

# MERKINCH

## *News and Views*

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



**HOW** did they do it? It's all a bit of a puzzle... to see who caused this bewilderment, see page 16.

**ABOVE...** Girls from mp33 had a great day out at the Fairburn Activity Centre recently. It was open to all, but none of the lads signed on—hard luck, guys! Mp33 news on page 7 this month.

**RIGHT...** What's Councillor Bet McAllister doing down in the garden? Why, she's helping Inverness High School celebrate three years as a School of Ambition. More on page 5.



***Inside this month:***

**BB guns cause police concern**  
— Page 3

**Memorial Pays tribute to Freddie**  
— Page 4

**New faces on Merkinch scene** —  
Page 12

**More sports coverage**  
**See Pages 12, 13**

## Helpline

**Childline** – 0800 1111. Free confidential advice 24 hours a day.

**Samaritans** – 66 Tomnahurich St, tel 713456 or 0345 909090 (local rate).

**Drugline Scotland** – tel 0800 776600. Free advice on drugs 24 hours a day.

**Crossroads Care Attendant Scheme** – 2 Queensgate Arcade, tel 242112.

**Smokeline** – 0800 84 84 84.

**Victim Support** – tel 710806.

**Age Concern** – 0800 731 4931.

**Inverness Council on Alcohol** – 34 Tomnahurich St, tel 220995.

**Housing Problems** – 703800.

**Housing Repairs** (including out-of-hours – 232675).

**Trading Standards** – 0845 600 4222.

**Extra and bulky refuse collection** – Ring 230634.

**Inverness Women's Aid** – Confidential support for abused women, tel 220719.

**Citizens Advice Bureau** – 235345.

**Inverness New Start** – 715615 or 728770.

**Police Confidential Line** – 720367.

**Crimebusters** – 0800 555111.

**Your local councillors** – Janet Campbell 226598; Peter Corbett 238159; Donnie Kerr 225217; Bet McAllister 710558.

**Community House**, Craighton Avenue – 718848.

**mp33** – 717639

**Merkinch Community Website**—[www.merkinch.info](http://www.merkinch.info)

**Merkinch Enterprise** – 240085.

**Janny's Hoose** – Jean Mackay, 226348.

**Community Centre** – 239563.

**Community Dog Warden** – 703134.

**Merkinch Partnership Officer** – 718989.

**Road to Recovery** – Ian Polworth, Madras Street Mission, 715809, Thursdays 7.30—8.30pm

**Got a story?  
Contact News &  
Views on 240085**

## Campaign to brighten smiles in Merkinch

AN exciting new oral health improvement programme – Childsmile – is being brought to Merkinch by NHS Highland.

This month parents of every newborn child within Merkinch—Dalneigh is also included in the project—will be offered the chance of joining the Childsmile programme and receive additional help and support on the way to looking after the health of their baby's teeth.

Older brothers and sisters born after 1<sup>st</sup> January 2005 can also join the programme.

Families will be offered the chance of a home visit when their baby is three months old to discuss the benefits of the Childsmile programme, these include:

- Ongoing preventative support for keeping your child's teeth healthy
- Registration with local NHS dentists for your child, and
- Additional toothbrushes, toothpaste and free-flow drinking cups for your child.

Kirstin Edmiston, oral health improvement coordinator for the South East Highland Community Health Partnership, said: "The family will be offered oral health promotion advice, tips on toothbrushing for babies, tooth friendly snacks and drinks and weaning foods and information that can help to set healthy habits for life.

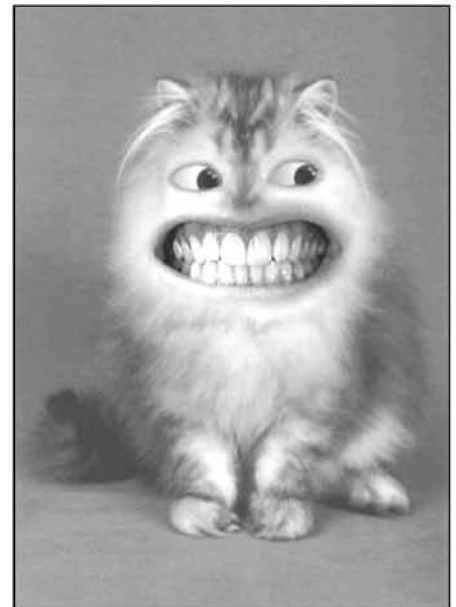
"Evidence shows that children who are registered with and visit a dentist are likely to have less dental decay and for this reason children will be registered with a local dentist for regular care."

David Babb, Childsmile programme coordinator, added: "Oral health support workers will work closely with families and health visiting teams to offer appropriate levels of support for families to attend dental appointments and we plan to take our service into the community in the new NHS Highland Childsmile van which you will soon see out and about."

"Childsmile will launch in Merkinch, and in Dalneigh, in November 08 and will be available to all new born children and those born after the 1<sup>st</sup> Jan 2005."

Early 2009 will also see Childsmile brought to several schools, nurseries and playgroups in the area – Childsmile nurses will visit these groups twice a year to paint a fluoride varnish on to teeth for additional protection from decay.

If you would like more information on Childsmile and how you can get involved please contact your health visitor on 01463 706701.



### Top tips on how to keep teeth healthy:

- Brush teeth at least twice daily – once in the morning and again just before going to bed.
- Use a toothpaste containing 1000 parts per million of fluoride (1000 ppmF) – check the box/package for this.
- Limit the amount of times sugary food and drinks are consumed – if eating anything with added sugar the best time is as part of a meal.
- Visit the dentist regularly.

## Parents to hold car boot sale

MERKINCH School Parent Council is looking for support for the car boot sale they are holding on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November from 9am to 12 noon at the school.

It costs £5 per car or table—to book a table contact the school.

Besides car and table participants, the Parent Council is also looking for raffle prizes, small prizes for the tombola and, of course, volunteers are needed to help on the day,

For more information contact the school on 232962 or Sandra Vanzetta 239101.

# The dangers of BB guns and broken bollards, the blessings of sport and street landscaping

THE toy of the moment in Merkinch, it seems, is the BB gun. Community Beat Officer Connie Sinclair told the October meeting of Merkinch Community Council of the police's concerns over this fad. The toy guns, which are known to be capable of causing quite serious injuries, are now being sold in a shop in the area.

She has visited the primary school and spoken to the children regarding the dangers of these toys and the consequences of them "mucking about" with them.

Northern Constabulary does have armed officers who respond to these calls.

The number of children who freely admitted to having them shocked them both the head teacher and PC Sinclair and as a result a note has been sent home to all parents advising them of the dangers and possible repercussions.

Councillor Peter Corbett proposed that a letter be sent from the community council, raising their concerns regarding the sale of BB Guns to the business concerned and all members agreed.

PC Sinclair, who was accompanied by PC N. Burns, also reported that vandalism were up again, the Corbett Centre is again being targeted, and seven reports alone were to these premises. Twenty calls were received over the month, mainly regarding the activities of youths in the areas of Grant Street, Anderson Street and Brown Street where they are tending to congregate.

The police are aware of the problem and youths will be dealt with appropriately. Merkinch at last has a second Community Beat Officer, PC Eddie Mackenzie. It was hoped he could be present at the next meeting.

■ Following a request from Merkinch Enterprise, it was agreed to contribute £500 towards *News and Views*. There was also a request for a contribution to the Floral Displays in Grant Street, it was agreed to donate £240.

■ The Traffic Bollards in Thornbush Road near the railway bridge are at times causing tailbacks. The bus stop and residents cars parked opposite the bollards are narrowing the road to single a lane.

Further along Thornbush Road some of the bollards have heads missing. This is potentially dangerous at night, as they are not lit.

The bollards in Gilbert Street are also causing problems. The drain cleaners cannot gain adequate access to the Gilbert Street/Shoe Lane junction drains in order to clean them properly.

Rubbish is being dumped in Shoe Lane.

■ Lochalsh Road Residents have discussed the problems regarding drunks outside the upper Kessock Street Flats. The police and Highland Council are working together to deal with undesirables.

■ Clach have had problems with "supporters" at some games both home and away with youths drinking and fighting.

■ A meeting between councillors and Stagecoach has been arranged to discuss the issues raised at last month's meeting.

■ Highland Council is looking to replace the existing lights in the Thornbush Road car park with larger ones. They are also looking at the possibility of Christmas lights to go up at the front of the Community Centre.

■ The new Albyn flats were to be officially opened on Friday 10<sup>th</sup> October. Danny Alexander and Craig Brewster have been invited to the event.

■ Regarding the South Kessock Environmental Project Dell McClurg reported that all the displays and memorabilia had now been cleared. Merkinch Primary School had asked about a visit and one is going to be organised for 2009. Dell will do a talk in the classroom after the holidays.

An assessor would be arriving the next week to carry out a structural survey of the ferry ticket office building and he would require access to the outside cupboard. It has been advised that work would need to be carried out on the roof first.

■ TEC services have decided that bulky uplifts will only be for household furniture. They will no longer collect black bags.

■ It was noted that some elderly residents are struggling with the recycling boxes. Residents can telephone the council to organise for a council worker to collect the recycle box from their front door.

■ Merkinch Partnership report said Merkinch Community Conversations had taken place and a meeting with all the relevant

agencies would take place in October. The agency representatives would be asked to address the issues raised by the community and agree an action plan. The final community plan will be circulated to every household in Merkinch.

■ The new Merkinch Sports Coordinator, David Paulin, took up his post on 22<sup>nd</sup> September. David has been involved in sports and coaching for many years and will be a great asset to the area. He will initially be based in Merkinch Enterprise, and will be responsible for setting up sports activities in the area, recruiting volunteers and accessing funding. (See page 12)

■ The new Active Schools Coordinator for the area, Lucy Huggit, will be based in mp33.

■ The Partnership Sports Budget has provided £1000 worth of equipment to the Merkinch Karate Club and has funded the purchase a storage container for Merkinch School.

■ Following complaints from local residents, the Highland Council has agreed to put the Anderson Street area into its maintenance programme. Some of the planting beds will be hard landscaped. The Partnership will be looking at other potential streetscape projects-contact Anne Sutherland with any suggestions.

■ A nomination for Merkinch Partnership has been submitted to the Scottish Urban Regeneration Forum Awards for best practice in urban regeneration. A nomination for Arts in Merkinch will be submitted to the British Urban Regeneration Association.

■ The members were notified that Highland Buildings Preservation Trust is going to be meeting with contractors regarding the Welfare Hall.

■ Dell raised concerns with regards to any future development at Carnac Point. It was proposed that she write a draft letter to the Harbour Trust, to be approved by the members.

■ Ali MacLean has decided to resign from the Community Council. Brian proposed Graham Adam to join the Council and this was seconded by Jimmy Fraser.

■ The next meeting will be on 13<sup>th</sup> November at 7.30pm in the Merkinch Community Centre.



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## Briefs...

DATE for your diary—don't forget that Santa and his reindeer are coming to Merkinch on 7th December—more details in next month's issue.

**BACK to November—Calendar Girls is the choice for the Silver Screen film club on Monday 10th ... yes that's the one about the WRI who bared all for charity. Venue, time—Community Centre, 2pm. Cost—£2.50 including a cuppa.**

THE Trinity Church are holding their annual Christmas Bazaar in the church hall on Saturday 29th November 2-4pm. You can have your photo portrait taken for a small charge, and of course there will be the old favourites—home baking, bric-a-brac, tea/coffee, plus Santa of course.

**RESIDENTS of the Capel Inch area—including Anderson, Brown, Jamaica, Madras and Nelson Streets—were invited to a meeting in the Community Centre on 30th October to discuss complaints and proposals on the way forward. Report next month.**

THE Friendship Club kicks off their November activities on Wednesday 5th with a Smell Game. Prizes are promised for the keenest noses! Seasonal festivities start early with a meal out at Holm Mills on 12th November; then they will see slides of Old Inverness on the 19th and host guitarist Ian Clark on the 26th.

**PLACES are available in keyboard classes for beginners at Merkinch Community Centre on Tuesday mornings. The cost is just £4 per session. If you've always wanted to get started on the piano, now's your chance. Ring 239563 for details.**

ACTIVE Adults are looking forward to next month when they are planning their annual festive sale on the 9th/10th. This is always a good opportunity to pick up nice little gifts. Donations welcome.

**LUCKY winner of last month's Nicol's Killer Quiz is Angus Macdonald of Anderson Street. He wins a £10 voucher to spend at Nicol's. Congratulations!**

### Thought for the day

There are times when only  
mashed potato will do

*Nigella Lawson*

## Janny's Hoose new programme

WE'LL have a new programme for this term, with the usual activities on offer and some new ones too.

■ Help for giving up smoking will still be available every other Tuesday morning, and the health visitor will be here every Thursday 1.30-3pm.

■ The CAB will be here the first and third Wednesday of every month from 10am-1pm - appointments are available or you can just turn up on the day.

■ Ceramics is starting up again on Friday mornings for six weeks.

Book your place quick as it soon fills up.

■ Our arts and crafts group on a Wednesday 1-3pm will be making Christmas cards for us and also Christmas decorations and other arty crafty things.

The cards are really easy to make and the crack is good.

■ We're hoping to run a gym bus, and restart the walking group as well. Why not drop in and see what we have to offer.



*Jean Mackay  
Janny's Hoose*

*Healthy Living Centre  
Telford Rd, Inverness IV3 8HY  
01463 226348*



When Freddie Adam was born in 1993 he was given just six weeks to live—but thanks to the care of his family, friends and caring professionals he only just lost his battle with a rare condition last year. On the first anniversary of Freddie's death, his parents Graham (left) and Pam (right) erected a memorial in their front garden in Carnarc Crescent. Many of those who had cared for Freddie over the years dropped in to see the memorial which celebrated things he enjoyed in his life. Pictured with Freddie's parents and sister Ivey (third from right) are Jill Brain and Susie Denoon from Drummond School and social worker Maureen Milligan.

**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**

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the Merkinch  
Partnership**



### INVERNESS TRINITY CHURCH of SCOTLAND

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proclaiming in worship the gospel  
of Jesus Christ, ready to serve with  
compassion the needs of the community."

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Rev Alistair Murray BD.**

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(Sunday School & Crèche during the morning service)

**Girls' Brigade meets Mondays 6.30pm  
Boys' Brigade meets Fridays 6.00pm**

Induction Loop System

**All Welcome**

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

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

# IHS celebrates 3 years as 'REAL' school

INVERNESS High School has kept up a high profile in the last three years since they launched their intention to become a "School of Ambition". And they have much to be proud of.

At the end of September the school held an open day to celebrate the first three years of the project, with displays indoors and the attractions of the gardens outdoors (right).



ABOVE—Despite the fresh weather, it remained bright and dry and most folk were happy to explore the school environs as well as being shown round indoors. Among the guests were MSP Mary Scanlon (right) seen here with IHS rector Ritchie Cunningham.



ABOVE— While the REAL food project is the best-known of the school's successes in the last three years, there is no shortage of bright ideas for future developments. One of the displays indoors at the open day showed a range of furniture, from tables and chairs to screens and benches. Watch this space!

## HALF PRICE

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## Contributions to News & Views

YOUR community newsletter, *News & Views*, has been awarded £2500 from the Discretionary Budget of Highland Council's Central Ward.

Last month Merkinch Community Council also granted £500 towards the cost of producing our monthly publication.

On behalf of our readers, who have received *News & Views* free through their letterboxes for well over a decade, we are grateful for their continuing support. *News & Views* is run by the charity Merkinch Enterprise which funds the newsletter. It picks up the tab for whatever is not covered by grants, sponsorship and voluntary effort.

Said Colin Downie, Chief Executive of Merkinch Enterprise, "We are very grateful for the support of our local councillors and community councillors and thank them for their contributions."

## Calling all tenants' and residents' groups in Merkinch

*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, hand in a report/minutes of your latest meeting.*

## CAB has an extra day

FUNDED by Merkinch Partnership, the Citizens' Advice Bureau (CAB) is providing a further day's outreach service in Merkinch.

The additional one day's outreach is available every Wednesday from 10am to 2pm and it started on 1st October.

The service will be located at the Janny's Hoose on the 1st and 3rd Wednesday of each month and in mp33 on the 4th Wednesday.

The CAB can help you with a wide range of concerns including:

- Employment matters
- Money advice
- Housing problems
- Debts
- Tax Credits
- Benefits
- Child Support.

The regular Tuesday outreach service in the Craighton Avenue Housing Office will continue. For advice on other days, please contact 01463 237664



**REMEMBER** the days when there was no such thing as exercise—you walked everywhere and you went to the dancing on Saturday nights. Well if you are over 50 you can still go "dancing" at Salsacise with Vicky on a Wednesday afternoon in the Community Centre from 3-4pm. Good music, fun, friends and fitness—and all for just £3. It's worth a try, after all, once you pass 50 it's a case of use it or lose it!

## Merkinch Traders elect new chair

MERKINCH Traders held one of their rare meetings last month. Top of the agenda was the election of a new chairman as Clair Pieraccini said he would not be standing for re-election. Secretary Jim Smith was elected chairman and Anne Sutherland from the Merkinch Partnership agreed to be secretary.

Jim started by thanking Clair for his long service to the Traders, and also Betty Urquhart who had minded his cobbler's shop so often to let him out on Traders' business.

Among the achievements listed were the floral displays, festive lights, and CCTV cameras. Concerns discussed were rowdy youths pestering Grant Street businesses, crime and drug abuse in Upper Kessock Street area, parking at both ends of Lochalsh Road, the need for signs against commuters using Grant Street car park all day when it was meant for customers.

Among hopes for the future was Rev Burkitt's boxing club and his plan to run a music festival in the area.

## November timetable

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

Activities this month are planned as follows: November 5th—

Autumn watch at the nature reserve; 12th—Snowberry removal; 19th—Gems of Merkinch Walk; 26th—To be confirmed.

**All these activities are suitable for all abilities but involve some walking to the site.**

**Green Gym**



**MERKINCH  
GREENSPACE**

BTCV have started the major path upgrades in the Merkinch local nature reserve. This involves widening to a minimum 1.5 metres, installation of motorcycle calming measures, resurfacing of paths and building of a ramp at the board walk. This is designed to allow the disabled access to the reserve as well as providing an all-weather, safer surface to walk on.

Elsewhere, some may have noticed the clearance work on the river bank at Friars Shott. Said Ali Locke of Greenspace, "Our thanks go to Lorne MacMillan of Garden Services and his boys for the brilliant job they have done for us.

So many people have congratulated them on the work. And the Waterfront Bar supplied them with some welcome hot soup etc - appreciation indeed!

"Our thanks also go to the councillors who awarded Merkinch Greenspace the funding to carry this out from their ward budget.

"Merkinch Greenspace hope to revisit Friars shot every three months with the view to keeping it clear of growth."

Finally Merkinch Greenspace held their AGM in the 21st October, after *News & Views* went to press.

# Great day out at Fairburn

**THE** boys missed out when they didn't sign up for a "fantastic" day out at Fairburn activity centre at the end of September.

The girls who did enjoyed archery, canoeing and a rope course.

A big thanks to the Merkinch Partnership who funded the adventure day.



## MONDAYS

Basic guitar tuition, 4-5pm. Monday evenings, Junior Youth Club.

## TUESDAYS

Capers parenting group in coordination with NCH 10.30am-12.30pm.  
Drop-in 2-4pm.

Girls' group 4-6pm—members are planning fund-raising with a Hallowe'en party, car washes, car boot sales, carol singing, to go to Badaguish outdoor centre as part of their John Muir Award. They hope to go ski-ing in February.



## WEDNESDAYS

2-4pm—access to computers to study at Open University and create CVs. Drop-in 4-5pm every second week alternating with the Youth Forum. The Senior Youth Club, for 12-18 year-olds, which no longer meets in the Community Centre, is flourishing in the Bike Shed despite having no sports facilities.

## THURSDAY

Drop-in 2-4pm.  
Newly-established Boys' Group 4-6pm.

## FRIDAY

Drop-in 2-5pm.  
Film group 6-8pm.

**Mp33 is hoping to get a Duke of Edinburgh Awards group going towards the end of this month or early December. It involves lots of effort, fun, adventure and achievement. If you would like to know more, drop in at No33 Grant Street some afternoon soon.**

## THE RESULTS

**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 information will be used to draw up a list of priority projects and developments, with a commitment from the relevant agencies to support and fund projects where appropriate.

The consultation process was carried out by the Merkinch Partnership Officer and Highland Council Community

Learning Officer and was done in a variety of ways - open sessions in the Community Centre, out and about in the area talking to people, comment sheets, maps and stickers, talking to local groups and project workers, market research, Merkinch Healthy Network and the Ribbons art project.



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**WHATS GOOD** - here's what you told us.

### Community's Greatest Strength

- Community spirit
- The people
- Good neighbours
- Good area to live

*"I like living here, I have always lived here."*

### Community Assets

- Greenspaces/outdoor space
- Merkinch Local Nature Reserve
- The views
- Carnarc Point
- Grant Street - facilities and accessibility to city centre

### Best things that have happened in the community

- Grant Street improvements - car park, new bus shelters, etc
- Merkinch Community Centre - theatre, activities
- Merkinch School
- Merkinch Partnership - lots of projects

*"Born and bred in South Kessock and still here!"*



**WHAT NEEDS IMPROVING** - here's what you told us.

### Community Safety issues

- Drug users/needles/drug dealers
- Young people on the streets/anti-social behaviour
- Drinking in public/underage drinking/alcohol
- Policing/CCTV
- Kids on motorbikes
- Stray dogs

*"Good Community Spirit"*

*"More use could be made of the green spaces."*

### Environmental issues

- Litter/broken glass/dog fouling
- Grant Street - traffic, traffic lights
- Grant Street - more shops, improvements to existing buildings, Welfare Hall
- Play parks
- Housing - repairs, housing policy, lack of housing

*"More education is needed about litter."*

### Things to change in Merkinch

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

*"A lot has been achieved over the last 2 years."*

**WHAT'S MISSING?** - here's what's you told us

- Community Café/Youth Café
- Concierge at flats (Coronation Road)
- Fitness park/play areas for young people/cycle track
- Signage
- Needle drop-off point

*"Getting to be nice area but still some problems."*

Merkinch Partnership will be working with all the relevant agencies to address the issues and concerns raised by the community.

Local people had a lot of good things to say about Merkinch and the Partnership is committed to making this area even better!

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



## consumer advice

## New cooling-off rules

COOLING-off periods and cancellation rights have been simplified by the introduction of a new piece of legislation which came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> October 2008. Under previous legislation, consumers were given a seven-day cooling off period and cancellation rights when they agreed to buy goods or services worth more than £35 from a trader during an *unsolicited* visit to their home.

However, unscrupulous doorstep callers over the years have tried to restrict consumer rights and avoid the necessity to provide a cooling-off period as well as cancellation rights. A consumer would find that a contract would only be "cancellable" if the doorstep caller had made an "unsolicited" call to their home. The legal definition of "unsolicited" meant that either the seller called at the consumers' home, uninvited, or the consumer agreed to a visit AFTER the seller phoned or visited without prior consent by the consumer.

By contrast a "solicited" visit was defined as being a visit at the express request of the consumer. Therefore if a consumer contacted a trader after receiving a leaflet or flyer through their door or after responding to an advertisement, the consumer would be deemed to have invited the seller into their home and was NOT therefore entitled to a cooling-off period or cancellation rights.

Consumer advice staff frequently have had to advise consumers that if they had invited salespersons into their home and agreed to work being carried out or if they had bought goods after inviting a seller into their home, they did not have the right to cancel and were legally bound to pay by the terms of the contract they had signed.

Tales of consumers trying to get rid of salesman who would not leave their home, unless a contract was signed are unfortunately not uncommon. Where consumers have signed a contract to get rid of a salesman thinking they could cancel later, they have been shocked to find out later that they had no right to cancel.

The introduction of the new legislation will, it is hoped, prevent such misery occurring again. It will cover contracts that are made during solicited or unsolicited visits by traders. These new rules also offer further protection to consumers in that cancellation rights must be given clearly in writing and prominently displayed in any written contract.

*Where no written contract exists the trader will still be required to give a written notice of these rights to the consumer.*

This new change in the legislation will affect trades such as plumbers, joiners, electricians and possibly other tradesmen where they have been invited by the consumer to provide quotes for work carried out in their home. All trades who carry out home improvements as well as sellers going door to door will now have to comply. There are exceptions to these rules however which are listed in the new regulations. An example of such an exception would be the seller of perishable goods such as foodstuffs or goods supplied to meet an emergency e.g. storm damage to a property.

Highland businesses and consumers alike can contact Highland Trading Standards in person or in writing at: Highland Trading Standards Unit, 38 Harbour Road, Inverness IV1 1UF or telephone: 08454 04 05 06.

### 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 inquiries please contact:

Rev John Wagner on (01463) 223199

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

## How to ask for what you want without hurting others



ARE you confident enough to ask for what you want? If you put others' needs or feelings before your own, you might end up feeling annoyed or angry, either with yourself for not speaking up or with the other person.

Sometimes if you have said no or spoken up, you can feel guilty or selfish. If this is you, improving your assertiveness skills will be of benefit; allowing you to be honest with yourself and others.

We have all been in the situation when somebody has been late to meet us, how do we handle it? Do we say it doesn't matter when we are annoyed, acting in a passive manner, or do we shout, acting in an aggressive manner?

An assertive person might say, "When you were late yesterday, I felt annoyed, I understand the traffic was busy, in the future I would prefer that you were on time".

Assertiveness means that you can say how you feel, getting what you want and need, but not at the expense of other people.

Assertiveness is about being confident and positive, at the same time seeing the other person's point of view. It is not to be used manipulatively, allowing you to get your own way all the time. It should be used to work towards a win/win situation, where everyone's needs are met.

Expressing your feelings, and saying what you want, allows you to put across your point and be understood by others, and health professionals believe that this leads to improved mental and physical health.

If you are more in control of the situation it is beneficial to your future health.

### Dealing with aggressive people

In difficult situations people can react in an aggressive manner, speaking too loudly or going over the top — this generally leads to feelings of regret later. Being confronted with this type of behaviour may push you into a situation you may not want to be in.

You can learn how to cope in this situation. Try to visualise the situation, taking a firmer tone with this person, ask probing questions, "Why do you need to know?", "Does it need to be done right away?" You could stall them by suggesting that you could "think about it further", "get back to them later", and "it's too short notice".

This technique will help if you find yourself being bullied or being bulldozed into a challenging situation.

## Win a FREE 3-session coaching programme

Coaching can be face to face or by telephone — a coaching session lasts 45 minutes.

To enter e-mail [cath@uniqueness.org.uk](mailto:cath@uniqueness.org.uk), through Cath's web site

[www.uniqueness.org.uk](http://www.uniqueness.org.uk), or by post Merkinch News & Views, c/o Merkinch Enterprise, 14 Grant St, Inverness IV3



UniqueNess

# You and your health



## When your throat is really sore, maybe it's your tonsils

TONSILLITIS is an inflammation of the tonsils. Your tonsils are situated on either side of the back of your throat. They are part of the body's immune system and work by trapping viruses and bacteria travelling through the body.

Tonsillitis is spread by air-borne droplets, hand contact and kissing. Symptoms normally show within two to four days after contact with the infection.

If you have a sore throat that lasts for more than a few days or is very painful with a marked difficulty in swallowing you should consult your GP.

In the majority of patients, the throat infection is caused by a virus. A viral infection cannot be treated with antibiotics and patients should take painkillers to bring down any temperature and kill any pain. You may also wish to use a mouthwash to reduce discomfort.

In a small minority of people, tonsillitis caused by bacteria is treated with antibiotics. If antibiotics are prescribed it is important that you finish the course to ensure that the infection is cured. Tonsillectomies, where the tonsils are surgically removed, may be necessary for those who suffer severe, repeated bouts of tonsillitis that do not respond to traditional methods of treatment. However, nowadays this practice is relatively rare.

✦ If the pain in the throat is severe or persists for more than a few days with marked difficulty in swallowing, high fever or vomiting you should consult your GP.

✦ Drink warm drinks and eat soft food.

✦ Throat lozenges and mouthwash can help ease symptoms.

✦ Drink plenty of fluids to avoid dehydration.

Your Pharmacist can give advice on the suitable pain killers.

*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 14th November.

**1. What country is called The Land of the Rising Sun?**

- A: Korea
- B: Norway
- C: Japan.

**2. Where do Gurkhas come from?**

- A: India
- B: Nepal
- C: Bradford.

**3. What river runs through Dublin?**

- A: The Liffey
- B: The Guinn
- C: The Larne.

**4. Where is The Forbidden City?**

- A: Dundee
- B: Bombay (Mumbai)
- C: Peking (Beijing).

**5. What did Sri Lanka used to be called?**

- A: Ceylon
- B: Kerala
- C: Nepal.

**6. Which explorer first reached the South Pole?**

- A: Scott
- B: Amundsen
- C: Oates.

**7. What is unique about the mythic bird the phoenix?**

- A: It is invisible
- B: It has X-ray eyes
- C: It is reborn in fire

**8. What is a greenstick fracture?**

- A: A crack in a child's bone
- B: A break in a rock
- C: A branch split off a tree.

**9. How do you spell the word that means "detached"?**

- A: Separate
- B: Seperate
- C: Separate.

**10. Which country is The Land of the Midnight Sun ?**

- A: Japan
- B: Greenland
- C: Norway.

Name.....

Address.....

Phone.....



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## Last month's quiz check

1. The Italian word "opera" means "works".
2. Mardi Gras comes the day before Ash Wednesday.
3. A crossword was first published in Christmas 1913.
4. The Roman numeral for the number 600 is DC, that is to say D meaning 500 plus C meaning 100.
5. A green light is displayed from the starboard side of a ship.
6. Something paper is given as a gift after one year of marriage.
7. St Patrick is reputed to have driven snakes out of Ireland.
8. A broken piece of pottery is called a shard.
9. The Mistral, the Sirocco and the Monsoon are all winds.
10. St Matthew is the patron saint of tax officials.

## Two new faces in Merkinch

MEET Heidi Jones (right) a bright new face on the local scene. Heidi is the new—and first—Parish Assistant at the Trinity Church.

Originally from America, she has been in Scotland for some years and knows this area well as her father is the Church of Scotland minister for Kirkhill and Kiltarlity and assists at the Crown Church. Heidi lives in North Kessock.

Though not qualified as a minister, Heidi can cover for funerals and services when the Rev Murray is away.

Heidi is keen to work within the church to find out how the Trinity can meet the needs of the people and already she has been out in the streets, meeting people and talking with them.

Chaplain to both Merkinch Primary and Central schools, Heidi also carries out home and hospital visits. She aims to start up a mother and toddler group and eventually an after-school club. A longer-term aim is a community café.



Also working with families—indeed “Working For Families” is Drew MacNeil (below) who succeeds Jane Wilson at the WFF office in Tannery Court. He is also based in Castle Street.

Drew worked for 16 years in the prison service but is far more widely known for his involvement in coaching shinty in schools.

Originally from Roy Bridge, Drew is manager of Fort William’s Camanach Cup-winning champion shinty team and has been involved in coaching Scotland’s national team.

WFF mostly works with families referred to them to prepare parents and help get them back into the workplace. He hopes to work closely with other relevant agencies.

Drew is getting married in mid-November—best wishes to Drew, his bride... and his shinty pupils!



## Sports News...



RECENTLY-appointed Sports Coordinator for Merkinch is David Paulin who is already well-known on the Inverness sporting scene.

Inverness-born, he lives in Muirtown but his granny and uncles were in Telford Road and his dad was born in India Street—so he has good strong Merkinch roots! A student at the IRA and Napier College in Edinburgh, David worked for 25 years in the Post Office before qualifying in Sports Coaching at Inverness College.

A marathon runner, David has always been interested in sport and has taken part in the Highland Cross, is a keen cyclist and an enthusiast for American football.

His remit is to encourage people to find a sport that involves them. He also tries to find volunteers who would be prepared to help in managing sporting activities. David is particularly fond of American football—the “flag” or non-contact version—for children and parents, kids and coaches can all play together and it creates a great family atmosphere.

He is married and has a son, aged 22, who not unsurprisingly is also keen on American football!

David’s November report follows...



*I look forward to meeting everyone and turning your ideas for sports into a reality, so if anyone wants to suggest ideas or would like help in getting a sports project up and running give me a call on **07951 977 922**. On to what’s been happening and some events coming up in the near future.*

### Westfield Sports Development

Starting on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November, for ages 13-16 there will be coaches delivering different sporting activities, including football, basketball and American Football. The activities will kick-off at 11am and will run for two hours.

### Community Centre

*The always popular cheerleading continues for children on Mondays from 6-7pm, along with Karate from 6-8pm on Wednesdays. Starting on Monday 3<sup>rd</sup> November from 9:30 to 11:30 will be the opportunity to take part in Boxercise. These classes are free and are a great way to get fit. I am looking into the possibility of setting up our own Merkinch Athletics Club, and also a shinty club so if you are interested in playing or helping out please get in touch.*

## Thornbush Stores

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# Sports News... Sports News



## Taster sports day at MPS

ON Monday 29<sup>th</sup> September the children of Merkinch Primary School were given the opportunity of trying out some exciting new sports, courtesy of Merkinch Partnership and event organiser Dagmar Borrowman.

The day kicked off Active Schools Co-ordinator Sarah Liebnitz leading the warm-up with a session of Boxercise.

With the rain holding off until late afternoon the children were able to enjoy participating in Capoeira, a mix of Brazilian dance and martial arts, Shinty, Cricket, Athletics, American Football and Cycling.

David Paulin, recently-appointed Sports Co-ordinator for the Merkinch area commented, "The cloudy skies have not dampened the children's enthusiasm. They take on each sport eagerly and it's great to see that they are prepared to give each sport a go."

The day was rounded off with the children giving all the volunteers and coaches a very deserved and very loud thank-you.

**THREE Merkinch pupils took part in the South Highland Schools Athletics Cross Country competition on Wednesday 8th October and finished as follows: Matthew McLoughlin 34<sup>th</sup>; Conor MacPhee 109<sup>th</sup>; Adam Leplongeon 134<sup>th</sup>. Well done lads!**



ABOVE—American football and RIGHT, the much-needed Boxercise warm-up for all the youngsters before they started their day-long session funded by Merkinch Partnership.



## October results in the Inverness City Taxis Darts League...

### 16<sup>th</sup> October

Results Supreme Cup: Raigmore A 1 Chieftain 11, Raigmore B 8 Portland Spikeys 4, Portland Club 3 Culloden Moor Inn 7, Tarradale 7 Finlay's 1, Portland A 10 Portland X 2 and Uncle Bob's had a walk over against Brockie's Lodge.

Consolation Shield: Clach Club 7 Legion B 5, East End Arrows 12 Thistle 0.

180s were scored by Gavin Fraser (Finlay's), Jason McAskill (Raigmore B) and Liam McAskill (Portland Spikeys). The top finishes were Gordy Redmond (Culloden Moor Inn) 152, Lawrence Woolley (Raigmore B), Davey Fraser (Portland A) 105, Evan Macdonald (Chieftain) 104 and Ewan Callander hit a 14 dart leg.

### 9<sup>th</sup> October

A League: City Taxis 1 Portland A 11, Legion A 7 Chieftain 5, Tarradale 4 Uncle Bob's 8.

B League: Brockie's Lodge 4 Finlay's 8, Caley Club 4 Deeno's 8, Portland Spikeys 5 East End Arrows 7.

C League: Portland X 9 Clach Club 3, Portland Club 10 Thistle 2, Smithton 7 Legion B 5.

After beating rivals City Taxis Portland A

are two points clear at the top of the A League with 23 legs for and 1 against, and in the two games played have chalked up nine 180s. Culloden and Uncle Bob's also have 100% records but they have only played one game so are two points behind the leaders. The position is exactly the same in the other two leagues with Finlay's out in front of the B but Raigmore B and East End Arrows are unbeaten after one game. C League newcomers Portland Club have also played two won two with Raigmore A and Portland X unbeaten after one game.

180s were scored this week by Stevie Falconer who got two, Alan Ewan, Shane Wharton, Barry Maclean and Davey Fraser all of Portland A and Mandy Anderson and Don Hargreaves of Portland X. The top check outs were Jim Hunter (Portland A) 134, Peter Macdonald (Portland A) and Steve Mitchell (City Taxis) both on 116, George Macleod (Finlay's) 100. Bomber Godsman (City Taxis) had a 13 dart leg.

### 2<sup>nd</sup> October

A LEAGUE: Culloden Moor Inn 9 Legion A 3, Chieftain 3 City Taxis 9, Portland A 12 Tarradale 0.

B League: Raigmore B 10 Brockie's Lodge 2,

Deeno's 5 Portland Spikeys 7, Finlay's 10 Caley Club 2.

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

A League champions Portland A started their title defence in style and did not drop a game to Tarradale indeed the Muir of Ord team only won one leg and that was in the last single.

Peter Macdonald hit two 180s and finished one leg in 14 darts despite his opponent Don Maclean Snr hitting two 180s in that leg. Barry Maclean and Jim Hunter also hit maximums and Jim checked out 104.

Both A League newcomers Legion A and Chieftain went down to the same score of 9-3 to Culloden and City Taxis respectively. These two games produced six maximums Barrie Mackay of Culloden hit two and team mate Steve Donald hit one as did Steve Mitchell and Derek Maclean of City Taxis and James Macmillan of Chieftain.

Barrie also had a 15-dart leg and Stevie Ross of Culloden checked out 105.

In the B League Shawn Gilham (Deeno's) and Alan MacKerrow (Portland Spikeys) hit 180s and Andy Davidson (Deeno's) checked out 114. In the C Davey Morrison (Raigmore A) hit a maximum and finished on 107.

## Cooking on a budget

### Scrummy spaghetti with pork Bolognese sauce



ADDING lots of vegetables to the sauce makes this spaghetti Bolognese an easy all-in-one meal—and less fattening!  
Serves 8; Prep time, 10 mins; Cooking time, 50 mins. Per serving: 145 calories; 4g fat.

#### Ingredients

500g (1lb 2oz) lean minced pork  
1 onion, peeled and finely chopped  
1 carrot, peeled and finely diced  
1 red pepper, deseeded and diced  
1 or 2 cloves garlic, peeled and finely chopped  
110g (4oz) mushrooms, wiped and chopped  
1 rounded tsp dried oregano or mixed herbs, 2 bay leaves (optional)  
400g can chopped tomatoes  
225ml (8fl oz) vegetable or chicken stock  
1 tbsp tomato ketchup  
110g (4oz) green beans, chopped into small pieces  
50g (2oz) spaghetti per person  
2 tsp chicken gravy granules  
Grated Parmesan cheese to serve (optional).

#### Method

1. Heat a deep frying pan. Add the pork mince in one layer and cook over a medium heat for 5 minutes, turning it once so it browns all over.
2. Add the onion, carrot, red pepper and garlic and cook for 5 minutes, covered, before adding the mushrooms and herbs. Cook for another 5 minutes and then add the tomatoes and stock and stir in the ketchup and beans. Simmer, uncovered, for 20 or 30 minutes.
3. Bring a large saucepan of water to the boil and cook the spaghetti according to the packet instructions.
4. A few minutes before serving, sprinkle the gravy granules into the mince to thicken the sauce and season to taste.
5. Drain the spaghetti, divide between hot bowls and spoon the sauce on top. Serve with grated Parmesan cheese if you have it—cheddar is OK.

**Top tip:** The sauce is suitable for freezing - so why not make a large batch and freeze it in portion sizes for quick suppers.

## Humour on the Net

### When St Peter met the blonde at the Pearly Gates

A BLONDE was sent on her way to Heaven. Upon her arrival, St Peter met her at the Pearly Gates.

"I'm sorry," St Peter said; "But Heaven is suffering from an overload of goodly souls and we have been forced to put up an Entrance Exam for new arrivals to ease the burden of Heavenly Arrivals."

"That's cool" said the blonde, "What does the Entrance Exam consist of?"

"Just three questions" said St Peter.

"Which are?" asked the blonde.

"The first," said St Peter, "is, which two days of the week start with the letter 'T'?"

The second is "How many seconds are there in a year?" The third is "What was the name of the swagman in Waltzing Matilda?"

"Now," said St Peter, "Go away and think about those questions and when I call upon you, I shall expect you to have those answers for me."

So the blonde went away and gave those three questions some considerable thought.

The following morning, St Peter called on her and asked if she had considered the questions, to which she replied, "I have."

"Well then," said St Peter, "Which two days of the week start with the letter T?"

The blonde said, "Today and Tomorrow."

St Peter pondered this answer for some time, and decided that indeed the answer can be applied to the question.

"Well then, could I have your answer to the second of the three questions?"

St Peter went on, "How many seconds in a year?"

The blonde replied, "Twelve!"

"Only twelve?" exclaimed St Peter, "How did you arrive at that figure?"

"Easy," said the blonde, "There's the second of January, the second of February, right through to the second of December, giving a total of twelve seconds."

St Peter looked at the blonde and said, "I need some time to consider your answer before I can give you a decision." And he walked away shaking his head.

A short time later, St Peter returned to the blonde. "I'll allow the answer to stand, but you need to get the third and final question absolutely correct to be allowed into Heaven. Now, can you tell me the answer to the name of the swagman in Waltzing Matilda?"

The blonde replied: "Of the three questions, I found this the easiest to answer."

"Really!" exclaimed St Peter, "And what is the answer?"

"It's Andy."

"Andy?"

"Yes, Andy," said the blonde.

This totally floored St Peter, and he paced this way and that, deliberating the answer.

Finally, he could not stand the suspense any longer, and turning to the blonde, asked "How in God's name did you arrive at THAT answer?"

"Easy" said the blonde,

"Andy sat, Andy watched, Andy waited till his billy boiled."

And the blonde entered Heaven...

# 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

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# MIC

# THE FLIPERZ PAGE

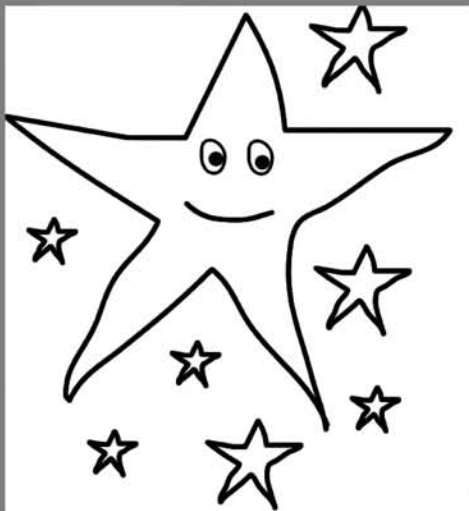


## JOKESPOT

**Knock! Knock!**  
 Who's there?  
**Abbott!**  
 Abbott who?  
**Abbott time you answered the door!**

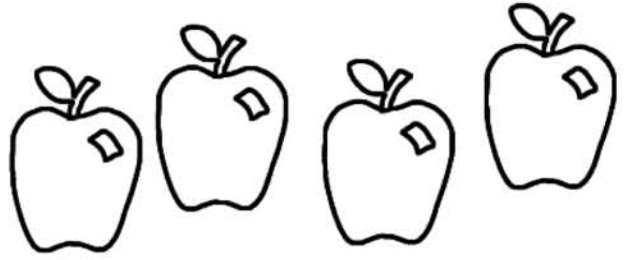
*Doctor, Doctor I've got wind! Can you give me something?*  
**Yes - here's a kite!**

*Where do ants go for their holidays?*  
**Frants!**



How many apples are there? Colour the right number in red. And how many stars are there—colour that number yellow. The you can colour in the rest of the picture...

0 1 2 3 4  
 5 6 7 8 9



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

*Fliperz staff would like to thank all who have helped Fliperz or given us items over the year. We are still waiting for the games we ordered with the Tesco vouchers.*

### Fliperz Daycare Enrolment

If your child became 3 years old between 1st March and 31st August 2008, 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.



## Successful season for Merkinch team

THE lads of Merkinch's Street League team had a very successful season and the team is pictured with the various cups and trophies they won.

RIGHT... Youngsters at Merkinch Nursery had an even more relaxing day than usual recently when they held a Pyjama Day to raise funds for charity.



Deadline for the December issue—the last edition of the year, and indeed until late January—is **Friday 14th November**.

So if you have any up-coming events, news or photo opportunities, let us know by then, please.

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