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let us know via our suggestion boxes
what should KCC's priorities be?

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Jan, KCC's treasurer, presents the cheque to the school's Eco Committee

KCC support Banavie Primary's Seed to Supper project

Jan and Mandy were delighted to present Banavie School with a cheque for £100 from Kilmallie Community Council at the beginning of March. This donation will go towards the school's Seeds to Supper project, where the pupils get hands-on experience of self-sufficiency, growing fruit and vegetables and learning how to eat well. The pupils will tell us all about it in a future newsletter.

The older pupils have already been working on the Seeds to Supper project up at the Rural Complex. They told us how they've sown and grown and harvested and eaten lots of their own produce. They've even made pizza with toppings made from their own home grown vegetables.

Before the presentation, the head teacher Mrs Dunham gave an inspiring speech to the assembled pupils about the role of government, the importance of expressing "Your Voice" in a

democracy, and how the Scottish Government encourage communities to make their voices heard through Community Councils.

Within the school, the pupils are used to expressing their voices through the Pupil Council, where they can discuss, debate and make decisions on the things they want to happen in the school. Mrs Dunham explained that the role of a Community Council was to do the same for the whole local community.

Everyone agreed it would be a really good idea to hold a Junior Kilmallie Community Council meeting at the school, so that all the children get a chance to express their views about what they'd like to see happen in our community. Watch this space...

FOCAL announces canine prizewinner! page 25



kilmallie community council

Food for thought?

Food poverty is deeply distressing. The direct experience of it is obviously deeply distressing for the people affected, and its very existence in 21st C Scotland is distressing. The phrase itself also distresses me. Food poverty isn't any special kind of poverty: it is poverty pure and simple, writ large, and extreme.

It's shocking that extreme poverty is no longer just affecting people out of work, or people who have hit very hard times. It can affect families where mums and dads are in work. But their wages are so low that they can't afford to eat all week. Hence the food banks that have sprung up in the last few years. Every time I hear the phrase 'food bank' I flinch with shame. So severe is the increase in poverty** that food banks have become a normal feature in our social landscape within just a few years***. The efforts of food bank organisers, volunteers and donors themselves are utterly admirable, and food banks are undoubtedly lifesavers for many people who have to resort to them, but we needn't accept that they have any permanent role to play in our social landscape.

So is food too expensive? No! If anything it is too cheap. The drive for cheaper food also drives to grossly inhumane animal welfare, to practices that degrade our soils, to exploitation of food producers (often themselves in abject poverty in other countries) and to unacceptably low wages for supermarket employees. It is a shameful irony when a Scottish supermarket worker has such a low income that they too have to rely on food banks. Thus it is a cruel irony that food banks indirectly unwittingly subsidise the profits of the largest supermarkets. The problem is that low wages are way too low. Not that food is too expensive.

So should we be calling for lower food prices in Lochaber? Well yes and no. Yes we should be demanding food that is affordable for everyone, but much better to raise low wages than lower food prices which would only drive low wages down even lower for people throughout the food industry.

Is the arrival of more supermarkets locally going to give us more affordable food? I'm not convinced it will. We already have a Morrisons, a Lidl and a Tesco in the town, as well as the more outlying Spars, Londises and Co-ops, so there is competition already. One new large out-of-town-centre supermarket (on the North Road or the Blar) is likely to push one or more of the others out of business, since the overall quantity of food consumed (in both senses of the word) in Lochaber is going to stay exactly the same. So after a brief flurry of supermarket warfare, any benefit to consumers from increased competition will quickly be lost. If Morrisons or Tesco are pushed out of central Fort William, the town centre will suffer as fewer shoppers than ever will make it to the High Street. If any of the smaller supermarkets in the outlying areas are pushed to the wall, the local communities will suffer, especially the elderly, disabled, car-less and others who can't easily travel far to shop. Even if they survive, the local shops will lose custom to the competition and be forced to raise prices, not lower them, further penalising local people on low incomes. Either way, a new large supermarket will primarily benefit the winner of the supermarket war (whether that be Asda, Aldi, Tesco, or whoever) plus the developer plus those who profit from the sale of land.

New supermarkets ride into town to make profit, not to serve the needs of the community, though their homespun farmfresh

everyday-value marketing might have you believe otherwise. New supermarkets certainly don't spring up to serve the interests of families on low income. Tesco has admitted binning 28,500 tonnes of food in just 6 months of last year. By my reckoning that equates to about a billion pounds worth of food in a year, thrown away by just one supermarket. If they really cared about households on low income they'd offer it all at heavily discounted prices or even for free to their low-income customers and those who rely on food banks.

What should our community wish for in terms of food shops? Should the provision of food shops be determined by the interests of local communities or by the interests of big business? Should food shops be owned and managed by big businesses, small businesses, co-operatives or communities? Should they serve a large area and be dependent on car use, or local and accessible to all? Should they be in the centres of settlements, on the edge, or outside settlements? How would Kilmallie be affected if our Co-op were forced to close? Decent food needs to be affordable for all, but who benefits in the long run in the race to sell cheaper junkier food?

Community thoughts on such questions can and should influence the West Highland and Islands Local Development Plan (see page 8). KCC would be interested to hear your views. And if you can persuade me that a new supermarket on the Blar or the North Road will reduce poverty, I'll gladly change my mind.

** Over 8 million people in the UK are living on incomes below what is needed to cover a minimum household budget, up by more than a third from 5.9 million in 2008/09. (Joseph Rowntree Foundation 26/2/15).

*** Food banks were established in the United States out of necessity due to the problems caused by their absence of a welfare state. The growing dependence on them in the UK indicates the erosion of the welfare safety net and the creation of a low wage economy. Are we to see a return to the poorhouses at Camaghael and Muirshearlich next?

As well as our normal meetings and correspondence over the last three months, KCC members have:

- attended the Lochaber Area meeting
- attended the Ward Forum
- attended the Lochaber Transport Forum
- attended a meeting on traffic congestion in Fort William
- attended meetings of the new Partnership of Fort William Area Community Councils
- requested repairs to potholes, and road signs
- joined the Scottish Rural Parliament, and attended its AGM in Perth
- raised issues about litter outside the Co-op
- raised concerns about proposals to reduce evening gritting on the B8004.
- not forgotten the concerns about fly tipping at Mount Alexander
- put Canadians in touch with their Kilmallie relatives
- helped resolve some longstanding procedural issues with Planning applications
- and continued to promote our Slower Safer Smilier campaign.

With Russell away in the Antarctic, there has been extra work to share around, so we've very much appreciated the extra help and involvement of Geoff Heathcote and Carol Anne Campbell in the last few months. Many thanks to them both.

Do email any of us, or come along to meetings, if you have concerns or ideas for Kilmallie. Or use the suggestion boxes at Corpach and Banavie.

Mandy Ketchin, Chair chairman@kilmallie.org.uk



come along to KCC's meetings

the place to share
your ideas and concerns
for local issues

and some interesting speakers lined up

- 18 March Sue Chadney
telling us about the work of Citizens' Advice Bureau, and the fulfilment of being a volunteer
- 15 April Corpach Marine
giving us a catch up on their ideas, plans and progress
- 20 May Donald Cameron, Younger of Lochiel
and Estate Manager Astie Cameron
telling us about the work of Achnacarry and Lochiel Estates

kilmallie community news

We hope you enjoy this issue. We keep trying to limit it to 24 pages, but it just keeps growing and growing, to 32 pages this time! As ever, thanks to all our fantastic contributors and all the volunteers who brave the winter weather to deliver the newsletter through all the Kilmallie letterboxes. Please continue to give us feedback and to send us articles, photos, ideas, opinions and information about things going on in Kilmallie. The deadline for material for the next newsletter is 20th May, for publication in middle of June.

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Views expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the newsletter team or of Kilmallie Community Council.

KILMALLIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Members of the public are most welcome at all our meetings. Meetings are currently held at 7:15pm in Kilmallie Community Centre on the 3rd Wednesday of every month excluding July and December, but please check the website or Facebook in case of changes.

Next ordinary meeting dates are:

18 March 15 April 20 May 17 June

The next AGM is 17 June 2015.

Chair Mandy Ketchin
chairman@kilmallie.org.uk

Secretary Russell Leaper
Canal House, Banavie, PH33 7LY
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Treasurer Jan MacLugash
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Other members Christine Hutchison
Kshama Wilmington

Associate member Chris Pellow





bus update



KCC supported a complaint from a local resident to Stagecoach and Lochaber Transport Forum about the cancellation/change of time of the buses on a Sunday, especially the withdrawal of the 9.20 am bus due to it starting from Caol depot instead of Corpach. Stagecoach responded by saying the reason for the curtailment to start at the depot was the lack of passengers boarding before this. However they said they were happy to look at this again as part of the review once they assess all the feedback.

pleading guilty

We have received complaints from people about parking on the pavement, and wondering if KCC can do anything about it. I plead guilty to having done it myself in the past, not with any intention of causing an obstruction on the pavement, but usually because I haven't wanted to cause an obstruction on the road. But since my husband has started to use a mobility scooter, it's been driven home (no pun intended) just how inconsiderate parking on the pavement can be. It makes life difficult for parents with buggies, wheelchair users, mobility scooter users, even just people walking

home with shopping, and it makes it more dangerous as well if people and children have to detour out into the road. So if like me you have been guilty, please consider the pavement users before considering the road users and refrain from parking on the pavement.

If you find a car parked on the pavement that is causing an obstruction, it is technically an offence, so you'd be within your rights to report it to the police. But in the interests of good community relations it would be better simply to ask the driver to move (they probably have no idea of the inconvenience they're causing and will be only too happy to oblige).

Mandy Ketchin

community policing

As I write this article, the wind is whipping up and there is a flood alert in place for the Caol waterfront and the Corpach basin. Snow is predicted on higher ground and whilst the skiers will be flocking to the hills, the snow ploughs and gritters from Bear Scotland and the Highland Council will have a long day ahead of them.

It's at times like this that Lochaber will see the benefits of having a Trunk Roads Policing Group based in Fort William and we are able to utilise this valuable resource for additional patrols of the A82 and the A830 in particular.

Now that the festive period is a distant memory we are looking forward to some spring sunshine and things will no doubt get busier as the tourist season kicks into full swing as we approach Easter and beyond.

School liaison officers have been getting in touch with their respective schools again in the Lochaber area following the Christmas period and a new liaison officer for Banavie Primary School has been appointed in Constable Brian Heriot. Constable

Heriot replaces Constable Joan Maciver who has moved into a different role with Police Scotland, still based locally.

At a local ward forum, it was reported that recorded crime is down by over 27% in the Caol and Mallaig multi-member Ward, which is great news. However, this doesn't mean that the local communities should be complacent in relation to the security of their home and personal belongings. There are a number of ways in which the public can take good care of their belongings and property and I'd encourage people to take a look on the Police Scotland website for some useful tips on crime prevention at the following link:

<http://www.scotland.police.uk/keep-safe/safety-security-advice/home-and-personal-property/>

As per previous newsletter articles, I would welcome any feedback or comments on local Policing in the Kilmallie or Lochaber area.

Andrew Bilton
Police Sergeant
Liaison Officer for Kilmallie Community Council
Andrew.bilton@scotland.pnn.police.uk

Police Service of Scotland
Fort William Police Station
BLAR MOR
Fort William
PH33 7GA

Tel. 101 for non-emergency



plans afoot

Here are the local applications that we've noticed on the Weekly Lists since the last newsletter, up to week ending 06/03/15. Some may already have been determined. For further information about Weekly Planning Lists, see the Sept 2014 edition of Kilmallie Community News.

27/11/14	14/04449/S42	Craiglea, 70-71 Camaghael, Removal of Condition 1 of planning permission LO-1997-364 to allow separate sale of Craiglea Cottage from Craiglea
5/12/14	14/04555/FUL	Upgrade existing forest access, Fassfern Forest, Kinlocheil
15/12/14	14/04681/OHL	33kv overhead line rebuild, Fort William to Banavie
19/12/14	14/04263/FUL	Erection of one & a half storey annexe in garden ground, Arkaig, Wilson Way, Banavie
23/12/14	14/04630/FUL	Proposed internal alterations and extensions, Aros Cottage, Banavie
05/01/15	15/00004/FUL	1.5 Storey extension to cottage to provide additional living accommodation and current single storey extension re-clad to form new entrance to property, 2 Erracht
13/01/15	15/00098/FUL	Construction of dwelling house with altered house design and revised site boundary, Plot 13, Fassfern
09/02/15	15/00436/PNO	Installation of 430m forest road, Fassfern Forest Main Block, Fassfern Estate
09/02/15	15/00437/PNO	Installation of 150m forest road, Land at Fassfern Estate, Kinlocheil
20/02/15	15/00609/FUL	Erection of dwelling house, Land 65m NW of Loch Eil Lodge, Fassfern



General Election 7th May



Do you want to be better informed about the candidates before you decide how to cast your vote?

Then come along to our community's

HUSTINGS

an opportunity to put questions to the candidates in our constituency (Ross Skye and Lochaber).

Joint hosts for this event are

Caol, Kilmallie, Fort William and Inverlochy & Torlundy Community Councils.

At the time of going to press the known candidates are, in alphabetical order:

- Ian Blackford (SNP)
- Chris Conniff (Labour)
- Charles Kennedy (Liberal Democrat)
- Lindsay McCallum (Conservative)
- Anne Thomas (Scottish Green)

All the candidates are being invited, but nominations are open till 9 April, so there may be more to come.

Caol Community Centre

14th April

6:30 for 7:00pm

All welcome. Admission is free



our Highland councillors' corner

This time we asked our three councillors: "How will Highland Council's budget cuts impact on Kilmallie?"

We always offer equal space to the three of them in the interests of balance and impartiality but this time Cllr Clark needed more. We're happy to redress the balance in later issues.

For background, Cllr Clark is a member of Highland Council's ruling coalition (SNP with Labour and LibDems) who are responsible for managing the budget.

Cllrs Henderson and Thompson are both Independent, and are effectively 'in opposition'.

Highland Council budget cuts are not in any way Ward or area specific. Highland Council cannot make budget cuts without some of those cuts having an effect one way or another on residents. Like other Local Authorities throughout the country, Highland Council legally has to deliver a balanced budget. Agreeing budget cuts from a fixed pot of money that will inevitably affect residents is not a pleasant experience but it is part of the remit of being a Councillor. Politics is the science of who gets what, when and why. Notwithstanding a 10% reduction in Scotland's Fiscal Resources budget since 2010 and a 26% real terms cut in Scotland's Capital budget, the SNP Government has increased the Health Resources budget by 4.6%. Local Authorities have received from the SNP Government a larger share of public finance from the remaining budget than at any time before the SNP came into office, even though Scotland's grants from Westminster have been slashed. Highland Council budget cuts were agreed at a very conciliatory meeting of Administration and Opposition Councillors at a Highland Council Meeting held on 18th December 2014. The Administration took on board some proposals from the Opposition, which created, in the main a non-confrontational debate. Councillors on both sides of the Chamber were well aware that cuts had to be made. The Administration also took on board consultation responses from many organisations and individuals. I cannot recall a budget meeting with so little adversarial opposition to the Administration. This meeting was Webcast throughout the Highlands and will be available on the Council's website for the next 12 months.

It is impossible to say how much the budget cuts will affect families or individuals until they take effect. Of course, we can all make various levels of negative predictions. On the other hand, we can be more positive in our predictions for the future. Most changes will begin to take effect from May 2015 but others are delayed to 2016 and in some cases 2017.

By cutting the education budget by only 2% means, as in previous years, we have safeguarded the education budget against most of the cuts. It is the Administration's intention to attempt to protect this budget in future years where possible but as the Care and Learning Budget takes up approximately £387.788M of the £570.388M Revenue Budget, some further changes will need to take place but these are yet to emerge as savings. It is important that teacher numbers are further protected in the main.

While we agreed 314 post deletions, this in no way means compulsory redundancies. The SNP has a 'no compulsory redundancy policy' and we intend to continue supporting this. The posts reductions will be sought from natural wastage and, where possible, not filling vacancies. Highland Council turns over 800 FTE posts every year and we only have to identify 314 of these over the next four years. It is intended to accommodate these without making anyone compulsorily redundant.

Highland Council recognises the importance of traditional music across the Highlands both in educational and cultural terms and as such decided against increasing charges for music tuition.

The increase in interment, lair and cremation charges up to the Scottish average rate in 2015/16 will of course have

an effect on everyone to some degree. Highland Council currently charges £505 for an interment and this will rise to £740 by year four (2018/19). Once other Local Authorities make changes to their charging schemes, Highland Council will be somewhere in the middle for charging. There will also be a reduction in Ward discretionary budgets over four years spread evenly across all 22 Wards. Based on the current Ward discretionary allocation of £55,204 for 2015/16, the reduction to £48,660 by 2018/19 is unlikely to have significant impact on any local group as each Ward's grant will be £48,660, a reduction of £6,544.

One contentious issue was the savings to be made on gritting Highland Council roads during extreme winter conditions, particularly in outlying areas. The £600,000 of a saving has been identified by applying policy, which means that "extra" road gritting will not be possible on an ad hoc basis. The pre-gritting element of the saving is being re-investigated and a report taken back to the relevant committee, so this may not take place. These measures will not come into effect until next year.

Unfortunately, working to a fixed budget leaves little room for manoeuvre. Nevertheless, roads will continue to deteriorate and resources in future years will require to be directed towards reactive rather than preventative repairs. Having said that, the Council is aware that the roads budget has been decimated in previous years and any underspends that may occur in the Council's general fund may well be directed towards this service to help deal with the issues.

Cllr Bill Clark



not be repaired as quickly. The cost of burials and cremations will go up substantially. Car park charges will increase. Teaching hours may fall. Local volunteer groups will lose funding. I could go on and on: the budget cuts extended to nearly 400 items. The bottom line is: expect services to worsen across the board. Was there an alternative? The largest group of independent councillors proposed a motion to increase council tax to reduce very slightly the impact of the cuts. So, no, there wasn't a radical alternative on the table. But there is no chance of an alternative when Holyrood sets 80% of the council budget and coerces the council to freeze the remaining 20% (in effect, just as Westminster does to Holyrood). Sadly, those who will feel the pinch the most are those least able to afford it: those reliant on regular buses, or who

depend on volunteer organisations, or who live in council houses, or who struggle to afford a decent burial. That is why I - with deep reservations - supported a council tax increase: despite its many faults, it is the only big lever the council can pull that asks for the deepest pockets to contribute more. Of course, despite the cuts the council will still do many good things. New schools and affordable housing will be built for example.

The full budget for the whole four years isn't finalised yet. There are many millions of pounds of 'balancing' still to do. Please let me know which two options you would pick for that task: ben.thompson.cllr@highland.gov.uk
Cllr Ben Thompson



are we expecting a cold summer...? new Beware of Ice sign at the canal bridge

our Highland councillors' corner

The budget decisions taken by Highland Council and passed by councillors in the ruling administration, on the 18th December, will have many and far reaching impacts on residents of Kilmallie, just as it will on the whole of the Highlands. These decisions are also set for the next 4 years. Of course we have all become used to budget cuts since 2008, but up until now most could be considered efficiencies, although drivers travelling across numerous pot-holes will no doubt, and rightly, disagree with this statement.

The latest cuts and that is what they are, along with increased charges, are really impacting on front line council services and local employment, rather than the heart of Highland Council. That front line service person could be you, or your neighbour. From planning your own house to death, we will all also be facing extra charges. Planning charges and burial charges are all to rise sharply.

Grounds maintenance along with street cleaning will be drastically reduced, with

more emphasis on communities looking after their own amenity spaces. Waste disposal will be reviewed with paper and tin deposits being removed from the recycling centre. You will have car parking charges if you venture to Fort William on a Sunday. Winter roads maintenance will also change dramatically as initially primary and secondary routes only will be concentrated on, when there is a heavy snowfall. This will be necessary as there will be less vehicles to get round the 4000+ miles of Highland roads that are not classified as trunk roads (Transport Scotland-Bear look after them). Roads with less than 20 cars (between 9pm and 6am) will possibly also not be pre-gritted. It will also take longer to get round to clearing the housing estates that are not school bus routes. Exact details have yet to be thrashed out, but there will definitely be a reduction in service.

The reduction in the large education budget will have a great impact on school budgets, primary and secondary, and the numbers of teachers able to be employed. This will

certainly eventually lead to a reduced choice of subjects, with a teacher facing the class, in the high school. It is proposed to use on-line services for some subjects. Increased charges and a tightening up of free use will impact on all our youth and sports organisations and clubs that use the facilities available at the schools.

All these cuts combined with an eventual 50% cut in the grants to 3rd parties (community centres, sports & leisure, museums, youth work, village halls) will make life really difficult for all the voluntary organisations in Kilmallie.

Certainly after this budget, life will change as we all knew it in Kilmallie.

Even council minutes of meetings will be shorter in detail! There will be no spare cash for anything that is not clearly budgeted for in a particular year.



Cllr Allan Henderson

slower safer smilier at High School

KCC have been asking BEAR for action to repair the part time 20mph signs at the High School which seem not to have been working for over a year now.

Bob Mitchell of Transport Scotland replied to us helpfully in mid February as follows:

"Apparently these two signs are prone to fairly regular failure, to such an extent that some people think they have not worked for months. The problem is caused by water ingress to equipment which is perhaps 8-10 years old. A repair has been completed on one sign but the other cannot be repaired. A replacement sign is being obtained but it may take up to four weeks before it can be installed. The long term aim is to include this site in a replacement programme, hopefully next financial year. I will monitor that programme to ensure this is achieved."

Bob Mitchell continued:

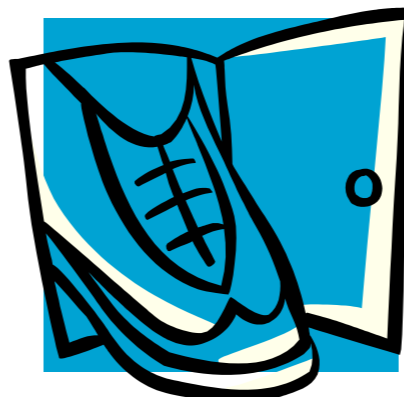
"The best way to report any defects anywhere on the Trunk Road network around Scotland is to call the Transport Scotland Contact Centre on 0800 028 1414. Calls are logged and passed to the appropriate Trunk Road Operating Company for attention. The caller should be given a Call Ref Number and the opportunity to receive a call back to advise what action has been taken."

"An alternative [for the Kilmallie area] would be to email Bear Scotland's own contact address which is: enquiries@bearsotland.co.uk. Please feel free to publicise these contact points, as it can only help Bear and Transport Scotland to identify issue on the network more quickly."

So by mid March we should be seeing the signs at the High School back in working order. If by April they're still not working, please let Transport Scotland and BEAR know, using the contact details that Bob's given us above.

KCC have also asked BEAR for action to repair the bad potholes at the High School pedestrian crossing which are a danger to pedestrians cyclists and drivers alike.

beware cold callers!



We've recently received a report of more unwelcome cold calling in the Kilmallie area - a man who is selling driveway resurfacing services who is extremely rude and pushy. Unfortunately we haven't got his name. He is accompanied by an unmarked van. It's best not to agree to having any work done unless you know the firm involved or have references from a reliable source. If you are being harassed by someone on your doorstep, close the door and call the police. Get a note of any vehicle reg no if you can. Don't put up with intimidation on your doorstep.

only 8 months till Community Council elections

West Highland & Islands Local Development Plan

The Highland Council is preparing their Local Development Plan for the West Highlands and Islands, which includes all of the Kilmallie area. The initial stage of plan-making includes a *Call for Sites and Ideas*: this is the stage the Plan is at now.

At this stage Highland Council are asking for, amongst other things:

- Suggestions on which land should be developed over the next 10 years, and which land should be protected
- Suggestions for bigger ideas, or a vision, of how Kilmallie should change over the next 10-20 years.
- Suggestions for changes to the boundaries of Special Landscape Areas.

Further details are available at:

http://www.highland.gov.uk/info/178/local_and_statutory_development_plans/582/west_highland_and_islands_local_development_plan

There are opportunities for communities to be pro-actively involved. Kilmallie Community Council are currently considering how we might best be able to co-ordinate our own community involvement with the Review Process. If you want to influence the planning decisions that affect our community, villagescape, landscape and environment, then please get in touch with KCC.



why we're lucky to have our coastguard at Corpach

The 91m long MV Fri Sea ran aground at Corpach on 7th March. The vessel is owned by the Kopervik Group and was manoeuvring prior to docking to collect a load of timber. Events like this remind us how important it is to have properly funded coastguard and rescue services.

canal news

Sorry no update from me this time but hope to have lots of news for next issue.

John Stafford, Canal Superintendent



not as remote as it sounds... how will T TIP affect us in Kilmallie (Transatlantic Trade & Investment Partnership)?

Banavie Primary News

This term we have been very busy with lots of things such as a Onesie Day for Diabetes UK. We raised £456.00. Other activities included getting your nails painted and getting a tattoo.

Primary 6/7 have been researching Ancient Greece and their Gods. We



all picked a god to make a presentation about. It has been really good to find out about the different Gods.

On Thursday 12th February 2015 Steve from DrumFun came to the school with his drums for the Nursery-P7 classes. We had lots of fun making rhythms and beats.

On Thursday 12th February 2015 Barry Hutchison came to talk to P5-7 about his new book, The Shark Headed Bear Thing. It was very interesting.

Dougie Beck from Feis Lochabair and Alan Gray from Eden Court have been



in to do drama with some of the classes. Primary 4/5 worked with Dougie on World War 1.

P5-7 got an outreach visit from the Scottish Parliament to find out how it works.

The topics we are working on this term are:

- P6/7-Ancient Greece
- P5/6-Victorians
- P4/5-Weather
- P3/4-Scottish food/agriculture
- P2/3-Pirates
- P1/2-Dinosaurs

Primary 2/3 had a pirate party and they enjoyed it a lot. They have been completing their maths about pirates and they also got a visit from a drama teacher, Steve.

Other classes have been doing Chinese New Year, internet safety, Julia Donaldson, Nutcracker, drama workshops, magnetic forces and Robert Burns.

Primary 7 are skiing between 9th and 12th of March 2015.

Yours sincerely
Ria Watson and Fraser Clark
Primary Seven



any reminiscences of the present Banavie School building opening 50 years ago?



The Christmas term saw the children enjoying dressing up and making lovely decorations, mingled with singing and the all-important partying where we experimented with delicious food and danced to our little hearts' content! We put on a fabulous Nativity play and Santa came to visit the children, giving each of them a special gift. We welcomed Claire, who came to visit the children, bringing musical instruments and the opportunity for the children to learn to keep the beat to music and to learn the all-important lesson of taking turns. The children had a great time! Teaching the children to take care of themselves always plays a very important role in what we do with the children and this term was no exception. The children continue to learn how to take care of their teeth through practicing tooth brushing, and they have been learning about (and eating!) the foods that make them healthy and help them to grow big and strong. We encourage the children to take an interest in their environment and so they have been learning how to look after things that they find there: the birds and the plants.



Throughout the term, the children have been involved in role play using shops as the stimulus and they have learned what shops we have locally, how the food gets there and how we pay for the produce we buy: money and credit cards. The children have very much enjoyed making shopping lists, working with money at money lotto, and making beautiful pictures using assorted types of rubbings. Burns Day arrived and the children learned lots of new songs and poems written by our very own great Bard. Amazingly, some children even commented that the words sounded funny when listening to "The Gruffalo" in Scots and Ally Bally Bee. What clever children! We had our very own ceilidh, ate haggis and oatcakes and sampled shortbread. Yum! The little ones especially enjoyed listening to Burns' songs sung by Eddi Reader, and they designed "jaggy thistle" pictures using hands and fingers, and they made purple heather pictures. Very busy little ones, indeed! For the celebration of the Chinese New Year, the Year of the Goat, the shop role play area morphed to become a Chinese kitchen and restaurant. The children were

involved in a lot of cooking activities that developed various skills including cutting, chopping, measuring, grating and blending. They made vegetable soup, celery soup, lentil soup, savoury rice with lots of peppers, spring onions, sugar snap peas (which provided great fun podding and tasting), and peppers, which resulted in a fabulous Chinese banquet on Friday 13th February. The banquet comprised of noodles, chicken, sweet and sour sauce, peppers, spring onions and prawn crackers, all eaten with chop sticks. The children all had a great time learning to use the chopsticks! The little ones also learned about life in China, especially how the Chinese exercise outside every day and the fact that their diet mainly consists of rice and noodles, and chicken and fish. They also wrote using Chinese letters and compared them to their own letters. Valentine's Day also brought much artistic endeavour as the children made cards and pictures and learned all about how to show kindness and to care for others. Love was definitely in the air!

contd next page



Throughout the winter term, we have been making the most of outdoor play, getting out in all kinds of weather. The children have been making snow angels, snow castles and enjoying sliding on hard snow and building snowmen! They have also been looking at the intricate shapes of ice and icicles. We have so much fun every day playing with sand and water, and we also play with more unusual materials, like lentils and polystyrene packaging. Playdough is a firm favourite with the children, where they use assorted cutters, scissors and rollers. The Number Table proves very popular, where the children play with shapes, jigsaws and puzzles and use measuring tools. Also proving popular is the Quiet Corner which is the place where they can go to enjoy books and stories, songs, rhymes, and they can sing and dress up. Birthdays are especially fun times, and the children have very much enjoyed celebrating in the winter term!



Kilmallie Playgroup hosted our first Soft Start session which saw parents join their children for a fun morning of play. The children were extremely proud to share their experiences and show their mums and dads around the playgroup, and they loved having them join in the fun for the morning. The staff very much enjoyed chatting to the parents, and the input that the parents brought to the session was very valued and appreciated by us. The enrolment for 2015/16 was extremely busy and August 2015 looks like starting off with excellent numbers. We are looking forward to welcoming the new intake when the time comes! However, before then, the staff and the children at Kilmallie Playgroup have a great deal to look forward to, not least of which are the various trips that we have planned to take place before the Easter break. How exciting! We are going to go to the library in Caol, and are very excited about going to join our friends at Nevis Nippers Playgroup afterwards. We are also visiting



Fort William fire station and maybe the Police and Ambulance station, although we might not be able to go there because the bus times have changed and not all of the buses go via Caol, so don't fit in with the Playgroup session times. What a shame. We continue to be very grateful for the support of the wonderful parents and the local community, who help to make Kilmallie Playgroup such a fun and educational place to be! We are looking forward to the fun and adventures that the remaining terms will bring.

Thanks to a parent for writing this piece for the newsletter this time. Playgroup enquiries can be made on 01397 772 016 or via e-mail kilmallieplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk.

Carole



High Notes March 2015

Prelim examinations are now over at Lochaber High School and, with just a few weeks left to the Easter break, the final assessments are in sight. While the preparation for National, Higher and Advanced Higher assessments is our top priority through the winter months, there have been plenty of other activities going on. Our Gaelic pupils have had two nominations in the final of this year's FilmG competition: 'An Agallamh', a film about a schoolboy who self-harms, has been shortlisted for 'Best Film' as well as the lead actor, Fergus Munro, who has been shortlisted for his convincing performance. The competition saw a record number of entries this year with 51 films in the youth category. You can watch the films online at: <http://filmg.co.uk/en/films/filmg2015/winners-shortlists/youth>

We held our annual Burns Supper on Saturday 31 January. A four-course traditional meal, cooked by David McQuillan and Kevin Fraser from Highland Council's catering Service, was followed by speeches, recitations and musical entertainment finishing off with dancing to the Lochaber High School Ceilidh Band. This year, for the first time, all the speeches and recitations – except the Immortal Memory – were delivered by senior pupils, who excelled in their roles. Huge thanks to all who contributed to a great evening and special thanks to Douglas Simpson, guest speaker, who delivered the Immortal Memory; our sponsors (The Alexandra Hotel and the Ben Nevis Distillery) and Mrs Jacqi Hume who coordinated the whole event.

The Burns Supper is the main fundraiser for the annual Sixth Year trip to London, which took place just after the prelim examinations; a short break before focussing again on examination preparation. The biggest group so far took part in this year's trip with 109 pupils and staff, in three coaches, travelling to the capital for a long-weekend of sightseeing, museum visits, activities and shows. The group was so large it had to be split between two hotels, the Meininger and the Columbia.

The excited young people left Lochaber High at 6.30 am on Thursday 19 February, travelling throughout the day in time to check-in at their hotels and then head out for a meal at Carluccio's restaurant. After a long day on the coaches, the two-mile walk back to the hotels was welcome exercise ... for most.

Friday and Saturday were spent on a variety of activities with each member of the group choosing three each day from an extensive list which included: a walking tour of the main sights; a visit to the Natural History Museum, the Science Museum or the V&A; a tour of the Emirates stadium; a guided tour of BBC Broadcasting House (with a chance to read the news, the weather or take part in a radio play); a trip to the Imperial War Museum; a visit to the Tower of London (with a viewing of the Crown Jewels); an encounter with the celebrities at Madame Tussaud's; a visit to the Churchill War Rooms or a tour of Shakespeare's Globe Theatre. There were four shows on offer in the evenings: 'Jersey Boys', 'Dirty Rotten Scoundrels', 'Memphis' and 'The Lion King' along with indoor go-karting at the high-speed Team-Sport track in North London. Friday night's meal was at Hard Rock Café and, on Saturday, the group ate at a variety of different West End restaurants. There was even some time for shopping in an extremely busy Oxford Street on Saturday afternoon.

The fourth and final day of the trip – Sunday 22 – was sunny with clear blue skies; perfect for the whole group to experience a flight on the London Eye. The stunning views of the capital provided a perfect end to a hectic but thoroughly enjoyable trip. The group boarded the coaches at midday for the long journey home... most of the group were asleep before reaching the motorway north!

This was the ninth annual Sixth Year trip to London and was arranged for those who have met a standard of application, behaviour and uniform; setting a good example for younger pupils. Next year's trip is already booked – Fifth Years can sign-up now.

Junior pupils have been travelling too this term with a ski trip in the French Alps. Pupils leaving the school building at the end of the day on 23 January were led through a tunnel of 70 candles held by Sixth Years in a moving commemoration of the 70th anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz. This was part of a project led by Oskar Wineberg and Fiona MacEachan who travelled to Poland for a day to visit Auschwitz as part of the Holocaust Educational Trust's Lessons from Auschwitz project. They also attended seminars in Edinburgh, where they learned about the holocaust and spoke to survivor Eva Clarke, 69, who was born in a concentration camp. Sixth Year pupils Morvern Harper, Rachael Tozer, Franchesca Smith, Abi Smith and Becky MacInnes took part in this year's Highland Hospice Young Apprentice. Using a start-up grant of £250 to purchase materials, the girls raised a total of £1317.18 by selling Christmas themed products at various craft fayres across Lochaber. They delivered a presentation to three judges in Inverness earlier this term where they were awarded third place in the competition, against tough competition from other schools in Highland. Thanks to Miss MacCallum and Miss Doherty for mentoring the budding entrepreneurs throughout the project.

Jim Sutherland, Head Teacher

*From top:
Highland Hospice Group;
70 Auschwitz candles;
London 2015 Group;
and overpage: Burns Supper*



Lochaber High School Burns Supper 2015

Corpach in Colour

We will be 10 years old in August this year! To mark the occasion and also to thank everyone who has supported us there will be Afternoon Tea for all in Kilmallie Community Centre on Saturday, June 20th. More details in the next Newsletter.

Our Flower and Produce Show will take place in Kilmallie Community Centre on August 29th. The Show for residents

of Banavie, Corpach and Kinlocheil will also include Camaghael this year. Last year's Show was a huge success. In this year's Schedule there are 2 recipes for you to try! Schedules will be included in the next newsletter.

The 2 Margarets

Banavie Floral Improvements

The snow has gone, from ground level at least, the days are getting longer and spring is just around the corner. Writing this in mid-February I have snowdrops, daffodils, crocuses, iris and hellebores all in bloom in the garden, along with one very enterprising rhododendron which has been in flower since early November, and there are green shoots poking up everywhere in through the soil. Weeding and tidying up at this time of year is satisfying after only being able to look out at it for the past few months. It also has the added advantage of reducing the weed population later in the year. It is surprising how many annual, as well as perennial, weeds can survive a cold and frosty winter. You can also find

colonies of hibernating snails which can be rehomed well away from your own plot! Time too, to start pruning roses and late flowering clematis.

We planted another 200 daffodil bulbs in and around Banavie in the autumn and they are now growing well and we should have a good show again in March and April. Is there any sight more cheerful than a field of bright yellow flowers even on a dull day?

It is now time to order our plants for the coming summer and to start growing the begonia tubers which we saved from last year. Check them for vine weevil and then pot up in compost, water and put in a bright place. They are star performers in this area as they keep flowering for a very long season and don't mind getting wet. Remember to keep feeding the birds as they need extra sustenance right through April until the first insects start to appear.

Sheena McIntyre



Kilmallie Community Centre

We had an amazing Hogmanay with BBC Alba who hired the Centre to hold their Hogmanay Celebrations. A huge thank you to Jimmy Milne our Centre Manager for showing the facilities to the production team and for helping them organise their event. Also thanks to Jimmy Smith and John MacDonald for helping with the pre-event arrangements. The funds from this event have helped towards match funding from the Highland Council for the toilet refurbishments at the Centre. It has also helped put Kilmallie Community Centre on the map with the event being on live TV, radio and world wide via the internet!

A big thank you to all those who came and supported our Xmas Fayre on Saturday 13/12/14. We raised £627.90 from the tables, raffle, refreshments and the meat & veg table! This is a fantastic result but it could not have happened without the support of all the stall holders, public, committee members and Centre Manager but in particular Bobby and Jessie Henderson for organising the event! Our congratulations to Maisie Dennison for winning the Cloutie Dumpling competition – she kindly donated the dumpling to Lochaber Beekeepers Association who raised £20 in funds from selling slices to keen dumpling munchers!

We are delighted to announce that we had our recent application approved by the British Heart Foundation and an award was granted towards the purchase of a Zoll AED plus defibrillator! The funding for our contribution for this life-saving hardware was partly provided from the Lochaber Housing Association so our thanks go again to them. The defibrillator is going to be put into a special cabinet by the Kilmallie Community Centre entrance and

LESLEY
RIDDOCH

BLOSSOM

Kilmallie Community Centre
Highland White Blossom Tour
Sunday 29 March, 7pm
free admission

Installation Engineer Vacancies



Have you got basic building and construction knowledge? Do you want to help remote areas of Lochaber benefit from advanced broadband?
Can you work on your own and problem solve on the job? Do you want rewarding work that can be timed to suit your circumstances?

Then maybe you can help Locheilnet.

Locheilnet provides broadband to remote areas of Lochaber and we cannot keep up with demand for our services. We need help to install antennas and cables to customers' properties.

Fixing small antenna to an outside location, running a cable through to the inside and completing this neatly and quickly is all that is required. Own transport is essential as well as simple basic tools. Specific training if required will be provided.

Payment is per installation and there is potential work in all areas of Lochaber.

Check out the Locheilnet website for more information and give us a call now if you think you can help. www.locheilnet.co.uk

Chris Pellow 01397 773128

will be available to any ambulance crew or member of the public who is trained on how to use this equipment. We have no doubt that this additional facility for the community will help save lives in our area.

The refurbishment of our toilets is well under way at the beginning of February so we apologise in advance for any inconvenience during the refurbishment but it will be worth it! Do come along and see the new look Kilmallie Community Centre comfort facilities!

We were sorry to receive the resignations of John MacDonald, Margaret MacDonald and Jessie Henderson at our AGM in November. They have each given so much of their time and efforts in bringing Kilmallie Community Centre back from the verge of being pulled down and getting it back into becoming the superb venue that it now is. Our heartfelt gratitude is passed to them and we wish them all the best for the future and hope that we will still see them around at the various events that we hold going forward!

Customers who have used the Centre over the past few weeks are: Lochaber Community Wind Band, George Rodger Band, birthday parties, Community Land, Baby Shower Party, Christmas Lights Committee, Baptism & celebration afterwards. We hosted the switching on of the Corpach Christmas lights ceremony with 100 folk in attendance, followed by refreshments in the small hall. We also hosted a Christmas carol service in the main hall which was very well attended with one of the largest numbers for the service and extra chairs were needed!

Our thanks go to our regular customers for supporting the Centre: The Mustardseed Fellowship, Mums & Toddlers, Ballet & Contemporary Dancing, Zumba Class, Lochaber Beekeepers Association, Kick Boxing, Scottish Country Dancing, Kilmallie Community Council, Olde Tyme Dancing, Music for All.

We look forward to a busy and successful year at Kilmallie Community Centre for 2015!

Sarah Kennedy

Kilmallie Community Centre

Station Road, Corpach, Fort William PH33 7JH
Scottish Charity SC000604

CHAIRMAN post vacant at present
SECRETARY Mrs Norma MacLellan,
12 Hillview Drive, Corpach, Fort William 01397 772597
TREASURER Mrs Sarah Kennedy 0776 880 5040



Were you at the Kilmallie Community Centre for the BBC Alba 2014 ceilidh or did you watch it on the television? Either way, what a great treat it was! I was very, very lucky and managed to obtain some tickets to attend the event. I had seen an article on the forthcoming ceilidh in the local paper and, as it gave an e-mail address to contact for tickets, I decided to give it a go. I did not hear back straight away so thought I was out of luck and then on the 30th December I received an e-mail saying that it was a squeeze but they would be able to fit me in at a standing table if that would be ok. I wrote back saying yes please, and as it was my birthday on the night, I was really chuffed to get the opportunity of some tickets.

I received confirmation and details on the 31st, a nail biting wait, and early evening Jim and I and Carolyn and Pete wandered down to the hall on, thankfully, a night without rain, but there was a good wind blowing! We found a bit of a queue at the door as everyone's name was being checked and tables were allocated by name so it took a wee while to get in. Everything was just brilliantly organised though. A cloakroom was set up in the foyer with 2 people manning it and our coats were taken and tickets given. We were also given tickets for a drink at the start of the night and one for the bells. Tradewinds were running the bar both in the small meeting room and table service in the hall and the service from start to finish was excellent. There was somebody dishing out stovies in the small meeting room but we decided just to go straight on in to the main hall.

On first entering the hall it was truly amazing: it really was literally stunning. The set was fantastic. It is just amazing

what lighting can do. Imagine if the hall was like that all the time as an entertainment venue. I jokingly asked some of the BBC people if they could leave it all behind but they said they were dismantling it all as soon as everyone left... they had a long night ahead of them.

Being there was an insight into some of the magic of television: things are not always as they seem, or come out in the same order!

The artists, including Skipinnish, Glenfinnan Ceilidh Band, Atomic Piseag, Seudan, The Leo and Anto Acoustic Project and Ellen MacDonald were brilliant, absolutely brilliant: no need to be coerced into foot stamping, clapping or cheering, they really had the room jumping and the time just flew by. A mystery first footer joined the party for the bells; I believe it was Dol Eoinn but cannot say for sure.

We did our best to avoid getting caught by the cameras but they found us out a couple of times. I knew I had been caught on camera as I came home to an e-mail timed not long after midnight from a colleague at work saying she had seen me on TV at the ceilidh.

There were a few Kilmallie folk there whose faces I recognised but I don't think the event was advertised much, apart from BBC Alba and the article in the local paper, it may have been a mainly invited audience and, given the timing I was confirmed tickets, I have a gut feeling that we only got in on a last minute cancellation.

I had rather a lot of gin and tonics on the night, well it was my birthday, but I managed to stay sober! Table service was excellent and every drink I had was served with ice and lemon and a smile; it seemed no sooner had we finished our

drinks than the young lady serving was back again, manoeuvring her way through the crowd. The prices were also reasonable for such an event, and the cool drink was needed as the heat of the lights made it very, very hot in the hall. Well done to that young lady for looking after us!

On the TV it seemed to go on for ages but on the night it went by in a flash. It was really a great night, one of the best New Year's I have had in a long time. The presenters, artists, people from the BBC and Tradewinds all worked so well together to provide a great night and of course the hall committee beaver away in the background and managing to bring the event to Kilmallie and organising it so well; a very big well done!

Even getting our coats at the end was no problem at all. On leaving around 1:30, I spoke with Jimmy Smith, a committee member, and he was telling me they would be upgrading the toilets in the near future; hopefully the hall managed to receive some much needed funds from the event.

I remember attending dances in the hall years ago. Now that this has been such a success I hope that the committee will consider an annual New Year's Ceilidh for the Kilmallie community; I am sure there would be many people in the community who would volunteer to help. Ok the hall will not look quite the same ever again but I am sure the atmosphere would be. It was all just magical!

Maggie Mackenzie

Did anyone manage to tape the programme? If so, please can you get in touch with KCC, thanks.



Well, Banavie Park has certainly seen plenty of action over the last few snowy weeks, with kids sledging, skiing and building snowmen at the park. Even if the equipment is looking a little tired, the local sledgers have certainly not been. It's amazing how much fun a small slope can offer, with or without snow!

Thank you to everyone who responded to our public consultation over the last 10 months! We have sought views from you as a readership (covering the whole of the Kilmallie catchment area), as well as Banavie, Caol and Lochyside Primary Schools, Kilmallie Playgroup, Kilmallie Toddlers, Jelly Tots, the Cubs, Beavers and Scouts and of course, everyone who came to the Go Wild on the Canal Day back in May.

We collated information from over 180 questionnaires and gained 71 Friends of Banavie Park Members along the way too. (We will contact you all by email to confirm this in due course). Remember, membership is free and really helps us show to potential funders the level of support that we have in our community for improving our park, so please get in touch if you would like to join.

Who Responded?

82% were local residents
 48% who visit occasionally, 23% visit weekly
 72% travel less than 2 miles to get to the park
 43% drive, 34% walk
 34% of respondents use the children's play area, 30% use the canal pathways, 20% the green open spaces and 16% the picnic area
 There is greatest demand for equipment aimed at 5-11 yrs
 79% of respondents thought the park was in need of improvement

Your Future Priorities

(in order of preference/importance)

- Update play equipment
- Preserve green open spaces
- Improve seating/ picnic areas and create sensory garden/maze (joint)
- Provide a covered seating area
- Provide accessible play equipment to meet a wider range of needs
- Create biking facilities

Most popular ideas from respondents
 (in order of popularity);

- Provide equipment to cater for older children
- Create a climbing facility in the play area
- The existing park is dated
- There is a need for a wider range of equipment
- Provide a zip wire
- Preserve green open spaces
- Improve the picnic, seating, BBQ area
- Provide biking facilities

Although most people thought that the park should be improved, there were also a few comments that no change was required whatsoever, as well as warnings of the maintenance issues for ambitious projects such as a garden maze. A number of you suggested that we tied in any new equipment with a canal/ boat theme to suit the setting and there were many comments that a more natural 'look' to the park would be preferred. The green open spaces are a high priority for many and some of you would like to see football goals on these. You also have concerns with the security of the park in terms of perimeter fencing and suitable pedestrian crossings, particularly for those of you coming from Caol. On some of your wish lists were; a more adventurous slide, basket swing, group swing, roundabout, log stepping stones,

nature trail, sunken trampoline, a water feature, bat boxes, toilets, BBQ tables, hopscotch, oh and info on the steam train times!

Next Steps

So there's a lot to do to try and meet everyone's wishes! We are now approaching play park companies for initial designs and prices as well as researching bike track installers for a small scale bike skills loop. We will hold a public meeting which will be advertised in this newsletter when we have some outline designs to show you.

In the meantime, you can help us by keeping in touch, signing up to become a member, and digging into your pockets when it comes to....

....Fundraising

Before we approach the big funders we need to get started with our community fundraising campaign. Watch this space as there'll be plenty of opportunity to donate and get involved!

As always we look forward to your views and feedback. Contact us via the KCC letter boxes, on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Friends-Of-Banavie-Park> or by email: vickydodman@outlook.com

Roll on Spring!
The Friends of Banavie Park Team
 Laura Smith, Louise Pescod, Vicky Dodman and co.



We are not quite at the end of our concert series and actually we have a big concert in Kilmallie hall on Sunday the 22nd March at 3pm. This will be a chamber music ensemble from Germany playing very familiar and popular classical music. They visited a couple of years ago and were so popular so it would be wonderful to see lots of folk coming out to support them again this year too. We have had another fabulous season of music with 4 very different but all amazing performances so far. We began with a beautiful mezzo soprano and pianist all the way from London, then we had something quite different with 2 talented young ladies on violin and cello playing music related to botany and supporting this

with visual images of the plants they were playing about. In January we warmed from the winter colds with music from the outstanding Kaleidoscope saxophone quartet who again came from London and really wowed the audience with their musicality, technical expertise and all round charm! On the last day of the month we heard the very up and coming Maxwell Quartet featuring local cellist Duncan Strachan who grew up near Roy Bridge. This concert took place in the Kilmallie Free Church, which was the first time we had used this venue and it was greatly enjoyed. The concert was inspired with wonderful introductions of the pieces from Duncan himself which really added to the understanding of the music. And so we look forward now to our final concert of this series which will also host an afternoon tea to help raise much needed funds for Lochaber Music For All. We are so fortunate to have these talented and brilliant musicians come to our area but of course it is always at a cost and if anybody feels they could help us with fundraising or make a donation to our group then we would be very grateful. However, the easiest way to support this wealth of music concerts is to come along and enjoy them. You get a wonderful evening of music and help support future concerts. If you would like more information or are interested in getting involved with Lochaber Music For All then please contact me on 01397 712802.

Clare Reynolds

Lochaber Showstoppers presents...

SEUSSICAL

7:30pm
 26th, 27th & 28th
 March 2015

* plus *
 2pm Matinee on Sat 28th

Nevis Centre, Fort William

£10 Adults/ £8 Concession

Box Office: 01397 700707



much fun and cause as much havoc as possible. He pops up here and there playing a whole host of different characters from the Seussian world, and although he's sometimes a bit annoying, I like to think he ultimately has everyone's best interests at heart.

"I have to try and keep up with the sheer pace the cat moves at. He needs an enormous amount of energy, always running hither and thither and generally mucking about. That's certainly helping me keep fit! As for the show, I think most of us in the cast have struggled with the fact that almost the entire show is sung, or spoken in rhyme, which requires a whole lot of learning to be done.

"It really is such a little gem of a musical. Great for kids, lots of over-the-top zany humour, colourful sets with little Seuss-style bits poking out all over them, a real whirlwind. Adults will love it too, and the actual story of the show is surprisingly moving and has quite an important message. Also (I am reliably informed) there will be quite a few miraculous little special effects emerging."

Do come and watch Fergus and the rest of the cast strut their stuff in Seussical.

See you there!
 Clare Brewer

www.lochabershowstoppers.co.uk



On Boxing Day we were officially back on home turf. The day was made extra special for the players as they were piped out on to the pitch by two of our Youth Players, our Youth Section also provided ball boys, and P6-7 Player of the Year presented the Match ball to the Captains before the kick-off. It was heart-warming to see such a great turn out of supporters for our pitch opening and everyone was treated to a free cup of homemade soup and a lovely warm roll courtesy of the LRFC Ladies. After the match, Club President, Alistair MacKinnon gave a welcoming speech, thanking everyone for coming and all involved in the 'behind the scenes work' for the pitch improvements and then with their complementary glass of bubbly a toast was given to the club and the future... **it's great to be back.**

Youth Rugby

Our Youth Rugby takes place every Saturday during school term, for boys and girls P3-S2. New players of all abilities are welcome. Our coaches are SRU qualified and the club has a Positive Coaching Accreditation. Parents are welcome to stay and have a cup of tea or coffee in our Clubhouse and get to know the other mums and dads. We are hosting a Mini Rugby Festival on Sunday 19th April 2015. We have friendly fixtures arranged for our S1-2's and U17's throughout the season.

Lucky Mascot

Our P6-7 player of the year, Fergus Beradelli is going to be a Mascot for the international game against Ireland at Murrayfield on Saturday 21st March 2015... our Youth Section is also going to watch the game so Fergus will have lots of Lochaber support from the crowd. Watch out for him in the line out before the kick-off.

Dinner Dance

Our Annual Dinner Dance & Awards Ceremony is being held on **Saturday 21st March 2015** in the Moorings Hotel. Tickets (£25 each) are **now on sale** and available from Pauline, phone or text her on 07979 338286. We are looking forward to another great night and dancing off the delicious dinner with the help of Eriskay Lilt. **Non-members are welcome;** tables of 8 can be reserved.



You can keep up to date with the news from Banavie via any of the options below.



Pauline Donaldson

Pictures, from top: Fergus Beradelli, pipers and teams on Boxing Day



Forthcoming Home Fixtures

Sat 28 March	3pm	Lochaber -v- Aberdeenshire II
Sat 04 April	3pm	Lochaber -v- RAF Lossiemouth
Sat 02 May	12 noon	Annual Sevens Tournament
Wed 06 May	9am-3pm	Annual Inter-School Tag Rugby Tournament



Kilmallie Shinty Club

Kilmallie Shinty Club is now a Limited Company and here are the new Directors:

Honorary Chieftain	Hugh MacIntyre
Honorary President	Ewen Bowman
Chairman	Alastair MacIntyre
Vice Chairman	James MacIntyre
Company Secretary	Linda Campbell
Directors:	Peter Jackson
	Andrew Brown
	Donald Robertson
	Lachie Innes
	Donald Lamont Snr
	Maureen Robertson
	Cath MacKay
	Ian Robertson
	Donald Lamont Jnr
	Mark MacPherson

18th April	Aberdeen University Vs Kilmallie
25th April	Glenorchy Vs Kilmallie
	Kilmallie Vs Skye
2nd May	Kilmallie Vs Kinlochshiel
9th May	Kilmallie Vs Aberdeen University
16th May	Beauly Vs Kilmallie
	Lewis Vs Kilmallie
23rd May	Kilmallie Vs Boleskin
30th May	Kilmallie Vs Strathspey

Some other What's Ons:

Our new 1st team manager is Mark MacPherson, Dugald MacPhee is the reserve team manager, Nicola MacIsaac is the Under 17's manager and Lachie Innes is the under 14's manager. Training is going well, with the whole club training at the Astro Turf on Monday night at 7pm and the seniors at the Astro Turf on a Wednesday night at 6.30pm.

Saturday 7th March Lochaber Strathspey and Reel Society Annual Fiddlers Rally Caol Community Centre at 7.30pm

Monday 16th March Whist in Caol Community Centre at 7.30pm fundraiser for LRET - fortnightly whist

Friday 20th March Whist in Caol Community Centre at 7.30pm fundraiser for MOD 2017

The new shinty season started on the 7th March: here are the forthcoming fixtures (subject to change):-

Monday 13th April to Friday 17th April Children's holiday Club at An Clachan. 4-8 year olds 10am to 2pm - £12 per child per day. To book 01397 708642

21st March	GMA Vs Kilmallie
	Caberfeidh Vs Kilmallie
28th March	Kilmallie Vs Caberfeidh
	Inverness Vs Kilmallie
4th April	Kilmallie Vs Inverness - 3pm
	Kilmallie Vs Lewis - 1pm
11th April	Kilmallie Vs Kilmory
	Ballachulish Vs Kilmallie

Friday 17th April Whist in Caol Community Centre at 7.30pm Fundraiser for MOD 2017

Linda Campbell

a forgotten hero from a forgotten war ?

With the 200th anniversary of Waterloo being commemorated nationally and internationally, this is a good time to reflect on a local hero who's contribution to the campaign is marked by the imposing obelisk erected in his memory. Colonel John Cameron of Fassifern, after 20 years of military service, lost his life at the battle of Quatre Bras on the 16th of June 1815, two days before the victory of Waterloo that brought peace to Europe. The Duke of Wellington, as Commander in Chief, recognised his achievements and lamented his loss and he was commended in dispatches after the battle.

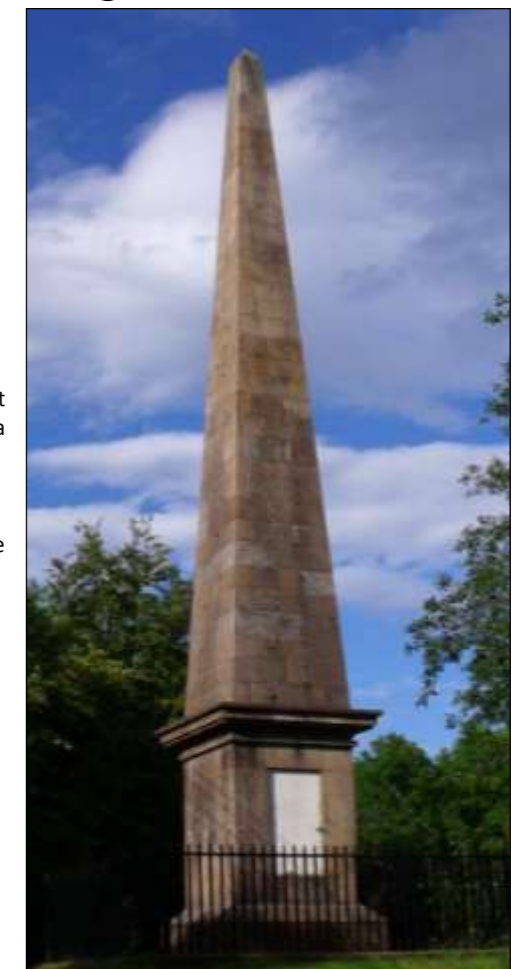
This ends with the statement "Reader, call not his fate untimely, who thus honoured and lamented, closed a life of fame by a death of glory".

With the 200th anniversary that this monument remembers now imminent, the Local History Society has been successful in securing the funding required to have conservation work carried out on the obelisk, and cleaning and highlighting of text on the information plaque. The generous award from the Centennial War Memorials Trust and other donors, recognises that this is a monument of national importance. It is hoped that this work will ensure that the monument is secure for years to come. This work will commence in April, and the anniversary on 16th June will be remembered by an occasion of some kind. We are unlikely to have as many as three thousand at this distance from the event! but all would be welcome.

His remains were brought home the following year and he was buried in the family crypt at old Kilmallie Church, Corpach. It was reported that over three thousand people attended at this funeral, making it the largest ever such occasion in the area. But after two hundred years, who remembers this man today? The best reference comes from a memoir published in 1858 by the local Minister Rev Archibald Clerk, but this is no longer in print and copies are difficult to obtain. Sir Walter Scott was an admirer, composed verse about him, and was commissioned to produce the tribute that is on the marble plaque on the obelisk.

I'll be giving a short presentation at the April 2nd meeting of the Local History Society, on aspects of this subject. Ben Nevis Hotel, 8pm, open to all.

Roddy Mainland





lights out for earth hour . . . Saturday 28th March 8:30pm



Lochaber Beekeepers Association

What will our honeybees at the Training Apiary be doing in the Spring?

Hopefully by the time you read this newsletter it will be the beginning of spring! In spring there is an abundance of flowers, rich in pollen and nectar, and the bee colony expands rapidly. The number of young bees increases quickly because of the abundance of food. Worker bees have special parts of their body for transporting food. Nectar is carried in a part of their stomach. Pollen is carried on their hind legs.

The hive entrance is a bustle of activity of workers arriving with pollen and nectar. The picture on the right shows a worker in close-up, with large dollops of pollen sticking to the hind legs. Only the left leg is visible, but both hind legs carry pollen.

As the weather becomes warmer and the flow of nectar into the hive increases, the beekeeper will want to encourage the bees to store some of this nectar as honey which can be harvested for sale. How is this done? The beekeeper must secure a crop of honey by providing the bees with space in which to put it. Look at the hives in the picture above centre. They are of different heights, the right one has had additional boxes of frames for combs, called a super, added on top of the main one. As more frames of comb are needed for honey, so they are added by the beekeeper.

It is important not to allow the queen into these upper boxes of comb to lay eggs, as this would result in larvae being mixed up in the honey. This is done by inserting a special screen, called a queen excluder (picture below), between the bottom box, containing the queen and bee larvae, and the upper boxes, which will contain the honey. The holes are large enough to allow worker bees to crawl through, carrying their loads of nectar, into the upper boxes. They are too small to allow the queen through, so she remains confined to the bottom box.



Next talk

Saturday 28 March 2015 at 2pm - Tony Riome from Ayr Beekeepers Association is coming to talk to us on "Beekeeping Mistakes" and "Gardening for Pollinators" at Kilmallie Community Centre, Station Road, Corpach, Fort William, PH33 7JH. The cost will be £3 to non-members to help towards the cost of the event. We hope you can join us!

Beginners Course

We are very pleased to announce that we are carrying out a Beekeeping Beginners course funded by Highlife Highland at West Highland College UHI on 17,18,24,25 March 2015 from 6.30-9pm. This course will cover all aspects of beekeeping! If you wish to book a place then please contact Janice on 01397 874270 or janice.wegner.whc@uhi.ac.uk.

If you would like us to bring the bees along and give a talk to your group or if you would like more information about what we do then please do call me

Sarah Kennedy
07768 805040 or e-mail secretary@lochaberbeekeepers.org



green fingers

Garden in spring

Spring is on its way!!! Exciting times ahead, snowdrops are nearly past, daffodils almost out and all manner of bulbs popping up. Birds are also thinking about nesting so check trees etc before trimming them.

Pruning can begin now on apple, plum, pear trees, also fruit bushes and roses. Also a good idea to mulch round the base and give a feed. I cut the clematis down with varying degrees of success as I lose labels, so not entirely sure what variety I am dealing with. As a rule of thumb, the ones that flower early are left alone until after they have flowered and tidied up then. The large-flowered summer varieties get cut half way and the rest get cut to about 4", then feed them with sulphate of potash and cross your fingers. This 'method' seems to work fine.

Now the seeds have arrived it is time to plant sweet peas. I have found, after years of trial and error that about 4-5 seeds in a 4" pot works best as they don't need to be re-potted and just be planted out near the end of May. All the plants that have over-wintered in the greenhouse or conservatory get re-potted into fresh compost and tidied up. Also time to remember where you put the begonia and dahlia tubers. We always lose a number of begonias to vine weevils so pick them over carefully before potting up. There are still Brussels sprouts and cabbage growing: these can be hung up in a garage or shed and will keep quite well for a decent length of time.

When planting seeds etc in your nice clean tidy greenhouse, make sure you use the correct compost. We use seed compost and then transfer to potting on when the plants are big enough.

The garlic is growing well, we had enough chillis last year to feed an army, also had success with lemongrass so OK for lots of Thai cooking!

The wild birds have eaten us out of house and home this winter. Apparently whole peanuts are dangerous for baby birds so make sure the nuts are in feeders. We have dogs who would be quite partial to a baby bird or two so we are quite careful to check for small feathery things hopping about before we let the girls out.

Happy gardening

Morag Mackell



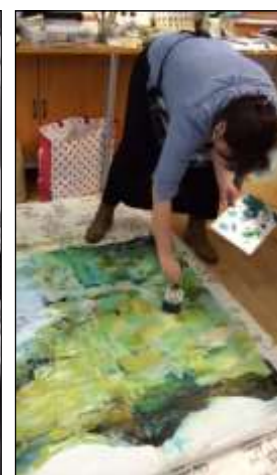
art lochaber

We have enjoyed some excellent workshops this year already including collage at The Hub with Dorothy Kelly, drawing and painting at Glencoe with tutor Alan Anderson from Argyll, and Mixed Media at An Clachan with tutor Bella Green from Lockerbie.

Our final class of this season Life Drawing with Alan McGowan from Leith School of Art takes place 14/15 March.

Following our season of interesting and diverse workshops we will host the ANNUAL ART EXHIBITION at Ben Nevis Distillery from Saturday 23rd May till Wednesday 3rd June. ALL WELCOME!

Anyone interested in joining or finding out more about activities please see our website artlochaber.co.uk or ring me on 01397 772806 or Dorothy on 01855 821 296.
Lorna Finlayson



It's spring! brown bins now getting collected till 27 Nov



wild about kilmallie

Tracking in the Snow

The cold weather this last winter was great for following footprints in the snow, with overnight sprinklings providing the perfect medium for fresh tracks. The most obvious around us are those of the pine martens, which wander all around the house and garden. The martens have surprisingly large feet, which leave large prints. A good imprint may show the five claws on each foot signs, but the usual impression is of an elongated paw. The trails often meander, showing where the martens deviate to investigate some smell or rustle, and rarely follow a straight line. Marten trails can also be easily seen along the canal towpath and through the Erracht forestry. We even found a trail that had ventured out onto the snow-covered ice on the canal itself, although the animal simply wandered out into the middle and went back again – who knows why?

What has surprised us rather more are the number of fox tracks around. The paw print has a diamond shape, with four claws, as opposed to the rounder dog print, and often the claw marks of the middle two toes can be seen. Foxes tend to walk in straight lines and also make good use of the canal towpath. Judging from the variety of print sizes there are several foxes around. Indeed, we followed a set right along the canal and down into the boggy fields by the Lochy. As these were fresh prints we hoped to see the fox, and were rewarded by the sight of a large, furry, dog-fox, hunting in the rush tussocks for mice and voles. It was oblivious to our presence and patiently watched and waited before pouncing into the snow. Once the fox finally got wind of us and ran off we went to see what it had been up to and clearly saw that its prints were much larger than the ones we had been following earlier.

We were also delighted to find a set of otter prints by the gate at Loy Bridge. The otter had clearly come up the track from the canal tunnel, made a brief foray into the adjacent field and then turned back towards the river. In fresh snow otter prints are quite large and splayed, and a good one will show all five claws, with a hint of the webbing between them. Badger tracks, also to be seen along the canal, are also easily recognised as they have 5 long parallel claws with a generally narrow pad print behind them.

The deer have also been out in force and fresh prints should also alert the tracker to the presence of the animals themselves. We were following two sets of red deer prints



along the Glen Loy road on the riverside verge, until we eventually saw the culprits – two hinds that has crossed over the river and were lurking on the far bank. Red deer tracks are large with rounded cleats. Often in deep snow they also leave a secondary imprint of heir dew claws behind the main cleat pattern. Roe deer prints are much neater and smaller, and often quite deep. The cleats are pointed and the prints are therefore sharp and delicate in appearance, as opposed to the larger, parallel cleats with blunt ends of sheep.

Small mammals have also been surprisingly active in the snow. We have found several sets of mouse or vole prints crossing from one side of a forest track to another, often disappearing into holes in the snow. These must make an easy target from predators against the white snow, but we only found signs where one had met an untimely demise. Perhaps more strikingly we found the trails where rodents had been tunnelling just underneath the surface of the snow. These looked just like miniature white mole runs. Where the snow meets the grass is a layer of warmer air that allows small animals to move about and feed, insulated from the cold above. No doubt as voles move around this zone they push up little mounds of snow above them.

Birds also leave clear tracks in the snow, and these too can be fun to investigate. Webbed feet could belong to ducks or gulls, while larger tracks with typically three toes pointing forward and one back are likely to



Thanks to Angela Mercer for photos, top to bottom: otter print, underground vole trail, fox print, pine marten print.

be those of herons. Underneath the bird feeders smaller versions of this pattern are repeated as a variety of chaffinches, robins, dunnocks and blackbirds mosey around looking for food' These tracks are most likely to show two footprints side by side, as the birds hop as opposed to walk. Larger birds hopping through deep snow may also leave an imprint of their tail behind them. Judging from this type of trail, crows commonly land on one side of a forest track then hop across to the other before flying off again. Quite what they are up to is anyone's guess, but trying to make sense of tracks in the snow can provide hours of cheap entertainment while the white stuff lasts.

Jon Mercer
Glenloy Wildlife



passage to Terra Nova Bay

Terra Nova Bay, on the western shores of the Ross Sea in Antarctica, lies at 74 South and 164 East. Flanked by steep, icy cliffs and 3000m mountains, the snowy massiveness of the environment is everything you would picture if asked to conjure a vision of the Antarctic continent.

What were we doing there? Russell Leaper and I are currently at sea on the RV Tangaroa, a research ship working on a joint New Zealand/Australian voyage studying Antarctic ecosystems. Our role in the project is to research the region's Antarctic blue whales, and try to assess whether their numbers are increasing after the terrible effects of mid 20th Century whaling.

However, we're lucky enough to be working with marine scientists from many other fields of study too, so we can look at how whales fit into the Antarctic food web as a whole, and who is eating whom – from tiny plant plankton, to animal plankton, to small fish, all the way up to seabirds, seals, penguins and whales.

One of the fish that the fisheries scientists onboard are interested in is Antarctic silverfish. They are very important prey for a variety of species, but we would like to know more about their spawning and migration.

And so to Terra Nova Bay in the Ross Sea, a hotspot for

silverfish, and where we hoped to find out more about their habits by deploying a mooring with an echosounder which will ping all through the Antarctic winter, searching for silverfish.

Our passage across the Ross Sea, southwest to Terra Nova was a murky one. Having been at sea without sight of land for weeks, we were excited by the prospect of seeing the continent. But grey fog and snow surrounded us from dawn, and there seemed little hope of a dramatic arrival at the bay. And arrival itself was not even a certainty. Bands of sea ice between us and the bay had been heavy in recent days, and we weren't sure we would be able to get through.

The afternoon drew on, and we pushed on through the pancake ice, sea ice that forms when the surface freezes and the sea becomes a continuous mass of round ice plates. And then the snowy mists seemed to thin, and shapes emerged on the horizon. Land? The shapes seemed too big; maybe just cloud? No, definitely land – the huge jagged-toothed bulk of Cape Washington on the north entrance to the Bay, guarded by powerful icebergs, with the snowy mountains of Ross Island to the south in the distance.

Slowly, from the mountains upwards, a thin slice of pale blue sky began to push upwards, the sun muscling its way through the cloud and illuminating the glaciers. By dinner time, it was sharp, still blue sky all round, with even some warmth in the Antarctic sun, bright on the snowy plateaus, slowly fading to pink as the sun set at around midnight.

By then the mooring was successfully deployed, and will be recovered in about a year, hopefully full of data on the winter movements of the silverfish, another piece of the Antarctic food web jigsaw falling into place.

Susannah Calderan





we'd love contributions from any Gaelic poets and short story writers, all ages!

beagan eachdraidh Bhanbhaidh agus bailtean croitearachd eile

Thainig teaglach mathair m'athair gu Bhanbhaidh bho Cheann Loch Airceig aig toiseach an naoidheamh linn deug.

Bha riaghaltas Breatainn air Oighreachd Loch lall a' gabhail tharis às dèidh bliadhna Thearlaich. Rinn Coimisean nan Oighreachd Arfuntaichte tuathanasan mòra le Banbhaidh, A' Chorpach, Taobh Lòchaidh agus Moigh Siorralaich. Tha dùil agam gum bhiodh na h-àiteachan sin nan tac, air an leigeil a mach air mhàl do luchd-dàimh Loch lall ro àm Chùil Lodair. Bhiodh mòran daoine bochd air lotaichean fhaighinn agus feannagan a togail agus àitich fo ùghdarras an fhir-taca. Fhuair Henry Butter, ceannard a' Choimisean, A' Chorpach air mhàl agus fhuair fear Tearlach Stiubhart, fear lagha, Banbhaidh, ach, as dèidh greis, thug Butter, fear sanntach, coirbte, Banbhaidh thairis cuideachd agus talamh ionaltraidh ri taobh Loch Airceig.

A rèir aithisge a sgrìobh Uileam Moiresdan airson a' Choimisean ann an 1775 thog Butter taigh mòr, spaideil anns a' Chorpach agus chuir a chaidhean le ballaichean chloiche, a' cur às dhan t-seann dòigh obrach nam feannagan no run-rig. Anns an dòigh seo thàinig an ar-a-mach àiteachais Cill Mhalaidh.

Fhuair Loch lall, ogha Loch lall aig àm bliadhna Thearlaich, an oighreachd air ais ann an 1784. Bha fiachan mòra aice agus bha aice ri càin de £3433 9s 1d a phàigheadh dhan riaghaltas. Bha an oighreachd fo smachd urrasair o chionn gun robh Loch lall na bhalach òg, dìreach ochd bliadhna a dh'aois. Thòisich iad màil a chur an àirde agus daoine bochda fhuadach gus tuathanasan mòra chaora a' cruathachadh.

Cha robh Banbhaidh, A' Chorpach agus Moigh Siorralaich dìreach cho luachmhòr mar tuathanasan as dèidh togail a' chanàil agus chuir Loch lall roimhe na àiteachan sin a thoirt dhan daoine a chaidh am fuadach bho cheann Loch Airceig. Feumaidh mi aideachadh nach eil mi cinnteach cuin a thachair sin. Chreid m'athair gun d'ràinig a shinnsearan bho Ghleann Deas Àirigh, aig ceann Loch Airceig, c1840; fhuair iad croit ann an Banbhaidh agus obair air an ath-thogail mòr a bha a' dol air adhart air a' chanàil aig an àm sin. Thuirt e gun do dh'fhalbh mòran dhuibh do Bhictoria ann an Astràilia nuair a thàinig an obair gu crìoch ann an 1848 air sàillibh gainnead fearainn. Tha beagan trioblaid agam leis a' chunntas a tha seo ged-tà. A rèir An t-Urramach Somhairle Mac a' Mhaoilein, chaidh munntir Ghleann Deas Àirigh am fuadaich ann an 1804 agus chaidh a chlàradh anns na clàraidhean Sgìre Cill Mhalaidh gun tuiirt Loch lall ann an 1810 gun robh e airson nan tuathanasan ri taobh a' chanàil a thoirt do croitearan. Tha fios againne, cuideachd, gun do thug Iain Camshron (Coirechoille) taobh Loch Airceig thairis, uile gu lèir, bho Alasdair Dòmhnallach, Gleann Comhann, agus Iain Caimbeul, Gleann Iubhar, ann an 1834 agus am fearann fo chaoraich mar tha. Tha aon rud cinnteach ged-tà. Bha Banbhaidh làn dhaoine, anns na seann làithean, air an robh ainmean mar Camshron, Mac a' Mhaoilein agus Mac-a-phì a bha cumanta aig cheann Loch Airceig ro àm nan fuadaichean.

(A translation of this will be provided later)

Ron Cameron

The little West Highland train

“Let the train take the strain.” This well known slogan gave me the idea for a poem – one which children might enjoy. I enjoy trains myself and much prefer them to buses for a long journey.

I'm a little West Highland train,
Down to Glasgow and back again,
Leaving Mallaig at break of day
Lochs and mountains along my way,
Whether it's snow or frost or rain.
Clickity clack, I'll be back again.

I've lots of stops along my way.
People out for a shopping day,
Climbers and walkers along the route
Happy to hear my loud too-oot,
Tourists enjoying the scenic view –
Majestic mountains and roe deer too.

I greet the folk at each small station
Sounding my horn in jubilation,
Climbing now on Rannoch moor
I reach the top of the hill – Corrour.
Over the moors I go and then
By Loch Lomond go down again.

Queen Street soon, the end of the line,
I'll rest a while but be right on time
For I'm a little West Highland train
and back to Mallaig I'll go again.

Ruth Miller



The little West Highland train crossing Rannoch Moor
photo Alan Mitchell

soon to be published The Cinderella Murders

by Corpach author David Cargill

Provisional date for David's book launch is
Thursday 18th June
at Kilmallie Community Centre
Final details to be confirmed

congratulations Mac!

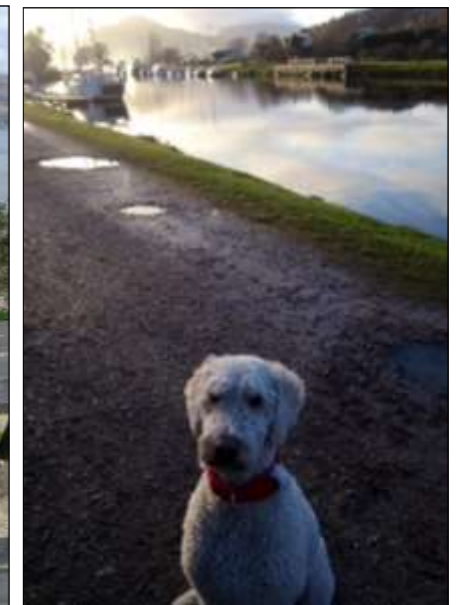
We're delighted to announce that Mac wins FOCAL's £20 prize for the best picture of a dog enjoying the worst of the weather beside, on, or in the canal between Corpach and Moy, whilst NOT wearing a "fetching tweed coat" (see full story in June 2014 issue of the newsletter). FOCAL have donated a further £20 to local Scottish Canal funds. Many thanks to all the dogs who entered.

Top: (winner) Four year old Mac tells us he walks the canal twice a day 365 days of the year. We loved his intense concentration on the water, oblivious of the cold and wet. It's also a beautiful portrait in colour, texture and light.

middle row:
left - Smokey at the very start of the canal at the Corpach basin last autumn. We loved the quality of light in this photo, and the way the winter sun is reflected off Smokey's beautiful coat.

middle: springer spaniel Lucy, at Corpach. She just makes us smile every time we look at this picture!
right: Ted looks so cosy in his own woolly coat and the canal looks beautifully atmospheric.

bottom row:
left - it's great the way the snow and ice accentuate the structure of the Shengain aqueduct. Labbie Abbie looks so cosy and content in the snow.
right - a bitterly cold portrayal of Banavie basin. Maybe Niko is coveting Kshama's pink down jacket? See the photos in colour at www.kilmallie.org.uk



STOP PRESS - FOCAL were sad to hear of the extensive damage to Culloch Weir in the middle district of the canal due to the extreme weather of 7/8 March. All credit to Scottish Canals for mobilising repairs really quickly & making plans to minimise the length of time the canal has to be closed.

FOCAL

(Friends of Caledonian Canal Lochaber)



happy 200th birthday to Torcastle aqueduct



history snippets - Banavie

Remembering Hugh Muir again in this, the first of his collections of snippets about the history of Banavie and surrounding areas which he sent us before he died. With **thanks as ever to Hugh's family for permission to publish it.**

Where is Banavie ? Roughly from the main road Corpach sign and about 300 yards from the shore on the south side, then along the west side of the Blar and up towards Muirshairlich. Prior to construction of the canal this was a fairly scattered and thinly populated area although up to 100 crofts were said to be in the area. Over the last 60 or so years there has been considerable expansion in housing.

The name Banavie:
Banavy (1461) Banivy (1492)
Banaventa
Banbhaidh
Banbha (Irish)

What does Banavie mean ? There are numerous interpretations:
young suckling pig
fair face of a slope
high place
foot of gap

Where is Camaghael ? It is now known as the area on the north section of the Blar all on the West of the River Lochy.
What does Camaghael mean ? Suggested as Bay of the Fields.

The earliest claimed 'event' in the Banavie area was by a Glenfinnan priest. In 1948 his research showed that the Romans had reached Banavie and c389 St Patrick was born there!

About 1740 Lochiel had a large ditch dug across the Blar from Banavie to the river Lochy in an attempt to dry up the area.

Hundreds of years ago, before there was a Fort, Banavie was known as a trading post - one item mentioned was antlers.

In the early 1770s it was reported that there were few trees in Corpach and Banavie.

Badabrie means Lochaber Man's Thicket, or Wood of Lochaber. Lochiel lived here for a short time between living at Torcastle and moving to Achnacarry in 1665. It was also the home of Butter, estate factor, before he moved to Corpach House - believed to have been in the now Canal / Kilmallie Road area. A hillock to the west of Badabrie is Tom a Chrochaidh = hill of hanging.

On a map of 1850 is shown a Poorhouse at Camaghael - not shown by 1900. Not so long ago this area was well known for its potatoes and milk production.

Banavie has the rather unique and famous Neptune's Staircase. In the Glasgow Herald of 1822 it is quoted "the Staircase was a memorable construction costing £50,000 and was the greatest mass of masonry in the world"! The strip of ground to build the canal from Loch Lochy to Corpach was sold by Lochiel for £2,000.

Work on the canal started in 1803 but it was not until 1822 that the first through voyage was made. The Staircase was constructed in the shorter period of 1807-1811. The two bow-windowed large canal houses were built during this time. They were built for the lock-keepers but were used initially by construction masons etc. Labourers were paid
1803 1/6 - 1/8d per day
1814 2/4 - 2/6d per day

It appears that Banavie quarry was not a major supplier of stone compared with other named sources. The quarry was not known to be used again until it was reopened in the late 1940s by Wilsons with Tom Gardner as Manager.

While the names are known of at least 13 steamboats which plied the canal, the last was the Gondolier. The Gondolier stopped regular sailings in 1939 having started in 1886. Queen Victoria sailed on her. In 1860 the cost of a ticket, Banavie to Inverness, was 6d. In 1927 the steamer to Inverness left Banavie 11.20am and arrived 7pm. For comparison the Fort William to Inverness bus took 4½ hours.

The original Canal road crossing was at the third lock up (next to the Moorings). The first road from here to the River Lochy was constructed starting in 1804. That was to the Lochy Ferry, with the first Lochy Bridge being built in 1849.

Hugh Muir



The structure of Neptune's Staircase exposed to view during repairs. Photo: Alex Gillespie, courtesy of Scottish Canals

ten years ago

this snip is taken from
Kilmallie Community News
Issue 21,
February 2005

News about the Belford Renal Unit and "The Renal Dialysis Lochaber Fund".

Completion date for the Renal Dialysis Unit

As a result of the bad weather before Christmas and the extended New Year break, not helped by the storms in early January, there has been a set back to the start up by one week. The present estimate date for the completion of work on the new Renal Dialysis Building at the Belford Hospital is the end of April, that is in 12 weeks. After the work and general clean up is completed a two week commissioning period is necessary to allow the nursing staff and the technician to check the dialysis machines and associated monitoring equipment. Also the water treatment plant, an important part of equipment for kidney dialysis has to be tested. It will therefore be mid May before the Lochaber kidney patients get their first local dialysis treatment at the Belford Hospital Renal Unit and we have to apologise to the renal patients for the delay, having waited for so long.



picture quiz no 5

In our December 2014 issue, our picture quiz was this photo of Banavie taken in 1896 which had been sent in by Andy Goodwin from Sweden. We asked if this house was still standing and whether anyone could figure out exactly where the picture was taken. It only took a few days to solve, with thanks to Ron Cameron, Joanne MacGillivray and Neil McBride.



The house in Andy Goodwin's fascinating photo was situated on or near the driveway down to "Corrieglen" at the crest of the hill on the B8004 before it begins the descent to Seangan Bridge. Its location can be established on a map as it lines up, in the photo, with Inverloch Castle and the snow patch below the first platform of the NE Buttress on the Ben. Initially I wasn't sure about this as the present tree cover makes it difficult to see all the landscape features that appear in the photo. However Joanne MacGillivray, Dontra, and Neil McBride are both convinced of the location and I am sure they are right. The photo also shows a bend in the river and Lochan nam Beisean (the wee loch of the beasts, possibly otters) on the other side of the river. This also helps to locate the house. In the 1950s there was an abandoned house on this site that had been the home of Jessie Glen. Jessie Glen's was a square cornered, modern structure and may have been built on the site of the house in the photo, although I half remember some older ruins beside it.

The house in the photo is interesting. It has rounded corners and no chimney, said to be a features of homes built before 1800. My father believed that Banavie had been a farm before the construction of the canal and was broken up for crofts which were rented to Camerons, MacMillans and MacPhees who had been removed from Glen Dessary, at the head of Loch Arkaig. He said this happened about 1840 and that the people found employment in the repairs and

improvement to the canal that happened at that time. Notwithstanding my father's reputation as an expert on local history, I am inclined to question this account as I think the Glen Dessary clearances happened in 1804.

My father also said that initially most of the crofters constructed turf walled houses which were abandoned when most of the population emigrated to Australia when the canal work dried up in 1848. Turf houses were common in the Central Highlands, Badenoch and Speyside, but less so in the west and in the islands. It is therefore possible that the wee house in the picture dated from before the division of Banavie into crofts and was the home of a worker, sub-tenant or cottar on the original Banavie farm. Donald MacCulloch speculated that Mount Alexander, a short distance from that house in pre-canal days, was the original farm house, occupied by the tenant in chief.

I am really pleased to have had a chance to see that photo. Thanks to Andy Goodwin.

Ronald Cameron

PS The house in the photo was at, or near, OS grid ref NN126787





LOCHABER WOMEN'S AID

Women Supporting Women

Ross-shire, Caithness & Sutherland and Lochaber Women's Aid have recently received funding from the Big Lottery Fund for a project providing services to women from Eastern Europe across Caithness & Sutherland, Ross-shire, Lochaber & Skye.

The project aims to provide eastern European women affected by domestic abuse with practical and emotional support to help combat homelessness as a result of it.

There are specific barriers that women from Eastern European communities face in getting the help they need, these include little confidence in speaking to agencies due to limited English language skills and different cultural perceptions of domestic abuse. Through the employment of 3 support workers with additional language skills (Polish and Romanian) the project hopes to make the services offered a lot more accessible and sensitive to the women's cultural background. The wide range of services provided include information on women's rights, liaising with other agencies that can help (housing, benefits, legal advice), advocacy, group support or assistance in finding a safe place for them and their children.

Eastern European Women across Lochaber wishing to get in touch with the Support Worker allocated to the area



should phone 07850 831842 (Tuesday – Thursday). Alternatively, they can phone Lochaber Women's Aid on 01397 705734.

Organizațiile locale Women's Aid din Ross-shire, Caithness & Sutherland și Lochaber au primit finanțare de la Fondul Marea Loterie pentru un proiect care oferă servicii pentru femei din estul Europei și care sunt stabilite în zonele mai sus amintite.

Proiectul își propune să ofere suport practic și emoțional femeilor est-europene afectate de violență domestică, cu scopul de a preveni ca aceste femei să devină persoane fără adăpost ca urmare a acestei experiențe.

Femeile din comunitățile est-europene întâmpină bariere specifice în a obține ajutorul de care au nevoie, printre care faptul că nu vorbesc limba engleză, ceea ce le afectează încrederea de a intra în legătură cu diverse agenții sau percepții culturale diferite despre violența domestică. Angajând 3 lucrători care vorbesc limbile poloneză și română (pe lângă limba engleză), proiectul speră să facă serviciile oferite mult mai accesibile și în același timp sensibile la specificul cultural al acestor femei. Proiectul oferă o gamă largă de servicii, printre care informații despre drepturi sociale, îndrumare către alte agenții care pot ajuta (ajutoare sociale, sfat legal, locuințe sociale), advocacy, grup de suport sau ajutor în a găsi o locuință în siguranță pentru ele și copiii lor.

Femeile est-europene care locuiesc în Lochaber și doresc să intre în legătură cu persoana alocată pentru această zonă pot suna la 07850831842 (de marți până joi). Alternativ, pot apela Lochaber Women's Aid la 01397 705734.

Ross-Shire, Caithness & Sutherland i Lochaber Women's Aid, organizație charytativne prczivdziałające przemocy domowej, otrzymały dofinansowanie od Big Lottery Fund na projekt, świadczący usługi dla kobiet i ich dzieci z Europy Wschodniej, mieszkających na terenie Caithness i Sutherland, Easter Ross, Wester Ross, Lochaber, Ross-Shire i Skye.

Projekt ten ma na celu zapewnienie emocjonalnego i praktycznego wsparcia kobietom dotkniętym przemocą domową, a także walkę z bezdomnością, która może z tego wynikać.

Kobiety pochodzące z Europy Wschodniej stoją w obliczu bariery, która może utrudniać uzyskiwanie potrzebnej im pomocy, w tym brak pewności siebie w rozmowach z agencjami i urzędami, ze względu na ograniczoną znajomość języka angielskiego i różnice kulturowe zmieniające wyobrażenie na temat czym jest przemoc domowa. Poprzez zatrudnienie trzech pracowników wsparcia, posiadających zdolności językowe (polski i rumuński), projekt ma nadzieję, że oferowane usługi będą bardziej dostępne i adekwatne do różnicowanych kulturowo potrzeb kobiet pochodzących z Europy Wschodniej. Szeroki zakres usług obejmuje między innymi: inofmracje na temat praw kobiet, współpracę z innymi agencjami pomocowymi (urząd mieszkaniowy, porady prawne, centrum zasiłków), adwokaturę, wsparcie grupowe lub pomoc w znalezieniu bezpiecznego miejsca zamieszkania.

Kobiety z Europy Wschodniej, mieszkające na terenie Lochaber, pragnące skontaktować się z jednym z pracowników pomocowych, powinny dzwonić pod numer 07850831842 (Wtorek – Czwartek) lub alternatywnie pod numer Lochaber Women's Aid 01397 705734.

*Mihaela Tomescu
Eastern European Women Support Worker 07850 831842*

letters

We love to receive letters and feedback. Please let us know what you think about the newsletter, and write to us with your news views questions and answers



Hi there.

Andy Goodwin here from Gothenburg. Happy new Year to you all and thanks for all the features in the Kilmallie new letters during 2014. I hope that I can contribute a few more this coming year.

I was wondering if anybody knows if the Hogmanay party will be released on DVD or if anybody has been able to make a copy of the show. I was unable to see it on the internet as it was only available for the UK mainland and I would love to see it and the hall again.

Has the white tape on the floor been renewed since 1979 as it was me that put

the tape markings down for the badminton floor on that occasion.

Cheers
Andy

PS Well the storm has just passed Gothenburg and we were battered for about 18 hours with gusts of about 80 mph.

PPS Great to read that Ronald knows about the "black House". I look forward with anticipation to read what he says about it. His dad Walter was my headmaster at Banavie Primary and also Tomonie. He was also my shinty mentor.

Kilmallie chosen for carbon reduction project

Lochaber Environmental Group are delighted to announce that they have received funding from the Climate Challenge Fund to deliver a brand new project starting in April this year. The project, called Carbon Reduction Lochaber, will continue much of the great work they have done to help people understand how much energy they are using in their home and to work with them to reduce their energy use and save money as a result. The new project will focus on three communities and the great news is that Kilmallie is one of the areas that has been chosen.

There will be community events and activities happening over the next 12 months, but if you are keen to get started

and would like to chat to someone about how to find out a bit more detail about what is actually using all the electricity in your own home, then get in touch with the team on 01397 700 090 or email life@lochaber-environmental-group.org.uk

Jane Beaton



spotlight

Talk Lochaber

Talk Lochaber is a local charity providing a "talking newspaper" service for visually impaired people or people otherwise unable to access the printed word, most of whom live in the Lochaber area. Established in 1999, it operates with a thirty strong band of volunteers, a mixture of readers, editor-readers, technicians and administration staff.

Once a week, on a Thursday evening, that week's editor prepares the script, a series of news stories, articles and the occasional light hearted piece from a variety of sources, but chiefly, the Lochaber News, Lochaber Life, Scottish Memories and the Scots Magazine. The readers then meet in the evening, at 7pm for an hour or so, in the studio at An Drochaidh, Claggan to record the readings – the atmosphere is always relaxed and good fun! With a rota system in place the volunteer readers are usually involved about once a month. Twice a year a magazine version is recorded, which is generally a much more light-hearted affair, often with guest speakers. Originally recorded on cassettes, then micro cassettes, the readings are now recorded on memory sticks and these

are posted out free of charge, by our good friends the Royal Mail. Each of our listeners has been provided with a "boom box" in which the memory stick is inserted, a very simple operation. The stick is returned to the studio in the same easy-to-use pouch, again free of charge, ready for re-use the following week. Talk Lochaber currently has 53 listeners, 16 of whom are resident in the Kilmallie area. Like most local charities, Talk Lochaber is totally dependent on volunteers, and, like most charities, is always looking for new recruits, either as an editor, reader or technician. The technician's duty is to monitor the sound pitch and quality during the

recording and then to download the finished product onto the memory sticks.

There are several fundraising activities throughout the year and once a year there is a social get together of the volunteers and listeners. Talk Lochaber has received national awards for its work, and it is always great to get feedback from our listeners.

If you might be interested in joining our team, then please contact our secretary Heather on 01397 702240; or contact VAL at An Drochaidh, who will direct you to some of the volunteers. If you would like to listen in one evening to see if this might be for you, without any obligation, then please give Heather a ring.

Gerald McIntyre

Some of the volunteers at a recent recording



focus on folk



Thanks this time to Lorna Ungoed-Thomas from Banavie for telling us about her life and interests.

I was born in Edinburgh into a very musical family. My mother, grandfather, two uncles & two aunts were all professional classical musicians, so as children my brothers & I were surrounded by music. At the age of around six I started to learn the violin, being taught by one of my aunts, Edna Arthur, who was well known in both classical & traditional circles at that time. I also learned clarinet as a second instrument – my brothers played trumpet & French horn but Mum wouldn't let me take up the trombone! However the violin remained my first love and I might have chosen music as my career had I not also developed my love of & interest in animals. This was an out of character thing for our family as we had only ever had a rabbit & some fish as pets & we had no other animal connections. Perhaps it was a rebellion against the engineers in the family as Dad & both my brothers went down that path. I always wanted to be Zoo Vet, but alas that was not to be.

So I studied Veterinary Medicine & Surgery at Edinburgh University, finally graduating as a Veterinary Surgeon in 1984. After a few years working & living south of the border, and meantime meeting & marrying Colin whose parents moved to Lochaber when the Pulp Mill started up in the early 60s, we returned to Fort William in 1988 and here we have remained.

My first dog was a Welsh Springer Spaniel that Mum & I got from a fellow vet student in the 80s. Ruaridh stayed at home when I left, lived till he was 15, and nearly broke my mother's heart when he died. I still have a real soft spot for the breed. Our first Labrador arrived not long after we moved to Fort William & she was locally bred near Invergarry. Bracken introduced me to the world of dog shows & obedience training and I have enjoyed participating in these activities ever since. The highlights with our dogs over the years have been: winning in obedience competition; competing at Crufts several times & winning a First Prize there last year (Daisy gaining two Best in Show awards; breeding 4 litters over the years & looking forward to our next one soon; and of course Winnie's appearance in the TV series Monarch of the Glen which was a great experience to join in the filming over 3 summers. Most of all

though, they have all been wonderful friends & companions at home and I wouldn't be without them.

My musical interests have continued as a hobby throughout my lifetime, and I have played in many orchestras over the years. Currently I play in the Showstoppers Band for their stage musicals in Fort William, with Highland Chamber Orchestra who have concerts throughout the Highlands, and with a Heriot-Watt University group called Inchcolm New Music Ensemble which has a weeks' course in Knoydart or Ardtornish every summer followed by concerts in Edinburgh.

Gardening is my other main hobby and this has just grown up over the years by chance rather than design due to having a rather large garden! I enjoy exhibiting at the local Flower & Produce Shows and have been fortunate enough to win many rosettes & trophies over the last few years.

My work as a vet has brought me into contact with lots of wonderful characters, both animal and human, over the years, and has been a career of great challenges and rewards.

Lorna Ungoed-Thomas



focus on business

I believe it's been three years since the boatyard featured in the newsletter. It seems like yesterday, where do the years go? There have been no significant changes at the yard in that time. We have had a few changes to the staff, both in the workshop and in the office, and we unfortunately lost one or two of our long term employees to local competition. However, we have been extremely fortunate and been able to recruit skilled workers who have relocated to Fort William in pursuit of fresh challenges and a better quality of life.

Andy Pegram joined us almost a year ago in March 2014. Andy and his wife Sonia came up to Lochaber and were married at Cia-aig Falls. They fell in love with Lochaber and looked for employment opportunities in the hope of relocating from Norfolk. Andy settled in Norfolk in 2004 having spent more than a year travelling around the world, and found work in a boatyard servicing a fleet of electric hire boats which were available for hire on the Norfolk

This time we have an update from Don at Corpach Boatbuilding Co. Why not join with them and others and become a sponsor of Kilmallie Community News: you could be included in our next Focus on Business!

Broads. It was his love of the mountains and the sea which took him to Lochaber. Quite a contrast to flat expanses of Norfolk!

Andy is a keen walker, mountain biker and sailor. He spent much of his spare time racing dinghies on the Norfolk Broads, and undertook a number of yacht deliveries with an experienced delivery skipper. To further his boatbuilding experience Andy spent a year at the International Boatbuilding Training Centre at Oulton Broad where he learned a wide range of new skills and techniques.

Andy has proven to be a great asset to Corpach Boatbuilding Company bringing with him not only practical boatbuilding skills but hands-on experience of being afloat in a variety of craft. He and Sonia have chosen to live in Lochaber because of the natural environment and the quality of life that it brings which is surely testament to our belief that Lochaber is the Outdoor Capital of The UK!

Don Hind



PUZZLES FROM THE PITHEAN



picture quiz no 6

Where in Kilmallie is this? and how long has it been there?

Answer to Picture Quiz No 5: see page 27

Answers to these puzzles are on the website www.kilmallie.org.uk (follow the link on the RHS of the homepage) and will also be published in the next issue of the newsletter for people without access to the internet

"some straight, some cryptic, some easy, some not so easy"

Crossword grid with numbered squares for clues.

Across

- 1 Can be in it in this van(7)
4 This girl's a confused game going north (5)
7 Sorcery (5)
9 Mixed trainer does it again (7)
10 Can be lunar or solar (7)
11 Wine (5)
12 Pill contained in stab letters (6)
14 Taster mix for those special things (6)
18 Big church (5)
20 Eight sided figure (7)
22 Sounds like a nutty military man (7)
23 Innards (5)
24 Nurses about dents (5)
25 Alters (7)

Down

- 1 Storm (7)
2 A fish or Gabriel (5)
3 Part of the nectar getting a goal (6)
4 Measuring device (5)
5 Breakfast cereal (7)
6 Martial arts expert (5)
8 Small bit of wood (5)
13 Maybe the gardens hung here (7)
15 A trio around proportion (5)
16 These are not married (7)
17 Hat or cricketer (6)
18 They have races here (5)
19 Colloquial Americans (5)
21 Presents (5)

Thank you to Tony Whitelocke for another great crossword.

Answers to last issue's puzzle: Across: 1 COMMENT, 4 BABEL, 7 NIGHT, 9 RACQUET, 10 RANGERS, 11 NOUNS, 12 LADDER, 14 BATTER, 18 SCRAM, 20 FOOTMAN, 22 EPISODE, 23 TOTAL, 24 LOGIE, 25 SHALLOT Down: 1 CONTROL, 2 MEGAN, 3 THRUSH, 4 BACON, 5 BOUQUET, 6 LOTUS, 8 THEME, 13 DARLING, 15 ABOUT, 16 RINGLET, 17 OFFERS, 18 STEAL, 19 MOOSE, 21 MOTEL