

## Sweden flights ready for take-off

A TWICE-weekly service between Inverness and Stockholm is set to take off next week.

Snowflake, Scandinavian Airlines' low-price carrier, will be operating the service from Monday. (29) The airline will run return flights on Mondays and Fridays, with one-way fares starting at £46 including taxes and fees.

Flights will be operated with Boeing 737-800 and MD-80 aircrafts.

Ludmilla Lindercrantz, Head of Snowflake, said: "We are delighted to be starting this new service, which will provide an essential link between these two beautiful cities."

## Religion in world affairs

THE role played by religion in world affairs will be examined at an open meeting next week.

Organised by the Baha'i community of Inverness, the speaker will be Barnabas Leith, secretary of the National Assembly of the Baha'is of the UK.

His talk will be entitled, "Help or Hindrance? Religion in World Affairs."

The meeting will be held in the Beaufort Hotel on Wednesday, March 31, starting at 8pm.

## Balloch WRI

AT the March meeting a very informative talk and demonstration was given by three ladies from Airire Complementary Medicines, Julie Palt, Joanna Legard and Fiona McLaren.

Competitions: Pretty Candle - 1 Jean Kennedy, 2 Gail Taylor, 3 Marion Snape. Herb Sachet - 1 Marion Snape, 2 Hilda Nicholl, 3 Sheena Cullen.

# One more for the ... tray collection

By Helen Bushnell

A WELL-known Inverness character has shown Highland hospitality is still alive and well - by helping a collector who is looking for rare beer trays.

Local historian, artist and former councillor Hector MacDonald, fears the UK's largest collector of beer trays will be unable to find any made in our former breweries when he travels north this weekend.

So in a bid to ensure Lancashire man Richard Percival doesn't go away empty-handed, kind-hearted Hector has taken it upon himself to produce one of his own!

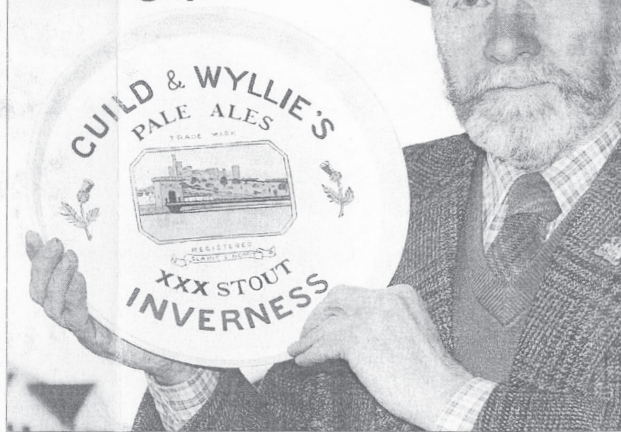
Richard (41) of Clitheroe, was looking for a tray from the now defunct Guild & Wyllie Thornbush Brewery in Inverness which closed in 1913 or the former Highland Brewery Co, which closed in the late 1920s.

But Hector read our story and thinks it will be almost impossible for Richard to find what he's looking for so he came up with a contingency plan.

Hector explained: "I was flicking through an old antiques book, which shows various nic-nacs and how much they're worth when I saw an old coaster from the Guild & Wyllie Brewery.

"I very much doubt this collector will be able to find a tray as all the breweries in Inverness closed down at the start of the first world war in 1913, so what I have done is reproduce a tray with the picture on this coaster. If the brewery had indeed made trays, I'm sure this is what they would have been like."

## Inverness man Hector makes his own brewery replica to fill gap



My round - Hector, above, shows off the replica tray he has made for collector Richard, right.

The coaster has a picture of the old suspension bridge that spanned the River Ness, the castle in the background, with a thistle either side. It also has the words: "Guild & Wyllie Thornbush Brewery, Pale Ales, Inverness XXX Stout, as well as a Gaelic slogan: "Slainte 's Neart", meaning health and strength.

Hector, a former town councillor, went on: "I got a McEwan's Lager tray and I spray-painted it cream and the wording.

"I decided to do it because I didn't want the guy coming all the way up here and going away empty-handed.

"I hope he does manage to find a tray, but if not, then at least he can go home with a replica."

On hearing of Hector's kind-hearted gesture, Richard told the *Highland News*: "That's amazing, I'm really touched. I am going to arrange to meet up with him and I can't wait to see it!"

He has 1000 trays from every UK region, except the Highlands.

His collection has featured on TV, most recently on Channel 4's *Collectors Lot*.



# Rare trays trail leads to Inverness

## Richard flies in on pub crawl with a difference

A MAN with a mission will arrive in Inverness this month - in search of two rare trays.

Richard Percival has built up the largest collection of brewery trays in the United Kingdom and has twice appeared on television.

Now he is trying to track down another two produced by Inverness

By Donald Fraser

breweries which have been closed for almost 100 years.

Richard (41), of Clitheroe, Lancashire, has trays from every region in the country, except the Highlands.

He has been reading about two now-defunct breweries in the area and is hoping that someone, somewhere, might have a tray from either one gathering dust in an attic.

He has booked a flight to Inverness in March to investigate the breweries and has asked the *Highland News* for help.

Richard said: "I am a collector of British brewery memorabilia but in particular I am an avid collector of brewery trays.

"In fact I believe I have Britain's biggest collection of trays with well over 1000, some of which pre-date the 1890s.

"My collection has appeared twice on TV with the most recent being on Channel 4's *Collectors Lot*.

"I have to say that my favourite trays in my collection are from Scottish breweries but I am yet to find if trays ever existed from either of the two ex-Inverness breweries.

"Could any reader help me find a tray from Guild & Wyllie Thornbush Brewery which closed in 1913 or from The Highland Brewery Co Ltd which closed in the late 1920s?

"Failing that I am on the lookout for old Scottish breweries which once supplied the area, in particular any tray which when you turn it over has a dark black colour."

Richard's obsession with trays began while on his journeys as a travelling football fan.

He said: "We were in a bar and one of my mates asked for a beer mat because he collected them.

"The barman didn't have one but offered him a tray which he declined so I took it and that was the start of it all.

"It just snowballed from there really and I'm now really proud of my collection."

Richard found out about the now closed breweries through a book entitled *Where Have All Our Breweries Gone?*

Advertising Antiques

