

MERKINCH

News and Views

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



Prize time for karate kids

ABOVE... Merkinch Karate Club members were graded earlier this year and here they are seen sporting their new belts. For more sports news see pages 12 and 13.

Launch of new DVD

RIGHT... The Shand family, and friend, from Rosehaugh Road were among those who enjoyed a Saturday morning out at Eden Court to see various short films made during last year's *Out of Air* Artists-in-Residency and the Merkinch Festival. See story on page 2.



Inside this month:	Here come the Street Pastors — Page 3	Merkinch Partnership update — Page 5	Falcon Club enjoy their ceilidh — Page 7	Noah in Merkinch? Web humour — Page 14
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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.

CAB, Citizens Advice Bureau – 235345.

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.

JANNY'S Hoose – Jean Mackay, 226348.

MERKINCH ENTERPRISE – 240085.

mp33 – 717639.

NEW START – 715615 or 728770.

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

Street pastors aim to be friendly faces in Merkinch

THE Street Pastor project, which has been proving so successful in Inverness City Centre in the last year, is to start making regular forays into Merkinch as from 15 May.

Inverness organiser Mark Hadfield (pictured) says the 30 or so volunteers are young and old, men and women who come from all walks of life—doctors, health workers, housewives and so on. What they have in common is that they are all church-going folk. However, they are not evangelistic; the movement's motto is "Caring, listening and helping". "One of our main roles is to pay attention," said Mr Hadfield. Peace and safety are basic themes.

Street pastors are not just for talking with bored and aimless kids and caring for drunken youngsters. "We're available to anyone; we're open to invitation. It depends on what the community makes of us," he said.

Street pastors are non-denominational, with volunteers coming from 13 different city churches.



Mark Hadfield is originally from Yorkshire. For 10 years while he was working in Manchester he regularly visited the Highlands and it just felt like home, he says. He and his wife have now lived in Inverness for 12 years. His daytime job is graphic and website designing and his wife is a town planner. The couple have two girls.

Anyone talking to street pastors can be assured of confidentiality. They all have 12 days' training, as well as Disclosure, and are well-versed in defusing situations without intervening.

Wanted: 20 able-bodied folk to help Merkinch get a new minibus

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)

MERKINCH Community Centre hope to receive a new minibus from the Highland Cross this year.

However, the Centre has to provide 20 able-bodied people to assist at the Bike Pound in Glen Affric on Sat 20th June all day.

So volunteers are required to help at this event, which promises to be a good day out.

Please contact Elsie Normington if you can help out and ask your friends to join you! The Centre's number is 01463 239563 or you can email her direct on

elsie.merkinch@uwclub.net

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



MERKINCH PARTNERSHIP

Rowdies and local bobbies, PO potential and ticket office refurb, nesting birds and a brand new floor

MERKINCH Community Councillors are concerned to hear of the transfer of Merkinch's two community beat officers. It had been understood that Connie and Eddie, as they are popularly known, would be here for some time.

Members at their April meeting felt that the transfer was peremptory and that it was unfortunate that both should be going at the same time and that it should coincide with the arrival of the Street Pastors' service in mid-May. Members were also surprised that they had not been consulted as had been promised.

However, they were assured that new CBOs were to be appointed and that the Street Pastors were not being used as an alternative to policing. Councillor Peter Corbett pointed out that staffing and operational matters were the responsibility of the police and the police alone.

■ The Community Council has been granted a 10-year lease on the former ticket office at South Kessock pier.

The building has new windows and a new door, the walls have been lined and the electrics upgraded. The roof was being repaired and the building should be ready for use by the end of May, members were told.

■ The secretary is to write to the railway authorities about birds nesting under the railway bridge on Thornbush Road. Besides the danger of being hit by excrement, chicks fell on the road in the breeding season.

Members said it was a health hazard and something should be done to deter birds nesting there.

One member commented that large sheets of paper from the advertisement hoarding adjacent to the bridge had been blowing across the road, causing a traffic hazard, however this was due to vandals tearing the huge sheets of paper off the hoarding.

■ Greenspace have appointed three new directors, one of them being Claire Richardson, the community warden. The riverside had been given another clean-up.

■ The Community Centre had been closed for a week over Easter, members heard, in order to lay new flooring (pictured right). The previous tiles had lasted for 32 years, since the centre first opened. Thanks to the North British Hotels Trust and another anonymous local donor the Centre has been transformed. The new floor, which will also be extended into the play room, only requires regular buffing to keep its appearance.

■ South Kessock Residents Association are to hold their Fun Day at Craigton Avenue on 3rd July.

■ Some 25 members of ACTRA attended their latest meeting when the major topics were antisocial behaviour — vandalism and graffiti — and the repairs to the Friars Bridge.

■ A meeting of Ward councillors, police, street pastors, youth workers and other interested parties regarding the antisocial behaviour that Merkinch, along with other areas, was experiencing had proved very fruitful, Cllr Corbett reported.

The main issue was youngsters gathering in Grant Street and it was agreed that a combination of providing access to more activities and coming down hard on offenders was the best approach.

Operation Respect was due to start in mid-May and police presence was to be increased in the first few weeks of the operation, when street pastors would also participate.

■ Among the topics to be discussed at the Ward Forum on 27th April was the over-provision of licensing and the new licensing



times, and the question of unsuitable housing allocations.

■ The question of a community noticeboard was raised once again and the community council is to write requesting permission to erect one.

■ Highland Council is looking into the possibility of starting up a Credit Union in Inverness. It was suggested that the Merkinch Post Office premises might be suitable for Credit Union and Citizens Advice Bureau offices. Members regretted that the Council's low-cost household insurance scheme had had a very low take-up.

■ The community council's May meeting will be on Thursday the 7th in the Community Centre.



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■ **For amusement:** Pack of playing cards **ONLY 35p**. Domino sets **ONLY 60p**.

■ **To admire:** Giant individual artificial flowers (assorted colours) **ONLY £1.99** each.

**Nicol's Killer Prices, 57 Grant Street,
Inverness IV3 8BP, Tel 01463 231596.**

Briefs...

NOMAD Cage Football was due to come to Inverness High School and at various locations around Merkinch on the week commencing 27 April, after we went to press. "This exciting two-on-two close action football game is not to be missed," says David Paulin, local sports coordinator. More sports news on pages 12 and 13.

CLACH Club is the venue for an Ann Summers' party on Sunday 3rd May. The event, which starts at 7.30pm and costs £3 to get in, is in aid of the Highland Hospice.

MARIA Throp who is known in Merkinch for her work with MDV, is now working as the Inverness Community Care Forum local involvement worker. She has been researching how safe and supported older people feel in their homes. Her final report will soon be out and will feature on the Forum's website www.hccf.org.uk

A FOYERS-based company selling wild bird food is seeking a part-time agent for the Merkinch area. No financial outlay required. More details from Dave Munro on 01456 486 639 or email sales@wildbirdfoodscotland.co.uk

THE Common Threads multicultural sewing group which meets at the Community Centre is changing the time of its term-time sessions to Thursday mornings, 10am to 12 noon. Members from a range of cultures share skills ranging from embroidery and knitting to dyeing fabrics and crochet.

TELFORD Road-based hair salon Oxygen have a spare chair for a qualified hairdresser. Those interested should ring Clare on Inverness 716183.

BOWLING is on the menu at the Trinity Church's Women in Spirit meeting. The meeting is set to take place on the third Wednesday of the month at 7.30pm but ring Heidi on Inverness 731837 for details.

LUCKY winner of the Nicol's Killer Quiz for April is Karen Watt, Benula Road. Congratulations!

Thought for the day

"They make a wilderness and call it peace."

Calgacus, Celtic chieftain, speaking of the Romans

Eden Court event celebrates the 'Out of Air' project

IN 2007 various local groups took part in the artist-in-residency project, *The Other Side of Air*. Del Whitticase worked in Merkinch with the Art Group and Multi-Cultural Sewing group creating art work that was shown the Trinity and Methodist Churches.

On Saturday 18th April there was a screening of *The Other Side of Air* DVD, which also shows the three short films created by young people from the area, Ghost River, Merkinch Film and Face of Faith.

Everyone who was involved with the project, or was interested was welcome to come along to the screening and it was very well attended. Copies of the DVD are available through community arts worker Annie Marrs, tel 240085.



Festival fast approaching

THE Merkinch Festival does not take place until early July, but already local artists aiming to show work at the exhibition are urged to prepare their entries for handing in at the end of next month.

Once again the Bike Shed in Grant Street will temporarily take on the name of The Black Bridge Gallery. Opening on 2nd July, the festival will run until the 12th. Next month *News & Views* will have entry forms and full details of the exhibition, also highlights of the other festival events, such as performances and workshops. Full programmes and booking details will be generally available nearer the time. Meantime there is a Funny Bones puppet show on 2nd May in the Community Centre at 2pm, tickets £2.50.



'Friendly steamroller' visits Merkinch on mission to help fellow addicts

MAY Nicholson (right) was a notorious fighting drunk and anyone who has lived with drug addicts or alcoholics knows how elusive hope can be.

However, May found a different type of hope—or rather it found her, literally saving her life. This set in motion what one of her colleagues calls "a friendly steamroller", clearing paths of hope not just for herself, but for dozens and dozens of others too.

May will be at Merkinch Community Centre on Friday 1st May, thanks to the Christian Fellowship of Healing (Highlands) who organised May's visit.

Said Henry Nelson, one of the Fellowship, "Come along and hear her remarkable story, told in her wonderful Glasgow humour — and bring a friend who might benefit from hearing of May's life-changing experience."



Community café pilot to run this summer

THE Merkinch Partnership Officer, Anne Sutherland, has been working with various groups and projects over the last few weeks:

- Trinity Church is looking into the idea of a Community Café located in the Church Hall. The Merkinch Conversation carried out last summer highlighted the issue of a community café facility as something which is missing in the Merkinch area and the Church is keen to address this as a way of making closer links with the community.

Anne has been meeting with Parish Assistant Heidi Jones to take the idea forward and funding has been sourced from the Central Ward budget to run a pilot café project during the summer.

The pilot for the "Seven C's Café" will run from June to August 2009, Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays from 1pm to 4pm. (Seven C's – Community, Compassion, Coffee, Chat, Connections, Caring, Chill.

The café will offer local people the opportunity to meet up to have a chat in a friendly setting and enjoy basic catering — soup, sandwiches, tea, coffee, home baking. The café will also provide newspapers, a children's corner, sofa seating and restaurant tables.

- Anne attended a meeting on 6 April in mp33 to discuss the proposal to extend "Operation Respect" from the city centre into the Merkinch area.

The idea arose from discussions between Northern Constabulary, mp33 and Merkinch Partnership and the meeting was attended by the four Central Ward members, local Project Officers, Youth Workers, the Street Pastors co-ordinator and Area Commander Julian Innes.

The two-hour meeting discussed the issues around youth work in Merkinch and it was agreed that the Street Pastors would have a presence in the area, launching on 15 May. In the meantime the group are to meet again on 5 May.

- The Partnership Officer was a member of the interview panel for the new post of MDV Volunteer Co-ordinator and Jamie McJimpsey started work on 15 April.

Jamie has previously worked in Merkinch during his time as a Community Learning

Officer with Highland Council and is busy settling into his new post.



MERKINCH PARTNERSHIP

- The Escape Group (pictured below in the Alps last year) has finalised its programme for the coming year. The girls have a lot of walking experience under their belts now and this year will be tackling the hills without a professional Walk Leader.

They will also be undertaking Walk Leader training to increase their skills and will be doing another "Big Challenge" next summer.

The Partnership Officer has had preliminary discussions with Step It Up Highland about setting up a walking group in Merkinch offering easier, low level walks in the area.

- The Partnership Officer is working with the Workers Educational Association to set up Options and Choices courses in areas of need in Inverness.

The first course is planned for June and will be aimed at early school leavers who are not moving into employment or training. Planning is at an early stage and more details will be available in May.

- Fairer Scotland Funding was approved by Highland Council Resources Committee on 15 April for the following projects:

- Partnership Officer post
- Sports Co-ordinator post
- Arts Worker post
- Ness Soaps
- IT training for the unemployed
- Merkinch Greenspace
- Mp33

- The next Partnership meeting will be held on 21 April, when members will be discussing the future role and membership of the group.





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Community pay tribute to murder victim



THERE was a large turn-out at the dedication of a bench at South Kessock to the memory of murder victim Josh Mitchell. Rev Alistair Murray of Trinity Church (pictured above with some of those who attended), officiated. Also pictured (left) is Josh's fiancée Cheryl and (far left) Josh's mother Marilyn and his son on the specially-commissioned bench.

Youngsters welcome to play in Reserve

MERKINCH Local Nature Reserve is now in its second year of existence and much has been done — some may notice the new paths the disabled ramp, dog bins and so forth.

The Green Gym is very successful with local people getting involved as well as people from further afield.

Recently an interpretation plan drawn up for the reserve which identifies — for example — where benches should go in the reserve what kind of signage should be installed etc.

During this exercise the Merkinch Greenspace consultant spoke to as many people as she could about the area's past and its future, one of the many things that came up was that

some parents are thinking that as it is a nature reserve their children should not play there.

This could not be further from the truth: Merkinch Local Nature Reserve is a place where people and nature can co-exist in harmony with each other, so please feel free to let your child play there as children have done since time and memorial! After all its **your** Nature Reserve. Said Ali Locke of Merkinch Greenspace, "This reserve the 50th in Scotland could have been anywhere in the country. But it is not anywhere else it's here in Merkinch, something Merkinch can be proud of.

The first clean up of Friars Shott scheduled

for this year has taken place and further tidy ups will take place as required over the year.



May timetable

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

Activities this month are planned as follows... The Green Gym will be undertaking a variety of reserve management tasks during their weekly sessions in May. On the 13th and 27th of May there will be one of the wildlife specials from 12 until 1pm. The nature of those specials have yet to be confirmed. 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@btecv.org.uk



Arts, sports and parties, Merkinchers of all ages enjoy springtime fun



ABOVE... Merkinch Primary School pupils put on a good show at a recent Cross-Country event in the Bught Park. Many were well-placed in the event which saw youngsters from all over competing. For full report see page 12.



ABOVE ... over 50 members of the Falcon Club came to a ceilidh in the Community Centre where the club now meets. The Inverness Fiddlers played for the group and they all had a fantastic time singing and dancing.



LEFT: Another group from Singing for Pleasure wait for their turn to go on stage during The Big Sing.



33 Grant Street
Inverness
IV3 8BN
Tel: 01463 717639
Fax: 01463 717723

A lot's been happening at mp33 recently. The Summer Programme is currently being drawn up and will be finalised by the end of May. It will include a wide range of activities throughout the Summer break, both active and creative. The Bike Shed is now back up and running, and has been opened on a number of afternoons and evenings to provide young people with another location to meet up and socialise. We have a couple of pool tables, a keyboard and a set of drums, and hope to secure some more musical instruments in the near future. If you hear a lot of dissonant noise emanating from the bike shed, you'll know why.

Unfortunately, however, John McMurray is taking up a new post in Dornoch, and will be sadly missed, though he will be working a day a week for the time being to complete some of the project work he started at mp33. We wish him all the best.

Coming activities and events... Spring-Summer Programme 2009



The Guitar Club has resumed after the Easter break and is steadily working its way through the foundation course. John Hyslop, our tutor, has now registered with the RGT, and will lead the group into the grading process once the course has been completed, after which we will commence an intermediate level course.

Unfortunately, John has just recently gone and slipped a disc in his back (you gotta stop those stage dives, John!), and may require further hospital treatment. We wish him swift convalescence, and hope he gets back into the groove soon.



Just as one cheery face unexpectedly departs, so another arrives. Myra Campbell, formerly a Project Worker at the Jannie's Hoose, will be based at mp33 as she awaits redeployment (or perhaps getting press-ganged into permanent work at mp33 by Gus and Naomi!). Myra is already well known and respected by the young people who attend mp33, since she is a local, and brings a host of skills which we hope she will put to good use, particularly in the cooking department (we're getting peckish already, Myra!)

Now that the Jannie's Hoose has closed, we will be looking to fill in some of the gaps of the service that the Hoose offered to the community, as it relates to healthy eating, fitness and well-being.

16+ Group

Recently, we have been exploring strategies to engage recent school-leavers in the community by hosting a 16+ Group, in accordance with *A Curriculum for Excellence - 16+ Learning Choices*. Highland Council, E, C & S.

We are renewing our efforts to liaise with other agencies which are involved with this older end of the youth spectrum, in order to devise an inter-agency working initiative, and would hope to cater more directly for this target group by introducing morning sessions and workshops tailored to their specific needs and requirements. Ideas are being explored to host breakfast clubs for both school pupils and school leavers, incorporating informal learning strategies relating to health, fitness and well-being, and social and occupational development.

Raising achievement and employability will also be a high priority in the year ahead. A number of avenues are now being explored in this respect, including the implementation of various award schemes.



Scott Shields displays a positive response to a recent healthy cooking session with our 16+ group



SUMMERJOG 09

Ages 12-25 years

Running Group

Weekly Training

Mondays 4pm-6pm @ mp33

new members welcome



Training for
Jog Scotland 5K - Inverness challenge

run by qualified JogScotland leaders

Granny's favourite household tips

THE bathroom is one area of the house where we use a lot of unnecessary cleaners. The simplest way to keep your bathroom sink from becoming clogged up needs no harsh chemicals. Just heat a gallon of water once a month to boiling point, the carefully pour half of it down—wait a few minutes and pour the rest. **Don't risk** cracking a porcelain basin—pour directly into the actual drain.

- If you notice a bit of a whiff wafting up from your sink or bath, prevent it by giving the offending drain a dose of baking soda, half a cup will probably do it.

- If your bathroom sink is clogged or hardly draining there's an old-fashioned way to deal with it: pour one cup of baking soda, one cup of salt and three quarters of a cup of white vinegar. Let these ingredients stand in the drain for 20 minutes or so, then wash it down with a gallon of boiling water. Remember, if your basin is porcelain, pour it directly into the drain to avoid cracking the bowl. This method probably won't work on the loo—for that a plunger is your best bet.

- By the way, did you realise that a bath uses 50 or 60 gallons of water, whereas a four-minute shower will get you just as clean with just eight gallons.

- If your metal shower head gets clogged or a bit grubby, unscrew and remove it, put it into a pot with a 50-50 mixture of boiling white vinegar and water. Simmer for five minutes. If the shower head is plastic, or can't be removed, fill a small, sturdy plastic bag with vinegar and tape it close around the fixture overnight. By morning it should be free-flowing again.

- If you are laundering some small items, such as ribbons, baby socks, thongs etc, pop into a pop sock and tie top loosely.

- **DANGER ALERT!** When washing clothes or doing other household chores, NEVER mix vinegar, ammonia or anything else with chlorine bleach. These mixtures could cause toxic fumes and make you VERY sick.

Cooking on a budget

Tasty tuna and pasta bake

Serves 2/3 people; two portions of veg in one serving.

Ingredients:

1 onion
1 x 14oz tin tomatoes, chopped
1 tin tuna
1 mug uncooked pasta
1 tin sweet corn
Mixed herbs
Seasoning
Cheddar cheese.

Method:

1. Cook pasta in boiling water for 10 minutes until soft. Drain, rinse with cold water and leave to cool.
2. Chop onion fairly finely and put in a large pan with chopped up tomatoes and simmer for 10 minutes or until the onion is tender.
3. Add the pasta, tuna and sweet corn to the tomato sauce. If desired, add mixed herbs, black pepper and salt to taste.
4. Stir gently and cook till hot.
5. Serve with a sprinkling of grated cheese on top.

Tuna Bake goes well with a side salad and some crusty bread.

This is a very versatile dish and you can ring the changes by replacing the tuna with strips of cooked ham, slices of sausage, or other cooked meats such as left-over mince or chicken, diced small. Or try experimenting with kidney beans instead of corn.

We are encouraged to eat five "portions" of fruit or veg a day—but what is a portion? Here's the definition we've been given:

- 1 glass orange juice — but two a day doesn't count as two portions!
- 1 small bowl of salad.
- A handful of grapes or

vegetables.

- 1 medium fruit such as apple, orange or banana.
- 2 small fruits such as plums, apricots, satsumas.
- 1 slice large fruit—melon, pineapple etc.
- 2-3 tablespoons fruit salad, fresh or tinned.
- 1-2 tbsps raisins, dates etc.

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.'

Calling all residents' groups

Tenants and Residents Associations within the Merkinch area are invited to get in touch with News & Views with a view to regular coverage of their issues. Ring us at Merkinch Enterprise on 240085 and leave your name and phone number and the editor will call you back, prior to going to press, so that we have the latest news from your association. Alternatively, email or hand in a report/minutes of your latest meeting.

*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**

You and your health



Whether it's your bladder...

BLADDER weakness, otherwise known as incontinence, is a condition where the bladder leaks involuntarily. It is very common during pregnancy, after childbirth and in elderly people.

Our Advice

- If you need more than three pads a day you should consider using a pad with a higher absorbency.
- Drink enough liquid, 3-4 pints a day, but try to cut down on alcoholic drinks, tea, coffee and fizzy drinks.
- Try to do pelvic floor exercises. Get advice from your GP, practice nurse or pharmacist to ensure you are doing them correctly.
- Your GP may also be able to prescribe tablets to help your condition.
- Your pharmacist can supply a range of pads for your condition. Pads for both men and women are available.
- For more info call the Tena advice line on 0845 30 80 80 30.

... or your bowels

CONSTIPATION is not opening your bowels as often as you normally do. Our bowel habits are very different. Being regular can mean going once every three days for one person and going three times a day for another.

Our Advice

- Drink more fluids, but not tea, coffee, cola or alcohol.
- Eat more fibre which is found in fruit, fresh vegetables and wholemeal foods.
- Regular exercise improves bowel habits.
- Relaxing in a hot bath may help you to go.
- Never put off going the toilet when you know you need to go.
- Taking too many laxatives can stop your bowels working on their own.
- If you notice a change in your stools or get frequent stomach ache ask to see your pharmacist.
- If you are having to take regular laxatives, ask your pharmacist for advice.

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

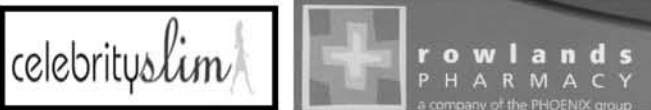
This month Quiz fans once again get a shot at winning the Nicol's Killer Prices' prize of a £10 voucher. When you've answered all the questions, fill in your details and send it in or deliver to Merkinch Enterprise, 14 Grant Street to reach us no later than Wednesday 13 May.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <p>1. Which cocktail consists of Tia Maria, vodka and Coke?
A: Screwdriver
B: Harvey Wallbanger
C: Black Russian .</p> <p>2. How many men have walked on the moon?
A: 6
B: 12
C: 18.</p> <p>3. What is the meaning of the abbreviation FTSE
A: Further
B: Financial Times Stock Exchange
C: The Red Croissant.</p> <p>4. Stella Rimmington was the first female head of which organisation?
A: MIS
B: Smersh
C: The Royal Bank of Scotland.</p> <p>5. What does the V stand for in DVD?
A: Video
B: Very
C: Versatile.</p> | <p>6. In which Palace is the Hall of Mirrors?
A: Versailles, near Paris
B: Buckingham
C: India.</p> <p>7. What edible fungi which grows underground, shares its name with a chocolate confection?
A: Roses
B: Truffles
C: Black Magic.</p> <p>8. In which country are Lada cars made?
A: Russia
B: The Czech Republic
C: India.</p> <p>9. Who did John Hinkley attempt to assassinate in 1982?
A: George Bush
B: President Ronald Reagan
C: Margaret Thatcher.</p> <p>10. What is dichromatic vision?
A: Colour blindness
B: Double vision
C: Second sight.</p> |
|---|--|

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....



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Last month's quiz check

1. The number 555 in Roman numerals is DLV: D=500, L=50 and V=5.
2. There are 28 individual pieces in a set of dominoes.
3. In Muslim countries one finds the Red Crescent.
4. A cutler makes, sells or repairs knives.
5. An old song re-recorded by a new artist is a "cover" version.
6. India's national symbol is a Lotus flower.
7. Gin is derived from rye and juniper berries.
8. Tetley made the first tea bags.
9. The Prime Minister is also the First Lord of the Treasury.
10. The variety of mandarin which takes its name from a city in Morocco (Tangiers) is the tangerine.

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

Learn to be a soccer coach, join in the LNR Mile plus all the latest sports news



**MERKINCH
PARTNERSHIP**

Merkinch Football Academy

Are you able to volunteer a couple of hours a week? Merkinch Partnership are looking for football coaches to assist with delivering an organised and professional football programme within Merkinch. Get involved, help your community, gain qualifications and experience as well as having some fun at the same time. Merkinch Partnership Sports will guide you into becoming a coach, covering any course costs and paying expenses. Contact David on 07951 977 922 or email david@merkinch.org.uk for details.

Register now for the Merkinch Mile

The race will take place at the Merkinch Local Nature Reserve on 27 June. Entry is £2 and forms can be picked up from Merkinch Enterprise, 14 Grant Street or MP33. Closing date for entries is Thursday, 25 June.

Athletics success

Merkinch Primary School recorded its best-ever placings in the McRobert Cup Cross Country

event on 20 March. On a day more like summer 36 athletes from Merkinch Primary took part in cross-country races at the Bught Park over distances between 1200 and 1600 metres. With nearly 700 athletes from schools across the Inverness, Nairn and Badenoch & Strathspey area the competition was fierce but some determined running from Michael Shields-Stevenson secured him a very well deserved third place in the primary 2/3 boys' race and with his teammates in close pursuit took third place in the boys' team event. Congratulations also go to the following Merkinch athletes who were first home in their race for their team:

Mathew McLoughlin finished 34th in the boys P6/7.

Danielle Knox finished 120th in the girls P6/7.

Jake MacDonald finished 39th in the boys P4/5.

Anna-Louise Mackenzie finished 48th in the girls P4/5.

Mia Mackay finished 14th in the girls P2/3

Karate Club

Coach Dolina Ross issued new belts to the successful members of Merkinch Karate Club at their

grading session in March.

Leisure Leagues 6 a-side Football

The league continues with the Merkinch team, who, after a slow start to 2009 have bounced back with a 3-1 win over the Rams, a 5-0 win over second-placed Outer Milan and the 6-0 destruction of Inverness United.

Street League

Merkinch began their preparations for this year's Street League with a friendly against Dalneigh which finished in 2-all draw.

Street Football

Street football returns to Merkinch on the following dates at the park on Anderson Street.

Saturday 2nd May 7-10pm

Friday 22nd May 8-11pm

Thursday 4th June 6.30-9.30pm

Mountain Biking

After months of intense training newly qualified Mountain Bike leader Steve Morgan aims to make Merkinch Mountain Bike club one of the biggest Mountain bike clubs in Scotland. There will be regular

monthly sessions taking place on the first Sunday of each month, sign up for the next Mountain Bike excursion on Sunday 3rd May, email david@merkinch.org.uk to reserve your space.

Twilight Basketball

Stars of Scottish Rocks professional basketball team toured Merkinch setting up some impromptu games with local children. The players were up in Merkinch to promote Twilight Basketball, a programme which runs in Inverness College every Friday night from 6-8pm, offering people aged between 11 and 21 the opportunity to play games of basketball and get the best coaching all for free. Visit the Merkinch Sports Bebo page for all the action.

Bebo latest

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

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Michael Shields-Stevenson of Merkinch Primary receives his well-deserved medal from Inverness Provost Jimmy Gray at the recent McRobert Cup Cross Country event.

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



IN a project funded by Fairer Scotland Funding through Merkinch Partnership and run by Coaching Highland with assistance from Active Schools and Merkinch Partnership's Sports Co-ordinator, David Paulin, several newly-qualified Level 1 sports leaders put their skills into action at Merkinch Primary School last month.

The Level 1 Award in Sports Leadership is a nationally recognised qualification that enables successful candidates to lead small groups in simple sport and recreational activities whilst under the direct supervision of their tutor and these experiences often provide opportunities to increase their personal development, i.e. self-confidence, time-keeping, team work etc.

David Paulin said "The Sports Leaders are all pupils from Inverness High School (some of whom are pictured left) and have shown great dedication and effort in completing this course." The course which has been running since January has involved regular Monday night sessions along with some extra work on other evenings and weekends. One of the sports leaders commented "Taking part in this course has helped me improve my leadership skills and boosted my confidence."

Since passing their Level 1 course the leaders have been eagerly pursuing their new vocation and have helped out interschool sports days and after

Latest results in the Inverness City Taxis Darts League

New faces and familiar ones in the champions' roll of honour this season



RESULTS for 9 April in the Inverness City Taxis Darts League are as follows:

A League: Legion A 5 City Taxis 5, Chieftain 6 Tarradale 6, Uncle Bob's.

B League: East End Arrows 5 Raigmore B 7, Finlay's 7 Portland 5.

C League: Thistle 4 Legion B 8, Raigmore A 4 Portland X 8, Clach Club 12 Smithton 0.

Only one of the four undecided league positions was resolved in the last week of the season. Portland X took the two points they needed to win the C League but it was not all plain sailing as they trailed Raigmore 4-2 before taking the last two singles and all the doubles to make sure of the title.

Results 2 April: The new **Inverness Doubles champions** are Dougie Milne and Michael Maclean of Uncle Bob's. Dougie had his first win in the Inverness Doubles in 1998 but this was a first in this event for Michael. However the title is well known to Michael's family as his father had two wins, and his cousins wins were Barry five, Kevin three and Derek two. This was the fifth time in six years that Dougie had reached the last four.

The runners-up were Andrew Macdonald and Andy MacMahon of Chieftain and the losing semi-finalists were Bomber Godsman and Roy

Younger (City Taxis) and Ally McGinely and Andy Leckie also of City Taxis. Going out at the quarter finals were Steve Ross and Don Maclean Jnr, Davey Morrison and Charlie Ross (Raigmore), Graham Munro and Mick Jackson (Clach Club) and Gordy Redmond and Sandy Morrison (Culloden Moor Inn).

Bomber Godsman (City Taxis) and Rhonda Philip (Portland X) had won the **Mixed Doubles** five times but last year were runners-up. However they regained the title this year when they beat Nigel McEwan (City Taxis) and Fiona Stott (Raigmore B) in the final. The losing semi-finalists all from the Thistle were Davey Morrison and Lucille Duncan and Stevie McAllister and Liz Dallas.

Results Thursday 26 March: A League Cup: Portland A 11 Chieftain 1, Legion A 4 City Taxis 8, Uncle Bob's 10 Culloden Moor Inn 2.

B League Cup: 4 Portland Spikey's 8, Finlay's 8 Brockie's Lodge 4, Raigmore B 12 Caley Club 0.

C League Cup: Clach Club 7 Raigmore 5, Thistle 7 Legion B 6.

Results 19 March: There was a record entry for this year's **Inverness Singles** when 90 players competed for the title. The holder and

three-times champion Dougie Milne went out in the first round as did four-times champion Gordon Morison. The other two former winners, Don Maclean Snr and Stevie Falconer, both went out at the quarters so there had to be a new champion this year and it was Keith Stephen (Portland A) who beat Sandy Morrison (Culloden Moor Inn) in the final to claim the title.

The losing semi-finalists were Andy Mackintosh (City Taxis) and Kevin Maclean (Uncle Bob's) and the losing quarter-finalists were Barry Maclean (Portland A), Stevie Falconer (Portland A), Michael Hillan (Portland Club) and Stevie MacAllister (Thistle).

Mandy Anderson (Portland X) won the **Ladies Singles** for the second year in succession beating her team captain Rhonda Philip in the final; the losing semi-finalists were Fiona Stott (Raigmore B) and Lesley Dawson (Portland X). The **Junior Singles** was won by Jamie Matheson (Brockie's Lodge) he beat Liam MacAskill (Portland Spikey's) in the final. This was the second runners-up place in this competition for Liam. The losing semi finalists were Blair Lobban (Caley Club) and Siobhan Ross (Raigmore A).

Health certificates presented

ON 26 March, just before the Janny's Hoose closed, certificates were presented to a number of local women for passing the first part of Health Issues in the Community.

Recipients were: Sara Kane, Helen Gladstone, Jennifer Malone and Dawn Beaton.

Jean Mackay who previously ran the well-being facility said, "We mummified Councillors Peter

Corbett and Janet Campbell in toilet paper and then dressed Hoose staff Judy, Jean and Myra up as models in newspaper, coloured paper and toilet paper, which was all great fun."

Also presented with certificates were Beryl for her campaigning skills, Graham and Kenny Campbell for driving everyone up the wall and round the bend on trips away and Myra and Judy.

Humour on the 'Net

Don't fret about the floods...

NOT so very long ago Noah was living in the Merkinch when the Lord came unto him and said, "Once again the peoples of the earth have become too wicked to continue. Build another Ark and save two of every living thing. You have six months before I will start the unending rain for 40 days and 40 nights."

Six months later the Lord looked down from the dark clouds and saw Noah weeping in his garden, but no Ark. "Noah," he roared, "I'm about to start the rain! Where is the Ark?"

"Forgive me, Lord," begged Noah, "but things have been difficult. I needed Building Regulations' approval because the Ark was over 30 metres square. I've been arguing with the Fire Brigade about the need for a sprinkler system. My neighbours claim that I should have obtained Planning Permission for building the Ark in my garden because they don't accept my argument that it is a temporary structure. They say the roof is too high.

"The local Area Access Group complained my ramp was going to be too steep and the Ark was not going to be fully accessible.

Getting wood was another problem: all the decent trees have Tree Preservation Orders on them and we live in an area of Special Scientific Interest, set up to preserve the Lesser Spotted Owl.

"When I started gathering the animals the RSPCA took me to court for attempting to confine wild animals without the proper paperwork. The Council, the Environment Agency and the Rivers Authority have ruled that I can't build the Ark until they've conducted an Environmental Impact Study on your proposed flood.

The Trade Unions insist that I can't use my sons to build the Ark—I can only employ members of the Shipbuilding & Allied Trades Union. Finally Customs and Excise have seized all my assets claiming I am going to attempt to leave the country illegally with numerous endangered species.

"So forgive me, Lord, but it will take at least another ten years to be ready for the Flood."

Suddenly the skies cleared, the sun began to shine and a rainbow stretched across the sky. Noah looked up in wonder and asked, "You mean you're not going to destroy the world after all?"

"No," said the Lord, "the Council, the Government, the lawyers and the European Commission have beaten me to it."

...Be careful what you ask for

A HUSBAND and wife, who had been married for 35 years, were celebrating their 60th birthdays. During the celebration, a fairy appeared and said that because they had been such a loving couple for 35 years, she would give them one wish each.

The wife wanted to travel around the world. So, the fairy waved her wand and the wife had the tickets in her hand for an around the world itinerary.

Next, it was the husband's turn. He paused for a moment, then said shyly, "Well, I'd like to have a woman who is 30 years younger than me."

The fairy picked up her wand, waved it, and he instantly turned into a 90-year-old.

New dance class for girls



A NEW class is starting for Primary School girls interested in dance. Monica will be leading the class in Fan and Ribbon dancing and girls will learn how to do elegant dancing, Chinese style — see picture above. The class, which will be held at Merkinch Community Centre, starts on Tuesday 5th May at 4pm and cost £1.50 per week.

Still at the Community Centre, here's a date for your diary next month. The June Jamboree showcasing lots of local talent will be held on Thursday 25th June, starting 7pm the entry will be adults £3, Children £1.50.

News & Views volunteers

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

● Madras, Nelson, and/or Brown Streets.

● MacLennan Crescent

● Benula Road flats
● MacLennan Crescent,
Jamaica Street/Gardens
● Lower Kessock Street,
Pumpgate Court.

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

MIC

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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.



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE

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

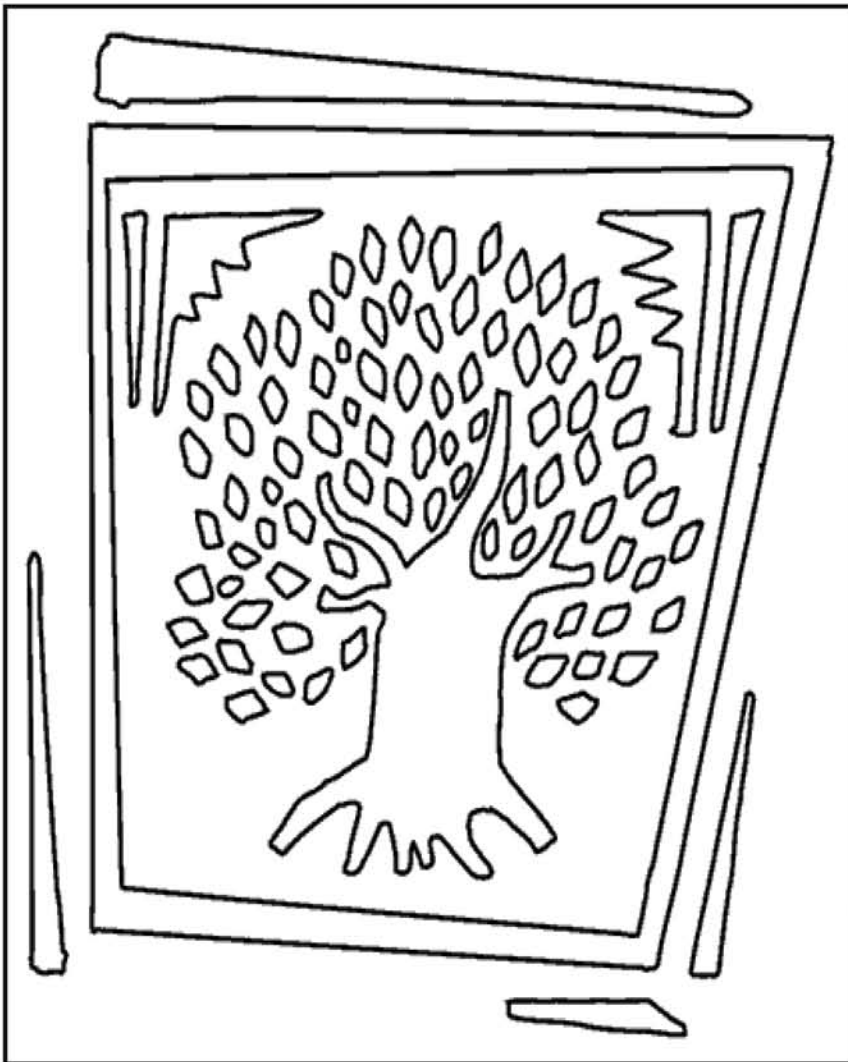
DIW

THE FLIPERZ PAGE



JOKESpot

This picture of a tree shows all the little leaves as they appear in spring. Or perhaps it is a cherry tree full of pink blooms? And if you colour all the little shapes different colours, maybe you will invent a new kind of plant!



What is a frog's favourite drink?
Croaka Cola!

What did the shy pebble say?
I wish I was a little bolder!

Who was the first to become famous for wearing a shell suit?
Humpty Dumpty

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

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

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.*

Music in the air

LEFT... A Vocal Training day at Merkinch Community Centre saw a good turn-out of singers keen to pick up tips from the London-based tutor.



ABOVE... Pause for a smile for two Singing for Pleasure members during The Big Sing which saw choirs from all the city and beyond gather for a concert-ceilidh.



LEFT... And later in the month ladies from the SFP group got all dressed up in their Easter bonnets for one of their themed evenings.

■ More pictures on page 7.



Do you want **FREE** training and qualifications in the use of Microsoft Office Applications?

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14  Merkinch Enterprise - Technology & Training Centre 



If the answer is yes, contact

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