



Carron Valley and District

Community Council Newsletter Winter Edition Feb 2015



Photo by Crawford Logan

CARRON VALLEY & DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL

GREETINGS FROM THE CHAIR—DAVID PETCH FEB 2015

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all residents of the Carron Valley, old and new, a belated best wishes for a healthy and prosperous 2015 .

Over the past year, the Community Council has worked hard to forge a strong working relationship with the directors of Valley Renewables Group so that both bodies are more closely aligned in representing and looking after residents of our community.

Because of Government budget cuts, it has been a challenging year in encouraging Stirling Council to maintain and service our community's needs .This pressure will continue into the foreseeable future but the Community Council remains committed to encouraging and reminding Stirling Council of those needs. It is now more vital than ever that a strong Community Council voice continues to ring in the ears of local government, because if we do not shout we will not get. As a small community with quite differing needs from the urban areas which border us, it is very easy for the powers-that-be to forget we exist. On that note, the burden of representing this community has fallen on the shoulders of a few. We always hope that more people would come forward to help us in this task by offering a small amount of your time and skills.

Over the next year we are going to face increasing challenges posed by construction work in the valley for already approved infrastructure projects and from planning applications for further developments. In the past, the community has been protected to some degree by the overall arch of Stirling Council's Development Plan. This however might not continue as the policy is the subject of several challenges at present--only time will tell the outcome. We will also face other challenges brought on by local government spending cuts which could have an impact on the services provided to the community. We need to engage in conversations within the community as to how best we can do more to help ourselves. The Community Council will continue to do its utmost to get the best possible outcome for all our residents in all the above issues.

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NOTICE: If you wish to receive your next newsletter by email in digital form. Please email **Dorothy, as above** with your details.

Valley renewables group



.....Update.....

Good news for all young people in the area!
Valley Renewables are launching a Children & Young People's Grant Scheme aimed at providing grants of up to £250 to help with education, skills development or meeting the challenges of rural living.

For full details see leaflet enclosed or check out Valley Renewables website at:

<http://www.valleyrenewables.co.uk/>

Stirling Heritage Trails

Spring is fast approaching, a good time to **X**plore Stirling Heritage Trails!

Enclosed with your newsletter you will find a copy of the Borestone Heritage Trail Leaflet. A further 6 beautifully illustrated, informative leaflets covering Bannockburn, Braehead & Broomridge, Cambusbarron, Cambuskenneth, Riverside and St Ninians along with details of Gowan Hill, Kings Park and Stirling Walking Network can be found on the following website:

www.stirlingheritagetrails.co.uk

A SENSE OF CENSUS

How many readers, I wonder, have had the time and inclination to trawl through the census of 2011? Maybe not many, but the editor—clearly with too much time on hand—has done just that. What follows is an attempt to compare the results from Carron Valley with those from Scotland as a whole. And while some of the differences are obvious and not unexpected, others may come as a small surprise at least.

For a start, Carron Valley has a much higher proportion of residents aged 45-64 than the national average—41.3% against 27.5%. Not unexpectedly in a scattered rural community, many more people own their homes—80.8% against 62% nationwide—and those homes are much more likely to be detached—58.6% against 22.1%. Carron Valley dwellers also have much more space to clutter about in as 25.8% of those houses have 8 rooms or more, a privilege extended to only 9.6% of the population as a whole.

Statistics for car ownership are similarly predictable. In the Valley, 46.2% of people own 2 cars and 11.5% own 3, as against a national average of 21.6% and 4.3% respectively. Turning the spotlight on the lack of viable public transport in the area, only 2.8% travel to work by bus, against 4.9% in the Stirling Council area and 10% across the country. It seemed, in 2011 at least, that 1 brave soul (0.6%) travelled to work by train!

In health and religious affiliation, the figures are broadly similar, but it was interesting to find that Carron Valley has a larger proportion of invaders from the south, at least by birth. In Scotland, the population by birth is 83.3% Scottish, 8.7% English, but in Carron Valley these numbers are 75.8% and 15.2%.

But it's in the areas of employment, education and perceived social class that the comparison is more striking. The rate of unemployment in Scotland in 2011 was 4.8%, Carron Valley getting on for half that—2.7%. Of course this may be explained by the fact that the number of self-employed people in the valley was more than three times the national average—22.7% to 7.5%. Likewise, 36.9% of people in our community have a higher qualification or university degree (similar to the Stirling Council area), while only 26.1% have them across the country. And furthermore, 15.7% in Carron Valley have no qualifications, a figure which rises to 21.3% in Scotland as a whole and 26.8% in the Council area.

When we look at various occupations, a small comparison chart is quite revealing.

<u>Occupation</u>	<u>Carron Valley %</u>	<u>Scotland %</u>
Managerial/senior official	17.7	8.4
Professional occupation	25.4	16.8
Technical	11.0	12.7
Admin./secretarial	6.6	11.4
Skilled trades	21.0	12.5
Caring, leisure etc	5.5	9.7
Sales/customer service	5.0	9.3
Process, plant and machinery ops.	3.3	7.7

Of course this sets a very small number of inhabitants in Carron Valley against the number in the whole of Scotland, and it begs the question, for instance, of what constitutes a 'professional occupation', among other things.

But it fits with the education figures and, finally, with the social grades we in Carron Valley are given (or maybe give ourselves!). 34% are registered in the AB category against 18.6% nationwide and 25.8% in the Stirling region. But in the DE category there is a contrasting picture—8.7% in Carron Valley, in Scotland 27.8% and in the region 22.9%.

This little essay is intended as no more than that and does not set out to reach hard and fast conclusions, scientifically proven. But at the simplest level we may conclude that living in Carron Valley means more space, better employment and a more educated workforce. Reasons to be cheerful, part I!

WHAT'S ON—FOCUS ON STIRLING'S MACROBERT CENTRE

This time we've chosen to focus on what's happening during March and April at the Macrobert Centre at Stirling University.

The Stirling Gang Show will be happening between March 10 and 14, with the usual turnout of scouts and guides.

For children there is "Capt. Flinn and the Pirate Dinosaurs" on April 26, and Scottish Ballet bring "Elves and Shoemakers" on April 9.

Films include "The Missing" (March 10), "You're A Good Man, Charlie Brown" (March 26-28), and "Schindler's List" (March 27-30).

Theatre, opera and ballet lovers have a large choice of onscreen live performances—"La Traviata" (March 11), "Behind The Beautiful Forevers" from the National Theatre (March 12), "Swan Lake" (March 17) and Arthur Miller's "A View From The Bridge" (March 26).

Also in Stirling, at the Albert Halls, there will be Antique Fairs on March 7 and April 4, a date with Stirling Orchestra for a Family Concert on March 1st, and a chance to get down with "A Night of Dirty Dancing" on April 11.

Further afield, two big names will be appearing at the Fraser Centre in Milngavie on consecutive nights—on March 18, the king of Irish Folk, Andy Irvine, and on the 19th, bluesman Stefan Grossman.

And if that weren't enough, why not get your dog out to Callendar Park in Falkirk on April 25 for the "Big Bark" 5k. walk for charity.

Murrayshall Quarry

On the northern edge of the Carron Valley Community Council area, the famous Gillies Hill is threatened with destruction by the potential resumption of quarrying at Murrayshall Quarry within the hill. The planning application from Patersons Quarries has been with Stirling Council for some weeks, but there is still time to lodge an objection if you haven't already done so. Many people in the area feel very strongly about this and an online petition on Change.org has gathered more than 4,500 signatures worldwide. Please help. You can find details of the application, what's being done to thwart it, and how you can object at www.savegillieshill.org.uk or search for the Save Gillies Hill page on Facebook"



Launch Project of Riding Excellence

After a stressful and upsetting 2014 for Carron Valley's Riding for the Disabled Association, there is finally a glimmer of good news for the charitable organisation. Following the closure of their Bannockburn centre, the RDA have proposed plans to create a top of the range, exclusive centre of excellence in Central Scotland.

After the success of the "Ride On" fund raising operation during 2014, the group have managed to begin researching possible opportunities for opening a new complex within the Stirling area which aims to work at the same capacity as their previous Bannockburn centre.

On the 16th of January, a press release by the RDA featured comments from Chief Executive, Ed Bracher on the subject;

"Getting a new site identified and the fundraising underway is now a priority.

To that end, we have already found three potential sites in and around Stirling, and have started positive discussions with all those involved. We are also bringing together a steering group to help shape the future of the centre once a site has been agreed.

This project will only succeed with the help and support of as many people as possible.

We will need some specific skills to get this centre off the ground—but mostly it will take the dedication and enthusiasm of individuals who understand that Stirling needs the very best facilities for its disabled children and adults."

The RDA urge anyone who feels they may be of assistance to get in touch. In order to do so, please contact

www.facebook.com/CentralScotlandRDA
and register your interest in making a difference.



This Newsletter is Designed &
Produced by
C&M Community Consultants
Editor C. Logan of CV&DCC.



POLICE SCOTLAND

TOGETHER FOR SAFER COMMUNITIES

So far during the winter months we have had a few reports of road accidents within the area involving vehicles skidding on ice on untreated roads. Luckily there have been no injuries.

A complaint has also been received on 28th January 2015 regarding large vehicles/HGVs using the B818 road travelling to the wind farm. These large vehicles are travelling on narrow roads and residents feel that some drivers are not giving due care and attention as they drive.

I am currently looking into this complaint.

Overnight from 20th December into 21 December 2014 we received a report from local residents that problems were being experienced with phone lines. It was then discovered that a theft of phone cable had occurred near to Murrayshall Quarry. A similar theft of phone line has also occurred between 18th and 19th December 2014 near to Wester Garth in Denny. Enquiries are ongoing. There have also been reports of thefts of quad bikes, power generators and red diesel.

If you have any issues or concerns about safety in your area, please do not hesitate to get in contact with me at

alison.ferry@scotland.pnn.police.uk

or

StirlingWestCPT@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Councillor Surgeries

4/3/15 Neil Benny

1/4/15 Scott Farmer

Howietoun Museum

Howietoun Museum

Contact Details:

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A CANADIAN BANNOCK

Well naturally we all know what a bannock is! It's a Scottish classic, often baked in a tin and with sultanas, and it comes from Selkirk.

According to Wikipedia—which by the way has been around long enough to be called "good old Wikipedia"—"bannock" is a northern English and Scottish word of Celtic origin." The Oxford English Dictionary goes further afield to suggest it may be derived from the Latin *panicum* meaning baked dough.

But of course we can't have the bannock all to ourselves in Scotland. At the Thunderbird Café in the Squamish Lil'wat Cultural Centre in Whistler, British Columbia, they make their own bannocks fresh to go with a healthy bowl of venison chili or even a bison sausage. BC shares with Scotland magnificent snow-capped mountain scenery and great expanses of water. The only thing is, like most things North American, it's higher, wider, deeper. you name it. And this was the world of the First Nations of Canada, that 100 years ago we would have called 'Indians'. Now this is a resurgent culture. The role of British colonists in its demise is not one to be proud of, and as in the Scottish Highlands, the native peoples were bought off, stripped of their land and language, and herded onto settlements where many died of imported diseases. But in the Cultural Centre, it's exciting to learn what a 'potlatch' is and understand the significance of the creatures, both real and mythical, carved on the totem pole and how the carving differs from area to area, or marvel at the construction of longhouses and boats, the variety of the crafts—basket-making, weaving, the making of masks and ritual costumes-- or the natural world on which they so closely depended. Continued on page 4

A CANADIAN BANNOCK continued from page 3.....

In the Carron Valley we are a 'community'—indeed this is a 'community' newsletter—with all that implies about shared culture. The First Nations communities of British Columbia have dug back into their history to redeem their culture and language just in the nick of time, involving many young people.

You want culture? Well, here's the recipe for "Bannock Fry" scribbled down by the cook in the Thunderbird Café (in industrial quantities, by the way,—"4 litres warm water"!

We've tried to reduce it for domestic purposes.)

275g. Flour 2 tsp. baking powder 2 tbs sugar ½ tsp salt Approx. 250 ml warm water
Mix them all up to make a flexible dough, not too thick and certainly not runny. A certain amount of experimenting may be required. We've also tried it with wholemeal flour.

Allow to rest for a couple of hours, then roll or press out into whatever shapes you like, about the size of a breakfast roll and maybe a centimetre thick.

In a frying pan, heat about a centimetre depth of oil thoroughly. Put in the bannocks, turning once until cooked.

The PERFECT Bannock Fry will be light and airy in the middle and delicately brown and crispy on the outside!

Broadband Update From CVCC

Progress with obtaining funding through Community Broadband Scotland for the Broadband feasibility study has stalled. However, the group have decided to apply for funds to Foundation Scotland / VRG to have the research carried out. Hopefully this will be started within the next couple of months.



Forestry Commission

CARRON VALLEY FOREST DESIGN PLAN

In spite of the wide open spaces of moorland, anyone familiar with the Carron valley will be aware of—trees! All the

forest areas are supervised by Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), and they are presently consulting locally about a new design plan for the forest, revising the previous plan from 2005.

The sheltered position and cool, wet climate of the valley make it particularly conducive to conifer plantation, so that of the 85% of the woodland presently under cover, approximately ¾ is sitka spruce. Elevation of the site rises from 150m in the sheltered valley to 570m at the windswept top of Meikle Bin, and the soil is naturally more fertile in the lower regions. However, depending on the soil and the topography of particular areas, it is planned to diversify as much as possible by planting, for example, more aspens and less pine (in the case of the latter due to the threat of disease in the form of Dothistroma Needle Blight).

Of course when it comes to forest management, the first requirement is a crystal ball. Naturally, all trees have their roots in the future so it's interesting to note that the present age structure of the forest is 0-10 years:1/5, 10-20 years:1/5, 20-40 years:1/3, 40-60 years:1/10 and 60 years+:also 1/10.

FCS are very conscious of the landscape design, especially as much of the forest is visible from the main road. Some of the large areas which have been felled in recent years are in part due to storm damage, meaning that larger spaces have had to be cleared than would otherwise have been the case. This has meant there has been a lot of timber traffic over the last 4 years but it should start to drop back to a more normal level before too long, and looking further ahead, some areas currently producing timber may be switched to biomass production, which could well reduce the number and weight of lorries.

In addition, previous efforts to soften some of the hard forest edges have largely failed as a result of prolific sitka regeneration and browsing by brown hares, the occasional escaping sheep, and most particularly by roe deer—some 130 deer are culled annually.

Access across the forest is generally good—and the aim is to make it even better. Although there are no plans for new mountain bike tracks, it may be possible to put in an area where youngsters or novices can learn to ensure they are capable of riding the existing paths. It is also intended to improve access to Meikle Bin and to improve the track running towards Queenzieburn. There is also the possibility of extending car parking at Todholes. Some jobs could be created locally in servicing these improvements, but it's worth emphasising that all these proposals are at the draft stage so no promises made or expected!

Outside of the National Park, Carron Valley Reservoir is the largest area of open water in the centre of Scotland. With populations of osprey, black grouse, pine marten and squirrel, this makes Carron valley a mecca for birdwatchers and nature-lovers, as well as being an ideal spot for a day walking in open country or forest shade. Increased access may bring with it increased problems, and although levels of crime have generally decreased, there have been many instances of poaching, particularly of fish, while the introduction of wild camping can also be accompanied by greater risk of fire. The car park is locked each night.

Trying to balance so many different challenges can be a bit of a juggling act—as Chris Little of FCS said at a recent Community Council meeting: "Although we'd ideally like to please everyone all the time, due to the sometimes conflicting demands placed upon us, we often have to settle for annoying everyone as little as possible!"

Well amen to that, and we may applaud and support their work in keeping our forest increasingly beautiful and a joyous experience for visitors well beyond the lifetime of this editor.

The current draft proposals can be found at Scotland.forestry.gov.uk/supporting/communication-consultation/forest-design-plan-consultations/carron-valley (snappy title!!), and will form the basis for the detailed design plan which will be developed over the coming months. If you have a comment to make or would like to be informed when the detailed plans come out for consultation, email Chris at chris.little@forestry.gsi.gov.uk

Carron Valley Heritage Group Website

Your community council are sharing Carron valley Heritage Group website to post notices and copies of all newsletters.

This newsletter is the 19th edition following the community consultation back in 2009. For copies of all previous editions please visit www.carronvalleyheritage.org

All 19 copies can be found under the CVCC newsletters tab.



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Scotland

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