

# THE WEE BLETHER



Re Match

Nairn & the Rest of the World V Inverness



**Volunteers & Friends  
are invited to join  
Befrienders Staff at Rollerbow!**

On Wednesday 27th October 2010

For

A Basket Supper and 2 Games of Bowling

Supper will be served at 6.00pm

Cost per person £10.00

This cost had been subsidized @£5.00 per person by Befrienders Highland

Book your place NOW for an evening of Fun and PRIZES !!

Please return the tear off slip by email, post or call the number below

By the 18th October 2010

.....  
Name.....will be attending the Ten Pin  
Bowling event on the 27th October 2010.

The Staff are looking forward to the Ten Pin Bowling rematch and hope you can all come. Now read on and see what has been happening in Befrienders Highland since the last edition of the Wee Blether.



Befrienders Highland, 19 Church Street Inverness IV1 IDY 01463 712791

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

## From the Management Committee



It's been a busy time since the last time I wrote something for this newsletter.

We have received some more money from the Big Lottery Fund to help us deal with the effects of the economic recession; less income and more demand. We are very grateful to the Big Lottery Fund once again. This money has enabled us to employ an extra part-time, Co-ordinator in Inverness – Debbie Ruppenthal. Debbie started work last month and brings great experience as a BHL Volunteer herself and is already showing what an asset she will be.

We have also moved into a lovely new office in Nairn. We've gone through a few offices in Nairn, I know, but this one looks as though it can be a long-term home, which is wonderful. Well done, Heather. The number of friendships we have in place across the whole of BHL is at an all-time high. In the last few months we have also seen more friendships pass the 10-year mark which is a real pleasure to see and shows how successful our friendships are.

This success is due to the efforts of you all; friends, volunteers, staff, committee members and, of course, our funders. Thank you all so much for the efforts you make and the talents you bring. David Stallard



### Inverness

Friends and Volunteers generally look forward to the coming of summer, since the longer, lighter nights and dry sunny days mean that there are more opportunities for adventures that the winter does not allow. It was a poor summer unfortunately, so fewer friendships were able to enjoy such summer frolics this year and huddling round a warm cup of coffee or hot chocolate seems to have been a preferred activity.

Summer saw two friendships moving towards an ending since one friend and one volunteer moved away from the area. Strangely, both people have moved away to pursue interests at university and we wish them both well.

Our big excitement was having Debbie join us in August to be a part time co-ordinator, principally focusing on friendships in Inverness. Debbie is in the process of getting to know Volunteers and Friends who are waiting to be matched and will be initiating several matches over the next few months. Having an extra pair of hands will make a big difference to the Inverness service and will allow us to support more friendships. To do this we will need new Befrienders, so if you know anyone who you think would enjoy befriending, tell them about us and we will be delighted to meet them.

### Graeme



### Nairn

Nairn office as has moved AGAIN!!!, for the last time on Tuesday the 31<sup>st</sup> of August to our new wonderful office in Nairn Community Centre. Although we are sharing the office with Volunteering Highland, Befrienders will have sole use of the office on a Tuesday and Thursday. There is a fantastic view over the Moray Firth and even a balcony to sit out on when the sun shines, as it often does in Nairn. If you have not already been for a visit please come along for a coffee.

Nairn has been quite busy with 3 volunteers trained and ready to be matched after my holidays and two more volunteers in training; and one of them is a man, which is brilliant.

Everyone is settling down for the winter and looking for ideas of things to do on the dark evenings so if you have any ideas please let me know.

New address: Office 1, Nairn Community Centre, King Street, Nairn IV12 4BQ

### Heather

## Distance

The season may be changing but the pace of life at Distance Befriending keeps consistent and busy. The summer months have seen a steady stream of referrals and new volunteers and that has kept us on our toes! At present we have 44 befriending matches with a few more pending even as I write.

Starting new friendships is always exciting and a bit nerve wracking. It never ceases to amaze me just how often people 'hit it off' immediately - even people who have been very nervous about the first contact. One friend recently said she had amazed herself by being able to chat quite freely to someone she had never met – that it was easier than she expected!



In May we hosted 2 peer support conference calls for volunteers. There were 6 volunteers on each call and they all said they enjoyed the chat! We had Befrienders Highland AGM in June, and also in June we submitted our end of year report to the Big Lottery. That report lets the Big Lottery see that we are doing what we said we would do! So is very important! We were pleased that they were happy with all the details we sent. In July the WISH (We're In Stitches Highland) group had its' first ever get-together at the office here in Inverness. A total of 5 group members (friends and volunteers) had a good time planning, eating, learning and (would you believe) more chat! We had fun!!

Now, we are always on the lookout for new volunteers and at the moment middle aged men and women are particularly welcome! Do feel free to pass our phone number on to anyone you know who may be interested and either Sally or I will be happy to give them all the details.

**Yvonne and Sally - phone 01463 235675**



## A Welcome to Debbie



I have been coming to Scotland for over 25 years, and in 2008 decided that it was time to move here more permanently! As a crafter and photographer the Highlands is a great place to live and I've been taking advantage of the scenery and inspiration since I've moved here.

My professional life has been spent organising systems and people in an administrative and managerial capacity, and I am already putting that experience to good use in the BHL office.

I have spent the last 6 years working as an advocate with young people and young adults with a variety of special needs, and have seen first-hand how isolation and exclusion impacts peoples' lives. Encouraging people to speak up for themselves has been a very rewarding experience.

I'm delighted to be working for an organisation in BHL, where people are making a difference. It's great to see the befriending experience first-hand and know that both friends and volunteers are benefitting from that relationship. I look forward to meeting you, the friends and volunteers who make BHL such a positive place to be

**Debbie Ruppenthal**





### Distance Befriending Stitching Group



'We're in Stitches –Highland' (WISH) is the stitching group of Distance Befriending—group befriending at a distance. It focuses on stitching of all types – knitting, crochet, hand embroidery, cross stitch, tapestry and quilting, and all friends and volunteers are welcome to join. Members are encouraged to stitch on projects at home, and support each other, display their stitching, share tips, find answers to queries etc via a quarterly Newsletter.

There is growing evidence that shows that stitching has the following beneficial effects: Relaxation, Improved self esteem, Optimistic behaviour, Improvement of Mood, Meditation, Sensory input, Distraction from pain, Relief from depression, Sense of belonging, Creativity and Potential for helping others.



New members receive a free 'Welcome' stitching project to get started and are encouraged to share news of their progress. Even a row of stitches is something worth celebrating for a newcomer to knitting to achieve and even the most competent stitcher was a beginner once remember!

WISH had its first Get Together Day at the offices in Inverness recently. Two spinners from Nairn came to share their skills. It was a great success and great fun was had by members who attended. More Get –togethers are being planned, and we hope that the Group will go from strength to strength.



Katherine—WISH Newsletter Editor

### SEAGULL CRUISE



On a warm sunny afternoon in July five volunteers and friends sailed along the Caledonian Canal for a 2 hour cruise with the Seagull Trust— for free! This is the first time that we have organised a cruise like this and reports are that it was a very enjoyable afternoon.

Some people enjoyed it so much that they have volunteered to become crew on the boat!!! Next year the Trust hopes to have a new boat capable of taking more people and with a deck for people to go outside and enjoy the fresh air. Next years cruise should be even more fun, especially if we get sunny weather like we had this year.