

MERKINCH

News and Views

The Merkinch community newsletter, entirely written and produced in the Merkinch

Dawn and Jim receive award for Glendoe Terrace

DAWN Beaton (left) and husband Jim were in Glasgow on 20th June to receive a beautiful engraved crystal award and certificate on behalf of Glendoe Terrace Residents Association for the GTRA's many outstanding efforts over the years on behalf of all those who live in the Terrace. This is the first Frances Nelson Award and it was presented by the Tenants' Information Services at the Beardmore Hotel. The late Frances Nelson was a passionate believer in the tenants' movement. Pictured here with the Beatons is Issi Wilson who, with Greg Brown, visited Inverness last year.

GTRA committee members are: Dawn Beaton, Chair; Jim Beaton, vice chair; Elaine Duguid, treas; Helen Gladstone, secy; Gemma Sloggi, Kevin Gladstone, Nikki Dominic, Julie Griffiths, Jen Bowie, Louise Fraser, Margaret Hadnett, Dzintres Letkovskis, Alexander Gray.



HOS anticipates Festival favourite

LITTLE Struan Cuthbert (second right) so enjoyed himself at last year's Highland Open Studio (HOS) event at Ruth Black's felting workshop in the Rectory garden in Abban Street that this year he brought along little brother Seoras and sister Niamh as well as mum Maria (right). Struan now goes to the Gaelic school at Slackbuie, but still attend St Michael's and visit their gran, Mrs Jamieson, in India Street.

● TEXTILE artist Ruth Black returns to this year's Summer Arts Festival on Saturday 11th July to hold one of her popular felting workshops. The festival's workshops all take place in the Black Bridge Gallery and a full programme of all the festival events is featured on page 7. Get more details and make bookings by calling Annie Marrs on 01463 221027.

Inside this month:

Three resign over 'control' issue — Page 3

Arts festival programme — see Page 7

Merkinch Partnership review — Page 8,9

Lots of sport this summer — pix on Pages 12, 13

Helpline

AGE Concern – 0800 731 4931.
ALCOHOL, Inverness Council on – 34 Tomnahurich St, tel 220995.
CHILDLINE – 0800 1111. Free confidential advice 24 hours a day.
Citizens Advice Bureau – Advice line, 08 444 994111; Appointments, 01463 237664
COMMUNITY CENTRE – 239563.
COMMUNITY HOUSE, Craigton Avenue – 718848.
Your local COUNCILLORS –
 Janet Campbell 226598;
 Peter Corbett 238159;
 Donnie Kerr 225217;
 Bet McAllister 710558.
CRIMEBUSTERS – 0800 555111.
CROSSROADS Care Attendant Scheme – 2 Queensgate Arcade, tel 242112.
DENTIST, Emergency – 0845 644 2271.
DOG Warden – 703134.
DRUGLINE Scotland – tel 0800 776600. Free advice on drugs 24 hours a day.
HOUSING Problems – 703800.
HOUSING Repairs (including out-of-hours) – 232675.
MERKINCH ENTERPRISE – 240085. mp33 – 717639.
NEW START – 715615 or 728770.
NEWS & VIEWS – 240085, 221027.
MERKINCH PARTNERSHIP Officer – 718989.
Emergency PRIMARY School – 232962.
REFUSE, extra and bulky collection – Ring 230634.
ROAD to RECOVERY – Ian Polworth, Madras Street Mission, 715809, Thursdays 7.30–8.30pm.
SAMARITANS – 66 Tomnahurich St, tel 713456 or 0345 909090 (local rate).
SMOKELINE – 0800 84 84 84.
SOCIAL WORK Dept, Emergency – 0845 769 7284.
TRADING Standards – 0845 600 4222.
VICTIM Support – tel 258834.
WEBSITE, Merkinch Community – www.merkinch.info
Inverness WOMEN'S Aid – Confidential support for abused women, tel 220719.

Got a contact you think we should include?
Contact News & Views on 240085

Second PC on the beat

JOINING Community Beat Officer Ian Blackburn on the Merkinch beat is CBO Doug Murray, pictured right.

Born in Inverness, he was educated at Culloden Academy and became a time-served joiner. Seven years ago PC Murray joined the Metropolitan Police in London where he worked with the Diplomatic Protection Unit after undergoing firearms training — among those he protected was Lady Thatcher.

He came back to Inverness in 2006 to serve as a General Response officer — Merkinch was part of his area for some 18 months. When requested to become CBO in Merkinch he says he “jumped at the chance”. He started here at the end of May.

CBO Murray is married and has two children, aged nine and seven.

His hobbies include weight training and an occasional run, and he is a member of the Highland Budokan Judo Club which meets at Millburn Academy.



What would YOU like to see done with the Welfare Hall?

REMEMBER the days when the Welfare Hall in Grant Street was a hub of activity? Have any ideas what you would like to see happen in the hall if-and-when it is refurbished? Your chance to have your say comes on Wednesday 1st July at 6pm in Merkinch Community Centre when the Highland Buildings Preservation Trust will be holding an open meeting to discuss their feasibility study.



After many years of background work, recently things have been progressing. Last month we announced that money had been granted by the Common Good Fund to take things a step further and that surveyors had been looking at the condition of the building. So if you want to hear the latest and express your views, come along on 1st July.



Do you have a story for us? An achievement to tell us about? Do you want to have your say about local issues?

Contact News & Views at Merkinch Enterprise on 240085

Madras Street Hall

welcomes you to the Merkinch!

We are the local Free Church of Scotland in this community and have been working in the area for over 100 years. Come and visit us at any of the following meetings which take place regularly in the Madras Street Hall.

Sunday Services 5pm

Sunday School 5pm (ages 4-12)

(Children meet during Sunday Service)

Bible Discussion Group

'Road to Recovery' Meeting

(support work for alcoholics & drug addicts)

For meeting times or other inquires please contact:
 Rev John Wagner on (01463) 223199

Jesus said: 'I am the Way and the Truth and the Life.'

Dive-bombing seagulls, crime rates down, and designated estate workers set to go

POLICE call-out figures for Merkinch continued to go down in May, CBO Ian Blackburn reported to the June meeting of Merkinch Community Council.

Calls alleging assaults, thefts, vandalism, domestic assaults and disturbances — mostly music or drunks — were all reduced. Speeding in the South Kessock area had been cut down. The call-outs in response to complaints about children and youths were to do with youngsters playing football and other non-crimes. CBO Blackburn said that they were on foot patrol eight hours a day and these were having good results; his colleague CBO Doug Murray was sometimes seen on a bicycle.

Members congratulated CBO Blackburn on his recent award following an incident in Duncraig Street involving a knife assault; the perpetrator had been jailed for six years.

Community councillors also paid tribute to Area Commander Julian Innes who has been promoted to Caithness. They recalled the Chief Inspector's success in setting up Operation Respect and this will be one of his priorities when he goes to Wick.

● Members are concerned about the loss of their two estate workers, particularly with regard to their regular removal of rubbish and discarded furniture in the area. All agreed that this was a backward step, though Cllr Peter Corbett had to point out that other areas had not had the benefit of their own squad. Ali Locke agreed, "We've been spoilt." The decision earlier this year to charge for uplift of bulky rubbish largely hadn't affected South Kessock because of the estate workers, but members fear that local streets will soon show the results of these decisions. Mr Locke feared that it would end up in the Nature Reserve. Members were reminded that New Start and

Blythswood were happy to collect unwanted white goods which they can repair and recycle.

● Proud dads in Merkinch are going around attacking anyone who comes near their young!

However, it seems no-one can do anything about the situation as the aggressive heads of families are a protected species — seagulls! The dive-bombing gulls are getting worse and last year the attacks went on through till August and September, with hungry birds still patrolling the streets until November. Cllr Corbett said the council was looking into forming a policy.

● Enforcement is being taken to do something about the former Tawse yard, adjacent to the school following a site meeting with the owners, the Macmillan brothers.

● Cllr Janet Campbell said that the ward which includes Merkinch has the highest unemployment level in the highlands and she welcomed the Pathfinder scheme to help young people aged 18-25 to find work.

● Anne McCreadie reported that the Community Centre had been extremely busy with the Gaelic drama festival, the local Mod and the June Jamboree. They had bookings until December. Work to make the front doors automatic were going out to tender.

● Bette McArdle highlighted the fact that the annual Arts Festival would run from 2-12 July this year and invited members to support and publicise the event.

● The way was clear for parts of Abban Street and Lochalsh Road to be returned to the official Merkinch area, members heard.

● Following the resignations at the AGM, chairman Gary Wells suggested that representatives from other residents' groups would be invited to join the Community council. The next meeting is on September 3.

Five resign from community council

MERKINCH Community Council (MCC) saw five members resign at its AGM last month. They were: Brian Cain, treasurer; Julie Vivers, secretary; Helen Geddes; and Graham and Pam Adam — they gave Pam's ill-health as their reason for leaving.

Mr Cain, who has been on MCC for 10 years, latterly as treasurer, said that he felt he had been there long enough, while Julie Vivers, secretary for six months, said her resignation was due to family obligations.

However, the following week the three told the *Highland News* that they were disconcerted by what they saw as the community council's "loss of power".

Mr Cain voiced the view that there was no longer a role for MCC. He claimed that other organisations, including the Merkinch Partnership, were "ruling the roost".

And according to Julie Ivers the issue of the former ferry ticket office was "the straw that broke the camel's back". "I just felt a lot of council members were members of other groups and were possibly trying to make decisions favouring their group."

Chairman Gary Wells stressed that the MCC still had control over the ticket office. "It's just sour grapes," he told the *Highland News*, "a storm in a teacup."

Cllr Peter Corbett pointed out that the Partnership had helped out with the funding of the building's £13,500 refurbishment and that was on the understanding that all members of the community would be able to use it, not just a small clique. Highland Council owns the building, and MCC has it on a 10-year lease. A user group including the LNR's Green Gym and the Countryside Ranger service is being set up to organise the day-to-day running of the facility.

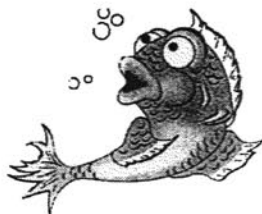


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Inverness IV3 8BP, Tel 01463 231596.**

Briefs...

IRELAND'S top show band *The Indians* return on Wednesday 22nd July. Doors open 7.30pm and tickets can be purchased for £10 or £8 concession at Merkinch Community Centre.

TRINITY Church's *Women in Spirit* programme, which takes place on the third Wednesday of each month, continues in July with a day trip. For details ring Heidi Jones on Inverness 731837.

LUCKY winner of Nicol's Killer Quiz last month was Mrs Daphne Macdonald, Lower Kessock Street who receives a £10 gift voucher. Congratulations!

AT the Friendship Club this month Lesley Junor will stir up memories of Old Inverness with a slide show on Wednesday, 1st July. The following week sees a trip to the Waltzing Waters at Newtonmore — with lunch this costs £10. And on the 15th, Donnie Menzies will sing and play guitar.

NEIGHBOURS in Rosehaugh Road are scheduled to appear on TV's controversial Jeremy Kyle show on 13th July to air their mutual grievances about what they claim is anti-social behaviour on the part of the others.

AN international flotilla of historic and modern craft taking part in a Homecoming Scotland event were to be seen at Muirtown Basin on 20th June. One of the stars of the event was the only replica of an oar-powered Highland galley, *Galley Aileach*. The *Aviat Huskie* amphibious seaplane was due to land and there was a chance to see the tall ship *TS Royalist*.

AN interim ASBO ban granted last November against Alexander Stewart (23) has been confirmed for a three-year period. The cases of his father Lindsay (45) and brother Daniel (21) who also have interim bans preventing them entering the area north of Grant Street are yet to be considered by the Sheriff.

Thought for the day

"To forgive is human, to forget divine."

James Grand
1980

Young brass players have a brilliant day at Centre



SOME 87 young brass musicians from all over the Highlands met at Merkinch Community Centre last month for their seventh annual get-together learning, sharing, playing and enjoying brass music. Tutor, pictured above with some of the more senior players, was Robert Farmer from Inverness High School's music department. That evening a concert was held for parents and friends. Previous such occasions for young Highland strings and pipes players have also been held at the Centre because of its useful combination of a stage and various side rooms in which different groups can practise.

Church to hold holiday club

INVERNESS TRINITY CHURCH of SCOTLAND

"We aim to be a welcoming fellowship, proclaiming in worship the gospel of Jesus Christ, ready to serve with compassion the needs of the community."

Your Parish Church

Rev Alistair Murray BD.

Sunday Services 11am.

(Sunday School & Crèche during the morning service)

6.30pm First Sunday in Month

Girls' Brigade meets Mondays

6.30pm

Boys' Brigade meets Fridays 6pm

Induction Loop System

All Welcome

(www.trinityinverness.org.uk)

Inverness Trinity Church of Scotland is a registered Scottish Charity (SC015432)

ALERT for parents of all primary school children — the Trinity Church is holding its first-ever holiday club August 3-7.

Entitled *Merkinch Mountain Holiday Club: A Wild Ride through God's Kingdom*, sessions will run each day from 10am to 12.15pm for children from P1-P7. Activities include crafts, games, singing, stories and a snack.

The cost will be £5 per child for the week or a maximum of £10 per family for the week. You must book in advance and Registration Forms will be available in the schools or at the church.

This issue's printing and collating processes are funded courtesy of the Merkinch Partnership.



MERKINCH PARTNERSHIP

Young or old, there's always something to do in Merkinch



LEFT ... Mark Morris and his son Mathew and daughter Emily turned out to help clean up Carnarc Point on National Spring Clean earlier this year. Dell McClurg told *News & Views* that participants got a pleasant surprise, for where at one time this event involved lorry-loads of rubbish, this year there was barely enough to fill a carrier bag! Well done to all those who use Carnarc Point for keeping it tidy and for using the dog waste bins.

BELOW... Former Highland councillor Chrissie Cumming (2nd left) is never slow to get in the swing, and here she is with other Singing for Pleasure members entertaining and joining in with the keep-fit session at Raigmore Rusties Over-50s club.



BELOW and RIGHT... the 65th anniversary of D-Day did not go unnoticed at the Community Centre and here are members of the Singing for Pleasure group examining mementoes of World War II. Some dressed up in WW I and WWII costumes.



Local Nature Reserve holds open day



MERKINCH GREENSPACE

DESPITE a chilly breeze, Merkinch Local Nature Reserve's open day was enjoyed by all. Among the guests was local MP Danny Alexander with his wife and young daughter. Besides regular walks round the LNR with the Countryside Ranger, there was lots of things to do and see.

LEFT... But are you sure it won't bite? The display of reptiles and insects was very popular.

BELOW... the drumming sessions are always a favourite with youngsters.

Local Nature Reserve proves popular

ALI Locke of Greenspace reported to the June meeting of the Merkinch Community Council that the news from the LNR was good.

They had had a good day at the annual open event and the boardwalk path network was now finished.

It was noted that many local people were picking up litter and the dog bins were being well used by dog-owners who walked their pets in the area.



July timetable

All meetings are on Wednesday mornings from 10am to 1pm and participants meet at the Turning Circle at South Kessock.

Green Gym®



Activities this month are planned as follows... The Green Gym will be visiting a variety of venues during their weekly sessions in July. On the 1st there will be Michaelmas Daisy control and other related tasks at the LNR and a special event (tbc). The following week they will be at Inverness High, looking into organic horticulture, and maintaining and harvesting vegetable beds. On the 15th July they will be looking at Michaelmas Daisy control and conducting a Ragged Robin plant survey, also looking for mini-beasts with the Countryside Ranger. On the 22nd they will be doing woodland management and control of invasive species. And on the 29th is Ragged Robin plant survey and healthy walk. Please contact Ullie, the Green Gym Project Officer on 01463 811560 for more information.

All these activities are suitable for all abilities but involve some walking to the site. Please be advised that on occasions there may be a change to the day's activities. Pick-up from Inverness bus station can be arranged. Joining the Green Gym also offers the opportunity to take part in the John Muir Award scheme. Please contact the office (01463 811560) on Mondays to confirm tasks/ book place/ arrange pick-up/ find out about the John Muir Award Scheme. Ullie can also be reached on 07739 447987 or at u.wenzel@btcv.org.uk

SUMMER ARTS FESTIVAL

FRIDAY 3RD JULY – MONDAY 13TH JULY

BLACK BRIDGE GALLERY, GRANT STREET

Black Bridge Gallery exhibition is open 10.00am - 4.00pm throughout the festival with work on display including photography, painting, drawing, printing and three dimensional work from local artists. Much of the work is for sale.

Workshops are run throughout the festival for children and adults. You can book a place on any of the workshops by calling 01463 240085 or in person at Merkinch Enterprise.

Check out www.merkinch.info for all up-to-date information and click on 'Community'.

DATE	TIME	EVENT	AGE	COST *	LOCATION
Thur 2nd	18.00 - 20.00	Exhibition Opening	All ages	Free	Black Bridge Gallery
Fri 3rd	19.30	Merkinch Theatre Group Showcase	All ages	Free	Merkinch Community Centre
Sat 4th	14.00 - 15.30	Mask Decorating	7yrs +	£2	Black Bridge Gallery
Sun 5th	13.00 - 14.00	Decorate your own re-usable canvas bag	6yrs +	£2	Black Bridge Gallery
Mon 6th	19.00 - 21.00	Papermaking with Silk & Pulp	Adults	£3	Black Bridge Gallery
Tue 7th	09.30 - 11.30	Ceramic Painting for under 5's	Parent and Toddlers	£3	Black Bridge Gallery
	13.00 - 15.00	Ceramic Painting	6yrs +	£3	Black Bridge Gallery
	19.00 - 21.00	Ceramic Painting	Adult	pay / piece	Black Bridge Gallery
Wed 8th	13.00 - 15.00	Manga Drawing Drop In	All ages	Free	Black Bridge Gallery
	19.00 - 20.30	Decorate your own re-usable canvas bag	Adults	£3	Black Bridge Gallery
Thur 9th	10.00 - 16.00	One Day Street Theatre Project with Andy Jessiman	11 yrs +	Free	Black Bridge Gallery
Fri 10th	11.00 - 12.00	Decorate your own re-usable canvas bag	6yrs+	£2	Black Bridge Gallery
	14.00 - 15.30	Making Rod Puppets	7yrs +	£2	Black Bridge Gallery
Sat 11th	10.00 - 16.00	Wet Felting with Ruth Black	All ages. Under 16's must be with adult.	£6	Black Bridge Gallery
Mon 13th	14.00 - 15.00	A History of Scotland (in 60 minutes or less) Family theatre performance	5yrs +	£3 / £2	Merkinch Community Centre

* prices listed are per person



Arts in Merkinch
14 Grant Street
Inverness, IV3 8BL

T 01463 240085 / 715450
F 01463 717977
info@merkinch.com

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The Merkinch Community Conversation took place from May to September 2008. Local residents were asked how they felt about their community – what's good/recent achievements, what needs improving and what's missing.

The results of the consultation were circulated in News and Views in November 2008



and now we want to tell you how some of the issues raised by the community are being addressed. Here's What You Told Us:

WHAT NEEDS IMPROVING

Community Safety issues:

- Drugs users/needles/drug dealers
- Young people on the streets/anti-social behaviour
- Drinking in public/underage drinking/alcohol

Environmental issues:

- Litter/broken glass/dog fouling
- Grant Street – traffic, traffic lights
- Welfare Hall

Things to change in Merkinch:

- Health of the community
- Ticket Office
- Green spaces in South Kessock
- Local Nature Reserve - signage, seating, paths improvements, disabled access
- Community Centre

WHAT'S MISSING?

- Community Café/Youth Café
- Concierge at Flats
- Fitness park/play areas for young people/cycle track
- Signage

Here's What's Been Done:

Operation Respect was launched in Merkinch on May 15th 2009 and now volunteer street pastors are out and about in the area on Friday and Saturday evenings getting to know the local community. Feedback from local residents has been very positive and Northern Constabulary has reported a decrease in calls when the pastors are in the area.

Mp33 is opening the Grant Street bike shed on Friday evenings from 5 to 8pm to offer young people an alternative to socializing on the streets. A Guitar Group is also held on Friday evenings in mp33.

Merkinch Partnership Sports Project provides diversionary sports activities for local young people.

David Paulin, the sports co-ordinator, is developing the Merkinch Football Academy incorporating all the football teams from primary school age upwards and Merkinch Partnership is looking at the feasibility of building an indoor sports facility in the Carse Park.

A Directory of all the groups and projects active in the Merkinch area can be obtained from Merkinch Partnership Project Officer Anne Sutherland.

Other projects which have been successful over the past year include:

- Merkinch Local Nature Reserve improvements
- South Kessock Ticket Office refurbishment
- Merkinch Community Centre improvements
- Merkinch Green Gym
- Trinity Church Community Café pilot project
- Traffic calming measures in Lochalsh Road
- Welfare Hall feasibility study

Much has been achieved over the past year but there's still work to be done.

If you have any comments or ideas for further improvements please contact Anne Sutherland on 01463 718989, e-mail anne@merkinch.com or pop in to the Merkinch Partnership office at 4 Grant Street.

**You can contact Anne Sutherland, the Partnership Officer, on
01463 718989**

Consumer advice

Planning a home improvement project?

BRIGHT days and longer nights might mean you are turning your attention to all those jobs that need doing around the home. You may even be planning to undertake big renovations such as a new fitted kitchen, new bathroom or even planning to build a conservatory.

As well as planning your finances to undertake these large renovations in your home, a bit of forward planning might save you time (and money) in the long run. Here are some helpful tips and advice to help you avoid some of the home improvement pitfalls:

Before you get started

1. Do you need special planning permission or a building warrant before you start renovations to your home?

Highland Council website has a FAQ guide relating to Building Standards and has contact details for all the Planning and Building Standards Offices. To avoid planning problems and extra costs later on, it's best to visit the website and seek advice from your local office before going ahead.

2. Do you need structural plans for the renovations you are planning to carry out?

Bigger jobs may require specialist advice and assistance. It is always worthwhile to contact the experts before you contract a builder to carry out work on your home. For instance, if you are planning to build an extension to your home, contacting an Architect for help may be a good first step to take.

3. Finding the right contractor to fit the job?

Finding the right contractor to fit the job can be difficult. For example, planning a new bathroom you would need not only the services of a plumber, but also the services of an electrician if you are fitting a new shower.

Contacting several contractors beforehand and asking advice on what work is involved to carry out a particular building project, is perhaps a good starting point. Also asking neighbours, friends, and family who have recently carried out similar home improvement projects might also be a good idea.

4. Where can you find reputable tradesman to carry out the work properly?

If you need the services of a builder, joiner, roofer, plumber or electrician it can be difficult to find a local tradesman who is reputable and reliable. 'Trustmark', a government backed scheme has been set up to with this consumer problem in mind. Firms who have signed up for the scheme have been independently checked through regular on site inspections, which monitor, good practices relating to health and safety and customer care. Reassuringly in these troubled financial times, checks are also made on a firms trading records and financial status.

Tradesman on the government endorsed scheme can offer consumers a Deposit Protection Insurance, which protects consumers in the event of a firm ceasing to trade. Work



carried out is also backed by the schemes, Insurance Backed Warranty.

5. How much will it all cost?

Always get a written quote and contract covering the work, the price, payment arrangements and start/finish dates.

That way you can plan your finances and ensure you can afford to get that new kitchen or bathroom installed, before embarking on work being carried out. A written quote has the advantage of being a 'fixed price offer' and cannot be changed once it has been accepted by the consumer.

An 'estimate' however is an educated guess at what the total job may cost and it is not binding. An 'estimate' can be subject to change and once the contractor starts work, may make it difficult to keep track of ongoing costs.

Remember if you ask or agree to 'extras' once the contractor starts work this will increase the overall cost of the contract. Be sure to obtain the cost of 'extras' in writing from your contractor, so you are not faced with a vastly increased invoice once the job has been completed.

6. What's in the small print?

Before you sign a contract or agree to a written quote, make sure you read the terms and conditions carefully to understand what is covered and what is not. Look out for terms which might seem unfair or restrict the liability of the tradesman.

These unfair terms might not only be illegal but non-enforceable too. If you are unsure of a particular aspect or term of the contract, ask the tradesman to explain and/or seek legal advice before you sign or agree to work being carried out.

7. What are my rights if I change my mind about work being carried out on my home?

You are entitled to a 7-day cooling off period if you verbally agree to a quote or sign a contract for work to be carried out on your home.

However, not all contracts are covered under these rules so it is advisable to check out your rights before going ahead. Consumers can initially check out their 'cancellation rights' by contacting Consumer Direct Scotland on 08454 04 05 06 or visiting their website at:

www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

Getting the job started

8. How long should the job last?

Agree a timescale with the contractor and dates when work will commence and finish.

It might not be possible to keep to a rigid timescale but a tradesman should be able to give an indication how long with particular home improvement project should last and when goods (such as replacement windows or kitchen units) should take to be delivered.

9. What can I do if the job is delayed?

Some renovations can be delayed due to weather conditions or delays in suppliers regarding goods.

Consumers should keep in touch with the contractor and ask to be updated on progress if orders for goods are delayed or work due to commence is hampered due to rain, snow etc.

Getting the job finished

10. What if work suddenly stops and I cannot get them back on site?

If work on your home improvement job stops, find out the reason why this has occurred. Asked the contractor why the work has stopped and how long the delay will continue.

Again work can be stopped due to weather conditions and if suppliers of goods to complete works have failed to deliver on time.

Regularly keeping in touch with the contractor may be the solution and if this is a reputable firm, they will want to keep delays in contracts kept to a minimum. Remember, you can retain monies from the agreed price for your contract to ensure that work is completed within a reasonable time.

11. What if the work done is shoddy or incomplete?

If the work is shoddy or incomplete, gather together everything you can by way of evidence - this could include photos or video footage. Keep in contact with the contractor and advise him in writing that you are unhappy with the work carried out, stating your reasons.

You can also contact Highland Council Trading Standards for advice on your rights and assistance on how to resolve your problems. However, if the matter remains unresolved, you may have to employ another contractor to either complete unfinished work or carry out remedial work to rectify faulty workmanship. You may also have to consider taking court action against the trader if extra cost has been incurred due to shoddy or unfinished work not being completed.

If you wish to discuss your rights relating to home improvement contracts or you have recently had problems regarding home improvements carried out in your home, you can contact Consumer Direct on 08454 04 05 06 or go to website:

www.consumerdirect.gov.uk

Alternatively consumers can visit or write to: Highland Council Trading Standards Section, 38 Harbour Road, Inverness.

You and your health



Dangers of the sun

OVER-exposure of skin to sunlight can be dangerous as well as uncomfortable. The redness, heat and pain of sunburn is agonising and is caused by exposure to UVB radiation from the sun. UVB radiation is also responsible for skin cancer.

People of all ages can get skin cancer, but it is rarely seen in children. People who are exposed to large quantities of sun radiation can develop skin cancer as early as 20 to 30 years of age, but the disease is more common in older people.

The risk of developing skin cancer is increased following episodes of sunburn, although there may be a delay of many years before the cancer appears. A small number of cases are caused by hereditary conditions, but they are also triggered by exposure to sun rays. Sun beds can also cause skin cancer.

Symptoms of skin cancer include:

- An existing mole which changes colour or shape or begins to bleed or ooze.
- Sores that heal very slowly may appear on the mole.
- Moles may become unusually large.
- Blood blisters underneath nails and toenails that are not the result of a blow.
- Areas of skin that become scaly, itchy, tender or red, or areas that ooze, bleed or become crusty.

Any changes to your skin should be reported to your GP urgently.

Skin cancer can be difficult to diagnose so a biopsy is usually carried out. The doctor will also check to see if the cancer has spread to the lymph nodes and surrounding tissue. If the biopsy reveals that the affected area is cancerous, surgery is usually carried out and it is necessary to remove not only the tumour but the normal skin around it and the fatty tissue underneath it. If the cancer has spread to the lymph nodes, chemotherapy and radiotherapy may be needed.

Remember – people are all different. Some of the information given above may not be right for you. Ask your pharmacist when you need advice.

Prize Quiz

This month Quiz fans once again get a shot at winning the Nicol's Killer Prices' prize of a £10 voucher. When you've answered all the questions, fill in your details and send it in or deliver to Merkinch Enterprise, 14 Grant Street to reach us no later than Friday 17th July.

- | | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. What rank in the Royal Navy is the equivalent of the army's Field Marshall?
A: Sea Marshall
B: Admiral of the Fleet
C: Sailor-in-Charge.</p> <p>2. Loriners and farriers cater for what?
A: Pigs
B: Cows
C: Horses.</p> <p>3. Who is said to rule in a plutocracy?
A: The rich
B: Dogs
C: Civil servants.</p> <p>4. What is another name for a ship's load mark?
A: Plumb Line
B: Plimsoll Line
C: Prune Line.</p> <p>5. What is the collective name for the nine handmaidens of Odin?
A: The Gorgons
B: The Valkyries
C: The Fates.</p> | <p>6. According to the Bible, on what day did God create the sun, moon and stars?
A: The 1st
B: The 4th
C: The 6th.</p> <p>7. What are the caves at Lascaux famous for?
A: Cellars for Champagne
B: Stalactites and Stalagmites
C: Prehistoric cave paintings.</p> <p>8. Which number president of the USA is Barack Obama?
A: 24
B: 44
C: 64.</p> <p>9. Leo and Aries are two of the fire signs in astrology. What's the third?
A: Capricorn
B: Virgo
C: Sagittarius.</p> <p>10. Which French car design has a double chevron logo?
A: Citroen
B: Renault
C: Vroom-vroom.</p> |
|---|---|

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....

Last month's quiz check

1. Kibbutz means 'gathering' in modern Hebrew and describes an Israeli collective farming community.
2. We obtain linseed oil from the linen/flax plant.
3. Risotto is an Italian dish based on rice.
4. The George Cross is the highest civilian award for bravery in this country.
5. The perfume ingredient ambergris comes from the whale.
6. The £1 note ceased to be legal tender in 1988.
7. 'Shirley', 'Harbinger' and 'Moneymaker' are all varieties of tomato.
8. Nokia, the mobile phone company, originates in Finland.
9. Mrs Thatcher was the last Prime Minister not to have a wife.
10. The kangaroo and emu are on the Australian coat of arms.



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... Sports News ... Sports News ...

Lots of sports to choose from this summer

Merkinch Football Academy

Primary Football League (under 13s)

Results:
Merkinch 6, Ardersier/ Croy/
Cawdor 1
(Aaron Mackay, Jamie Head,

Matthew Maclaughlin (2), Lyndon
Fraser (2).

Central 8 Merkinch 4
(Connor Macphee (2), Lyndon
Fraser (2).

Merkinch 5, Holm 3
(Matthew Maclaughlin (3), Aaron
Mackay (2).

St Joseph's 6, Merkinch 6
(Aaron Mackay (3), Jamie Head

(3).
Merkinch 3, Raigmore 4
(Raymond Chen (2), Jamie Head
(1).

IPFL Summer Cup, First Round:

Kinmylies 1, Merkinch 5
(Aaron Mackay, Raymond Chen,
Matthew Maclaughlin, Lyndon
Fraser, Connor Macphee).



MERKINCH PARTNERSHIP

Street League (under 15s)

Results:
Balloan 2, Merkinch 0
Thistle Colts 1, Merkinch 4
Merkinch 2, Kinmylies 4. Man of
the match Liam Shewan.

Youth League (under 17s)

The youth league team continues to
grow in numbers and improve on
the field.

Results:
Culduthel 1 Merkinch 0
Inverness United 5 Merkinch 0
Merkinch 2 Milton Athletic 2

Leisure League (over 17s)

Results:
Merkinch 4, Rams 3
Merkinch 1, Scotizilan 5
Delta Force 0, Merkinch 0
Citadel 4 Merkinch 2.

Bebo

Check on the Merkinch Sports
Bebo site for the latest sporting
videos, pictures and news. Have
your say what you would like to
see in the summer programme of
sports events.

www.bebo.com/merkinchsports.

**LEFT... Mountain bike leader
Steve Morgan explains the route.**



Thornbush Stores

Thornbush Road
Inverness

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... Sports News ... Sports News ...

Mountain Biking

Merkinch Mountain Bike Club needs fearless people looking for a challenge and willing to take risks, if you are over 12 years of age and are looking for an exciting sport to take part in phone 07951 977 922 for details the club is free to join and all equipment is supplied free of charge all you need is enthusiasm.

Sports at Inverness High School Transition Day

On 19th May Inverness Sports Centre hosted the

Inverness High School Transition sports day, this was an opportunity for primary 7 pupils from the primary schools that feed into the High School to mix with each other and also with 1st year pupils from the High School in a sports environment. Sports on offer included Rock Climbing, Athletics, Football and Tae Kwon Do.

Dodgeball

Pupils from Inverness High School took on Charleston Academy on June 18th at this fast, exciting and rapidly growing sport. If you are

interested in playing dodgeball either at school or as part of the UK league phone 07951 977 922

LNR Celebration Day

Players from Scotland's only professional basketball team made an appearance and showed off their skills as well as passing a few on to eager youngsters. The players from the Scottish Rocks team are also involved in the Twilight Basketball programme which runs every Friday evening at Inverness College from 6pm-8pm. Open to all ages, the sessions are totally free.

If you want any more information about any of the activities on these pages contact David Paulin, Merkinch Partnership Sports Co-ordinator, mobile 07951 977 922.

LEFT... A vital part of any football game is the half-time talk... here the expressions of pure concentration can be seen on the players' faces.



*News & Views
seeks more
delivery
volunteers*

We need volunteers in the following areas to help us deliver your community newsletter. This takes around half an hour or so, once a month. It helps keep you fit... and we don't expect you to go out in the rain!

- **Madras, Nelson, and Brown Streets.**
- **Maclennan Crescent, Jamaica Street/Gardens.**
- **Lower Kessock Street, Pumpgate Court.**
- **Abbey Court.**

*If you can help, ring 240085
or drop in at Merkinch
Enterprise,
14 Grant Street.*

Other summer sports

THESE are just some of the activities taking place in and around the Merkinch area this summer...

Jogging. Get the day off to an active start with some jogging. All ages welcome at Westfield every Tuesday from 10am, starts 14th July.

Boxing at Merkinch Community Centre, starts Tuesday 21st July for three weeks, two sessions from 2-3pm and 3-4pm

American Flag Football at Merkinch Park starts at 10am on Wednesday 29th July for ages 10 up.

Mountain biking Wednesday 22nd July, 29th July and 5th August leaving from Merkinch Park at 4pm returning 8pm.

5 a-side football at Merkinch Park from 10am -12 and 1pm - 3pm on Thursday 23rd July, Friday 31st July and Friday 7th August.

Kwik Cricket at Merkinch Community Centre for P4 to P7 on Wednesday July 22nd from 10am - 12.

Basketball at Westfield on Thursday 30th July and Thursday 6th August from 1pm-3pm.

Mystery arrival of new 'equipment' at playground



IT could have come from outer space for all some council officials and representatives were aware.

What looked like a big metal sheet set in an arch and covered with an obscure series of little holes, flanked by a row of rings set into the ground, appeared among some rather dilapidated play equipment at the back of Benula Road, across from the new play area opened last year.

A perfect disguise and location for aliens wanting to hide some research installation, one would think.

The mystery of the "play equipment" was raised at Merkinch Community Council last month, "It would appear to be a mystery donation," said Cllr Peter Corbett. "It looks like some kind of climbing frame."

A few queries around nearby residents resulted in a range of views. As far as some were

concerned, the installation might just as well have come from outer space, but one man told *News & Views* that a council van was certainly involved. And a neighbouring couple said that the work had been going on very late in the afternoon and although it first appeared a couple of weeks earlier, nothing had been done since, but their young daughter had told them that it was supposed to be a climbing frame.

Later Cllr Corbett was able to confirm that it was indeed a council project but he had no more detail as the person in charge was on holiday... which undoubtedly explains the delay in completing the project.

■ The Ed says: "While our reporter was disappointed that Benula was not the new Roswell, we are happy that neighbouring youngsters are going to have a new addition to their playground.

Consumer advice: Upholstered furniture

REGULATIONS are in place to reduce the number of people killed and injured by toxic fumes given off when some upholstery materials burn.

Upholstered furniture supplied in let accommodation is covered by these Regulations. Furniture covered by these regulations (unless it was made before 1950) can include household upholstered items, such as three-piece suites and armchairs; beds, headboards and mattresses; sofa-beds, futons and other convertibles; nursery and children's furniture (including pushchairs and prams); loose and stretch covers for furniture; scatter cushions, seat pads and pillows; furniture in new caravans; garden furniture which can be used indoors.

In order to ensure items of upholstered furniture are safe, they must have: covers which resist ignition from a match flame test; upholstery which resists ignition from a smouldering cigarette test; filling materials which pass an appropriate ignitability test; permanent labelling to show compliance. Tenants and prospective tenants of furnished accommodation, if concerned about the condition of the furniture supplied, should ask for written confirmation if a piece of furniture is not labelled.

Humour on the 'Net

In honour of stupid people...

In case you needed further proof that the human race is doomed through stupidity, here are some actual label instructions on consumer goods. Please note: they may have now been changed since this selection was made.

● On Tesco's Tiramisu dessert (printed on bottom)

...
'Do not turn upside down.'
(Well...duh, a bit late, huh!)

● On Sainsbury's peanuts...
'Warning: contains nuts.'
(Talk about a news flash)

● On Nytol Sleep Aid...
'Warning: May cause drowsiness.'
(..I'm taking this because???)

● On a Swedish chainsaw...
'Do not attempt to stop chain with your hands or genitals.'
(Oh my God...was there a lot of this happening somewhere?)

● On packaging for a Rowenta iron...
'Do not iron clothes on body.'
(But wouldn't this save me time?)

● On a child's Superman costume...
'Wearing of this garment does not enable you to fly.'
(I don't blame the company. I blame the parents for this one.)

● On a Japanese food processor...
'Not to be used for the other use.'
(Now, somebody out there, help

us on this. We're a bit curious.)

● On most brands of Christmas lights...

'For indoor or outdoor use only.'
(As opposed to what?)

● On a bag of Fritos...
'You could be a winner! No purchase necessary. Details inside.'
(The shoplifter special?)

● On a Sears hairdryer...
'Do not use while sleeping.'
(That's the only time I have to work on my hair.)

● On Marks & Spencer Bread Pudding...
'Product will be hot after heating.'
(...and you thought ????)

● On Boot's Children Cough Medicine...
'Do not drive a car or operate machinery after taking this medication.'
(We could do a lot to reduce the rate of construction accidents if we could just get those five-year-olds with head colds off those bulldozers.)

● On some Swanson frozen dinners...
'Serving suggestion: Defrost.'
(But, it's just a suggestion.)

● On an American Airlines packet of nuts...
'Instructions: Open packet, eat nuts.'
(Step 3: say what?)

Blessed are the cracked: for it is they who let in the light.



MIC

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14 Grant Street, Inverness IV3 8BL
Tel: (01463) 715450 Fax: 01463 719777
e.mail: info@merkinch.com

Merkinch News & Views always welcomes input from readers. If you have an idea for an article, any comments or questions, please get in touch with us at the above address.



Opinions expressed in this publication are not necessarily those of the editor, or of Merkinch Enterprise.

INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

DIW

THE FLIPERZ PAGE



The holidays are here... So, enjoy your summer. Let's hope there is plenty of sunshine and happy days ahead. And if it rains? Colour in this picture!



JOKE SPOT

The phone rang, so I picked it up and said, "Who's speaking?"

And a voice said, "You are!"

I rang up the local swimming pool and said, "Is that the local swimming pool?"

He said, "It depends where you are calling from!"

I rang the builders' and said, "I want a skip outside my house."

He said, "Skip where you like. I'm not stopping you!"

Fliperz Daycare

Enrolment

If your child becomes 3 years old between **1st March and 31st August 2009**, you can enrol him/her for a Funded Nursery place now. Four-year-olds can also be enrolled. When enrolling please bring your child's Birth Certificate.

You may call into Fliperz and have a look round any time.

- Daycare
- Nursery Sessions
- After School Care
- Holiday Care

*Contact: The Childcare Manager
Fliperz Daycare,
Simpson's Lane.
Telephone 234232.*

Fliperz still has a few vacancies for the August term — contact Denise on 234232.

Fliperz are collecting Tesco vouchers for schools and children's clubs. Please hand in at Fliperz or Merkinch Enterprise.



LEFT... Johnny Fowler (left), a former pupil at Merkinch Primary, can blow up a storm on his trumpet when required. He is pictured here with Robert Farmer from the music department at Inverness High School where Johnny is now a pupil. Both took part in the annual Highland brass pupils get-together held recently in Merkinch Community Centre. For further coverage of the event, see page four.

BELOW... This young football fan was delighted to meet Bobo the Clown at the Local Nature Reserve open day. More pictures on page six.






LEFT... Some of the youngsters who took part in the annual National Spring Clean event found they didn't have as much to do as they expected to. See another picture and see the full story on page five.

Are you looking for FREE IT training with recognised qualifications?

Are you unemployed or working 16 hours or less per week and living in the Inverness area?

Applicants must be between 16 years old and retirement age to qualify.

If the answer is YES, contact
MERKINCH ENTERPRISE

-  Microsoft Word, Excel & Access 2003
-  Microsoft Windows XP
-  Introduction to the Internet



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