



"I started Primary 1 at Kenmore in 1971. I remember Mrs Bain vividly. Luckily we then were fortunate in our next headteacher, Mr McLeod, who, like Mr McVicar, was a unique, hugely influential and kind person. I remember Mr McLeod telling us that the school building came in below budget and it was decided to spend the underspend on the Capercaillie sculpture that still sits on the roof." A former pupils memory



Old School Desks

Kenmore School History

Did you know that the school was not always where it is now?



The school moved in 1802 to the building by Kenmore Bridge - which later became an orphanage. Mr Armstrong, the school master lived there too. The first ever Gaelic Dictionary was written by Mr Armstrong's son, Robert.

The first school in Kenmore was opened in 1651. It was in a building next to the Estate Office now part of Kenmore Hotel. The school master was Mr Hepburne. The old school beside the bridge became an orphanage in around 1883 - opened by Lady Alma Breadalbane. Two of the boys in the orphanage were there because their Mother was a Matron on the TITANIC.



The Armstrong's taught in Kenmore for 85 years until 1873. The school at Acharn became the big one, and Kenmore had a small infant school from 1906 with 20 children. Mrs McLaren was the first teacher with Miss Jane McDonald pictured here on her first day in 1912.

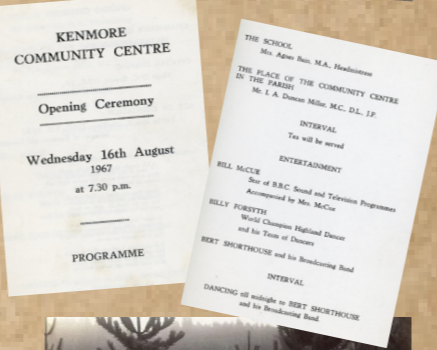


Orphans trained as apprentice gardeners, Breadalbane Estate



There is a Capercaillie on the roof it is made from a metal called Bronze. It was made by a famous Scottish sculptor Scott Sutherland, who also made the Commando memorial in Spean Bridge.

The current school opened in the late 1950's because lots of little schools closed nearby. A community hall was added to the school in 1967, when the old Holder Hall (which was where the little ghillie boat is) was closed.

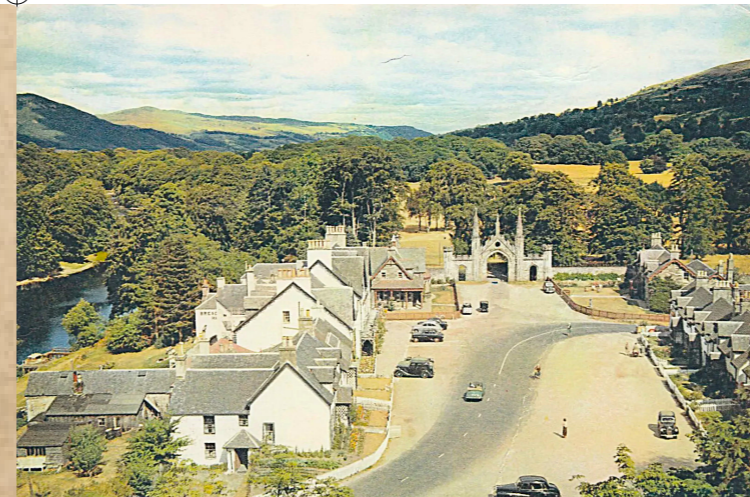


Why a Capercaillie?
Capercaillies had become extinct in Scotland due to hunting and habitat loss, Lord Breadalbane reintroduced them to the area in 1837. There was some money left over after building the school, so it was used to buy the Capercaillie.

Look out for this mutant bird!
This April Fools' hoax went viral in 2022! This monster was said to have been shot around 1890, by Lord Breadalbane, leaving a legacy that would captivate the imagination of many. Rumoured to be one of the heaviest avians that ever existed, this colossal bird became a symbol of both awe and sustenance for a local school, as it provided nourishment for an entire week!



see <https://ecency.com/hive-161155/@imov/the-monster-capercaillie>



Kenmore 1950's



Sketch, 'The Institution' c.1920's



History of Kenmore Shop and Post Office © Mark Bridgeman

History of Reading Rooms © Breadalbane Reading Rooms 2024

Produced with thanks to Mark Bridgeman, local author & historian and Kenmore Primary School P4-7 pupils.

KENMORE'S PAST & PRESENT:

Reading Room, Primary School & Village Shop.



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HISTORY OF THE READING ROOMS

In 1882, the 1st Marquess of Breadalbane, had originally intended to build a small hall in which to hold meetings of the Masonic Lodge of Tay and Lyon. The original Lodge meeting room in Kenmore had since been subsumed into the Kenmore Hotel. It soon became apparent that a more practical space would be needed in Kenmore, not only for Lodge meetings, but to 'establish an institution with the laudable purpose of providing reading and entertainment for all the physical, mental, or moral improvement of the people of the district.' On a site, adjacent to the West Gate at Taymouth Castle, a unique building was constructed, which incorporated timbers from the estate, and a magnificent baronial-style fireplace. Lady Alma Campbell opened the Reading Rooms in a formal ceremony on 30th March 1885 and donated an antique table with an interesting past. Find out more about the table, and details of its remarkable history, inside the Reading Rooms. By the mid-1890s, visitors were able to enjoy more than 1400 volumes, daily newspapers and illustrated weeklies, as well as refreshments, a billiard table and sales of local produce. The Rooms became a popular community asset. However, with the arrival of the Great War, its role changed dramatically as many young men from Lochtayside volunteered to serve in the trenches. Following the armistice, the fortunes of the Rooms changed significantly. The ageing committee, a lack of funding, and the break-up of the Taymouth Castle Estate meant the Rooms ceased as a lending library until the complex terms of its original charter were finally untangled when the Perthshire County Library Service took over the management of the building in 1938. The Second World War once again brought disruption to everyday life in Highland Perthshire but, once more, the Reading Rooms became a vital part of the community's war effort as a hub for the distribution of ration books. Despite the war ending in 1945, shortages and lack of funding continued for many years afterwards. By the 1960s some much needed improvements were required (despite the Rooms

featuring in a 1966 British comedy film). With Listed Buildings status being awarded in 1971, and some much-needed modernisation in 2012, the Rooms are once again undergoing a rejuvenation to become a vital community asset fit for the 21st century. Why not visit the Reading Rooms and learn more about its unique history.



Kenmore Reading Rooms c. 1890

READING ROOM TODAY

A new management committee was formed in 2023, tasked with developing the Reading Rooms as a warm, safe, eco friendly hub at the heart of the community.

The space is once again thriving with activities and events, being a hub for meetings, craft, workshops and coffee mornings – with a regular warm spaces provision where members of the community can enjoy a bowl of soup and a bread roll, hot drinks and a blether in front of the fire.

In 2024, the Reading Rooms underwent major refurbishments, with the laying of a new floor and the replacement of several wood panels. In 2025 it will celebrate 140 years as being an important space at the centre of our local community.

HISTORY OF THE KENMORE SHOP & POST OFFICE

The 'Post Road' (or post route) between Aberfeldy and Kenmore was first established around 1801, partly because John Campbell, the Marquess of Breadalbane, helped to finance an improvement to the road network. From about 1810 onwards, early Post Office Directories list Kenmore as a 'Post Town'. This road was a turnpike route offering 'carriages

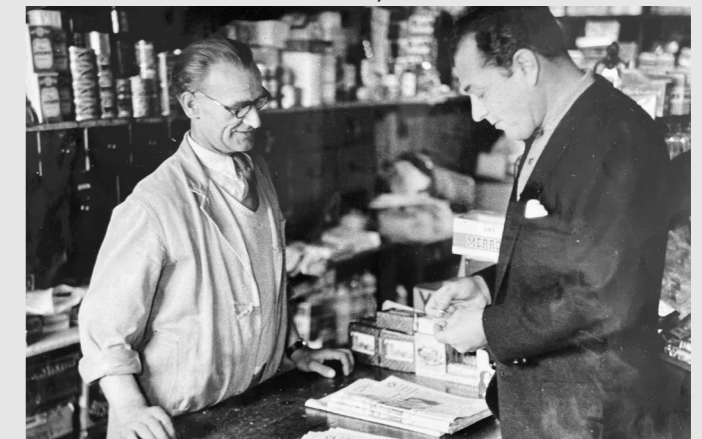
and a light post coach'. From about 1820 onwards, mail was initially carried three-times weekly, on Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Saturdays, leaving Perth at 9am. This became a daily service by the late 1830s. Kenmore, as a Sub Post Office, became one of the regular stops on the route. William Armstrong, son of Robert Armstrong the local schoolmaster, served as the first postmaster operating from the family home (the old Kenmore Schoolhouse, which later became known as The Orphanage), although there was no recognisable counter as we might expect in a post office today. As communications improved, and the Breadalbane Estate flourished, demand for postal services expanded. The 'Penny Black' stamp was introduced in 1840 and a new faster mail coach in 1846. By the 1860s, the post office offered its own savings bank facility and by the 1880s even advertised the amount of money it held on deposit – '1886, there are 37 savings accounts held at Kenmore totalling £365 19 shillings and twopence' (approximately £60,000 today)! When William Armstrong passed away in 1879 the post office



8th Highland Cyclists Battalion c. 1908

moved to its familiar location in The Square, and John Menzies became Postmaster. At this time, it also became a village shop. The late Victorian era brought huge technological advances to rural Perthshire. The first telegraph poles were erected locally in the 1880s and telegram services were gradually rolled out to rural post offices. By 1910 a public petition was presented, requesting a public telephone in Kenmore. Although this was agreed to, the installation of the service was delayed until after the Great War, when a new public telephone was installed inside the post office. However, the first public phone box was not erected in

Kenmore until the laying of underground cables could be completed in 1927. The phone box even made a brief appearance, as did the post office, in the 1966 British comedy film, Mrs MacTaggart Won't Lie Down. Jack Moir, the Postmaster, was unexpectedly photographed serving American entertainer, actor and singer Tony Martin in 1957. The Hollywood star had called into the post office during the filming of the British musical Let's Be Happy. Several scenes from the movie were filmed locally, as were some scenes from the 1957 version of The 39 Steps, starring Kenneth More. In 1979 the Kenmore Post Office was expanded into the cottage next door, to create an open plan and larger shop. This proved a great asset to locals and helped offset the problems faced by the small post office network around Scotland. By 1988 this concern had only increased with many rural post offices losing as much as £2,000 a year. As the 1990s arrived, the threat to the rural post office network seemed to widen with each passing day. Despite the closure of many village post offices in Scotland, and an aborted attempt to transform the Kenmore Post Office into a bakery in 1995, it continued to operate as a post office and valuable local shop until 2022, when it finally closed. The new owners of the property, Taymouth Castle, undertook a painstaking renovation of the building, allowing its new tenants Ballintaggart to reopen as a village shop in 2024, once again providing a valuable resource for the community and visitors alike.



Jack Moir and Tony Martin, Kenmore PO 1957