Andy Jackson Memorial weekend,

Two rivers (eg the Garry and the Moriston),

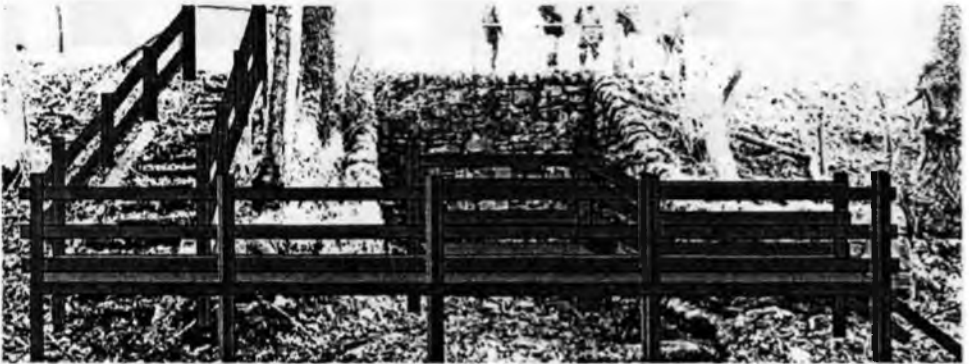
Followed by two hydro releases

And lots of kayakers.

Stir well with hundreds of paddles.

At the end of the Moriston, tip kayakers into a well-stocked Millennium Hall and watch as several litres of soup accompanied by dozens of bread rolls, slices of cake and oodles of tea and coffee are turned into another vital ingredient.....funds for the Heritage Group.

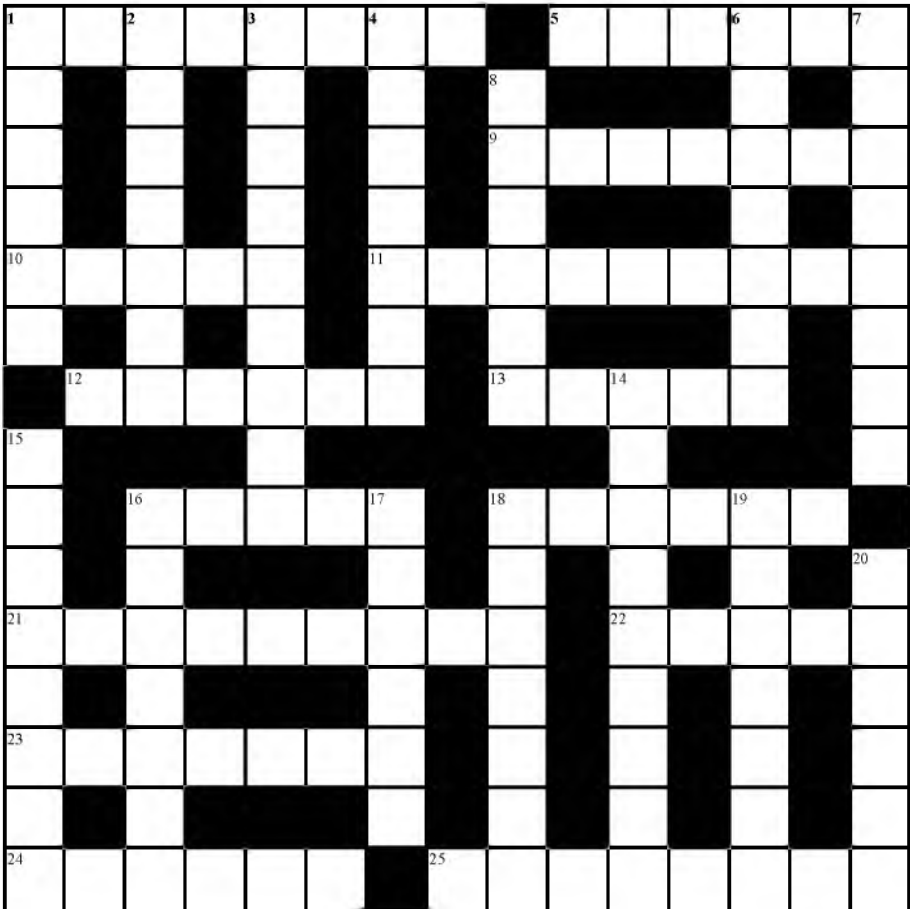
If sufficient cash can be accumulated, this is what it is anticipated the open-to-the-public renovation will look like.



LATEST NEWS on this front is that a grant from PRIN is imminent.

Its great to have a new and dynamic group active in the Glen and the editors offer their congratulations and best wishes. For anyone wanting to be more pro-active than this, contact Val on 01456 459083 or Mike on 01320 351228

CROSSWORD



ACROSS

1. Poorly billed. (3,2,3)
5. The Lotus Eater's staple diet. (6)
9. A ragman for example. (7)
10. Presented by the Admiral of the Fleet in the crow's nest. (5)
11. Presuming is not for them but could be the making of them. (9)
12. Flight directions to the ness. (6)
13. Cover the act with latent potential. (5)

16. Taking things the wrong way. (5)
18. Phrase seen from a different angle. (6)
21. Is it played to achieve atmosphere? (3,6)
22. A disease in about the sticks. (5)
23. Compose elegies. (7)
24. The hotter alternative. (6)
25. Humiliated because the act was about average. (8)

DOWN

1. Oetzi. (6)
2. Greyhounds? (7)
3. Sounds like a horse, a horse..... scary! (9)
4. Edit wolf. (7)
6. Most frightening to an eastender but could not be more insubstantial. (7)
7. Could be a *Y₂p*, a ft or so, an' it ain't 'arf 'ard. (4-4)
8. Had to keep very quiet it transpired. (6)
14. Supporters of the "grassy knoll". (9)
15. The fullest and the finest across the street. (8)
16. The most acerbic taste is about right. (7)
17. It's the payments and it's the change. (6)
18. A gem of a fish. (7)
19. She is in favour, not about to about turn. (7)_r
20. A lot of dairy milk, about all except one kind. (6)

Completed entries to be sent to Alan Smart, Halfpenny Cottage,
Invermoriston.

CONGRATULATIONS !!

The winner of the Winter 05 puzzle was Anne Curry of Gunnislake, Cornwall. The solution is given below.

ACROSS. 8. hornbeam 9. usance 10. queues 11. sherzos 12. vignette
13. ribbon 14. blood from a stone 18. danger 20. approach 23. waterski
24. kibitz 25. yemeni 26. nonsense DOWN. 1. moduli 2. innuendo
3. jetset 4. xmas decorations 5. euphoria 6. Zagreb 7. octoroon
15. leakages 16. foresail 17. troubles 19. geezer 21. poking 22. cutest

Kids Chatter Pages

A Riddle

My first is in pencil and also in pen,
My second's in sparrow but isn't in wren,
My thirds not in loch but you'll find it in glen,
My fourth is in Billy but never in Ben.
My fifth is in bumble and also in bee -
What am I? A creature you'd all like to see!

Boy Cop (At large) continued.....



The Story so far: Jake wants to follow his dad into the Police Force. He is in his father's office.....

Episode 2.

Jake's hair rose when he heard the phone ring. He watched his father pick up the phone and speak a few words and then he hung up. Jake rushed up to his dad.....

"Dad...Can I come? Please?"

Don't forget the crossword on page 12. If you do wish to submit it * don't forget to include your Name Address & Age. Remember this is only open to children 16yrs and under.

Cont.....

"No. Some poor man needs police help not a little boy's help!"

Jake lowered his head and left the room. Good he thought, now everyone thinks I'm off home. Oo[s! Better hide the bike. Jake pushed the bike into a bush and knelt down beside it.

Jake's father came out of the building along with two other cops,

"Jake? Are you there?" Jake's father got no reply.

"I think he'll be at home now sir."

"Come on, lets see what the man wanted"

Jake followed his father a few blocks behind being careful not to be seen.

As they entered a building, Jake stopped. Just then a high pitched scream ripped through the quiet morning air!.....to be continued.

Catriona Knott

Being 15 and living in Fort Augustus has its ups and downs. Since moving from London there is a big contrast between the two places. In London everything is on your doorstep Cinemas, transport-links etc. Although in Fort Augustus it's difficult AND expensive to get to Inverness, the young people make their own entertainment. Like in summer we can go camping and swimming in the River Tarff and the River Oich which you could never do in London.

Now I'm nearing the end of S4 and my standard grades exams are 1 week away! I'm kinda annoyed though cause I've done no where near as much revision as I'd have liked. But I'm not too nervous. Think It's because it's come so soon and it doesn't seem like my exams are around the corner.

There is some stuff in Fort Augustus that I'd like to have like a Youth Centre, swimming pool and a gym nearby would be good. And I know I speak for a lot of people my age when I say that. Right now in class we're discussing Dr Cameron's retirement.

The new head teacher starts in August (Ms Gibbons) and I think she will be really good, when I met her and she was really bubbly and friendly.

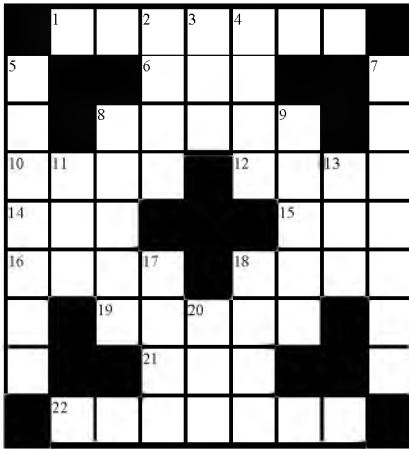
Even my mate Sean changed his opinion on her when he met her. And Sean hardly ever admits it when he's wrong.

Siobhan Murchie

KIDS CROSSWORD

Here's a puzzle for you to solve.

As you read the story, try to figure out the missing words and fit them into the appropriate places in the crossword grid. As you go along you can



go through the clues below as a double-check. Or do it the other way round -solve the clues and see if they make sense in the story. A bar of chocolate for each correct complete solution! Send it to Mave at Am Fairdean, Invermoriston.

The Story My mother had learnt her skills in many 5D and was 1A of almost anything. She knew how to play 2D and how to 4D things with Superglue. Her cooking was fantastic - she could 8A all sorts of things with her Kenwood mixer and she knew how

to make gravy with an 6A cube. She could download 12A from the computer, but didn't know what an 15A was so she often got an electric shock when she tried to repair things. She once climbed a Swiss 11D, shouted "14A!" from the top and said it was 7D than any Scottish mountain. She 18A all sorts of things to!6A cans, and once stubbed her 13D with an 3D while chopping firewood. She could never wait for the 8D before leaving a message on the answerphone. You could always depend 18D her to put 21A much soil in the 20D when planting a 9D. Our 19A thought she was 17D. But I 22A criticise her - she was a saint and should have worn a 10A!

ACROSS

1. Is(can do it) (7)
6. Gravy cube (3)
8. Mix up (5)
10. Gold circle around saint's head (4)
12. Computer information (4)
14. Spanish "Hooray" (3)
15. Electrically charged particle (3)
16. Take the lid off (4)
18. Second hand (4)
19. Baby dog (5)
21. Also (3)
22. You - - be naughty (4,3)

DOWN

2.mint (4)
3. Wood chopping tool (3)
4. Stick together (4)
5. Learning places (7)
7. More grand (7)
8. Telephone noise (5)
9. Wild flower (5)
11. Swiss mountain (3)
13. Part of foot (3)
17. Crazy (4)
18. On top of (4)
20. Flower holder (3)

Darkness Falls Am Fairdean

Just turning in late one night
Heard a noise, got an awful fright
There's someone there and I'm such a sight
Dume where's my trousers?

The handle's turning. "Oh my God!
I'm in here and I'm on my tod
Get away from here you drunken sod
Dume where's my trousers?"

"Let me in, I'm your B&B guest"
"No you're not, you're a bloody pest
I'm stood here in my M&S vest
Dume where's my trousers?"

I threaten him with a bunch of five
He scarpers quickly down the drive
I thank God that I'm still alive
Dume where's my trousers?

Being a true account (with a little licence) by Heather & Alan Smart

Goodbye and Good Luck

We shall shortly be saying goodbye to Caroline, George and young Argyll, who will soon be leaving the Glen for pastures new. Shop handover will be mid-July but they'll be staying on a bit beyond that. The editors would like to express their thanks to them for providing the main outlet for this publication as well as for maintaining and improving our precious Local Shop. We give them our very best wishes for the future.

We also have to say goodbye to someone else who has had high profile jobs, in his dual roles of barman and postie: Harvey Morby. We wish him Happy World Wandering, before he starts his new job in the Borders and all the best for the future.

Twitichers

Over 3,000,000 adults each year observe the 240 regular species of birds seen in the U.K.* Thousands of us provide sustenance for our garden birds in the winter and hundreds of people become 'twitichers'—undefined in my copy of English dictionary, but well-known among the omithological circles, (bird brigade—which is easier to say and spell) as camouflaged fanatics armed with expensive telescopes and binoculars, who chase round the U.K. pursuing rare migrants, which are occasionally blown off course and grace our shores

Wild excitement ensues as a hot-line of information is set up, they scurry off, hence the name twiticher presumably, whilst the media coverage enables 'armchair twitichers' to watch at home, what invariably turns out to be yet another L.B.J!**



One regular bird-watcher in Dalchreichart is, I feel, developing the first symptoms of early 'twitiching' and I dedicate my poem to him

* I have recorded 78 species so far in the Dalchreichart / Glen Moriston area during 2004/05. There is an interesting range of habitats here.

**L.B.J.--Little Brown Job, a term often used to describe some rather drab, indefinable colours of birds, fungi etc., hence making them difficult to identify

Any younger readers are welcome to count the number of species mentioned in the following poem.

Dalchreichart Twitcher

Always up with the Lark, excuse the pun,
Equipped with binoculars and a muffin bun,
Out of the gate, to the East on his search
Misses the MERLIN on its' favourite perch.

Spots the bobbing, bibbed Dipper up on its rocks,
Our twitcher's sat on the bridge parapet blocks.
Eagle and Osprey: he scans the skies,
Whoops! He's missed the MERLIN skim by.

Goldeneye and Goosanders guarding the river,
Snow Buntings on the hill evoking a shiver.
Redwings and Fieldfare: hundreds take flight
Chittering and chattering as the MERLIN'S in sight!

Off again, his face upturned to the West,
Oh dear, he's passed the trilling Golderest.
Ignores the Mallards; too common he feels,
Meanwhile the MERLIN'S on its next meal.

On to the farm, maybe a Wheatear or two,
Hears the Doves, doting in their court-ship coos.
Collects his bike with the unused gears.
The MERLIN'S watching, unnoticed I fear.

Riding the thermals; the Buzzards domain,
Yellowhammers and Twite feeding on grain
Along with the Plovers and Curlew too,
The Kestrel and MERLIN fly out of the blue!

Redpolls and Siskins, he had to be shown,
Goldfinches and Bramblings unfortunately flown.
His Dalchreichart records: well into the fifties
That bloody MERLIN would make it SIXTY!

Any others for his list, maybe not yet seen,
Woodpeckers Lesser or Great Spotted and Green?
How about Wagtails, both Pied and Grey?
But it's that MERLIN; elusive bird of prey!

Don't worry, there's always Robin Redbreast
Grubbing in the garden where you can rest.
Browse through your book or cards from P.G. Tips,
No, you can't bribe the MERLIN with oven chips!

Think of Robert the Bruce, forever striving.
The swallows and cuckoos will soon be arriving,
House Martins and Swifts, all will fly in.
The MERLIN: stay calm and have a tonic with gin!

WINDFARM UPDATE

As many of you will know the proposed Windfarm in Glenmoriston was granted planning permission in April. The Highland Council Planning Committee met at Glenmoriston Millennium Hall after an extensive coach tour to see the viewpoints from which the turbines will be visible. I felt that the planning committee gave everyone a fair hearing and the debate was good. There was a vote taken and the majority of councillors voted for the development and they were granted consent.

I know some of you were very much against the project, but now that is a fact I believe we should make the most of the opportunities. The firm promised 2 or 3 local jobs, lets keep them to it. They are also in discussions about community benefit with the Community councils for Invergarry and Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston. They are also offering shares in a co-operative working with a firm called Energy4All, who have been running something similar in Northern England for a few years now. It is complex, but it has the potential to deliver a good return for local people as well as the wider community.

There will be information coming around with details of the proposals and then exhibitions. Do take the time to visit them.

PYLONS

Talking about exhibitions. Scottish and Southern will be lodging a planning application for their proposed new pylon line in June. It will then be up to Highland Council to consider it alongside the communities involved. Highland Council will only be a consultee, but they will have the power to call for a Public Inquiry if necessary. Details will be in local papers when the application is lodged and I and the Community Council will keep you posted.

DULCHREICHARD SCHOOL

Lovely old Dulchreichard School is to be closed in July 2006. It really is the last chance to make a case to retain the school, or to use it in the community. If anyone has a suggestion do let me know for consideration. It has a long and noble history delivering education in the Glen.

ACCESS GROUP. HERITAGE GROUP

These are two excellent and keen new groups formed locally that are making good progress restoring sites and providing a forum discussing access issues.

St Columba's Well is a credit to the volunteers and I know there are plans to do more. Well done.

I am hoping 2 long-held aspirations will come true this year. First the Scottish Executive's promise to bring Broadband throughout Scotland by the end of 2005 and I am just checking up that will include Invermoriston; Glenmoriston and Dalchriecart. The other is the promise from the trunk road's people to give entrance signs for Invermoriston. I will be nailing them down.

GLENDOE

Scottish and Southern do not have their final consent from the executive, but I believe it is very likely to go ahead.

That saying there will be local liaison arrangements that hopefully will keep us all informed and will deal with any problems as they arise. It will impact on us all I am sure, and I have spent many hours trying to protect the communities along the A82 as best I can.

There will be a community benefit fund with the development and again the Community Council is negotiating with the developers.

Shortly there will be meetings to talk about setting up a community trust and considering how the community will use the funds.

GREAT NEWS

Kilchuimen Academy has a new head teacher. She is Maria Gibbons and is coming from a school in Perthshire.

And will be taking up post in August. Meanwhile we have a seconded head teacher - Gavin Maclean from Inverness High School.

Let's wish them both the best of luck.

Cllr Margaret Davidson

Hall Matters

Do you love them or hate them? Fliers, I mean. Do you appreciate the local information or just see more junk mail? An alternative 21st century option is now available and you are invited to see what is happening online, at www.glenmoristonhall.org.uk

Have you considered using the Hall for a private party or an activity / talk / demo that would be open to the community? To make the latter a very attractive option, the committee has decided to offer the **Small Hall free of charge for community use.**

Booking overall is very reasonable, with private use of the Small Hall £4.50 an hour and the whole Hall £8.

If you're tempted to take advantage of this superb facility on your doorstep, contact Cherry on 351230 and ask for details.

These prices have not been raised since the new Hall was opened in 1999 and this is due in very large part to the annual Lite Bites. For newcomers, this is when, for 6 weeks in the Summer (3 days per week), the Hall turns itself into a cafe and serves soup and sandwiches and home-baking to both locals and visitors.

This year, because of prior bookings, LITE BITES will be a week later than usual and **run from Tuesday, 12th July until Thursday August 18th.**

Not only can you enjoy some excellent food but you also have the chance to recycle those unwanted possessions that are just too good to throw away but clutter up your home - and to replace them with others!!

In the first week, there will be a TABLE SALE and £5 will get you your own table to sell from for a day or for £10 you can have the opportunity for three days. And you won't need to take anything back home: it can all be donated to the WHITE ELEPHANT SALE, which will run throughout.

If you'd like details of how to be involved or to book a table, please contact Clare on 351254.

Future events

July 9 Summer Scottish Country Dance to John Renton and his Band.
7.30 - 11.30pm Tickets £6 / £3 (spectator) Margaret Hill 351287

***August 11th** the full complement of seven **BLAZIN' FIDDLES** will be in the Hall. Tickets £10. Start 8pm

***In late Sept / Oct**, Mull Theatre Company will make a very welcome return to the Hall, this time with a family production of "**Katie Morag**".

*Finally, for classical enthusiasts, on **November 24th** the **Tchaikovsky Quartet** will delight us with their music.

***Promoted** by the PAN group, who also brought you the Ness River Rhythm Kings and the Emperor's Opera and **supported** by Scottish Arts Council, the Highland Council, the National Lottery and Highland 2007.

Good news on the CRAFT CLUB front. The Club will be offering **Upholstery Classes** in September. Watch for posters nearer the time. We are also hopeful that a **SPORTS CLUB** can soon be arranged for the youngsters. Again, watch for posters.

Maggie's Hike and Bike returned for a second year and were again extremely happy with the quality and prices of the refreshments provided. The Hall committee would like to thank everyone who worked to make this year's event such a success and to the many who, over the year, have given their time and expertise to help with catering and all other activities.

MacDonald - Bowie Blacksmiths

Recently the great granddaughter of John MacDonald, blacksmith at the Invermoriston Smithy in the late 19th / early 20th century was visiting the village. She remembers her grandmother's stories of helping her father with the bellows, when he was making the chandaliers for the Abbey. Interestingly, she, (the visitor, that is) was married to Jim Bowie, a man apparently with no connection to the blacksmith's art, but they have discovered that for some time in Drum, the blacksmiths were called Bowie! Does anyone have any stories of MacDonalds the Blacksmiths here and is there any known connection with the Bowies?

Garden Thoughts (3)

I must confess to having two very persuasive and "ungardener" thoughts over the last few months :-

1. Buy a top floor flat with a window box
2. Buy an army of gnomes equipped with suitable tools, and hope for magic.

As you can see both are unrealistic!

However, if all those daffodils can survive gale, rain storms, hail storms, and come out smiling then so can I!

The recent beautiful weather encouraged me to search out plants in the flower bed, and remove the weeds. I've not finished this task yet, but am well on the way and the flower bed is beginning to look good.

Here I feel I must mention the under gardener who has valiantly supplied me with many barrow loads of compost which he has rescued from a very large compost box emptied after 10 years!! One of those jobs you never get round to. It's lovely stuff!! Thank you David.

I'm not really a good gardener. I'm too disorganised, and am always having to cope with things that should have been done yesterday (or two months ago!!) So while digging over the flower bed, I am also trying to prune trees and hedges, plant up containers and prick out seedlings. Has anyone else got 4 inch high seedlings with two minute leaves at the top? I do hope so!! For I shouldn't like to think that I'm the only incompetent gardener in the glen. Commiserations from fellow sufferers welcome.

At the end of each day, tired out, aching back, stiff joints, sore hands, broken nails, I recline happily on the settee and find myself content with my days work and sleepily contemplating "summers bounty".