

**2017**

Jan 3

**British Legion to foot the bill:** The gravestone that was erected in the New Cemetery, Buckie to mark the resting place of a local soldier Pte. Alexander Stewart who died in October 1918 from the effects of stomach wounds he suffered while fighting in France in November 1916, had been found to have fallen into disrepair. Pte Stewart, the son of Andrew and Mary Stewart of Bridgend, Buckie, was then serving with 2/6 Battalion Seaforth Highlanders. It was unclear who owned the burial plot with the only inscription on the memorial being – ‘Erected by his comrades.’ The local branch of the Royal British Legion were of a mind to have a new stone erected but made efforts to find any relatives and received permission from Moray Council. It had to be established whether it was a war graves monument. President of the Buckie British Legion Brian Turnbull told the Advertiser” Permission was eventually received and our administrators in Aberdeen gave an assurance to us that they would fund two thirds of the cost leaving the Buckie branch to raise the sum of £434. The state of the stone was first brought to the notice of the British Legion by local historian David Fowler who has been for some years past delving into the background of men who lost their lives in two world wars and is in the process of putting the information into book form.

**MBE for Buckie man:** A retired Buckie school teacher who had held a number of positions in the community has been made an MBE in the Queen’s New Year’s honors. During his National Service, John served with the Parachute Regiment taking part in the airborne landings at Suez in 1956 and experiencing the emergency situation in Cyprus. In 1998 he served as Deputy Lieutenant for Banffshire under the then Lord Lieutenant James MacPherson and in 2003 he was invited to serve as Vice Lord Lieutenant under the current Lord Lieutenant Mrs. Clare Russell. He retired in 2011. He began his teaching career at Keith Grammar in 1960. He began as an assistant in the P.E. Department before becoming principal teacher. Following his move to Buckie High in 1977 he became a Principal teacher of Guidance.

**End of the line for Margaretta:** Margaretta West who belongs to Findochty has retired after spending more than 21 years at Netherha Care Home .Over the years she had filled a number of different roles, starting first in the laundry but has been a housekeeper for much of her time. At her farewell presentation she was joined by resident Enid Smith (86) who has been at Netherha for more than 20 years, who saw her being given an Angel of Hope ornament, flowers and champagne. There will be a retirement dinner on January 21st. Said Caliegh Bean, Netherha manager “Margaretta has been an integral part of the team for a long time and we will miss her”.

Jan 10 **Bowlers in the money:** Portgordon Bowling Club received an award of £10.000 from the Big Lottery Fund. It was a case of first time lucky for the club in terms of making a large grant application. Part of the money is to be spent on a new kitchen. They were also fortunate enough to receive a thousand pound grant from Asda. Earlier the club received £480 from the Gordon and Ena Baxter Fund which will help to support our coaching

programme for youngsters at the local primary school. Money from this will be spent on the purchase of junior bowls.

**Buckie man killed road accident** James 'Wayne' Cameron (38) had been walking from Girvan to Turnberry at 12.30am on January 1st after his car had broken down when he was struck by a car. Wayne, the father of three young children who live with their mother and Wayne's former wife Karen in Elgin. They married in 2007 but later were divorced.

Wayne had only started a new job last month as events manager at the Trump Turnberry Resort, which his parents, James and Ellen described as his "dream job."

Wayne was a former pupil of Buckie Community High School and an honors graduate in business management at Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen. He ran the Grand Central Bar in Buckie, formerly Buckie Thistle Social Club, for four years.

Jan 17 **Fishermen play their part in litter catch:** Buckie fishermen have played their part in hauling 1000 tonnes of litter from Scotland's seas. The litter, enough to fill three Olympic size swimming pools was collected as part of the 'Fishing for Litter' campaign. Fishing for Litter was introduced into Scottish waters by KIMO UK in 2005. The campaign encourages skippers of fishing vessels to land litter they catch in their nets during their normal fishing activities.

**Hae a News:** A relaunch of a cafe to support people living with dementia and their family and carers will take place in Buckie this Thursday. The 'Hae a News' session will resume in the Fishermen's Hall in North Pringle Street from 10.30am to 12.30pm. The group is run by Alzheimer Scotland team in Moray and is the same group that used to meet in Le Cafe Coull in Buckie. The sessions are open to anyone to attend and will take place monthly, with the next one on Thursday February 16, followed by Thursday March 16th. Sharon Finlay, community activities organiser, is behind the Buckie session and is looking forward to welcoming some familiar and new faces to the group each month. She said: "It is for anyone living with dementia and their friends and family but also people who are experiencing a problem with their memory but do not have a diagnosis of dementia."

**Rotary Club of Buckie "Splash for Cash"** All swimmers are invited to call at Buckie Swimming Pool on Saturday 25th February 2017 in an exercise to raise money to 'Help End Polio Now'. You are asked to come and enjoy this splash for cash to help us rid the world of Polio. Enter as a team or individually. Entry forms from the pool or Rotarians. Swim a length or donate a pound. For further information contact on [charles13@uwclub.net](mailto:charles13@uwclub.net).

**Big cheque for Teddy Bear Group.** Eddie Clark who won the prize of £500 in a pool competition held in the Thistle Bar donated it to the Teddy Bear Club that caters for disabled infants. They are to use the money to create a sensory garden.

Jan.24 **Cullen Bowling Club president dies in road accident:** Tributes have been paid to a Cullen man who died after suffering a heart attack behind the wheel of his delivery van. Douglas McBain (63) was president of Cullen Bowling Club and also the Highland Bowling Association and Elgin and District Indoor Bowling Club. Mr. McBain took ill during his delivery round with J.G. Ross Bakers, last Thursday morning in Inverurie causing his van to crash.

**Fochabers Fish Shop among the awards again:** Fochabers Fish Bar have started the new year as they mean to continue by claiming yet another prestigious award. The chip shop's commitments to only using sustainable sourced fish netted the much sought after Marine Stewardship Council certification. They became the first chip shop in Moray and only the sixth in Scotland eligible to use the distinctive MSC blue tick label on their cod, assuring customers that the fish has been caught using sustainable methods. Run by Darren Boothroyd, wife Ruth and their three daughters Elise, Gemma and Katie for just three years the Fochabers Fish Bar has collected to date five different awards.

**Making a splash to stop polio:** Swimmers in Buckie have been urged to dive in to help a global effort to eradicate polio. The Rotary Club of Buckie is hosting the Rotary Global Swimmarathon on Saturday, February 25, from 1-2pm. In that hour it is hoped that as many people as possible will swim a length and make a minimum £1 donation to the 2017 'End Polio Now' campaign. The club hopes that people will swim more than 1000 lengths in that time and aims to raise around £2000 for the charity effort.

**Radio slot child's play for Kayla:** Radio Buckie is looking to broaden its community focus even further by recruiting more volunteers and has started with its youngest ever recruit. The online radio station held an open night earlier this month to let people know about the opportunities to promote local events and activities through the voluntary-run organisation. Since then St Peter's Primary School pupil Kayla McIntosh (10) has been signed up to present a half hour show for young listeners. Kayla has been recruited to take over the Spotlight Junior role from volunteer co-ordinator Leah Rossvoll, who admits having a younger presenter will hold more appeal for listeners.

Jan 31 **Local groups receive awards:** St Peter's Primary School was one of three local groups fortunate enough to share in a cash handout of £25,000 from the Big Lottery. The school was awarded £10,000 which is to be used to transform their playground which is also used by the nursery. Among the plans are an active trail, drawing trail, a tepee, perch benches and musical panels.

A further £10,000 was given to Fochabers Village Association to help in the revamp of the public institute hall. With the money they will be able to buy new lighting and sound system for the stage in the building. Cullen Community Allotments Association received the sum of £5034. The money will be spent on improving their meeting place, upgrade the path network and water accessibility on their two acre site just off the road to Deskford, which boasts 34 plots.

**Fochabers Fish Bar comes top:** Last Thursday at the National Fish and Chip Awards held in London saw the fish and chip shop in Fochabers win the National Federation of Fish Friers Fish and Chip Quality Award 'Champion' Award. In addition, the chip shop took the regional title in the takeaway fish and chip shop of the year category - officially making them the best in Scotland while Mr Boothroyd's (the owner) daughter Elise claimed the runners-up slot in a close battle for the young fish fryer of the year crown.

**Rotary Club salute Robert Burns and his legacy:** Buckie Rotary Club held their event in the Mill of Tynet Hotel last Monday evening. The grace was said by Jim Farquhar with Charles McKay giving a memorable Address to the Haggis. The Immortal Memory was given by Malcolm Watt. Charles McKay and his son Colin sang a number of songs, Moyra Hendry recited the poem Tae a Louse while James Alexander entertained with a selection of fiddle music. A DVD of Holy Willie's Prayer featuring Jim Pirrie added to the enjoyment of the evening for all.

**Burn's Day celebrated at Parklands:** Parklands and Burnbank care homes residents joined together to enjoy the anniversary of Robert Burns, Scotland's National poet. Staff, family, and friends all joined in the fun while the haggis, neeps and tatties were enjoyed by all. The haggis was carried by May Anderson accompanied by the rousing sound of the pipes played by Stewart MacMillan, who later gave the toast 'Tae the Haggis'. A selection of traditional Scots tunes was given by keyboard player Gordon Grant. Parklands activities co-ordinator Lisa Phimister said: "It was a great afternoon and everyone really enjoyed themselves".

**Buckie dental hygienist/therapist bound for Kenya:** Jennifer Peterkin of 8to8 Dental practice in Buckie will spend two weeks in Nyahururu, Kenya with a programme run by the charity Dentaaid. In June she will visit slums, orphanages, schools, old folks homes offering basic dental care. She will be part of a group of six people working with a dentist. To put things into perspective the ratio there is one dentist to 40,000 patients, in the UK it's one to 7500.

Feb 7 **We've nae butchers ony mair:** The closure of Dean's Country Butcher's shop on the Square of Fochabers marks the end of an era. There had been a butcher's shop on the site for many years although over time the owners have changed. For many years the Square could boast of having two butchers shops but the other, a long established concern J & P Cruickshank's run by family members shut a number of years ago.

**The Regina Caelis goes down.** An iconic three-masted schooner which was moored at Buckie harbour for 15 years has sunk in Northern Ireland. The 80 year old Regina Caelis became something of a tourist attraction at the harbour before being sold and sailing to her new home in Northern Ireland in 2015. She was sold again but news has emerged that she sank at her moorings at Strangford Lough, County Down, on Friday, January 27th.

**Production was a success:** Buckie Community Theatre's (The new name for the former Lyric etc) production of Cinderella staged in the Fishermen's Hall, over three days last week was declared to be an outstanding success.

Feb 14 **Sudden death of High School pupil.** The school community and the town at large were saddened to learn of the sudden and unexpected death of 16 year-old , Callum Grant who was in class 5. It was not thought that there were any suspicious circumstances. Callum's death is the second tragedy to strike the school in little over three months. In October, a car smash near the farm of Ryerigs on the Buckie to Keith road, claimed the life of 14 year-old pupil Nerings Narustye.

**Local firm gets major cash investment.** A Buckie boat builder was celebrating after attracting a £65,000 investment from Highlands and Islands Enterprise. March Road-based Probond Marine Limited which was formed in 2015, proprietor Colin McAndrew, is to become the first in the world to build and supply a new type of rigid inflatable boat, in partnership with boat designer Barry Carson.

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**Men's Sheds and Allotments** A meeting took place in the Town House Hall on Wednesday of last week hosted by Buckie Area Forum. On the menu were two topics allotments and a 'Men's Shed' in Buckie. People in Cullen have had allotments for some years now and it is hoped that an area near or in Buckie can be set up along similar lines. Regeneration Group Chairman, Councillor Gordon McDonald told the meeting "Tonight we want to see if there is enough interest in the community to get groups for both a Men's Shed and allotments and to drive them forward.

Feb 21 **Fish Bar's owner bound for Australia :** Fochabers Fish Bar has been showing chippers up and down the land how it is done over the past three years, and now owner Darren Boothroyd will be taking his expertise. Crowned No 1 chipper in Scotland last month, Mr Boothroyd is set to head for Port Kennedy, Perth, Western Australia on February 20<sup>th</sup> at the invitation of a couple there who own a chip shop. He will spend a week with ex pats Pete and Anne Speight helping them find a way for their business to grow and develop.

**Joe goes an extra mile:** A young Cluny Primary School pupil has swum 21 miles in just three weeks - all to help a pal with a chronic health condition. Joe Sutherland (9) quite literally took the plunge to take part in the Channel Challenge to swim the distance in 12 weeks and has raised £1351 for type 1 diabetes charity IDRE. The inspiration for his remarkable feat was to be found very close to home in the shape of family friend Madison Mitchell (15) an S4 pupil at Buckie Community High School, who was diagnosed with the condition when she was just five.

**Police confirm body is missing kayaker:** The body of a man found on the beach near Lybster last week has been confirmed as being that of missing sea kayaker Dominic Jackson. Mr Jackson, who was 35 and lived in Laurencekirk, sparked a full-scale search and rescue operation after going

missing from local coastal waters at some point over the weekend of February 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Feb28 Buckpool Club to receive major cash grants:** There was a £200.000 double windfall for a Buckie golf club last week. Buckpool Golf, Sports and Social Club were celebrating as the Climate Challenge Fund and the Suez Trust awarded grants of £148,752 and £50,000 respectively. The money has been earmarked for a number of projects, among them being the payment for material and its application to the flat roof of the building to provide a sealant against water seepage and provide a degree of insulation to keep heat in the building.

**Ladies' Day cash delight:** A local primary school's funds were nearly £3000 better off thanks to a recent cash-raising bash. The Cullen Bay Hotel played host to a Ladies' Day event in aid of Findochty Primary and succeeded in collecting £2832.80 for the school. Behind the move were Lynsey and Rachel Watt, who both serve on the Findochty Parent Support Group.

**Cluny fund-raise for leprosy lifeline:** Kind-hearted Cluny Primary kids have helped save nearly 200 youngsters from the scourge of leprosy. A recent fund-raising drive by the whole school has resulted in the highly impressive sum of £4281.50 being collected for anti-leprosy charity Lepra, which seeks to combat the infectious disease across the world. The following pupils had the honour of handing over a cheque for £4281.50 to Trish Pakenham from Lepra. Kallum Aitchison, Seth Fordyce, Courtney Clamp and Carly Hutchison.

**Mar 7 Biggest ship ever:** The arrival of the largest cargo vessel ever to come into Buckie harbour is being hailed a victory for a local harbour user group. Last Tuesday morning saw plenty for shipwatchers to feast their eye upon as the 300foot (89.95m) Dutch-flagged 2978 tonne cargo vessel MV Peak Bremen inched into basin one of the port. Her appearance- and hopefully other ships of a similar size in the future is down to sustained lobbying by the Buckie Harbour Advisory Committee comprising a variety of harbour users and businesses.

**The "Squeeks" first local hero:** A woman who has poured her heart and soul into raising more than £18.000 for children at the Special Education Department of Buckie Community High School is the Banffshire Advertiser's Local Hero of 2017. Suzanne Clark (39) has raised the five figure amount since she started her annual weekend tea party and other fund-raising efforts in 2013. The money has allowed the department to do much with the children, including pantomime visits and outdoor learning. There were a large number of nominations but Suzanne came out top. She was given a trophy and a bouquet of flowers from the Advertiser and gift vouchers from Tesco in Buckie.

**Honour for fireman Dave:** Twenty years' service has done nothing to dent the enthusiasm of one of Buckie's fire station stalwarts.. Crew manager Dave Crombie was honoured recently with the 20 year long-service and

good conduct medal at a ceremony held in the station. Joining the Grampian Fire Brigade in 1996 was the culmination of a childhood dream for Mr Crombie (52) after he moved to Buckie two years prior.

**Award for Portknockie shop:** Portknockie fish and chip shop have been handed the perfect birthday gift after being unveiled as the champion chip shop in Moray. The chip shop run by Moira Proctor and Ian Nutall, was voted the best in the region in a recent competition ran by the Northern Scot. Being based in a small village proved to be no obstacle to the fish and chip shop when it came to netting votes, with its widespread appeal helping carry across the finish to glory. It was a tight vote at the end of the day, with Portknockie gathering 235 votes, which were submitted by post, email or via social media. Next in line with 206 votes was the Galley in Lossiemouth. The couple opened the shop on March 10 three years ago. "It was a nice birthday surprise," said Ian.

**Pupils help in charity cash dash:** A total of 10 groups made their way to the school's Highfield Hall to take part in local charities turned out in force at Buckie Community High School last week in a bid to secure a £3000 boost to their coffers. A total of 10 groups made their way to the school's Highfield Hall to take part in the charity fayre, where they met S2 youngsters working on this year's Youth Philanthropy Initiative. Groups represented included - Babs dial-a-bus, Riding for the Disable, Buckie and District Cancer Group, Parkinson's UK.

**Cluny were Quiz Champs:** Success was the answer for a quartet of Cluny Primary pupils when they were crowned quiz kings and queens The annual Rotary school's quiz recently saw P6-7 youngsters Finlay Wood, Courtney Clamp, Rhys Lee and Poppy Reid take the top spot in the contest, which brought in primary schools from Buckie and the surrounding area, including `Milne's in Fochabers.

Mar 14 **Lifeboat duo showcase changing role of women:** Buckie RNLI has been helping the Scottish Women's Institute mark not one but two special occasions. It was a case of one venerable voluntary organisation lending a hand to another when two of the volunteer Buckie lifeboat crew - Elaine Mair (45) and Gill Sutherland (39) appeared in the most recent edition of the SWI magazine 'Women Together', which was not only celebrating International Women's Day on March 8 but also the Institute's centenary year. The two women who are both from Findochty and work at Seafiel's Vet Practice in Buckie, formed part of a special feature throwing the spotlight on women who were doing jobs that would have been unthinkable when the SWI was formed in 1917.

**Pupils strike winning note:** Buckie High's musical talent was celebrated recently when the school held their annual Young Musician of the Year contest. Both junior and senior awards were up for grabs during the keenly contested evening competition, with the overall winner being declared as S5's Anna Campbell, who also claimed the senior vocal award after her performance vowed the judges. Taking the runner-up slot in the senior vocal section was Amelia (S4) who also finished a close second in the

instrumental section. The instrumental crown went to S4 student Isla Smith. In the junior section Khara Lovelace and Megan Mathieson (both S3) took first and second places respectively in the vocals with Neve Paterson and Abbie Nye doing likewise in the instrumental category. PT Music and Drama, Josie Raffan, said "The standard was really high and the judges had to make some very difficult decisions. There were 19 finalists in all who were selected by Music Department staff from a wider field of hopefuls who auditioned. We're very proud of everyone who took part." The judges were Mairi McLennan PT Music at Milne's High School, Andrew Murray (from the sponsors Buckie Rotary) and BCHS depute rector David Strachan.

**Sheila scoops award with a taste of Italy:** Success continues to taste just as sweet for Fochabers Ice Cream Parlour after it claimed yet another prestigious national award. The High Street shop, which has been run by Sheila Gray for the past seven years, has just seen her tiramisu flavoured ice cream judged the tastiest in the UK. Her fourth major award to date, the trophy for her latest creation, based on the popular Italian coffee-flavoured dessert was handed to her by the Ice Cream Alliance, the UK trade body for the industry. The tiramisu is available either as an ice cream or as a semi-freddo (semi-frozen).

**Justin completes a 20k non-stop swim in Australia :** Justin Jones, whose parents live at Clochan recently completed the Rottneest Channel Swim a stretch of water between Perth W.A. and the island the event is named after. This is the third time that she has taken part - the other two were firstly as part of a four strong team and the other as one half of a pair - it was a dream to accomplish the feat on her own. "I always wanted to do the solo crossing because you get a personalised number plate. I finished 175 out of 260, which is a pretty good achievement, especially when you consider about 60 competitors didn't finish at all. "I finished in nine hours and two minutes. I had hoped to come in at around eight hours, so if you factor in the time I spent fighting myself internally to keep going my actual swimming time was around eight and a half hours.

Mar 21 **Eight hour trip in ambulance** A Buckie man, Jim Simpson, who is disabled, diabetic and has to attend specialist eye clinics periodically had to spend eight hours in an ambulance to attend a clinic in Aberdeen. He previously saw the specialist in Seafield Hospital then Dr Grays in Elgin, but they have gone with the nearest clinic now being in Aberdeen. Needless to say he was very angry not only for himself but for some of the frailer passengers in a vehicle without toilet provision.

**Our Lives in £1k windfall:** Our Lives, the Grampian Group of newspapers' book of reader's photos, has been selling extremely well since it was first published last year. The book was the brainchild of Banffshire Advertiser photographer LynnMacDonald. The charity book is benefitting four different organisations throughout the Grampian Group area - the R.N.L.I, which has bases in Buckie and Macduff., the Grampian Child Bereavement Network, the Keith and District Multiple Sclerosis Support Group and the Samaritans Moray. Group Editor Chris Sanderson and Lynn handed over

the first cheques to representatives of each charity at a small ceremony in the office with each receiving £250 from the sale of books so far.

Mar 28

**Bank closure** Customers of the Royal Bank of Scotland after it was announced that the town's branch was to close down. The news comes just two months after the Clydesdale Bank announced it was shutting its Buckie branch. A spokesman for the R.B.S said that the way people choose to bank with us has changed radically over the last few years. Between 2010 and 2015 mobile and online transactions alone have increased by 1350 per cent. Since 2011 we have seen the number of transactions in the Buckie branch decline by 34%.

**Fochabers firms hail double award success.** Two Fochabers firms have been raising a glass to toast their success in the Scottish Rural Awards. Baxters Food Group claimed the highly commended award in the Rural Employer category while Gordon Castle was unveiled as the Business Diversification runners-up.

**Tune up for another fab fiddle week:** Fochabers Fiddle Week is back and promises to be better than ever. It returns on Wednesday, April 12 and will involve a load of top class tuition and performances. Now in its fifth year the event, run by former fiddler Jack Smedley, will be based in the newly refurbished Fochabers Public Institute, with tutorials running through to Friday April 14<sup>th</sup>. The week will finish in grand style when students and tutors alike will take to the stage on the Saturday evening as one of the first acts to perform at the new - look Institute.

**Parade for heroes gets £250 boost:** A parade to commemorate Buckie's only Victoria Cross winner has been handed a cash boost by a Freemason Lodge in the town. Lodge Gordons 589 recently handed over a cheque for £250 to the Gordon Highlanders Committee which is organising a parade through Buckie on July 29 to honour George McIntosh VC as well as the other 18 VC recipients throughout history of the now disbanded regiment. Receiving the cheque on behalf of the committee was Alma Jappy whose late husband Joe was a member of both the Lodge and the Gordon Highlanders. Presenting the cheque was Lodge Gordons R.W.M. Ricky Lawtie.

Apr 4

**A new and young harbourmaster:** Buckie's new harbourmaster has been unveiled and he is believed to be one of the youngest in the country. Darren Bremner has been appointed to the top job at Moray's biggest harbour at the age of just 35. However he has gathered a wealth of experience which will stand him in good stead as he plays his part in developing the harbour and fulfilling its potential as a huge asset for both its owners, Moray Council and the local economy. Mr Bremner, who lives in Findochty where he grew up, joined as assistant harbourmaster only a year ago and was immediately thrown in at the deep end when the harbourmaster resigned nine days later.

**Beach action against plastic menace:** Cullen beach will be the focus of a new, cutting edge, national project aiming to clear the UK's coastline of plastic pollution. The Plastic Tide will lead a team of volunteers on a beach

clean on Friday 28, from 4pm- 6pm. The Plastic Tide aim to create a map of the problem along the country's coastline using drone technology. Dr Eric Van Sebille, Science Adviser to the Plastic Tide, said: "The Plastic Tide will significantly enhance our understanding of the amount of plastic on coastlines by trailing revolutionary drone-based automatic detection of litter. This will aid the creation of a global inventory of marine plastic pollution, and help identify hotspots, impacts and fate of our plastic."

**Award give Ben a buzz:** A winged visitor to his garden gave Buckie pupil Ben Paton the inspiration for an image which won him a highly commended award in a national competition. A drawing of a bee by Ben (13) an S1 pupil at Buckie Community High School is on show at the Royal Scottish Academy in Edinburgh until April 18. Ben is the only person from Moray to be highly commended in the competition organised by the Friends of the Royal Scottish Academy. His artwork is on show at the Academy's home on the Mound in Edinburgh, regarded as the home of Scottish art and architecture. Pupils at the school had been doing a project on drawing insects and PT of art Sarah Matthews, submitted 20 entries in the competition. She said: "The bee was very anatomically correct and our science department commented on how well drawn it was. I am delighted for Ben. All the kids worked really hard and it is nice for their work to be celebrated nationally."

**Model young citizens:** Supporting Syrian refugees, smoothing the big transition from P7 to High School life and making young people aware of the dangers of drugs, alcohol, smoking and knife crime, were the good efforts which earned accolades for good young citizens in Buckie. Three certificates were won by Buckie Community High School pupils at the Moray Young Citizen Awards. Taylor Cowie, Kirsty Sutherland and Courtney Smith were highly commended for their efforts to raise awareness of drugs, alcohol, smoking and knife crime among first and second year pupils. Chloe Shepherd and Faye Phimister were commended for their work in organising a P7 drop-in session at the school in February. The S6 girls took charge of group of senior students who were tasked with putting together an activities -themed day for pupils from local feeder schools. S6 head girl Eilidh McDermott (18) was also commended for her fundraising and support of Syrian refugees in Moray and Aberdeenshire. She was part of a group who organised a coffee morning and they raised more than £1000 for the Moray Supports Refugees charity. Eilidh also made appeals through Facebook for donations of clothes for the Syrian families.

Apr11 **New headstone for hero soldier:** A new headstone now marks the final resting place of a Buckie war hero. Private Alexander Stewart was buried in Buckie New Cemetery on October 17<sup>th</sup> 1922, four years after being severely wounded while fighting in World War 1. However, over the years his headstone had deteriorated so badly, that local historian David Fowler decided to inform the Buckie Branch of Royal British Legion Scotland. The group took the matter on board and set out on a quest to establish if Pte. Stewart had any remaining family in the area, and then to replace the grave marker. Last Tuesday Buckie RBLs president Brian Turnbull and chairwoman Donna Farquhar unveiled the new headstone which has been

made out of local granite and now provides a simple yet dignified memorial to a man who gave his young life for his country. Money to pay for the headstone came from various groups - Two thirds of the discounted £1100 cost was met by The Royal British Legion H.Q in Edinburgh, the local branch and also Martin Christie from Buckie Thistle Football Development. Following the war Alexander Stewart was an assistant trainer with Buckie Thistle.

**Daughter receives copies of her Dad's medal:** Grace McIntosh daughter of Buckie's only Victoria Cross recipient George McIntosh was presented with copies of his medal from the treasurer of the Gordon Highlanders (Buckie) committee Alan Carter and also a bouquet of flowers from Alma Jappy whose late husband Joe was chairman of the committee. (A picture appears on the front page of this edition.)

**Five years to raise £250,000 or the kirk bell will toll for historic church.** "You've got five years to save the historic Cullen Auld Kirk" that was the stark warning given at a public meeting in the church last week. Around 130 people packed into the church, which dates from 1236 and has connections with Robert the Bruce, to hear Rev Douglas Stevenson say that hundreds of thousands of pounds are needed for essential repairs and renovation work or face closure. Among the long list of work needed is £20,000 to repair the crumbling bell tower, which has been closed for two years. Tom Duff from LDF Architects outlined three options, ranging from £250,000 to £650,000.

Rev. Stevenson said the church has a membership of approximately 300. A third of them have not attended the church for a considerable number of years, nor indeed support the church with any regular income. The second third attend sporadically, maybe half a dozen times in the year which leaves 100 people-the active membership to raise the sort of revenue required for the continuous upkeep of not just the Auld Kirk but also the hall church and the manse. Many are now retired and dependent on pensions.

**Cullen honour club stalwart Bill:** For six and a half decades, a Portknockie man has been plying the fairways and greens of Cullen Golf Club. At a special ceremony held in the clubhouse recently Bill Mair of Admiralty Street in the village was presented with honorary membership of the club by Cullen captain Andrew Murray. Bill had been the club champion, Three Day Open Champion, Four Day Open Champion and the winner of tournaments around the area. Bill, who will soon be 78 said that he had his father to thank for his long association with the Cullen club. He encouraged me to join when I was 12 and I have been a member ever since. Among those on hand to offer their congratulations was his long time friend, neighbour and golfing opponent James Farquhar.

Apr 18 **Institute is now 'fit for the future':** Four years of hard work and £800,000 later, the Fochabers Public Institute has been unveiled as a modern community hub.

**Farmer's Market in the Port:** Portgordon Village Hall was transformed into a farmer's market recently in a repeat of last year's successful event.

Saturday April 9 saw the crowds flock to the hall to enjoy the varied fare on offer. Hall committee member Lee Grant said: "It went very well and we're very pleased indeed with the turnout". She added that the funds raised would go towards repairing the flat roof of the hall, which has sprung a leak. Cash has been sourced for new kitchen equipment but the installation of this is on hold until the roof is repaired.

**New kitchen for Portgordon Bowling Club :** The fruits of a lottery windfall were unveiled at the weekend by proud members of Portgordon Bowling Club. In January it was revealed that the club had netted an award from the Big Lottery Fund for an extensive revamp of the clubhouse kitchen. Saturday saw the result of the club's labours officially unveiled. Club secretary Ian Paterson told the Advertiser "The kitchen has been completely renewed and is looking really good. While we were doing this work we went a bit further and refurbished the toilets and changing area as well as giving the whole clubhouse a lick of paint and generally decluttering the place. Founder member Alex Green (83) was given the honour of clipping the ribbon to officially open the new facilities joined by vice-president Delvin Mair.

**Pipe Band still playing after 30 years:** Buckie and District Pipe Band have been handed a double reason to celebrate this summer. June will see the band, now based in the British Legion Hall, turn thirty years old while the tail end of the month will see them participate in one of the largest parades seen in the town in recent times. Band vice president Rab Taylor told the Advertiser: "It's brilliant to be celebrating our 30th birthday - who would have thought we'd be here today three decades on and still going strong. We've also been invited to take part in the parade on July 29<sup>th</sup> to commemorate the men who won the Victoria Cross while serving with the Gordon Highlanders, including Buckie's own George McIntosh".

**Golf Club drive for business expansion:** Buckpool Golf Club have unveiled the latest step in their bold expansion plans in the shape of club development manager Robbie Stewart. Lossiemouth-born Mr. Stewart who has been involved with the game for 37 years, is the first full-time pro ever hired by the club and comes to Buckpool from Newmachar Golf Club where he was operations director. Mr. Stewart has been handed a wide remit to taking forward coaching for both junior and adult members as well as promoting and developing the club as a whole.

**Flying flag for Scotland:** A former Buckie High librarian booked herself a place in a prestigious national final. Shelagh Toonen is one of five finalists - and the only one from Scotland- vying for the title of UK School librarian of the year. She has been school librarian at Elgin Academy for five years, having spent the previous 20 years as librarian at Buckie High.

**Very well done:** A keen young swimmer from Buckie made a big splash for charity. Trista Jorgensen who is eight took part in a swimathon at Buckie Swimming Pool to raise funds for Marie Curie and Macmillan. The Cluny Primary School pupil covered 64 lengths, a distance of one mile in one hour 40 minutes. Trista's efforts has raised over £400, with sponsorship

still being collected. She said: "It is something that I decided to do myself. It's the first time I have ever done something like this and I chose to raise money for two cancer charities as they have helped family members through cancer."

**Honoured by new role:** A Buckie woman who went on to co-found one of the north east's top engineering firms has been unveiled as one of the new Deputy Lord Lieutenants of Banffshire. Valerie Cheyne was presented with her commission at a special lunch hosted by the Lord Lieutenant Claire Russell at Pitlochry Lodge, Ballindalloch last Wednesday. Also being similarly honored was Banff resident Andrew Simpson, a former teacher at Keith Grammar and Head Teacher at Elgin High School.

Apr 25 **Buckie Thistle won the Highland League title.** The paper has a full report on the happy scenes together with a number of photographs.

**Myths a hit at Buckie library:** Superstition was the name of the game recently at a talk in Buckie library. Former geography teacher and local historian Allan Fraser shared his in-depth knowledge of some of the myths and superstitions which were once commonplace in local communities in days gone by and which sometimes still survive in one form or another to this day. One of those delighted with the evening was community librarian Eleanor Kidd. "The Buckie library audience were delighted with Allan's presentation on the myths and superstitions of the north east of Scotland on Thursday evening," she said.

May 2 **Buckie Summer Show Success:** There was a buzz about the centre of Buckie on Sunday when the Summer Show and Rotary Six Harbour Walk and Cycle burst into life. High Street was turned into a classic tractor park for the day, while East Church Street became mecca for car and bike enthusiasts. Cluny Square was transformed into a mixture of funfairs for the younger visitors and a wide selection of stalls featuring local businesses and community groups.

It was also a successful day for Buckie Rotary's annual fund-raising Six-Harbour, with some 450 participants getting underway from Portsoy and heading along the coast via Sandend, Cullen, Portknockie, Findochty before finishing in Cluny Square. One of those delighted with the day was Six Harbour Walk convener Bill Greig. "This has been arguably our best one yet and I'm over the moon," he said. "As well as a lot of regulars we were glad to welcome 125 new starts registering at Buckie and a further 25 at Portsoy."

**War Heroes honoured:** Two acts of wartime courage by local men - who amazingly happened on the same day scant miles apart - has been honoured. Buckie and District Fishing Heritage Centre last Monday unveiled special information displays commemorating the heroism of Buckie's sole Victoria Cross winner - George Imlach McIntosh - and Cullen man Spencer Fowlie, who was awarded the Military Cross. Their respective acts of gallantry took place over a 24 hour period spanning July 31<sup>st</sup> August 1<sup>st</sup>, 1917 near Ypres during the battle of Passchendaele in World War I. Joining Heritage Centre chairman John Addison, centre volunteers and

other guests at the unveiling ceremony were Mr McIntosh's daughter Grace, her cousin Lynn Lauriston along with Mr Fowlie's son, John and his wife Catherine. Mr. Addison said: "This is a very special day in honour of two very special men".

**Suicide walk to save lives:** A Buckie mum who lost her daughter to suicide was joined by four generations of her family in a sponsored walk to raise awareness of suicide in the north-east of Scotland. Deanna Cruickshank decided to front a Facebook campaign during Christmas last year to raise awareness of suicide after her daughter Jo, took her own life at the age of 36. By publicly speaking about Jo's suicide she hopes to prevent other families from going through the same experience. Saturday saw Deanna and her family walk from Garmouth to Cullen getting under way at the old railway bridge at around 10am in aid of the charity 'Choose Life'.

**Congregation launches £320k fund to save kirk:** A Buckie church has launched a fund-raising drive to help secure the building against the ravages of the weather. Friday saw the North Church on Cluny Square, which sports the local landmarks of an iconic spire and the town clock, hold a concert as part of their fledgling campaign to amass a £320,000 repair fund. The church's fabric convener, Ian Moir, said the aim is to make the B-listed church secure long term. He said: "The inside of the church is fine, it's the outside which needs a lot of work. The building material of the church is sandstone, which is very vulnerable to the weather. One of the major jobs which needs done is repointing, with patching not a long-term solution. We want to do a job which should last for fifty years, which would make the expenditure worthwhile. Around half the cost is going to be on scaffolding."

**World Host stamp of approval:** Babs-dial - a bus have been blazing the trail for Buckie after becoming the first firm in town to gain prestigious customer service accreditation. The community bus scheme based at the Best Centre, were handed their World Host stamp of approval by Trainer David Stewart. Gaining World Host status is being seen as a big step forward by the charity, according to Babs's office manager Leah Rossvoll. "We felt we needed to raise our profile and enhance our image in the public eye and were encouraged and supported to undertake World Host training by the local Regeneration Group. Councillor Sonya Warren, a member of the Regeneration Group was present to witness the presentation of the award.

May 9 **Tracey raises £30,000:** Remarkable fund-raiser Tracey Cormack has hit the £30,000 mark in her charity efforts. The Buckie woman has run four London marathons, trekked up Kilimanjaro and completed a monster bike ride. Her efforts in the London Marathon last month took her over the £30,000 milestone. This was Tracey's fourth marathon which she completed in five hours and ten minutes. She was running for Motor Neurone Disease (MND) Scotland and money is still coming in from sponsors. Her previous three London events saw her raise thousands for the Anthony Nolan Trust. Among other grueling fundraisers, Tracey has also undertaken the Kilimanjaro Challenge seven-day trek in aid of cancer charity CLAN, the first of her big fundraiser, which has also seen her

complete a host of other events such as the Great Scottish Run. Strangely enough though Tracey enjoys keeping fit she hates running.

**Ups and downs for candidates:** The highs and lows of local politics were there for all to see last Thursday at the Moray Council election count in Elgin Town Hall. The biggest shock of the day saw the SNP'S Gordon McDonald lose his seat in the Buckie ward, while his colleague Sonya Warren was one of three councillors elected to serve the area. Drybridge farmer Tim Eagle swept to victory for the Conservatives in the Buckie ward as the party enjoyed great success across Moray and nationally. Independent Gordon Cowie was returned to serve another term in the Buckie ward.

Conservative candidate Donald Gatt amassed the most first preference votes in the Keith-Cullen ward, Theresa Coull whose son Gary was leader of the SNP group on the previous council, followed in his footsteps after also being elected at stage one. Independent Ron Shepherd was returned for another term, being elected at stage four.

Marc Macrae enjoyed a landslide in the Fochabers - Lhanbryde ward for the Conservatives. Also elected were SNP pair, Shona Morrison and David Bremner who were both elected at stage 7. Sean Morton Labour councillor for the area previously was not re-elected.

**Ball Group help Teddy Bear Group:** It was time for the old to lend a hand to the very young when a local playgroup was given a four-figure financial boost.

The Teddy Bear Group, who cater for pre-school youngsters with special needs at their Lady Cathcart Community Centre base, received a cheque for £1115 thanks to some dancers at the more mature end of the spectrum. Members of the BALL (Be Active Life Long) groups in Buckie and across Moray have been paying donations to take part in Dancercise with Dot sessions, run by Dot Bremner. The cash raised was presented last Tuesday at Buckie Guide Hall, Ms Bremner said: "I've donated the money raised through the Dancercise sessions to the Teddy Bear Group for the last while because they do such a fantastic job for the toddlers they cater for".

May 16 **Success ahoy for boatbuilders:** The venerable and ancient art of boat-building has helped earn a major award with the Boys' Brigade. "Buckie High S5 Liam McKechnie and Finlay Slater, both 16, have been spending the last two years under the watchful eye of retired shipwright Bert Reid, Willie Henderson and John Wilson at Cullen Sea School. The skills they have learnt from helping build the school's second St Ayles skiff has helped land their BBs Queen's Badge. Cullen Sea School's chairman Prof. Ashley Mowat was keen to sing the praises of both students. "They've been a credit to themselves, the BBs, Buckie High School and the sea school over the two year's they've been coming to us," he told the Advertiser. "Both boys have been very interested in boat-building skills and have learned a lot from our retired shipwrights, Bert, Willie and John. Along the way they, Liam and Finlay have helped build our second skiff, which is due to be named by the pupils at Cullen Primary School soon, as well as making oars, which they can probably do in their sleep by now."

**Cash to honour VCs memory tops £12k:** Fundraisers in Buckie have raised more than £12,000 to help commemorate Victoria Cross heroes this summer. July will see a huge parade take place to mark the members of the Gordon Highlanders regiment who won the highest wartime honour for bravery in the British military, including the sole Buckie holder of the medal, George Imlach McIntosh. A ceremony in the Old Coach House Hotel (Commercial Hotel) saw a cheque for £9312.13 handed over to the Gordon Highlanders VC committee by their Buckie fund-raising sub-committee. Doing the honours was Mrs. Alma Jappy whose late husband Joe, had previously chaired the local group. "This is the final sum from our fund-raising and comes on top of £2900 which was collected at Joe's funeral," she told the Advertiser. Over £12,000 is an amazing sum and I can't thank the people of Buckie and the surrounding area enough for their generosity. The response has been magnificent and Joe would've been fair chuffed to have seen a total like this. I'd also like to thank the dedicated team of fundraisers who worked so hard to collect this money."

**End of an era as bank bails out** The Buckie branch of the Clydesdale bank closed its doors last Wednesday as part of a nationwide 'rationalisation' scheme. In the March 4, 1920, edition of the Banffshire Advertiser one could read how the building on Cluny Square which up to that time had been occupied by Miller's Motor and Cycle Works had been bought by the Clydesdale Bank. Miller was to move to Baron Street into the property previously occupied by R. Gillan, Grocers etc.

**New Youth worker at Baptist Church:** The return of a Buckie native is set to bring a boost to youngsters at a local church and the wider community. Buckie Baptist Church recently unveiled Carole Reid as their youth worker and she has been working to hit the ground running after returning north from Durham. The move represents a change of career for Carole who left Buckie in 1998 and latterly was employed as a nutritionist dealing with school lunches. She said: "I had done some volunteering a few years ago which had a youth work element and I worked with young people at the church I went to in Durham so when I heard of this role with Buckie Baptist Church I thought it was something I would like to do."

**Fab first funday at Buckpool:** Buckpool was buzzing recently when the golf club held a family funday. Running on Sunday April 30, the event saw crowds of young and old alike make their way to the club for an event being hailed as a huge success by the organisers. Golf Club secretary John Adam said: "The family funday was a huge success with around 200 people of all ages attending".

**Fochabers rolls out a welcome mat to the world.** The village of Fochabers has made its mark on the customer service map after being awarded WorldHost Recognised Destination. Fochabers received the WorldHost status which recognises high quality customer service after a number of businesses put at least half of their staff through the customer care training programme. Baxters Food Group, Fochabers Fish Bar, Gordon Castle, Christie's of Fochabers and Saltire Security have all completed the training.

May 23 **Opportunity for harbour:** Two vessels involved in the Beatrice Wind Farm project have arrived in Buckie harbour, confirming the port's potential as a base for offshore construction work. The 160 ft Manu-Pekka dredger barge berthed on Sunday along with the 80ft BKM 103 multi-cat tug. The Finnish-built barge has no propulsion and is towed between work locations by the tug. The vessels will spend two to three weeks in Buckie while general maintenance work is carried out and new equipment is fitted before beginning work in the Moray Firth. They will spend around three months excavating a subsea trench which will carry transmission cabling from the site of the Beatrice Wind Farm 35 miles offshore from Buckie. The power cables will make landfall to the west of Portgordon from where they will be connected to the electricity substation at Blackhillock near Keith

**New Centre Hopes for Cullen:** Cullen residents are being asked to support Cullen, Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group in its bid to open a permanent heritage centre. The group hope to build on its success over the years by expanding its heritage related activities and programmes through community asset transfer from Moray Council of the Memorial Suite in Cullen's Town Hall. President Brenda Wood said "This proposed opening of a permanent heritage centre as a base for exhibitions, together with facilities for the preservation and conservation of our collections, will provide many benefits to the wider local communities, including raising the profile of our local heritage, promoting research and hopefully attracting more visitors to the town". The heritage group has for many years run an annual exhibition of local heritage photographs and documents and will do so again this year. on Saturday July 1 in the Memorial Hall.

**Cullen Youth Groups cash in at the Co-op:** There was a cash bonanza on offer from Cullen Co-op for three kid's groups in the village. Cullen Play Centre received £800, 1st Cullen Brownies and Rainbows were handed a boost of £750 and £738 respectively thanks to the firm's dividend scheme. Cullen Co-op deputy manager Stewart Croll said: "The money was raised through the Co-op membership with one per cent of each members' purchase of own brand goods going to good causes".

May 30 **Fiddle legend James joins the hall of fame:** A Fochabers fiddling legend has joined the ranks of the Scottish music immortals after being inducted into the Traditional Music Hall of Fame. James Alexander MBE (61) who has inspired generations of young musicians, now joins the likes of Aly Bain and Phil Cunningham on the roll of honour, earning his nomination for his tireless work for the music

He was further honoured at a surprise presentation in the Fochabers Public Institute where around 60 former students and other guests hailed his lifetime of achievement. Among those in the packed hall were daughters Claire and Susan, long time friend and fellow Speyfest stalwart John Mehigan and ex-student Mairi Marwick who played a key role in luring the unsuspecting Mr Alexander on to stage. Speaking about his Hall of Fame honour, Mr Alexander said: "I'm honoured and privileged to have been nominated for the Hall of Fame. It's very much an award for musicians by musicians which is why I was very happy indeed to accept it".

**Gordon Castle Games:** The Gordon Castle Games now in its seventh year, attracted a large crowd. A total of 9803 visitors turned up to be entertained over the two days. Saturday was marred by rain but the weather failed to dampen the spirits of the visitors. A packed programme over the two days provided fun entertainment for all ages. A new attraction this year was a vintage village. Focus was on traditional skills, dress, music and agriculture from the 1900s - 1940s. Other entertainments included rare breeds, heavy hoses and racing pigs. Saturday also included a charity 'It's a Knockout' competition, raising money for Alzheimers Scotland. The traditional Highland Games returned on Sunday when the weather greatly improved. A number of new records were set. In the light hammer competition James Dawkins reached a distance of 127 feet and in the heavy stone a new record of 45ft 8in was reached by Lukaz Wenta. The 28lb weight for distance was won by Scott Rider with 85ft 7in and was also a new record. Cornhill team D won the tug of war with their team B in fourth place.

**Many hands make light work at harbour clean:** Community volunteers turned out in force to assist Buckpool Harbour Community Group with a major clean up operation. A total of 10 bags of non cyclable items were collected together with a large amount of rope which had been washed up on the beach. Convener Sharon Innes said "The area is looking a lot tidier now. We filled ten wheelie bins with the rubbish that we collected. The committee folded 18 years ago but we decided to revive it just a couple of months ago. It was needin a clean-up and we were delighted with the number of volunteers and committee members who helped out. We were all armed with black bags and litter pickers. We followed up the cleaning with a gardening night too so everything is looking good" Volunteers who worked up a thirst at the clean up welcomed the teas and coffees that were served from a van kindly donated by Sean Burnett.

**Chipping in with money for church repairs :** Fry Inn owner Stephen Grant presented a cheque for £500 to Catherine Stewart, treasurer of Buckie North Church. The money was raised from the 5p levy on carrier bags and topped up by the Fry Inn. It is hoped that £320,000 can be raised to pay for badly needed exterior repairs to the masonry.

**Soup and Sweet lunches a paying concern:** Raising cash is proving sweet success indeed for a team at Findochty Church of Scotland. On every Tuesday since January the church hall has played host to a series of soup and sweet lunches in a bid to upgrade the facility. The group of 24 volunteers is led by chef Jimmy Bremner from the Hall Restoration Group, working in the kitchen on a three weekly rota. Mr. Bremner said "The soup and sweet lunches have proved popular with an average attendance of 45 people each week enjoying the support of visitors and the local community". The soup and sweet lunches are on Tuesday from noon to 2pm costing £3 for adults and £2 for children. Additional volunteers to help out are also being sought. A photo showed Mr Bremner and the following ladies about to go to work - Jenny Mair, Doreen Work, Jess Duthie, Helen Graves and Margaret Ross. The money presently being collected is earmarked to upgrade the toilets, recently the electrical installation in the hall was given an upgrade.

June 6 **Shipyard is sold:** Buckie's economy has been handed a major boost with the relaunch of the town's last remaining shipyard. Macduff Shipyards Ltd has

been unveiled as the buyer of Buckie Shipyard (at one time known as Herd and Mackenzie's), which has lain disused and derelict since 2013 when it suddenly went into liquidation with the loss of 68 jobs. The keys to the yard were handed over by John Cowe, chairman of Moray Council's economic development and infrastructure services committee, to managing director John Watt.

**Portgordon Ice House:** The fate of plans to breathe new life into the 200 year old disused Portgordon ice house still hangs in the balance. A total of 48 letters of support for the application has been received by the local authority with seven objections lodged. Planning officers had recommended elected members decline the proposals, mainly on the grounds that it did not meet the exception for building in a Coastal Protection Zone, the premises is not currently in use and the planned design was not in keeping with the area criteria.

**Rotary honour stalwart fundraiser:** A Buckie charity fund-raiser who has devoted the last sixteen years of his life to helping others has been honoured. Bill Greig was in for a pleasant surprise at Buckie Rotary Club's meeting last Monday when he was presented with the Paul Harris Fellowship award by the assistant governor Donald Miller.

He was nominated by his fellow club members who were determined that he be recognised for his services to the community and for 'service above self'. He becomes only the fourth Buckie Rotarian to receive the honour in the club's 59 year history, two of those being current members Charles McKay and Malcolm Watt.

**North Church ladies open shop for a week** There was community support aplenty for Buckie North Church fund-raisers last week when they opened a pop-up shop. The shop in the former Hydro Electric store on East Church Street was part of the church's campaign to raise £320,000 to repair and refurbish the iconic spire and clock. The shop raised more than £2000 in the first few days. On offer were clothes, handbags, and household goods, three bikes, a reclining chair and a selection of shoes. Volunteer Moira Thain said "It's gone much better than we could ever have hoped, so much so we're considering doing it again". The church were indebted to Charles Milne the owner of the premises who gave them the use of it for free and also offered to pay for the electricity. Thanks were also extended to David Robertson at J.P. Pozzi who allowed fliers advertising the pop-up shop in his delivered daily papers, also the paper boys and all those who donated goods and patronised the shop.

June 13 **Douglas Ross (Tory) is the new MP for Moray.** He overturned a 9000 SNP majority from two years ago to oust Angus Robertson the former SNP leader at Westminster, who has represented the Moray area since 2001. Moray has been firmly SNP since 1987. Mr Ross won with a majority of 4159 votes, which he admitted came as a surprise and was the standout result of a Tory revival north of the border which saw them go from just one seat to 13 in Scotland.

**Baxter cash boost for Slochie hall:** Portessie Public Hall has been handed a hefty boost in their bid to upgrade facilities. The management committee were left celebrating recently after netting a £2500 grant from the Gordon and Ena Baxter Foundation to build a new storage facility at the hall.

**Milne's High School receives praise:** Milne's High School, has emerged with a glowing inspection report from Education Scotland. The leadership at the Fochabers secondary school has been praised, with rector Trish Cameron and her senior team lauded for creating a culture for improvement. The inspection report, published last Tuesday, added: "They are providing clear strategic direction and managing change at an appropriate pace."

**Knitters in charity bid:** From the very youngest through to those in their golden years are set to benefit from the efforts of a group of dedicated Buckie knitters. Members of the Knit and Natter Club at the South and West Church are working hard to complete another bumper batch of knitted clothes and other items for the Queen Mother's Clothing Guild. Group member Muriel Patience told the Advertiser "This is the third year we've knitted items for the QMCG. We knit just about anything for babies through to the elderly, from neonatal items to the likes of knee rugs. The Guild gives the wool and we do the knitting, but we also get generous donations of both wool and completed garments from the public, which we're always delighted for."

**Rovers up against it:** Buckie Rovers who found themselves relegated from the Super League at the end of the season also found themselves without a manager and secretary. David 'Parro' Findlay and Dave Roberts respectively when both resigned are in danger of having to go into abeyance for a year. As the new season approaches on August 1<sup>st</sup> the Rovers are still without a replacement manager and a difficult decision looms for the committee if a suitable candidate or candidates are not found. Outgoing secretary Dave Roberts told the Advertiser "We're getting to the point when we'll have to make a decision about going into abeyance pretty soon - by the end of the month at the latest, I'd say. The club needs a new manager as soon as possible. The players are getting a bit restless and quite understandably, many are reluctant to sign again until they see who's going to be manager. "Both Dave Findlay and Dave Roberts had nothing but praise for the committee who Findlay described as dedicated and hard working who had slaved tirelessly to raise money and search out sponsorship. For his part Dave Roberts said anyone thinking of taking on the job of manager would find the Rovers to be a well-run club with a core of good players who are good enough to take the Rovers back up into the Super League.

June 20 **Teacher awarded the MBE:** A Buckie teacher who has dedicated nearly three decades of her life to children with special needs has been honoured in the Queen's birthday honours list. Sharon Aitken, who is P.T. of the Special Education Department at Buckie Community High School has been awarded the MBE for her 27 year's dedication to children with Additional Support Needs. News of the honour left Mrs. Aitken, who lives in Buckie and is married with two daughters 'totally overwhelmed.'

**An abnormal load:** Drivers and bystanders in Buckie and on the road to Keith were treated to an unusual sight last week. Wednesday June 14<sup>th</sup> saw a slow-moving, escorted wide-load transporter take a 193tonne transformer from the quayside at Buckie harbour to the new electricity substation at Blackhillock, near Keith. The convoy followed a 13 mile route beginning with the March Road, the A98 to Enzie Crossroads before traversing the Braes of Enzie and then on to the A96 for the last part. It was a slow journey with the transporter

vehicle and its police escorts averaging 10mph, The completed journey took the best part of two hours.

**New Moray MP. sworn in:** It was a busy opening week at Westminster for Moray MP Douglas Ross, which included meeting the Prime Minister on his first day, parliamentary training, chamber etiquette, a visit from his mum and dad plus being sworn in.

**Auld Kirk unveils a new guide:** A new guide to one of the most historic churches in the north of Scotland is hoped to help raise vital refurbishment funds for the building Cullen Auld Kirk, which dates back to 1237 and has connections with Robert the Bruce is faced with a bill of between £250,000 and £650,000 to cover essential repair, renovation and upgrade work. Saturday saw the launch of Cullen Auld Kirk - History and Guidebook, a joint effort between church elder John Aitken and photographer Colin Shearer.

**Quiz first for Cluny:** Cluny Primary has been crowned the king and queen of the quizzes after claiming its first finals win in the Moray Libraries Primary Schools Quiz. Courtney Clamp, Finlay Wood, Leia Green and Kallum Aitchison, all P6 squared up against Bishopmill, Dyke and Hythehill to vie for the title of champions at the event held in Elgin Library. Cluny not only won but won well, with a score of 39, 13 points ahead of their nearest rivals. A photograph of the four youngsters appears in page 9 of the B.A. of this date.

June 27

**Boat launch at Cullen:** Crowds turned out in Cullen to see a “really bonny boat” take to the waves for the first time at the village harbour. Cullen Sea School was joined by pupils from the local primary school and by a large number of well-wishers to mark the launch of their second St Ayles skiff. She will join the Mairi, launched last year, which has proved highly popular with the club’s coastal rowers. Doing the honours at the sea school was retiring Cullen Primary headteacher Moyra Hendry, who invoked a variation of the traditional blessing with “God bless her and all who row in her.” Hailing the launch as a “really important day, Cullen Sea School chairman Prof. Ashley Mowat went on to pay tribute to the organisation’s three boat-building experts - Bert Reid, Willie Henderson and John Smith - and their dedicated team of 14 volunteers who transformed the skiff from a kit to a seaworthy vessel. “I suppose I’m biased, but she’s a really bonny boat”, he told the assembled crowd”.

The pupils of Cullen Primary School were invited to submit names for the new boat and the name Swift, suggested by pupil Shannon Paterson, proved to be the winner by the management committee.

**School provides the RNLI with a cash boost:** A sponsored walk by Buckie schoolchildren has seen the local RNLI handed a three figure boost. Youngsters from Cluny Primary got their walking shoes on to undertake a sponsored hike to Findochty Primary and back, raising an impressive sum of £925 for the maritime lifesaving charity. Two classes took part in the fund-raiser - Lisa Addison’s P5A and Carol Wilson’s P4/5W. On hand to receive an always welcome boost to the RNLI’S coffer were Buckie lifeboat coxswain Alan Robertson and mechanic/second coxswain Gordon Lawtie. “This is the second time pupils have done a sponsored walk and donated the money raised to the RNLI; said Ms Addison told the Advertiser.

**They came first:** The duxes of six and five in year 2017 at Buckie Community High School were Cameron Thomson and Honor Adam respectively. In addition to the medals both also received the Joe Mackay Award. This was the first year that a dux medal was awarded to a S6 pupil Cameron Thomson won the S5 dux medal last year, a first class achievement by any standard.

**A ride on his bike paid off:** A Buckie man has got on his bike to raise thousands of pounds for charity. Brendan Belcher strained more than a few sinews when he took part in the 66 mile Etape Loch Ness cycling sportive on April 23<sup>rd</sup>. As part of the effort he raised an impressive £2500, which has been split equally between the local branch of Macmillan Cancer Support and the Teddy Bear Group. He said, "We couldn't have done it without everyone's support, from donations to various raffles we held. We raffled off Christian Louboutin shoes and lipstick, a round of golf for four at Trump Golf Links, Strathlene and Spey Bay Golf Clubs and we also received £700 towards a holiday via Coop travel. As well as this, we are extremely grateful to Gordon and Kate Bowie at Spey Bay Golf Club and also David Lyon on behalf of Strathlene for donating the cost of the rounds, making our total more than we imagined". Preparing to take part in the demanding event meant long hours of training for Mr Belcher, mainly with friends Mark Graham and Kevin Addison, who also took part in the event. Last year Mr Belcher raised the sum of £1.500, which went to the SCBU unit in Dr Gray's Hospital, Elgin.

July 4 **Award for Rig Hero:** A Buckie man who led a challenging mission to rescue an oil rig which had run aground off Stornoway has been awarded a prestigious honour by his company. Transocean Ltd. offshore installation manager Bruce Thomson and his wife Angela were flown first class to Houston, USA, where he was handed the First Excellence Award by company CEO and president Jeremy Thigpen. It was recognition for the efforts of Mr Thomson and the small team of international experts he led last August to refloat the Transocean Winner rig which had dramatically run aground off Dlmore beach near Stornoway after she broke free of her towing vessel, the ALP Forward, in a freak storm.

**School football team did more than well:** Buckie High's under 14s football team have stamped their authority on the league and cup by winning both in their inaugural season. Team coach Colin Smith, who is a PE teacher at the school spoke of his pride in the lads' achievements. "We're all very proud of them, it's an incredible achievement," he said. "It's their first season in the league - there was an S1-2 tournament being run in the school prior to this but this is their first competitive experience outside of that".

The squad, which numbers around 15 or 16 players are looking to enter the North of Scotland Cup next season while seeking to defend their league and cup trophies.

July 11 **Sally Ann Officer says farewell:** Buckie Salvation Army have said a fond farewell to their officer at a special retiral ceremony. Corps members

gathered at the New Street hall on Sunday July 2<sup>nd</sup> to say goodbye to Territorial Envoy Colin Hanover (69) who has been in charge for the past four years.

**Sudden death of woman:** Police sealed off an area in the Land Street part of Buckpool on Sunday evening as an investigation into a death swung into operation. A woman, believed to be foreign, was found to be badly injured due to setting herself alight on waste land off Seaview Road around 7.30pm. She was taken to Dry Gray's Hospital in Elgin but later died.

**Ex BCHS kids no mugs:** A group of former Buckie High students were no mugs when it came to earning money, as the local RNLI lifeboat station were more than delighted to discover. On hand recently to hand over a cheque for £1,158.80 were five of the six members of the Young Enterprise group 'Mugshots'-Scott Bruce, Taylor Cowie, Robbie Bruce, Brodie Christie and Peter Mair. Missing due to work commitments was Adam McCarten. Accepting the cheque on behalf of the life-saving charity were crew members Creon Carmichael and Connor Cowie. Mugshots managing director Brodie Christie said "We wanted the money we raised to go to a local charity so the lifeboat seemed perfect. Our original target was £1000 so we're delighted to have smashed that." Welcoming the donation was Buckie RNLI life boat operations manager Jo Herd. "We're delighted Mugshots thought of us when deciding where the money they raised should go," he told the Advertiser.

July 18

**Railway station is recreated at exhibition :** A stunning new display helped a heritage exhibition in Cullen to draw the crowds. The stage at the Memorial Hall is home this month to a spectacular scale model of the former Tochineal railway station and the nearby brick and tile works. It forms part of the annual local heritage display being run this month by the Cullen, Deskford and Portknockie Heritage Group which this year has the theme of architecture, archaeology and history. A joint effort between group members John Czajkowski and Steve Liley, the impressive model takes up most of the stage, along with information panels about the brick works, photos and examples of the items it produced. Said Brenda Wood, president, "There's been a lot of interest in the brick works both from locals and visitors, a lot of people didn't know it even existed and it's proving to be quite a draw so far."

**Peter Fair looks to future, new venue call:** Peter Fair needs to move to help secure its future - that is the message coming from the event organisers Horne's Pleasure Fairs. The Glasgow-based firm took over the reins of the long-standing fair in 2015 and Peter Fair organiser Christian Horne told the Advertiser that they were looking for a new more suitable venue. "We're trying to find a new location for the fair that's basically safer than the current one."

**Fundraiser for lifeboat:** A walk along Cullen beach has handed Buckie RNLI a three figure boost. Two year old twins Madison and Mackenzie were joined by other family members on the fund-riser, which netted the local branch of the maritime search and rescue charity £300. The girl's

aunt Amanda Wood, who took part in the event, said “We all got our wellies on and walked along Cullen beach and back on April 16. The bumper cheque was gratefully received by RNLI members, mechanic and second coxswain Gordon Lawtie and coxswain Alan Robertson. The girls were each presented with a special cuddly toy RNLI penguin as a thank you for their efforts.

July 25 **Fochabers Gala:** Rain did not stop play at Fochabers gala on Sunday with the crowning event of the four day extravaganza making the Public Institute its temporary home. New this year was the introduction of gala VIPs, brought in by popular acclaim and replacing the previous gala queen format. Unveiled on the Thursday event as the very first gala VIPs were Milne’s Primary P7s Hamish McPherson and Mairi Younie. Taking junior roles were Calum McPherson and Connie Whelan.

**Summer joy for theatre:** Buckie Community Theatre celebrated a first when it unveiled its inaugural summer school. A total of 42 committed youngsters aged six to 12 made their way to the group’s hall at Logie’s Lane over July 3-7 for a week long course featuring singing with the children , dancing acting and music. The week culminated with the children giving a short performance to their parents.

**Jennifer ‘will never forget her African dental stint.’** A Buckie dental therapist has spoken of the poverty and desperation she witnessed while on a charity stint in Africa. Jennifer Peterkin, who has been with 8to8 Dental in the town for the past two years spent a fortnight last month based in and around the Kenyan city of Nakuru working with Dentaaid. During her time there she worked as part of a team of six volunteers bringing dental treatment and oral hygiene advice to some of the world’s poorest communities. Speaking to the Advertiser Jennifer said “Going to Kenya is something I don’t regret - there are things that will always stay with me. The poverty and desperation there makes you take stock of your own life. I’ll never take anything for granted again, things like a flushing toilet or having a carpet.’

Aug 1 **Crowd line the streets to remember the VC heroes:** It was a day of pride and memories as the Gordon Highlanders gathered for the last time on Saturday to honour the regiment’s bravest of the brave, their 19 Victoria Cross (VC) holders.

The focus was firmly on Buckie’s solo VC holder, George Imlach McIntosh, who won his medal on July 31<sup>st</sup> 1917. Hundreds of former Gordons gathered in the centre of Buckie to witness the unveiling of a memorial plaque to Mr McIntosh before marching to Linzee Gordon Park for a commemorative service. One of those with memories to mull over was Fochabers based former Highlander Keith Boardman who celebrated his centenary in May. Mr. Boardman saw service with the 6th Battalion throughout WWII beginning with the dramatic Dunkirk evacuation before fighting through the North African campaign and then to Italy via Anzio. Palestine was next and he was on the cusp of heading east to fight the Japanese but had these orders cancelled at the last minute when they surrendered. (Coverage of the event is given on pages 1 and 11-14)

**Peter Fair:** The age old fair once again took place at the stance adjacent to the A98 which has been its site since 1884 but because of the potential danger from passing traffic it could be the last to be held there.. Although the weather was less than kind through from Wednesday till Friday, the open period now for some years it was still frequented by crowds of young and old as in days of yore, larger perhaps on Friday the traditional fair day. The fair, previously also a market, has moved three times since it was sited near to the old kirk in Rathven but a new site is being looked for with Merson Park and the Linzee Gordon being talked of but potential drawbacks exist with both options.

Aug 8 **Harbour Gala beats the rain:** The crowds turned out in force to the Cullen Harbour Gala, despite the poor morning weather. A busy afternoon on Sunday July 23 was in store for the team from Cullen Sea School and their volunteer helpers in what is believed to be the most financially successful gala yet to be held at the harbour. An expanded menu of attractions joined the usual stalwarts of local stalls, music, a visit from Buckie RNLI lifeboat, Buckie Coastguards, a barbecue, kippers and home-bakes. Four skiffs - two from Cullen and one from Portsoy and Whitehills were on hand with the crews decking themselves out in pirate garb for the occasion. Portsoy won the golden bucket filled with chocolate. Cullen's Mhairi won the 300m race lifting the inaugural Paterson Trophy donated by Keith Paterson, electrical engineer. The crew were - Chris Winstone, Charlie Shand, Shona Smith and Kate Borland.

**Fochabers celebrates yet another successful music event:** Speyfest celebrated its 22nd year in spectacular style, and internationally renowned acts shared the stage with local talent. Top of the bill, and returning for the fifth time to the festival, were Scotland's own Red Hot Chilli Pipers who showed how the hugely popular stomp got its name. The group went on to say that it had been their best Speyfest to date. Young local talent also performed, including Calum Jones, Footerin' Aboot and the Fochabers Fiddlers.

**Portgordon Art Group put on a display:** Portgordon Art Group opened the doors on another triumph when their annual exhibition got under way at Spey Bay Hall running over Saturday and Sunday July 29<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup>. A wide range of media, subjects and styles were unveiled, with the usual high standard of work being reflected in a brisk early sale of work. It was the third year the group have held their exhibition in Spey Bay as opposed to their former base in Portgordon Community Centre. Group chairman Mike Collins told the Advertiser "I'm delighted once again with the standard of work in this year's exhibition. We're currently on the lookout for new members for the group, ideally about four or five people. All are welcome, we'll be delighted to see you."

Aug 15 Missing

Aug 22 **Icehouse plans approved:** Plans to transform the former ice house near Portgordon have been approved. An appeal hearing found in favour of

Brigid Aitken's proposal to build a coffee shop, well-being centre and manager's flat as part of the development of the 200 year old premises. The proposal, which was recommended for refusal by planning officers received 48 letters of support and seven objections.

**Exhibition marks 30 years of art:** There was 30 years of art and talent to be celebrated when Cullen Art Group unveiled their annual exhibition. The village's Memorial Hall was once again the venue for the event, which opened on the evening of Friday, August 11<sup>th</sup>, and ran over the following two days. More than 100 pieces of work produced by the group members over the course of the last 12 months graced the hall, with a packed opening night welcoming art enthusiasts of all ages. Cullen Art group currently boast around 20 members in their rank, meeting every Tuesday in the Cullen Community and Residential Centre from 9am till noon.

Aug 29 **Classic Car Show:** Owing to the usual venue the Linzee Gordon Park being out of commission following period of heavy rain and damage to the ground surface a new site had to be found. The event organisers were offered several alternative sites but decided to go to Cunningholes Industrial Estate. There were 349 vehicles on show with the organisers having to reluctantly turn others away. They hope to return to the usual venue next year.

The event was well attended with people arriving at 10am and still coming through the gates when cars were leaving at 4pm.

Although money was still being counted, a first donation of £1000 - £750 from the show and £250 from fuel distributor John A. Smith and Son, Peterhead was presented to CLAN cancer support. Charities and community projects in and around the Buckie area are to benefit from the money raised on the day.

**Deskford Flower Show:** The long established show once again proved to be very successful. A huge number of entries in the scholar section had the judges facing a difficult task of choosing the winners. Secretary Maime Mitchell, said: "There was a good turnout of spectators on the day and entry numbers were up across the board. It was surprising how many entries we had because of the inclement weather before the show. It was a bonny day on Saturday though which helped increase the number of those who came to see."

Most points overall(ladies) Gladys: (men) Graeme Clark. Juniors scholars: Sylvie Slater. Senior scholars Aleesha Duguid. Deskford school reunion shield: Natalie Kobedza. Jimmy and Jessie Boyd trophy: Jay Currie.

Special prizes- Pot Plants: Lynn Mitchell. Cut Flowers: Alan Morrison, Bill Copland. Honey: Bill Copland. Sweet Peas: Alan Morrison. Floral Arrangement: Silvana Stellini. Fruit: Graeme Clark. Dairy Produce: Gladys. Homebaking and cooking: Catherine Innes; Barbara Farquhar. Industrial: Muriel Farquharson; Caroline Fowler. Wines: Henry Milne

**Tales from the waves:** Providing hospital care to the poorest people of the world is the topic of a presentation being hosted by the Rotary Club of Buckie. The club sponsored nurse Sandra Campbell from Ellon, on her last voyage on the Mercy Ships and she is set to give a talk on her experience of

life on board. Mercy Ships are state-of-the-art hospital ships with five operating theatres and recuperating wards. It sails directly to some of the world's poorest people to deliver life-saving medical care and provide safe, modern facilities in which to treat them. Charles McKay, of the Rotary Club, said "Sandra has a great deal of experience on the Mercy Ships, having been on board more than seven years." The presentation takes place in Portessie Hall.

Sept 5 **Launch of war books is history in the making** (copied from front page the B.A.) The launch of a series of remembrance books and commemorative folders saw the completion of years of research by a Buckie historian. The War Memorials Project: Banffshire's fallen remembered, gives a wealth of information on those from the local areas who perished in World Wars I and II, all searched, collated and produced by David Fowler. Five books give a full history on the fallen who are named on the Buckie and District war memorial (three volumes), Portgordon war memorial and Findochty war memorial Those not named on the memorials but are known to have paid the supreme sacrifice are included in a separate volume. Mr Fowler said to the Advertiser: The remembrance books are rare. Only three copies of each exist; one is held at the National Library of Scotland, I have a set myself and there is another set which I want to give to the communities of Portgordon, Findochty and Buckie but they need a secure home. There is only one copy of each of the commemorative folders. The majority of the information came from the Banffshire Advertiser and from relative of the fallen who gave medals, photographs and official documents. The project would not have been possible without their help. My thanks also goes to Moray Desktop and project co-ordinator Peter Wills, who supported the project right from the beginning." Willie McDonald, a native of Buckie but now living in Edinburgh was one of the visitors to attend the launch. He helped Mr Fowler throughout the project by sourcing records at the National Library of Scotland.

**'Time had stood still'** Former pupils of Portessie Secondary School who are celebrating their 60th birthdays this year came together some for the first in more than 50 years. The group met at the Old Coach House Hotel (formerly the Commercial Hotel) for a meal, with people travelling from as far afield as America, the Shetland Isles, the Isle of Man and Swindon to be there. Organiser Rosemary Jones said "Most of us hadn't seen each other since leaving Portessie Secondary School in 1963 but it was like time had stood still." "We had one of our old school teachers, Mrs. Clark, formerly Miss Stewart, at the reunion. She tried very hard to teach us maths and it was lovely to see her,"

**Fundraiser is a knock out:** Teams competing in the annual Buckie 'It's a Knockout' raised over £10,000 for various charities. The competition now in its sixth year, was able to go ahead at its usual venue at Linzee Gordon Park with the weather staying dry and windy. Twelve teams took part in the junior games and eight adult teams were entered. Teams raised £10,002.79 which will be distributed to their own chosen charities. Organiser Denise Thomson said "A good crowd turned out to join in the fun and cheer on the teams."

**New members of staff at B.C.H.S.** The start of the new term saw six new teachers, (all female), joining the team at Buckie Community High School. All six have received a warm welcome from both teaching staff and pupils and look forward to working at the school. The newcomers are Jade Sutherland, Hannah Smith, Amy Millar, Robyn Lovelock, Hannah Cunningham and Katie Hill.

Sept 12 **Major upgrade:** It has taken two years with £4.6 million spent but by general agreement from teaching staff and pupils at Millbank Primary it was well worth it when the school was officially re-opened on Thursday. The honour of cutting the ribbon fell to the school's oldest pupil Kyle Dean and the youngest Jacob Foley.

**One out and one in:** The blooms will go on - that was the promise as one long serving Buckie florist headed for retirement while her former assistant opened up a shop next door. Last Tuesday saw Boda Flowers officially open on the town's West Cathcart Street, right next to what had been, for almost 30 years, Cottage Flowers. The changing of the guards saw Helen Wood welcome Katie Chalmers into the business in her own right. Ms Chalmers, who has been in the floristry trade since she left school, said: "I first started with Helen 22 years ago and was at Cottage Flowers for a couple of years before I moved on. I came back six years ago and I'm delighted to be able to open Boda Flowers. It was a great education working with Helen. It's a natural progression opening my own florists. I've gained a lot of experience over the years. I've never done anything else. I'm really chuffed at the good wishes I've had and I hope that Helen's customers will support me."

Sept 19 **End of an era:** Friday marked the end of an era as the Buckie-based Babs-dial a bus folded. For the last 17 years the charity has been a lifeline for many elderly and frail people across the area. Babs director and trustee Lyra Wilson said "There are a number of reasons as to why we have been forced reluctantly to close Babs-dial a bus down but it boils down to funding, the effect of other organisations operating in the area, and a shortage of volunteer drivers".

**Wind farm project clear major hurdle:** New jobs could be on their way to Buckie after a Moray Firth offshore wind farm project clinched a major contract.

Moray Offshore Windfarm East, a joint venture between energy firms EDPR and Energy, has been handed a 15-year Contract for Difference for the delivery of 950MW of wind generated electricity after success at the latest Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy CFD auction.

**Buckie area suffers from effects of heavy rain:** Roads turned into a watery nightmare for drivers on their way to work following a far greater than average downpour. Buckie and the surrounding area, along with the rest of the north, was hit by the tail end of storm Aileen which left chaos and flooding in its wake. Particular difficulties were encountered by motorists in the Fochabers, Spey Bay and Mill of Tynet areas last Wednesday morning and the back road from the Bellie road to Portgordon

was temporarily closed. Torrents of water were reported rushing through the main road through Findochty and down the A98 towards Cullen. Victoria Park was under water and the dressing rooms flooded resulting in a league game against Huntly to be postponed. A wall at Findochty Bowling Club was flattened by water and mud. Landslips occurred at several places in Portknockie, including a major one near the harbour.

**Cara becomes Moray Worldhost star pupil:** Buckie Community High School pupil Cara Coull has become the youngest person in Moray and possibly the whole of Scotland to complete Worldhost training. The 13-year-old recently successfully completed the Worldhost Principles of Customer Service Training course in Buckie. Cara, part of the family business that owns and runs the Little Kitchen Outside Catering based in Buckie and her father Mike join hundreds of people in being pleased to have the Worldhost qualification in Moray. Worldhost training is recognised across the world as a standard of high quality customer service and was received by all the volunteers at the 2012 Olympics in London.

Sept 26 **Posties in the money:** One of the luckiest Royal Mail delivery offices in the country delivered themselves another sack load of cash after hitting the jackpot again on the lottery. Both individually and as a syndicate, posties from the Buckie delivery office had already scooped almost £540,000 from the lottery over the last 20 years and last week added a cool £20,000 to the total. This time the 26-strong syndicate struck lucky on the Millionaire Raffle which, after a £20 top up from their existing winnings fund to round matter up, will mean a £770 windfall for each member.

**Ex Buckie pupil will be leading voice for teens:** A former Buckie Community High School student is set to play a key role in the Scottish Year of Young People in 2018.

Emmie Main (19) who is currently in her second year of a Community Education degree course at Edinburgh, has landed the role of participation leader with Communicat18. This diverse group of 35 young people aged eight to 24 is drawn from across Scotland. The aim is to represent the younger age group in making decisions regarding the Year of Young People.

**Almost like days long by;** Last week 30 fishing boats called into Buckie harbour to land their catches, which in total comprised 1469 boxes of fish, prawns and squid together with 62 bags of scallops, squid, being caught in near waters accounted for a considerable amount of the first.

**Portknockie will fly the flag for mariners:** Merchant mariners past and present from Portknockie, as well as their colleagues across the country, are set to be honoured at a ceremony in the village next month. Residents will gather on Tuesday October 3 at 2pm at the flagstaff to mark Merchant Navy Day 2017. At the end of the event the distinctive Red Ensign the Merchant Navy flag flown from its vessels will be raised by a former veteran seaman. Organising the commemoration is Portknockie Community Council. Their chairman Alan Beresford said: "We're delighted and honoured to be commemorating the contribution and sacrifices made by our Merchant Navy down the ages".

Oct 3

**Villagers pour on the pressure over floods:** Portknockie residents have vowed to band together to press the case for more flood defence measures. The recent heavy rains left a trail of flooding and landslips in their wake, with the road and some houses along Harbour Road and Patrol Road left particularly at risk. Village resident Bob Barsby, a former victim of flooding called a meeting in the McBoyle Hall, which was well attended, in an attempt to bring pressure to bear on Moray Council and Scottish Water to address a whole raft of measures.

**You daren't sell our stuff:** The news that Moray Council had proposed that some of the local authority's 50,000 artefacts could be auctioned off to provide funds for the Falconer Museum in Forres was not welcomed by some people in Buckie. A lot of stuff belonging to Buckie has been stored in Forres for some time, some since the closure of the museum in the library. Notable things include the Peter Anson paintings, a silver tray embossed with an outline of Cluny harbour, first given by the town council to Lady Gordon of Cluny and then returned as a gift to the town later and the former Buckpool harbour barometer.

**Skiff racers in Glasgow:** Cullen's skiff crew were joined by two crews from Portsoy, Soy Loon and Soy Quine, on the road to Glasgow to take part in Scotland's biggest open water race. A total of 75 crews gathered on September 23 to engage in the 13 miles of fierce competition better known as the Dumbarton to Finneston Crane race. Cullen's team on the Mairi were to come in a creditable 54th with a time of two hours 33 minutes, with Portsoy producing a storming performance to cross the line in ninth place, timing in at 2.05 The Cullen team trained for the long row every week for three months. Usual activity see them rowing for twenty minutes before stopping for a snack and drink. The Cullen rowers were - Linsey Horberry, Gillian Nicol, Ann Ashcroft, Chris Winstone.

Oct 10

**Banks a lot: closure of RBS branch a "huge step backwards for Buckie:** For years the Royal Bank of Scotland branch in Buckie has been a bedrock of the town's main street. Last week, however, the branch closed its doors for the very last time, joining a long list of firms which were once the beating heart of Buckie. The ATM at the bank will also be removed.

**Dog show fundraiser:** It can be a dog's life raising money for charity - in the nicest possible way. Buckpool woman Niamh Ballantine and her dad John Wilson are set to hold the fundraiser Buckie and District Companionship Dog Show this coming Saturday. Set to benefit from the event are Buckie Cricket Club - of which Mrs. Ballantyne's husband, Andy, is the outgoing captain - and Cullen Sea School, where the dad is one of the resident boat building experts .

**First open day flies by:** Wellbeing took centre stage recently when the Phoenix Centre held their first open day. The community facility held the event as their contribution to Suicide Prevention Day on Sunday September 12<sup>th</sup>.

Centre development officer Laurie Anne Davidson said: "There were 16 different agencies from across Moray represented in all with the focus being on mental and physical wellbeing. They included the likes of the Samaritans. We're all delighted with the response -we had 80 members of the public through the door. It's the first time we've done something like this since the Phoenix Centre was launched two years ago and our doors are open to all sorts of groups based in the local community."

**Oct. 17 Couple trading places for retirement after 24 years:** For nearly quarter of a century Bob and Frances Chandler have been the people to see if you needed something for the house or garden, From paint to key cutting, compost to electric heaters and teapots to lawn mowers the Trading Post on East Church Street (some oldies will remember it as "Grantie Browns") was the place to go for legions of loyal and satisfied customers. However, the couple have decided it is time to put their feet up for a well-earned rest as they head for retirement. A closing down sale gets under way this week which will feature massive discounts across the 40,000 or so items of stock the Chandlers have in store.

The Chandlers, who had previously been in the pub trade, owning the Crown Bar on Low Street from 1984 to 1993. They bought over Erskine Ironmongers when it went up for sale in 1993.

**Pooch power on display:** There were many happy "tails" to tell on Saturday when a charity dog show came to Deskford, The local hall played host to the Buckie and District Companion Dog Show, the brainchild of Buckpool woman Niamh Ballantyne and her dad John Wilson. Set to benefit to the tune of £230 each are Buckie Cricket Club and Cullen Sea School. There were a total of 211 entries from 64 dogs and we had good, positive feedback and everyone seemed to enjoy themselves.

**Cullen School head retires:** Primary head teacher Morya Hendry was bid an emotional farewell by staff and pupils as she retired from her post on the final day of term before the October or Tattie holidays. She was presented with a number of gifts from staff and pupils as a token of gratitude.

**Bob honoured for over 20 years of community work:** Portknockie Community Association said farewell to a long-serving stalwart at a special presentation ceremony in the village. Bob Croucher, the Association's secretary was accompanied by his wife Marj to the Victoria Hotel recently where he was handed a pair of engrave cut glass tumblers by PCA chairman John Goring to mark over 20 years of service. He told how prior to joining the Association in 2000 he was on the committee of the then Portknockie Amenities, having served Portknockie for 23 years.

**Oct 24 50th anniversary in Findochty:** A unique anniversary took centre stage in Findochty on Saturday for the local Salvation Army Corps. Majors Isobel and Bruce Smith, who lead the community church on Chapel Street were celebrating 50 years since Isobel's parents Jim and Margaret Stanger were appointed as officers in the village. An evening of festivities in the hall was

lined up for Saturday when corps members gathered to mark this very special occasion.

**New face at fireworks helm:** There will be a new face at the helm this year when Portgordon fireworks display lights up the skies above the village at the end of the month. Taking over the reins from chairman of over two decades Kenny Gunn is Michael Burnett, who has been involved with the group since its inception.

**Shelagh is a “wonderful” librarian** A former Buckie High School librarian has just missed out on a top accolade. The UK School Librarian of the year award is the School Librarian Association’s top honour that highlighted the best practice of those whose work is deemed outstanding. Shelagh Toonen, who is now school librarian at Elgin Academy, was one of only three finalists from across the country, and the only Scottish one. Although she missed out on the top prize, her work with students was singled out as exemplary by judges. David Barnett, Elgin Academy rector said: “Shelagh is a winner in every way. She is a wonderful librarian.”

**Jody has designs to help his mum’s tea party weekend:** Suzanne Clark who has raised more than £18,000 for Buckie High’s special education unit through her Mad Hatter tea parties has everything set for another this weekend. This time round, however visitors will be able to take away a permanent reminder thanks to her son Jody, a former special unit student who is now 18. She said to the Advertiser “We’re offering mugs and coasters or sale this year with a mad hatter design drawn by Jody.”

**V.C. fundraisers in triple boost for good causes:** A fund raising campaign to honour local heroes has seen good causes in Buckie handed a three figure boost to their coffers. July 29<sup>th</sup> saw the streets of Buckie filled with former Gordon Highlander soldiers as an event had been organised to commemorate not only their 19 Victoria Cross winners including Buckie’s own George McIntosh but also to serve as their last regiments gathering. To help fund the proceedings the Buckie Fundraisers, a sub group of the Gordon Highlanders V.C. Committee raised almost £13,000. With all expenses paid it was decided to give this to four worthy causes. Thanks to this Buckie Boys’ Brigade, Hanover House, Buckie and the Red Cross all received £700.

**Harbour challenge helps out charities.:** This year’s Buckie Rotary Six Harbour Walk and Cycle has provided another cash bonanza for good causes. A total of four charities received £2000 at a recent ceremony in the Mill of Tynet Hotel, near Buckie, from the proceeds of the April 30<sup>th</sup> event. Receiving their cheques were Barry Addison and Dennis Paterson from the Castle Hill project in Cullen, North East Sensory Services, Bruce Cruickshank, Charles McKay representing Mercy Ships and Nicole Henderson from Macmillan Cancer Support.

The walk this year raised around £11- £12,000. In addition to the £8000 disbursed to their four primary charities for this years’ walk, £2,500 was handed out for other good causes to the groups who took advantage of the 50-50 offer to split the proceeds of their sponsorship equally between

Rotary and their own charities. Rotary also intend to put a table and seats up at the Land Girl memorial near Clochan.

Oct 31 **Applications sought for £20k funding pot:** Next month will see groups in Buckie offered the chance to grab their share of a £20,000 funding pot. Buckie Area Forum's Regeneration Group's 'Bucks4Buckie' Real Money, Real People, Real Power scheme is aimed at groups of all types and sizes in the town, with applications opening at the beginning of November.

**SNP lauds stalwart Gordon:** A lifelong dedication to Scottish independence has seen a former Buckie councillor honoured by the SNP. The party's conference earlier this month was a memorable occasion indeed for Gordon McDonald when he was presented with a special gift to mark his achievements in public life, dedication to serving Scotland and furthering the cause of Scottish independence. He was presented with his award - an 18 carat gold pin in the shape of the SNP insignia by First Minister and party leader Nicola Sturgeon at a reception held to honour those like him who have made considerable contributions to the cause.

**Not paraffin lamps but fireworks light up the village night sky:** The magic that fireworks bring to many exploded into life above the skies of Portgordon on Friday evening as the annual display got underway. Crowds gathered at the harbour and other vantage points in the village to enjoy the half hour long spectacular, all put together by the volunteers of the Portgordon Fireworks Committee. A spokesman for the committee said "it had been a hugely successful evening all round. "It all went very well and we had a huge crowd"

**BBs ready for big day:** The finishing touches are being applied to an exhibition which will open a window on seven decades of the local Boys' Brigade. This Friday, Saturday and Sunday will see BBs past and present joined by members of the public heading to the South and West Church hall in Buckie for a wander down 1st Company's memory lane as they celebrate their 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Said 1st Company Captain Alan McIntosh: "There's been a lot of interest, especially from old boys. We've had a huge response to our appeal for memorabilia and the hall will be full for the weekend exhibition. People have been handing in all sorts of great stuff, including photographs, badges, as well as old publications such as drill books from the 1940s, and old Bible and enrolment cards dating from the 1940s."

Nov 7 **Company looks back on 70 years with pride:** When High School teachers Jocky Christie (to us in the 40s) and J.R. Duncan founded the Buckie Company of Boy's Brigade back in December 23<sup>rd</sup> 1947 it is unlikely that in their wildest dreams they thought it would become one of the biggest and most vibrant in the UK. However, 70 years on it is exactly that and crowds of people, including many former BBs made their way last weekend to the South and West Church hall to take a trip down memory lane at an exhibition to mark the milestone anniversary.

**Mad Hatters Tea Party went cash crazy:** The tea party held by Suzanne Clark and her family over the weekend of October 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> to raise cash for the High School's Special Education Unit, the fifth time they have done this, proved to be a stupendous success with £7,400 collected and more cash still rolling in. Mrs. Clark said we took in £4,400 over the course of the two days plus another £3,000 from the sale of bonus ball raffle ticket in the months leading up to the tea party. We also had a very successful raffle.

**Cash support for Buckie Community Theatre Group:** The group who have plans to refurbish their premises on Low Street/ Logies Lane received not one but two cash grants within the last few days. From the 'National Lottery Awards for All' scheme they received a grant of £6,070 following the sum of £3,000 from Buckie Common Good Fund. The cash is earmarked for phase 2 of the ongoing revamp project. The work focusses on the upstairs of the building which at the moment is damp with new windows required.

**New post service for the Sloch:** Portessie is once again to have its own postal office on a part-time basis, it has been announced. Since the outlet at the local store ceased last November following the resignation of the sub-postmaster, customers in the area have been redirected to either Buckie or Findochty. The new service will see an outlet open at the Portessie Public Hall one afternoon a week.

**Kinloss Military Wives Choir to sing in Buckie:** A Moray wives' group will be in Buckie this weekend to sing the praises of their new line of products - quite literally. The Kinloss Military Wives' Choir will be the guests of honour at M&Co's store on EastChurch Street this Saturday as part of an exclusive collaboration between the chain of stores and the national Military Wives Choirs charity. In what is the first ever retail partnership by the charity, M&Co will now be stocking an exclusive home and accessories, home fragrance and cushions along with cosy socks and scarves in a stylish purple and lilac colour palette.

**Vandals who wrecked the public toilets in Fochabers** have done so again. During the evening of October 25<sup>th</sup> the toilets on Ordiquish Road were targeted by thugs who left a trail of destruction. The incident has forced the closure of the facility yet again after a previous attack. The toilets were only re-opened on October 25<sup>th</sup> following an episode of vandalism the previous week. The facility will be closed to the general public until further notice,

Nov 14 **Buckie Remembers: We will remember them:** Buckie and neighboring communities stood in silent tribute on Sunday to remember those who have made the ultimate sacrifice in conflicts over the years. The annual remembrance went ahead despite a bitterly cold day. The salute was taken by John Crawford, former chairman of Buckie Royal British Legion. The bugler was Janet Winterbourne and the parade commander Peter McPhee.

The service at the memorial was conducted by Rev Canon Jeremy Paisey. A large choir led the singing of the hymn Abide with Me and the National Anthem.

Wreaths organised in order as usual by John and Pat Grant were laid by the various organisation present including an officer of the Royal Engineers, Kinloss and a RAF officer from Lossiemouth

**Castle 's garden cafe scoops tourist award:** A Fochabers cafe has come out tops at a prestigious tourism awards ceremony. On Friday, November 3<sup>rd</sup> the Gordon Castle walled garden scooped the Best Informal Eating Experience trophy at the Highlands and Islands Tourism Awards held at the Drumossie Hotel, Inverness where the keynote speaker was cabinet secretary for culture, tourism and external affairs Fiona Hislop.

**Hatter's the way to do it :** The generosity of a family of Buckie fundraisers and their supporters has left staff and students at Buckie High's special education department "totally overwhelmed". Last Monday Suzanne Clark, her husband Derek and son Jody, who is a former student of the department, come along to hand over a cheque for £7,435 to PT Sharon Aitken. The sum was raised through the recent Mad Hatter's Tea Party held at the Clark's family's Shearer Avenue Home in Buckie.

Mrs Aitken said "We are totally overwhelmed by the generosity of our local community and for the amount that has been raised by Suzanne and Derek for us through their Mad Hatter's Tea Party". She had words of praise for Jody for his artistry on the mugs and coasters, the sale of which was an added boost to the fundraising

Nov 21 **Kracker Action:** Festive spirit defied the worst of the weather as Buckie celebrated the official start of Christmas. The Buckie Christmas Kracker lit up the town on Saturday and despite a bitterly cold wind and heavy rain later in the day, more than 5000 townsfolk and visitors enjoyed a great day. The lights were switched on by TVs Coronation Street star Mikey North and the UK's pop tribute act Little Mix headlined the event and delighted fans young and old.

Nov 28 **Firefighters hand out festive bonus;** There was a bumper evening of handouts at Buckie fire station when the proceeds of the firefighters fundraising efforts were paid out. Receiving £4200 was the Firefighters' Charity (accepted by Dougie Annand) and £250 each to Portgordon PTA (Nicola Cowie), Findochty Christmas Lights (Rachel Watt), Buckie Pipe Band (Fred McGuire), North East Sensory (Allan Cowie), North East Heritage Trust (Ian Cowie), Sandpiper Trust (Mark Johnston), Millbank special needs unit (Fiona Peterkin) and Buckie Christmas Lights (Adam Murray).

**Cullen Skink International Championships** The title of the best Cullen skink in the world has been retained by a local hotel owner. Ian Watson, of the Cullen Bay Hotel, was voted the judges favourite for his creamy soup 35 recipe in the fifth Cullen Skink World Championships on Sunday. The competition made a return after being postponed in 2016. Mr Watson, who won the championships in the 2015 event came up against competitors from across the UK. One of the organisers, Simon Tucker, vice chairman of

the Cullen Voluntary Tourist Initiative, was delighted with the success of the competition. He said: "It was fantastic, there was a very high standard of entrants from all over the country with a good mix between local people and visitors."

**Buckie has largest BB Company:** A Moray town with a population of less than 9000 has the largest Boys Brigade Company in Scotland. The 1st Buckie group, which has approximately 220 officers, helpers and boys, will celebrate its 70th anniversary in December. The thriving company meets in the South and West Church of Scotland and the local high school. Captain Alan McIntosh said the Boys Brigade, one of the biggest Christian youth organisations in the UK and Ireland, still has a 'huge part to play' in society. "Buckie has been a very strong company for many years and prides itself on offering the boys a programme to suit their needs," added the retired secondary school deputy head teacher.

**Findochty becomes lit up:** Saturday saw Findochty Christmas lights celebrate its seventh year with the annual switch-on event. Findochty school choir opened the event with Christmas carols. A fun afternoon was had by everyone enjoying the stalls of all the local community groups. Special thanks to all the local business and residents that supported and donated to the event. The lights were switched on by Santas, Abbie Morrison, Harry O'Hanlon, Finlay Douglas and Luke Wilkinson.

**Trainees' achievements celebrated at ceremony:** Moray Reach Out, a charity that runs social enterprises that provide work and training opportunities to vulnerable adults across Moray held its awards ceremony on November 10<sup>th</sup>. Each trainee was given an award to recognise some of the amazing achievements they have made during their work at their social enterprises. Moray Reach Out is continually striving to create more opportunities to empower lives throughout Moray.

**Community join in to brighten up Cullen:** A Cullen community group has been digging deep to brighten up its town for the spring. The Cullen Past and Present Volunteer Group spent a recent Saturday morning planting crocus and daffodil bulbs in the area between the Bay View Hotel and Cullen Kitchens. Committee member Brit Souter was pleased with the turnout. She said "Everyone got involved in the Project and we had a big group together all helping out. The council had lifted the turf for us before we went to plant the bulbs. We asked the Brownies if they wanted to help so we had a few girls turn up with their parents. Two local ladies, Nancy Steele and Judith Whitelaw donated £100 to buy the daffodil bulbs with Buckie Rotary Club donating money for the crocus bulbs.

**Lucy inspires big night:** An inspirational young woman has helped raise £12,000 for research into Motor Neurone Disease. Among the long list of prizes on offer at a dinner for Lucy Linton, a former pupil of Milne's High School, was a rugby ball sent by Doddie Weir, the former Scottish international, who was diagnosed with MND earlier this year. The winning bid was £500 during the dinner dance at the Mansfield Hotel in Elgin. Marina McLennan who lives near Lucy in Garmouth and helped organise

the event said "People were literally coming up to you and handing you cash. I've honestly never seen anything like it in my life."

Lucy (23) held the dinner to raise cash as well as to mark the fourth anniversary of the date she was diagnosed with MND. Although the condition has left Lucy in a wheelchair and is robbing her of control of her body, she has raised £134,000 for charity and inspired others to fundraise. Lucy said: With MND the obvious changes are physical, but the hardest battle is mental. I can't even begin to describe what losing your independence does to you mentally.

Dec 5 **Lifesaver:** A barmaid who saved a customer's life by giving him CPR is spearheading campaign to have public access defibrillators available throughout Buckie. Lynda Murray, an assistant manager at the Pub in the Square on Buckie's Cluny Square face more than she could ever have bargained for when she clocked on for her evening shift on Saturday November 25<sup>th</sup> after a customer suddenly collapsed and stopped breathing. Without thinking Lynda used her first aid training, giving the man, who works on one of the guard boats for the offshore electricity cable being taken ashore near Portgordon, life-saving CPR until paramedics arrived.

**Citizen of the year:** Portknockie community stalwart John Bell got rather more than he expected when he turned up as usual to the switching on of the village's Christmas lights.

As a long-serving member of Portknockie Community Association that was more used to helping organise events for others to enjoy or capturing them for posterity on camera. However, it was time for him to enjoy the limelight for a change on Saturday evening when, at a social event in the Seafield Hall after the switch on ceremony was completed, he was unveiled as the latest winner of the John Addison Memorial Trophy for Portknockie Citizen of the Year. He was presented with the shield by Emma Addison and Portknockie Community Chairman Rob Barsby.

**Magnificent shoebox appeal:** The Christmas spirit made an early appearance in Buckie when the annual Blythswood Christmas shoebox appeal attracted a bumper response. A total of 1517 shoeboxes-bound for Romania and packed with a wide variety of practical gifts and goodies for all ages were loaded up from the appeal's Buckie collection and packing centre in the Baptist Church hall recently, up an incredible 250 on last year. Two school - Cullen and Cluny Primaries pitched in with their own contributions this year.

Dec 12 **Cash boost sees church lit up:** An iconic church building in Findochty is now fully in the limelight thanks to four figure donation. The spectacular Church of Scotland kirk has been a landmark for the village from both sea and land due to its hilltop perch in the village. Now, thanks to a donation of almost £4000 from Buckie Area Forum's Regeneration Group, the church is bathed in a number of different hues of light from LED lamps cited at strategic points in the grounds of the building. The Forum's chairman Gordon McDonald handed over a cheque for close on £4000 to restoration committee member Jimmy Bremner, Findochty Community Council, chairwoman Gayle Calder and former community council member and

project supporter Rachel Watt. Joining them was Mr. Bremner's grandson Mason Bremner, 4.

**BBS Songs of Praise:** Sunday will see a packed South and West Church in Buckie play host to a double celebration. The evening will mark the Buckie Boys Brigade Christmas songs of praise, an event eagerly awaited on the town's festive calendar, the songs of praise this year will be somewhat different, explained Captain Alan McIntosh, having special significance since it will form part of the company's 70th anniversary celebrations and there is an open invitation to all to come along and enjoy the evening, "Boys from the Anchor Boys, Junior and Company Sections will all be performing a total of eight festive songs and carols with music led by Peter McKay," he said.

**Portgordon Post receive a grant :** The monthly Portgordon Post team and their supporter across other groups in the village are hailing the 'Money for Moray' scheme after it handed them a donation of £2600 to buy a new printer. The paper's interim editor Colin Harrower, who also chairs the Portgordon Community Harbour Group Ltd, said that the cash was earmarked for a new, professional style printer. He continued, "having this printer will open up a number of different avenues for us. First of all, it'll allow us to print the Portgordon Post here instead of having to get an outside firm to do it for us. This is, of course, going to be a major cost saving over the long term and is also more convenient for us as well to be able to do it in house."

Dec 19 **Shock death of youth football stalwart:** "A huge force for good" was just better known in the community, one of the tributes pouring in yesterday (Monday) after the shock sudden death of local football coach Dave Findlay. Better known in the community simply as Parro, Mr Findlay passed away on Sunday. He was 53. An electrician for Moray Council by day it was his passion and dedication both for football and helping youngsters develop their talents in the game that gained him deep respect.

**Bumper day on cards:** A warm Christmas welcome is being prepared at a Buckie church for those who would otherwise find themselves alone on December 25<sup>th</sup>. For the sixth year running, Buckie Riverside Christian Church will be laying on a meal, entertainment and fellowship for both individuals and couples alike for whom Christmas Day could otherwise be a solitary experience. It looks set to be a bumper turnout this year, Riverside pastor John Coppard explained. "We've already got 80 people signed up so far which is a record for us," he said.

Dec 26 **Little stars' festive food bank donation:** Kind hearted pupils at Cluny Primary worked hard to ensure that needy families didn't go hungry this Christmas. Weeks of effort culminated in a large selection of tinned food being handed over to Salvation Army Majors Bruce and Isobel Smith who run Buckie food bank. Cluny head teacher Claire Wood described how the pupils had undertaken their own slant on a popular Christmas feature in order to help some of the most vulnerable people in society over the festive season. "In the run up to Christmas the whole school ran a reverse Advent

calendar,"she told the Advertiser. "Instead of taking something out each day of Advent, as is normally the case, each pupil was asked to bring in a tin of food for the appeal. Each class piled their cans in a Christmas tree shape before making one large Christmas tree from all the cans prior to presenting them to Bruce and Isobel. The spirit of Christmas was definitely an inspiration for the school" said Ms Wood.

**Sea school catches a genuine life-saver:** Christmas came early for Cullen Sea School last week when it netted funding for a life-saving defibrillator. Playing Santa Claus was Scottish and Southern Electricity Networks resilient communities fund which aims to help protect the welfare of those most vulnerable and enhance communities facilities and communication during severe weather events. The Port Long Road-based school, which is run by the Three Harbours Association has been awarded £1003 which will go towards the purchase and installation of a defibrillator unit.. Welcoming the award, chairman Prof Ashley Mowat, said: "We are very grateful to have received a grant from SSEN resilient communities fund to facilitate the installation of defibrillator equipment at CSS.

**Heartening support for refugees:** The Christmas message of goodwill to all people is alive and well thanks to three students and a teacher at Milne's aaHigh School. S4 girls Maisie MWilliam, Aisla Young and Katie -Jayne Ward, along with teacher Henry Archibald have been collecting clothes and items for refugees, often fleeing unimaginable violence and hardship. Clean, used clothing, jackets, hats, scarves and footwear are all being greatly received by the quartet before they are passed on to Elgin-based charity Moray Supports Refugees for sorting and onward distribution to those who have nothing to their name but the clothes they stand up in.

**Christmas spirit well alive at Portgordon:** There was plenty of festive cheer to be had at Portgordon when the village came together to enjoy the Christmas fair. Both the square and the village hall were packed with stalls and entertainment last Saturday, with the coming to a climax with the switching on of the Christmas lights by Portgordon Primary School brothers Calum and Aiden Runcie. Music during the day was provided by 'Just the Two of Us'. A spokeswoman for the Portgordon Community Alliance, the umbrella group behind the fair, hailed the event as being a great success. "This was the second Christmas fair we've held and we're delighted with the way it turned out".