

alyth voice

14th Edition, June 1998

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EDITORIAL

In last month's edition we asked for general comments on the paper. We haven't had a single response. What is the Editorial Team meant to read into this? Complete satisfaction? Total apathy?

Comments from those unlucky enough not to live in Alyth about the town's charms, apparent liveliness and general go ahead spirit are not uncommon. Because it's in front of us we may see the blemishes only too clearly and it is right that we should address them because it would be much worse if we let sloth and apathy rule and let others determine our fate. Let's hear some Alyth voices.

IT MAY NOT BE THE ROYAL OPERA BUT...

As we all know, Janey McFarlane has retired after 20 years as Producer for Alyth Musical Society. The Musical Director had to retire due to health problems - not connected to his activities in the Society! - and now the accompanist is no longer available on a regular basis. In the light of all this there are great opportunities available for some of the many friends of Alyth Musical Society to become closely involved with next year's production. If anyone wishes to know more about the roles of Producer, Musical Director or Accompanist please contact Sheila A Donald on 01828 632847.

Sincere Thanks

The members of St. Ninian's Church wish to thank everybody for their continued support at their Coffee Mornings. They are delighted to say that on Saturday 9th May they raised the great total of £452.

Many thanks to all who came along and YES they did have red "Yuppie lettuce" on sale.

Postcard from Latin America

Continuing her cycle ride through Latin America, Fiona Heron from New Alyth pens her latest epistle from Ecuador.

I have now arrived in Ecuador and will probably be here for a while due to flooding caused by El Niño in northern Peru and also on the Pacific Coast of Ecuador; bridges are down and it's practically impossible to travel to Peru at the moment unless by air. Ecuador is very nice and extremely cheap. There are indigenous people everywhere and the scenery is so stunning here in the Andes that one runs out of adjectives to describe it. I am staying in a large city called Quito which is only about 13 miles from the Equator. From my window I can see the snow-capped Cotopaxi in the distance, high above the city. Quito has trolley buses so is a bit less polluted and quieter than other cities. There is also a wealth of very old architecture.

A few days ago I visited a village called Mindo (Ecuador). It was smaller than Alyth or even New Alyth. The tiny bit of forest around it has recently become protected - just in time to prevent it being cut down for agriculture. Certain species of plants and birds are unique to the area. For two days I stayed in the jungle on my own in a cabaña in the reserve by a rushing river. It was so dark and the noises of creatures around in the trees made it a bit scary! It was warmer there and it rains every afternoon so everything grows fast everywhere.

CALLING ALL AIRCRAFT NUTS IN ALYTH!

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If the answer to any of the above is YES then contact PAUL PRETTYMAN on Alyth 633725 for a chat.

Readers' Letters

Dear Sir,

You could have knocked me down with a eucalyptus twig as I surfed the Net and found the Voice of the Alyth I left many years ago. Doesn't anything change?

Only one thing disturbed me - correspondence from one Adam Neve. If I'm right he's my mother's cousin's son. (There couldn't possibly be two. Could there?) He hasn't changed. He always was a snivelling, whingeing little creep - as much use as Brut is to a dingo's oxters. He'll mind of the time we'd been pinching strawberries from the Manse garden and the next day the police called on Uncle Eck (his Dad). Adam wet himself with terror but the constable only wanted to see Eck about stewarding at the Show.

The Burgh from the adverts seems full of dress shops and hairdressers, although I see that Sims is still there. Where are the real manly shops like Johnny Smith's, Sinclair's and Bobby Ball's? Or don't they need to advertise?

I'll close now as I need another tinny to keep the dehydration at bay.

Yours,
Ken Garrow
Kalgoorlie, West. Australia

Dear All,

Red Cross

We collected £580.02 from you good people on behalf of the Red Cross. I thank you all. Particular thanks go to Hazel, Joyce, Margaret, Shona and Val, the five non-members who took up a can and joined us

Yours,
Margaret MacKenzie
(Treasurer)

Dear Uncle Ian,

The man who has reorganised the parking in Airlie St. should be given a medal. I knew from reading my Alyth Voice that there are lots of motor bikes on the Hill but I had not realised that there were so many that we needed to provide special parking bays by the shops in the main street. Well done that man!

Yours,
Adam Neve BSA

A wise saying : or too clever for words?

Soap is the only good thing in the world you should shut your eyes to.

FISH SUPPER NIGHTS?

The lettuce leaves have turned soggy and curled up at the edges, the tomatoes have dried out, the hard boiled egg has developed a life of its own and a thick skin covers the mayonnaise. Yes, Alyth Musical Society's production of 'Salad Days' is over and it's back to fish suppers for the cast and crew. Janey McFarlane, cast and crew put a lot of sweat, tears and French Dressing into the show and it all paid off in the end. I would say 'blood' as well, but luckily no-one had to lose any in our attempt to create a musical treat for the audiences.

It was Janey's last show and one that I know she will put down as another success. Certainly the audiences who came along seemed to enjoy the Production and the word on the street was that it was a very happy show, brimful with colour and fun.

The Society would like to thank all who supported the show. Without the enthusiasm of the Alyth public and others from afar it would not be as much fun for those of us on the stage. Mind you in my case if there was no audience then no-one would spot my glaring errors ... how could I forget the words of that song on the Thursday night? Oh what the heck. Doing it in full glare of a watchful audience is part of the excitement. And what of the cast in these gradually lengthening days? Well a well earned rest won't go amiss, but part of me, like many of the others involved, looks forward to September when it all starts again. It will be a new era for the Society as it seeks a new Producer and Musical Director but I am sure that by hook or by crook we will once again be treading the Town Hall boards come April next year. We hope that you are looking forward to it too.

John White

News from the School

A big thanks to everyone who collected Tesco Computer Vouchers - we managed to collect sufficient to get a computer — brilliant!

At present we are looking to expand our book of "Playground Games". If anyone can remember any of the games from their own school days please jot them down and hand them in to the school - or even better, come along to the school and show us how it is done.

The school board meeting at 7.15pm on 17th June in the school library will discuss Discipline Policy and School Board Budget. If you want any issue raised at a school board meeting write it down and hand it in to the school, addressed to the Clerk of the School Board and it will be passed on. The Minutes of the previous meeting and the full agenda are available for everyone to read a week before the next meeting and are to be found at the school or in the local library.

Shona Eno
(Chairperson of the School Board)

The Spooky feel and Unhinged Society

Besides the usual dancing, singing, drinking and general carrying on at the meeting of the Society on 14th May the Treasurer presented accounts upto the end of April. On that date CDCHS had a bank balance of £388.56 and a turnover for its first year of £1897.65. Principal income came from Business Advertising in the Alyth Voice (£1230), a grant from Perth & Kinross Council (£350), the Quiz League Grant of £100 and individual donations of £15. On the expenditure side of the sheet there were a number of small outlays - all under £20 and the significant bill of £1281 for printing. Allowing for debts outstanding to the Society and payments made in advance by some businesses for advertisements, the Alyth Voice had an operating surplus of £37.38. It's **your** Society and if you want to see a full set of accounts contact a member of the Editorial Board and while we're at it why don't you come along to the next meeting in the Thistle Lounge at 7.30pm on Thursday 11th June?

Lights, Camera, Action?

Barbara and I have only lived in Alyth since February and were interested to hear of the success of the last photographic event organised by the "Crooked Dreel." We are both keen photographers and were members of a photographic society in East Anglia.

We understand that the last exhibition stipulated that the pictures had to have an Alyth connection and feel that this restriction on the subject matter must have reduced the number of entries submitted. There must be many wonderful photographs taken in Scotland by folk from the town and there must be many budding Lord Litchfields out there hoping to see their work on the wall.

Perhaps it would be better to have an **OPEN** or **GENERAL** event this year, where the only rules are:

1. The photographer must live or work in Alyth.
 2. The picture must have been taken in Scotland.
- It would also be possible to have a junior class, or classes to encourage young photographers.

If any reader has a comment on the idea please put it on paper and pass it to a member of the Editorial Board or send direct to: Paul and Barbara Prettyman, Johnshill Farm Cottage, Johnshill Road, Alyth.

ALYTH VOICE EDITORIAL BOARD

The Editorial Board members and their contact 'phone numbers are as follows :

Julie Brown	632986
Sheila Donald	632847
Billy Gordon	via Post Office
Simon Ingram	632705
Sandy McCurdy	632744
Jessie McLean	632684
Callum Strachan	633140
Alix Tindall	633485
Rob Tindall	632734

Please ensure that articles for publication are submitted by the **21st day of each month.**

Note : The views expressed in the Alyth Voice are not necessarily those of the Editors, nor can they accept responsibility for the accuracy of any **article.**

Alyth Musical Society AGM

will be held in the Ogilvie Rooms on Monday
8th June at 7.30pm
New members most welcome.

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Any Relatives out there?

We have received a very interesting e-mail from John Woodford Abrams in Alabama, setting out his Alyth connections. Unfortunately it is too long to print in its entirety but we hope that the following extracts and summaries will be of interest to readers and might galvanise someone to contact John at johnabrams@hotmail.com. the full text may be seen by contacting Jessie at Fashion Wise.

John Crichton Robertson emigrated to the USA in 1843 and a few years later sent money to his brother Robert to enable him to join him in Fayette, Fayette County, Alabama. Robert Robertson was born in Alyth in 1819 and married Margaret Stuart, also of Alyth. The other two Scottish strands in John Abram's family are Kirksey and McLeod (the latter from Skye); both of these families appear to have settled in America before 1800. Excepting a short rail journey made by a Kirksey uncle during the last war, the last of the Robertson family to visit Scotland was John Crichton Robertson who visited his niece and nephew in Alyth in 1873 and also renewed acquaintance with friends and family in Newtyle, Coupar Angus and Stirling.

The stories of his great grandmother (Robert Robertson's daughter) has made John Abrams feel as if Alyth is his home, even though he has never been here. *"When I found the Web page on the Internet, I was more than thrilled and excited. As I read the March and April editions I kept looking for anyone named Robertson, Stuart, Kirksey or McLeod. I could hardly control myself when I read that Wendy Robertson was a leading player in Alyth Musical Society. When I read the advertisement of A&R Robertson & BlackWS I could not believe my eyes."* Many of John Abram's family have been attorneys.

If there are any of the Robertson, Stuart, Kirksey or McLeod family members in Alyth who would like to correspond with John he would dearly love them to do so. There are two books published in the States detailing the descendants of those families who left Alyth so long ago and there has been a gathering of the descendants of John and Robert Robertson so there is a lot of information John Abrams is willing to share.

It Happens Only Once in a Hundred Years!

The sun will be obliged to shine on Sunday 14th June as the Gala Committee pull out all the stops to celebrate the centenary of the Diamond Jubilee Park. We are promised an event jam packed with different and exciting things to do and see.

The day will start at 11.45am with the revival of the traditional Float parade, which will leave the Square and make its way to the Park via Mill St. and Springbank. the Gala Day will be officially opened by Mr Alfred Anderson, Alyth's oldest resident.

Main attractions planned include a Falconry Display, Bungee run, Water tank, Clown and Magician, together with the ever popular dancing and karate displays. There will be performances from Alyth Youth Theatre and local band Supersegway. There will be a veritable multitude of stalls selling a variety of goodies as well as a car boot sale. As if that isn't enough to fill your day, Millers' funfair with rides for all the family will be in attendance as will the Black Watch and Royal Navy.

Entrance to this cornucopia is a measly £1 while children under 14yrs get in free. Entrance for cars is via the Springbank Rd. gate and there is no charge for parking the cars on the Park.

It seems that the Committee have catered for all ages and tastes and it is difficult to see how anyone could fail to have a great day out.

A Good Time? You Bet!

Over the years we have been watching John McCririck on 'Channel 4 Racing' continually telling us, "Come racing, come racing, you'll have a great time." All this time he has gone unheeded but then we saw the article in the Alyth Voice saying that a coach was going from Alyth Square to the Perth Races on a Wednesday evening. We thought, "We'll give it a go."

Well 'Big Mac' is right. We had a great evening's entertainment - and what is more we came back with shirts still on.

Thanks to CDCHS for organising the trip and Peter and George for helping with the administration. Edith & Jack

Gardening Notes

Herbs

The use of herbs for medicinal and culinary purposes has been known for more than 3000 years. Their first recorded use was by the Chinese Emperor, Shen Nung. Although herb seeds have been excavated from European Stone age settlements, it wasn't until the Crusades to the Middle East that herbs found their way into European culture, mainly through Benedictine monks treating wounds with them or using their strong flavours to hide the taste of rotten meat.

Their medicinal values have been well documented for hundreds of years and it is ironic that we call their properties 'alternative medicine' when it is in fact modern chemically based drugs which could be said to be alternative.

Herbs have many uses in the garden where they may provide aromatic scent, act as companion plants or help provide protection from pests and diseases. They are at home in a huge variety of habitats. Many such as thyme, sage and winter savory which enjoy dry sunny conditions are suitable for rock gardens. When considering the growing conditions for culinary herbs, remember that many originated in the Mediterranean on infertile, free draining soils so try to mimic these conditions in your herb garden. I would suggest using a John Innes No1/No2 compost mixed with plenty of sharp sand.

The best time to plant is now or in early autumn. Don't overcrowd your herb garden as they grow quickly and keep cutting regularly as they tend to lose their flavour if left to go straggly. Try to arrange your plants in such a way that the lower growing plants are at the front and the tallest at the back. Containers are ideal for planting herbs provided you have a sunny position. Terracotta pots are best and containers which have holes in the side are excellent because they can be filled with many varieties.

David Mathie

P.S. Next time I'll consider, "Herbs, what to buy, their uses and some unusual varieties.

Not another ****
CHANGE!!!

Ideas for the 'Grand off-your-trolley' race scheduled for the end of August have had to be revised yet again! It is proving extremely difficult to obtain a supply of supermarket trolleys by legal means - and the Hinge and Bracket Society would never stoop to illegality. Store policy has recently changed and whereas there used to be a great trolley graveyard, the job of maintenance and renovation is now subcontracted to a specialist firm which cannibalises any useful bits. (The wheels are apparently the most costly pieces). There are now very few unserviceable trolleys available and new ones cost £85.

As a home grown alternative the Trolley Race will become the Grand Wheelbarrow Race and competitors will be expected to supply their own grand prix versions. More details as the summer unfolds.

A HOT TIME IN THE OLD TOWN THIS NIGHT!

They couldn't get a paddle steamer up the Burn but there will still be Jazz ON the Burn on the evening of 20th June. A stage - materials and labour given free by Torith - will be erected across the Burn and railings between the bus shelter and the first footbridge. Perthshire Brass, fresh from Alyth Show and refreshed at a local barbecue will be performing well known tunes from about 7.00pm. They will be supported by Alyth's own Wedge Robb and friends and if any other local musicians want to contribute they should contact Callum Strachan (633140)

Local hostelrys and cafes have indicated that they are hoping to enter into the spirit of the evening eg Wedge & Co will continue playing in the Thistle Lounge from 10pm. A number of individuals and organisations have shown an interest in taking stalls in the Square to raise money for good causes but there is still room for more. Volunteers are also sought to help dismantle the stage on Sunday morning (see Callum).

The Crooked Dreel are indebted to a number of organisations for their help especially Torith and also to Perthshire Tourist Board for a grant.

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