

Ness News

Community News & Events

December 2023



The Gathering



Matthew Runs for Funds



India Trek





Welcome to the Christmas edition of Ness News and hope you can attend some of the local upcoming events.

The Fort Augustus Children's and Senior Citizens' Christmas Parties are both being held on Saturday, 16th December. The children's parties are at the village hall with the younger children at 12 pm and the older ones at 3 pm and the over 60's at The Lovat at 12.30 pm. If you are new to the area, please contact me by email at deirdre_x@hotmail.co.uk or my mobile phone number below so that we can add you to our lists.

The Silver Surfers "Christmas" lunch for the over 60's in Glenmoriston is at the Millennium Hall on Friday, 12th January 2024.

Glengarry Senior Citizens are having their Christmas Meal at 6.30 pm on Thursday, 21st December at the Glengarry Community Hall. To book your meal, please contact Lea MacNally on 01809 511220 or Maria MacRae on 07718 316540 by 14th December.

Other events are in the posters towards back of the magazine and in the church section.

Regarding local community councils, Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston just managed to scrape one together with only 5 submissions and Glengarry having to have an election as they had exceeded the limit with 10 submissions. Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Council are seeking more locals to co-opt so please contact any of the councillors below as well as looking for a Minute-Taker (paid position) to attend our meetings on the last Wednesday of the month:

Deirdre MacKinnon (07746839568); Mike Anderson (01320 338221); Helen Clay (07947503789); Clare Pegrum (07901663129) and Clare Levings (clarelevings7@gmail.com)

On a personal note, for all those that have been asking for my calendars, they are now available and will be for sale at the Great Glen Trading Centre and Gift Shop, Tarff Trading and Glengarry Filling Station. They will also be at the Invergarry Christmas Craft Fair on Saturday, 2nd December at the Glengarry Community Hall. For those that have already ordered, I will deliver them shortly.

Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year

Editors

Deirdre MacKinnon
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Glengarry Shinty Club

In September, our P7 age group team, won the 'Shinty World Cup' development section, the team were on form, having won through to the final winning 6 of their 7 league games and drawing one.

Having put in so much work and effort in to ensuring qualification, this team were not prepared to sit back and let another team go home with the trophy and they put the work in and won their final 4-0 to take home another piece of silverware!

This group have worked very hard in training and have a tremendous attitude towards their shinty and performances, whilst there were some teams we came up against that weren't the strongest. Our team did exactly what was needed to win but also ensured that they weren't playing too hard against those teams, taking care to ensure that no one got hurt – which is a tremendous testament to them. Whilst winning is important, they also ensured fair play and displayed a great attitude towards their competitors.

We also had our P5 age group team taking part in the 'Shinty World Cup', they did great, winning a few games and losing a few too. This team has not had so much game time, but we will ensure that they are ready to go for Season 24 and hopefully they can claim some silverware too.

A couple of weeks following this, the team travelled to Kingussie to take part in their annual 6-aside competition, again the team were on form and reached the final, with some pretty convincing victories against good teams. In the final we came up against a strong Kingussie team, who ran out as 3-1 winners. However, we showed that we can go toe to toe with the bigger clubs and that is some achievement.

This was a great way to round off our season 2023 and for the juniors, they will now switch to their indoor tournaments and we hope that we are able to do well in these too.



Our U14 team also reached the Development League Final, that was held in early September, which saw us meet Bute. However, despite it being a 'development' league final, Bute play in the main south u14 league so were unfortunately too strong for our team but the team played really well and should be proud of themselves.

Half time saw us 5-0 down and our heads were down coming in to half time, but the team rallied and played some of their best shinty in the second half – with captain, Lexie grabbing herself a great goal too.

The team were quite disappointed in how the game panned out, however, they should be proud of the performance they put in. Nerves played a part for a couple of the team, but as usual they rallied one another and our brilliant traveling





support gave them plenty of encouragement too.

We lose quite a few of the team as they are now too old for the U14 age group, but we have some exciting plans in the pipeline to continue their development as they are all fantastic players and we thank them for their work and effort at U14 level.

Our senior Men & Womens Team have closed out their Season 2023 too, taking a break before returning for preseason training in a few weeks!

Pitch Update

Our facilities are now closed for the season, allowing our playing surface time to repair and renew in preparation for a busy Season 2024.

Owning our own facilities has a lot of advantages, but also means it is us, the volunteers putting in the hard work with its upkeep and maintenance. As a club, we have always been happy to permit community use of our pitch. However, lately we have struggled with this goodwill being taken advantage of and we have an issue with dog owners not cleaning up after their pets. Given the obvious issues this causes, we have now taken the decision to no longer permit dogs on our facilities. We appreciate that it is the minority of dog owners causing this issue, but sadly, we have to take action in order to protect our members.

Matthew Runs for Funds!

Defensive stalwart, Matthew Ross took part in the David Goggins Challenge in order to raise funds for the Club. The Challenge involved running 4 miles, every 4 hours for 48 hours! A massive challenge, both mentally and physically!

Matthew began his challenge at 4pm on Tuesday 14th November and his last run began at 12 noon on Thursday 16th November – Matthew put in a huge shift over the 48 hours, despite aches and pains, sleep deprivation and some, erm, refuelling issues! Matthew completed his challenge and raised an outstanding £2500 approx for the club.

Massive thank you to everyone who donated, every penny is appreciated and we are so grateful to Matthew for taking on this challenging challenge – CONGRATULATIONS MATTHEW!



Christmas Gathering & Tractor Run

Our Christmas Gathering & Tractor Run is back for 2023! We hope we can be joined by everyone from all three communities (Invergarry, Invermoriston & Fort Augustus) to enjoy some Festive Fun and see what fantastic tractors and machines are on the run this year – there will be a trophy for the best decorated this year, so we are upping the anti!

We will have live music again from the superb 'The Fillers' and our amazing carolers will be back leading us in a Festive Sing-a-long.

The Shinty Club are aware that we spend most of the year asking for money, so our Gathering gives us the opportunity to give back so we are happy to announce that our





chosen Charity Partner for this year is Mikeysline.

Mikeysline is a vital organisation, providing much needed support for those in emotional distress, mental health issues and/or in crisis. (Text Helpline: 07786 20 77 55)

A wee note, from some feed back on last year, it will be CASH ONLY, we appreciate, it isn't always easy to get hold of cash so we thought letting everyone know in advance would help. This year, we will be able to sell Mulled Wine, so we don't want anyone missing out!

Entry to the event is free, but we are raising funds for a vital and important organisation, so expect to have buckets rattled at you!

Club Commitment to Mental Health

For several months, the club has been working on its commitment to Mental Health. This is something that, as a club, we feel is vital to ensuring the wellbeing of our members, as well as our community.

We are delighted to announce that we will be launching this in December, so please watch our social media for more information.

Want to Get Involved?

Our club has been a long-standing part of local history and we want to ensure its future going forward. We have a small group of people on the club committee committed to doing so and engaging with our changing community.

Historically, shinty is a sport that was grown from small Highland communities and everyone grew up playing the game that their ancestors did and so on. However, as our community welcomes new people and families, we are aware that most would be unaware of shinty. As our community welcomes new people, it also welcomes new skills, new ideas and new energy. We would love to have some of that at the club and would warmly welcome anyone keen to get out and become involved. We have loads of roles and opportunities that don't require any shinty knowledge and we are great at finding something for people to do!! If you would like more information, please email: community.ggsc@aol.com

Cill Chuimein Heritage Group

The present committee have served since 2015 and have been re-elected for the present year. Due to unforeseen circumstances two committee members have had to stand down leaving an unworkable situation. The committee are very keen for the group to continue and ask that you all consider joining with others to form a new committee.

The group was started a long time ago with the aim of like-minded members together promoting and conserving the heritage of Fort Augustus and the surrounding Highland area. Over the years we have had many interesting speakers at our meetings, and field trips to further afield places of note. We have taken on several local projects of historical and heritage importance involving the village community. It is with sadness that we have to announce that our December 4th meeting will be the last one, and the group will be placed in abeyance until a new committee can be formed.

Further information can be obtained by talking to any of the present committee members or email [Linda Bowman on happylittlepig@live.com](mailto:Linda.Bowman@happylittlepig.live) or phoning 01809 501772.





Culachy Windfarm

We really appreciate the time that residents have taken to participate in our public consultation since we launched our plans for Culachy Wind Farm in 2022. I am pleased to advise that we have submitted our application to the Scottish Government.

I do appreciate that this has been delayed. However, we are confident that our proposals are well considered and have been designed to sit well within the local landscape.

The layout that we have submitted consists of eight turbines up to 200m to tip, and a 10MW battery storage facility.

I look forward to working with the local community to explore how we can ensure the plans continue to deliver for the local area, including:

- Providing opportunities to local businesses
- Delivering over £280,000 per year to support local initiatives
- Improving habitats and peatland on the wind farm site

The application documents are accessible on our website www.culachywind.co.uk alongside details of how to submit your comments directly to the Scottish Government.

If you have any questions, please do get in touch.

www.culachywind.co.uk communities@fredolsen.com 07435 763 900

Boleskine Community Care



A COMMUNITY THAT CARES

Boleskine Community Care are excited to announce the recent appointment of their new staff members! Olivia Grant is our Community Services Co-ordinator and Jo Mitchell is our Community Engagement Co-ordinator. Both members of staff hope to work closely with 3 Glens Community Care to provide support to our broader community. We have a huge range of services and activities regularly taking place at our Hub in Lower Foyers that we would love to see attended by some Fort Augustus faces!

The Hub is manned Monday-Friday between 11am and 1pm for drop-ins and we also have a very busy calendar that can be viewed on our social media or collected from the Hub.

Please do not hesitate to contact us! admin@boleskinecc.com





‘SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITIES’

The Board of Trustees of 3 Glens Community Care work together, and alongside other organisations, to improve the availability of care services in our rural area to improve social isolation of people in need by reason of age, ill-health, disability, or social circumstances.

CONTACT our development officer:
07507627990
contact@3glenscare.org
www.3glenscare.org

HTSI Partnership Award 2023 – 1.9.2023

This award was won jointly by 3 Glens CC, Highland Hospice and Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company for partnership working to develop and support Sunflower Home Care in the delivery of care at home and befriending services to our rural communities. 3 Glens CC were represented by Deirdre MacKinnon, former Chair, Helen Clay, Trustee, and Denise Paterson, current Chair. It was an interesting evening at the impressive Strathpeffer Pavilion.



A BIG THANKYOU TO OUR GENEROUS COMMUNITIES!

We recently emptied 3 Glens CC charity boxes - which are spread throughout our communities. A grand total of £449.66 has been collected in 2023. At our October Board Meeting it was decided to spend this money on additional mobility equipment for community loan - a shower chair – and to support our Befriending Service.

Big thank you to FORTPC for designing our new website which is now live www.3glenscare.org Please do have a look.

Let's celebrate!



We have just celebrated Befriending Week! We have wonderful volunteers who make this service possible, changing people's lives.

We offer a free befriending service to anyone who needs it across the 3 Glens. Please do get in touch if you think the service could help you or someone you know.

If you completed one of our surveys about our next potential projects, thank you very much. Your feedback has been very useful, and we will be in touch soon with our findings.



Fort Augustus and Area Gaelic Group
www.the-gathering.co.uk

This
project is
funded by



**Fort Augustus
and Glenmoriston
Community Company**

Joyce Gilbert (Project Manager) on behalf of the Fort Augustus & Area Gaelic Group

It's been a very busy autumn for An Cruinneachadh/The Gathering Project. A big focus has been to explore ways of bringing Gaelic language and culture back into communities where it has largely been lost – in ways that are accessible, relevant and forward thinking. Thanks to all who have supported our regular events at various community venues across the 3Glens during the past year. We can't "gather" without you!

Here are some recent highlights.-

Rewilding Ourselves Sessions in the Old Convent Wood

During September and October, upper stage pupils at Kilchuimen primary school enjoyed outdoor experiences in the Old Convent Wood with Tom, Caoimhe, Iona and Jason. During these regular weekly sessions, pupils learnt about practical survival skills, local history, mythology and nature - all through the element of story. The sessions began with a very busy day at school making felt sit mats. This meant every pupil had their very own comfy and colourful mat to use at the wood. The mats became quite special for pupils, when they were asked to find a place in the woods where they would be on their own... and in silence.



Celebrating Samhain

To coincide with Hallowe'en or Hallows' Eve, the Gathering Project celebrated the ancient festival of Samhain with a focus on old traditions and customs from the Great Glen. This was attended by over 80 people of all ages. We were delighted to partner with FAGCC to hold this event at the Old Convent Wood. What a spectacular setting and what a magical harvest moon!





Sharing the musical heritage of the 3Glens with local young people

Researching forgotten songs and music from the project area has been a very important part of An Cruinneachadh/The Gathering. Earlier this year, Munro Gauld and Raghnaid Sandilands spent a few days at the National Library of Scotland exploring a remarkable archive collected by Alexander Macdonald during his lifetime. He was one of the famous Glenmoriston bards and his book 'Story and Song from Lochness-side (published in 1914) was the inspiration for the project. Some of these findings have been shared on the project website - where you can read articles by Munro and listen to a variety of the tunes.

We felt it was important to share rediscovered music with young people in the area. Charlie Grey and Rachel Campbell ran a session for young musicians at the community hub in Dalchreichart on the 29th October. After just a morning learning a few of the songs and tunes, the youngsters confidently shared these with around 50 people at a special afternoon event.



The following day pupils from Kilchuimen Academy joined Charlie at his grandmother's cottage in Fort Augustus. The youngsters agreed that the sitting room at St Columba's Cottage was a very special place to have a music lesson! A big thank you to Libby Grey for hosting this event.





Winter Festival/Fèis a'Gheamhraidh

Thanks to all who came along to our Winter Festival/Fèis a'Gheamhraidh at Fort Augustus Village Hall on 11th/12th of November. It was an opportunity to see and hear what the project has been up to over the past year, with the theme of Remembrance also an important part of the weekend. Saturday was a drop-in session with lots to try – including felt making, printing and making little lights with rush wicks. Or you could find out more about local heritage with displays from Invergarry Railway and Cill Chuimen Heritage Group. Munro Gauld and Neil Baillie provided a steady flow of restful local tunes – perfect listening to accompany a cup of tea and delicious cakes & quiche from the Highland Crepe Company.



The following afternoon, we celebrated the 3Glens in story, song, music and film – including a selection of the delightful pupil storymap films and a new film by award-winning film-maker Euan Robinson - which was commissioned by the local Gaelic Group especially for the project. The afternoon ended with the Armistice poem 'In Flanders Field' (by bard John Macrae) read by Nicola Wright and a beautiful & poignant Armistice song written by one of the Glenmoriston Bards. Thanks to FAGCC for providing a professional photographer for this event and to the Scottish International Festival of Storytelling (TRACS) for some additional financial support as part of their Go Local programme



Thank you to our generous funders, FAGCC & Beinneun whose support has meant all the project events and activities are free of charge. However, this is a community project commissioned 'by and for' local people - so thanks to several wonderful volunteers in each of the 3 Glens communities who have helped to make this project a success.

For further information visit our website www.the-gathering.co.uk where you can sign up to our regular newsletter. Hard copies of the Newsletter are also available on request.



Church News



Fort Augustus Parish Church of Scotland recently resonated with the beautiful voices of the Trollhattan Motet Choir from Sweden who were visiting Scotland. The choir conducted an unforgettable choral evensong the service included music by Thomas Tallis, William Byrd, Stephen Craig, Anthony Jones and Saint Saens. The choir enjoyed a lovely tea following the service in the Church Hall. Our thanks to everyone who helped support the evening and who provided the refreshments.

Cath Fraser, our Session Clerk, being presented on behalf of Fort Augustus Parish Church congregation with a Certificate of Appreciation and Thanks from the Trollhattan Motet Choir.

CHRISTMAS IN THE GREAT GLEN CHURCHES

Wednesday 13th December at 12pm Invergarry Primary School 'Carols at the Craic' (Invergarry Community Hall)

Sunday 17th December at 10am Family Nativity Crib Service. For the young and young at heart!
Fort Augustus Parish Church

Wednesday 20th December at 6.30pm Kilchuimen Primary School Nativity at Fort Augustus Parish Church

Friday 22nd December at 10am Kilchuimen Academy Christmas Celebration at Fort Augustus Parish Church

Sunday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

Christmas Family Service at 10am Fort Augustus Parish Church

Christmas Family Service at 12pm Glengarry Parish Church

6pm Family Christingle Service of Lessons and Carols at Glengarry Parish Church

10.30pm Christmas fayre of mince pies and mulled wine in Fort Augustus Church Hall.

11.15pm Watchnight Service at Fort Augustus Church.. All welcoming Christmas Day



together!

Monday 25th December (Christmas Day)

11am Short Family Christmas 'Toy' Service at Glengarry Parish Church. Children are invited to bring a favourite gift to church.

Sunday 7th January, 2024 (New Year's Sunday)

10am Family New Year Service with celebration of Holy Communion at Glengarry Parish Church

12pm Family New Year Service with celebration of Holy Communion at Fort Augustus Parish Church

*Please note the service time changes in both parishes on New Year's Sunday

Fort Augustus Fire Station

Fort Augustus Fire Station happily welcomed a new member to the team. Jamie Ferguson who works at the West End Garage recently passed his initial training and will soon be going to Invergordon to undertake his breathing apparatus course. This will help our local day-time crew numbers going forward but Fort Augustus Fire Station still requires new recruits. If this is something you are interested in why not pop along to the station on a Thursday night to meet the team and find out first hand what's involved? Lastly, a big thank you to the West End Garage for letting Jamie join the Fire Service. Without continued support from local businesses we simply wouldn't have the people in place to provide fire cover. Welcome to the team Jamie!!!



Marathon Runner

Cathy McInally nee Aitken recently finished the Chicago marathon in 4 hours although she usually manages a time of 3.24 at the London marathons. Well done Cathy for being an inspiration for the over 60's.



Announcements

Graduations



Muirin Hall-MacDonald graduated from the University of the Highlands and Islands with a Bachelor of Science in Nursing.

Engagements



Jordan Slater and Coreigh Sonley got engaged this summer.

Marriages



Jade O'Hara and Colin Clark married on the 28th October 2023 at Fort Augustus Abbey with best boy, Mack in attendance.

Births



Michael and Hannah welcomed Christopher Andrew Brady on the 26th June 2023, weighing 8lb 9.5oz. at Ninewells Hospital, Dundee.



Scott and Eilidh welcomed their second child Orla Johnstone on the 1st September 2023.



Jonah Fyfe Patrick Brew-Devitt born on 6th October in Newcastle to Katie Brew & Joseph Devitt, weighing 8lb 10oz. Grandson for Rosanna & Stephen Fyfe and great grandson for Katrina Fyfe.





Inesa Strielciunaite and Marcin Gasowski welcomed Arlo Sol Strielciunas, born on 12th October 2023, at Raigmore Hospital in Inverness, weighing 7lbs 15oz.



Ann and Andrew welcomed their son Neil John O'Hare born on 14th October 2023, weighing 5lbs 10oz & 51cm long, he arrived 5 weeks early at Raigmore Hospital. First grandchild for Neil and Rhoda Stewart.



Frankie David Fraser Weighell born on 20th October 2023 in Aberdeen Royal Infirmary to Lauren & Jamie Weighell, weighing 7lb 9oz. A grandson for Stephen & Rosanna Fyfe and great-grandson for Katrina Fyfe.

Deaths



Stuart Wilkinson

Stuart Wilkinson of Heather Cottage Dalchreichart, passed away on the 8th October,

peacefully but unexpectedly, at his home in Barnsley. He first came to Glen Moriston over 50 years ago when visiting family and in recent years he spent his retirement from teaching, renovating the cottage where his father in law, Duncan MacDonald, was born in 1914.

He will be greatly missed by family and friends. His heart was truly in the Highlands.



Mary Donaldson

Peacefully at home on Sunday 8th October 2023, Mary Fulton Donaldson nee Henderson, Tabgha, 10 Garden Place, Beaulieu aged 89 years. Former Head Teacher. Beloved wife of the late Rev Moses Donaldson, formerly of Fort Augustus, Mull and Duneaton.



Martin MacKenzie

Peacefully at home on Wednesday 15th November 2023, William Martin MacKenzie 'Martin' aged 83 years. Martin moved up to the croft in Auchterawe from Cambuslang, Glasgow as a boy and went to school in Fort Augustus. When he left school, he joined the Forestry research team nursery. He later left that and worked for Glendoe Estate. He later went back to the Forestry Commission to start his 40+ years and was all over the hillsides around Loch Ness planting trees and driving machines. He was out to Glenelg and Skye, living in caravans Monday to Friday and went to the local dances.

Around 1972/3, he was up in the Bonar Bridge vicinity and kept seeing a blonde female in a short skirt walking through the village. He finally met her and must have used all his charm as they got married in September 1974. He wanted a transfer up to Lairg as his

home base but he had the forestry house in Jenkins Park where his mother lived. They got that sorted and he got his transfer where he lived with his wife, Jan and two daughters, one who sadly died. Later, he transferred to Longman in Inverness and got the low loader that took him the length of the country. Always at top speed with a lead foot (he only got caught a few times), he would go away on a Monday and home for the weekend and he took the dog with him a few times. By the time he retired (under duress), he had another job driving tippers lined up for the Monday. He did this until he was in his late seventies and then decided it was a young person's game. Even then he didn't slow down, he found Facebook and was always on the phone. We lost mum last year and that was very difficult.

He had a new knee and everything was good and there was no stopping him as he was always in a hurry. He left the way he lived, very fast. We got an 8 week old puppy at the end of September and it was the apple of his eye.

All I can say is that my dad was one of a kind and may be gone but will be hard to forget by many. Tracey



Alasdair Fraser

Alasdair Fraser was born in 1938. He was the youngest of four, the eldest was Donnie, followed by his sister Pearl, then Iain and Alasdair. As a family, they grew up in Stratherrick, then Ardvergie Estate and finally back to Stratherrick where his father worked in neighbouring farms. Alasdair loved music, especially the accordion, he was a talented player and went on to form his own dance band (Glengarry Ceilidh Band). Alasdair married Peggy (MacInnes) in 1961 alongside his brother Iain and Peggy's sister Helen. It was the first double wedding in the parish where two brothers married two sisters. Alasdair worked for the Forestry Commission for 40 years and received a long service award when he retired aged 65 in 2003. After retirement, he continued to work on his croft in South Laggan for the next twenty years. He is survived by his children Angus, Alasdair, Donald and Eilidh who miss him dearly.



Brownies

1st Fort Augustus Brownies and Guides have had a busy few weeks since being back after the October holidays, as well as welcoming a couple of new guides which has been wonderful. First of all we had a little Halloween party with music, crafts, bingo, chocolate apple decorating as well as some party food. We learned about Diwali, we thought about all the positive things about ourselves and each other. We also took part in the Remembrance parade and attended the Remembrance church service. Several of our girls have recently earned new interest badges at home including photography and baking which has been great to see. Over the next few weeks, our focus will be on Christmas crafts as well as trying to achieve more badges as a unit.

If your daughter would like to join either Brownies or Guides please get in touch with myself (Lisa Gordon) on Facebook or alternatively you can register them at www.girlguiding.org.uk Brownies is from age 7 years to 10 years old and Guides is from age 10 years to 14 years old. Both are currently on at the same time which is 5.30pm every Tuesday (term time) until 7pm at the Fort Augustus church hall but if numbers increase, we will think about putting them on at different times again.

We are always looking for volunteers, if you have a few free hours and would like to help out now and again or join as a leader please get in touch. We are also always grateful for any craft materials you may have.

Thank you from all at 1st Fort Augustus Brownies and Guides.





Kilchuimen 3-18

As always, it has been a very busy time here in school and there have been a few staff changes. We said a fond farewell to Mrs Lauren MacKenzie, who had been in the Academy for 14 years. She will be very sadly missed, however, we wish her well in her new job in Lochaber High School. Mrs Yvonne Walker is now Acting 3-18 Headteacher, Mrs Kate Rose is Acting Depute Headteacher in the Primary and Ms Lynne Angus will join Kilchuimen on the 4th December as Acting Depute Headteacher in the Academy.



This term, we have welcomed several visitors and the pupils have had many opportunities to explore our wider community. The Academy has enjoyed visits to the Highland Wildlife Park, the River Tarff, Newton Rooms, and fiddle and clarsach sessions, as well as a varied Development Young Workforce programme. Some of the senior pupils also had a great time doing team building with the army.

The Nursery pupils have been out and about, come rain or shine, visiting some very welcoming local cafes for morning snack. The Primary pupils have enjoyed swimming in Inverness, doing community interviews, spending time in the Convent Woods as part of the Gathering project and visiting the Telford Centre at Halloween.



The Primary and Nursery had visits from 'Captain Morgan' during Maths Week and then during Book Week 'Bookman' and the 'Creeping Toad' also joined us. Author Corrina Campbell also visited the pupils during Book Week.



The rest of this term will be very busy with plans for a craft fair, a pantomime visit, church services and parties and dances. We look forward to seeing friends and family at some of these events.

All the staff and pupils at Kilchuimen 3-18 extend their seasonal good wishes to you at Christmas time.



Remembrance Day



It was lovely to see so many people attend our Remembrance Day event here in Fort Augustus and everyone agreed that once again the day was a great success. Special thanks to Martin Fraser and David Mackay for leading the parade and also to the many ex-servicemen, together with representatives of the emergency services and local community groups who all took part.

Thanks also to the staff at The Legion and to Craig and Jelena from Delightfulness for their excellent catering at the subsequent gathering.

We will never forget our heroes and we hope to see you all again next year.

India Trek

I was one of 13 people who completed a hike in the Himalayas challenge in support of the Highland Hospice. Together we raised an amazing £58,000 which is enough to fully fund a nurse on the Hospice's inpatients unit for a whole year.

We arrived in the chaos of Delhi off an overnight flight, we only had a short time before boarding the sleeper train to Pathankot where we were taken by cars to Dharamshala, the base for our trek.

Dharamshala is 5000 ft up in the foothills of the Himalayas, recent home to the Dalai Lama and the seat of the Tibetan administration in exile.

The following day we begun our hike. Team Hospice was joined by 26 other trekkers from other charities across the UK to form a larger group.

Our local lead guide, Sonny who is hugely experienced and able to find the pathways through the undergrowth and weeds, kept us at a good pace.

Our first day took us through a dense pine forest then crossing a mountain river on an old rickety bridge, we arrived at a local school for our lunch stop. By late afternoon, we arrived at camp to find the tents all set up and our big bags waiting for us. We had a local team with 30 mules to transport all the camping equipment and bags for us. The team also included a chef and his son who prepared all our meals, the food in camp was amazing, better than restaurant quality. Fresh bread and lots of curry.

It was at this first campsite, we discovered our team mascots! 2 stray dogs who came with us for the whole journey one even came back to the hotel at the end. We looked after them as they looked out for us by barking most of the night, we think that was to scare off predators, haha.



Day two, saw us climb more steeply, this was when we all fell into our own pace and the group spread out a little. This allowed some of us more time to sit and enjoy the views while waiting for the back groups to catch up. That night we were entertained by a thunder and lightning storm, it didnt last too long but it was spectacular.

Day three, was our biggest day 4000ft just like climbing Ben Nevis, with quite similar terrain too. This brought us up to the Triund ridge and our first direct view of the Dhauladhar mountains. It was along this ridge that we found our final campsite, home for two nights. Camping on the ridge gave us some of the most spectacular views and sunsets/rises.

Day four, had us reach our highest point at 10,500ft. We visited a small temple where we could really appreciate what we had achieved, we had prayer flags to hang up and time to reflect. Then it was off to the Snow Line cafe to enjoy a wee cup of chi and as luck would have it a snow shower too.

Our final day of trekking was one of mixed emotions, sad to be leaving the stunning mountains but excited at the prospect of getting a hot shower.

At the bottom of our steep descent, just outside town we gathered at the Shiva Cafe which was so lovely beside a waterfall. With another cup of chi we celebrated our achievement.

My time in India with the amazing Team Hospice is one I will never forget. From complete strangers to now good friends. I just wonder where we will go next?

Susan Macrae



News from Glenmoriston

Glenmoriston Matters

Upcoming events at the Millennium Hall

31st December – Hogmanay Party with music, food and dancing. Open to all and family friendly. Look out for posters with details nearer the time. We are aiming for an event that is affordable and an opportunity to get together and may be able to provide transport for people to and from the event.

12th January 2024 – Silver Surfers “Christmas” lunch for the over 60’s in Glenmoriston. If you are over 60 and live in the Glenmoriston area, you may also wish to join us for meals out and trips. **For more information, please contact Elaine on silversurfers60@gmail.com**

26th January 2024 – Glenmoriston Heritage Group will be showing the new documentary film **“Loch Ness, They Created A Monster”**. This is rated as 12A. Tickets will be available soon. We were approached by the film maker to show it as it is of such interest in this area. They will provide someone to answer questions about the film too.



The Charity Quiz in aid of MacMillan Nurses which was held in the Glenmoriston Arms Hotel, together with raffle, raised almost £700. Many thanks to all those who contributed prizes and made such generous donations at this event and also through Silver Surfers and Community Tuesday.

Community Tuesdays – have resumed. Come and join us at any time between 12 noon and 6.30 pm. We are offering the opportunity to cut your heating at home - spend the day (and eat with us if you wish) in the Glenmoriston Millennium Hall, while enjoying the craic, having a game of table tennis or indoor curling, catching up on the newspapers or jigsaws. There are regular crafting sessions and advice given on use of phones, tablets and laptops as well as opportunities to try Tai Chi, reflexology, head massage and baking some weeks. We also have visits from agencies such as the police, the 3 Glens Community Care and Citizens Advice. Soup and sandwiches served at lunchtime and a cooked meal at 5.00 pm. All are welcome – any age and local or visiting the area.

Regular Activities at Glenmoriston Millennium Hall

Day	Frequency	Activity	Time
Sunday	2 nd of month	Church Service (interdenominational)	3.00pm– 4.00pm
Monday	Weekly	Indoor Bowls	7.30pm – 9.30pm
Tuesday	Weekly from October	Community Tuesdays	12.00 – 6.30pm
Wednesday	Weekly	Zumba	7.15pm – 8.15pm
Wednesday	Monthly	Book Group	2.00pm – 4.00pm
Thursday	Weekly	Yoga	10.30am – 12.00
Thursday	Weekly	Scottish Ceilidh & Country Dancing	7.00pm – 9.00pm
Friday	Monthly	Heritage Group	7.30pm – 9.00pm
Friday	Weekly term time	Kids Club	1.00pm – 4.00pm
Saturday	1 st and 3 rd of month	Craft Club	11.00am– 3.00pm
Saturday	Monthly	Quiz	7.30pm – 9.30pm

For information about any of the above, or to book the hall for your own activity, contact gmhcahallbooking@gmail.com or call Carol on 07721 533316

Posters are usually available in the area advertising further details of the events. Lots of information on Facebook too. Look for the “Glenmoriston Improvement Group” page

Invermoriston Community Shop

We are delighted that the shop and its volunteers have been shortlisted for a Rural Community Business award in the category of Community Contribution. The judging panel were impressed that such a small community could engender such a large number of volunteers who staff the shop (we now have 16 volunteers from Glenmoriston but also Fort Augustus and Drum).

The shop is now licensed to sell alcohol, which we hope will help locals over the coming festive season and beyond. We are selling a range of beers, lagers, ciders, wines and spirits. Other new items include kindling, logs and willow briquettes, while newly made craft items are always being added. We will also be stocking Loch Ness Ice Creams as part of our commitment to support other local businesses.

We are selling 2024 calendars with views of Glenmoriston photographed by local people, in A5 format for easy posting, and can take orders for turkeys from Lyne Mhor which would be collected for you. So, support your local community shop when you can and please become a Member of the Invermoriston Community shop (free) to register your support.

Kids Club - It is open to all children in the Three Glens aged 5 – 15 years old and is held weekly in the Glenmoriston Millennium Hall between 1.00 pm and 4.00 pm during school term time.

To attend a registration form must be completed, these are available by contacting Lesley Hill via email lesleyhill@58hotmail.com or telephoning 01320 351302.

Give and Take Larder - This is located on the side of Glenmoriston Millennium Hall. It was suggested by the owners of one of our local chalet parks to prevent waste, so please come and donate what you can, but also please take what you can! This is all

about recycling and avoiding waste. The Community shop will be putting in food approaching its sell-by date daily, so check in regularly.

Forestry Works – Invermoriston the high route of the Great Glen Way between Invermoriston and Fort Augustus is now closed until the summer of 2024 for essential work involving a high line for timber removal. The low route is still open but there will be additional machinery and traffic so please follow safety signs and instructions.





Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company

To contact the Community Company, call 01320 366800
or email contact@communitycompany.co.uk
Follow us on Facebook to keep up with all the news.

Community Larders

The Community are delighted to introduce the Community Larders across the 3 Glens. Reducing food waste and food poverty while promoting recycling and healthy eating, the Community Larders are open to the whole community.

No booking or registration, just turn up and leave or take what you need. Non-perishable goods like tinned and dried food, washing powder and deodorant are available for you to swap, donate or use for yourself.

The Larders are topped up by the Community Company and largely run by volunteers. Locations are listed below:

Fort Augustus, behind Tarff Trading

Dalchriechart, behind the Hub

Invermoriston, behind the Millennium Hall



Samhain Evening

A spooky yet warm and inviting evening in the Convent Woods at the Samhain Evening.



The night saw a celebration of the Celtic Festival under the full harvest moon at Old Convent Woods. The night was lit up by the bonfire with the majestic misty hills in the distance.

The woodland was full of a golden autumnal array of colour, glowing with a trail of fire torches to guide the guisers through the dark old woods towards the fairy lights and bright fires of the festival.

The evening began with everyone dressed in their guising costumes and gathered by the fire for the traditional Samhain ceremony, followed by

divining at the magic camp, storytelling and weapon displays at the highland warrior camp, fire spinning under the moonlight, dookin' for apples and some tasty food.

There were three fires in the gathering to keep everyone warm as they sipped on the mulled apple juice and enjoyed the hot soup and stovies.



A huge thank you to all the guisers, creatures and human folk who came along and for all the staff and volunteers involved in creating the event; it couldn't have happened without the help, dedication, and commitment of you all.



MiDAS Training

The Community Company proudly funded six further Volunteer Minibus Drivers.

The six candidates all met with M.D Fiddes driving instructor for the theory class and test. Practical driving assessments were carried out in and around Fort Augustus.



We are delighted to confirm all six volunteers passed both the theory and practical assessments. This means that local groups and clubs can hire the minibus with an array of volunteer drivers to approach. The cost is £25 per trip plus the petrol.

If you would like to hire the minibus, you should contact Kilchuimen Academy. The list of voluntary drivers is available from the Community Company.

Convent Land Community Consultation

Convent Land Development Officer, Chris Rose, held a community consultation on 21st November in the Fort Augustus Village Hall.

The purpose of the consultation was to discuss and pull in ideas for potential uses for the Convent Land. Chris was on hand to talk about the proposals and explain how they might work, while giving the community the opportunity to have their say.

We will be publishing the full results soon but for now we can report the consultation attracted thirty-nine members of the community and inspired some fantastic conversation around the possibilities of how the land can be utilised for the good of the community.



Grants awarded

Since the last issue of Ness News, the following grants have been awarded:

- £4,800 to Kilchuimen Parent Teacher Council, to pay for students to attend the Abriachan Forestry School.
- £3,600 for six student grants.
- £934.70 to Loch Ness TaeKwon-Do for floor mats.
- £1000 for the annual Children's Christmas Parties

Annual General Meeting

The AGM was held on 21st November at Fort Augustus Village Hall with thirty-four attendees. Thanks to everyone who came along, it was lovely to see you all on such a miserable evening.

The Chair, Felix Paterson, was unable to attend physically but did have a virtual presence. The Vice Chair, Helen Clay, welcomed everyone and introduced the board of directors. She gave the Chair's report on the company's completed and upcoming projects and a summary of grants the company has funded.

It was announced that Lizzie MacEachen and Felix Paterson would be standing down as directors. The Vice Chair thanked Lizzie for her hard work and commitment over nine years. The Board also wanted to thank Felix for all of his efforts and will do so personally when he is feeling better. Lorn MacKay stood for re-election along with 2 previously co-opted Directors, Fran Mansell and Kelvin Hill.

The company's accounts and financial standing were explained by a representative from the auditing company. Operations Manager, Karen Edwards, reported on the work the company staff have completed through the year and explained some of the up-and-coming work in the next year.

If you would like to become a member, allowing you to vote at the AGM, please either go to our website www.communitycompany.co.uk or contact us on 01320 366800 for an application form.

Community Caretaking Team – Seasonal Team Investment

We may always appear busy, and a bit grass covered, as there is always plenty of work to do. The grass never stops growing! However, we are approachable, and the team is always willing to help improve the appearance of the villages and make you smile.

This year we saw an expansion in the team, with the additional help of two young recruits on a part time / seasonal basis. James and Fraser. It was reassuring that two young men from the area were willing to join the team and get involved in maintenance of all sorts. We hope the employment opportunities were useful to both and helped encourage them to continue to pursue a career in the outdoor sector.



As always, the community composting area is proving ever popular, and we are starting to see useable leaf mould / enriched compost materials. We hope to be using this finished product in a floral display project later in the year, (watch this space). All branches donated were chipped and have been spread around the villages used as a mulch on raised beds etc. We are delighted it's a useful service for the communities, however, it can be time consuming for the team. Please can we remind users to dispose of their vegetation in the right bays and as far back in the bay as possible. If it becomes overwhelming or abused, then the service might have to be stopped.

Highlighted projects for the core team over 2023 have included the construction of the top play park bridge, completion of the Auchterawe Cemetery entrance path and the Riggs post and rail timber fence to name a few.

We are now preparing ourselves for the icy pavements and snow that winter brings!

Tarff Trading – Hardware store



Your local hardware store continues to get busier and busier with your support.

There has been a consistent high demand for chilled items such as milk and soft drinks. So, we have fitted a new fridge to stock everyday chilled items such as big bottles of milk, butter, yoghurts, ham, cheese, bottles and cartons of juice plus chilled fruit and vegetables. All asked for by the community!

If you have any suggestions for other items for the store then let Donna, Nigel or John know.

The staff at Tarff Trading have been busy getting the Christmas decorations ready. If you're stuck for last minute items, then do pop in and see what they have. There are also some very handy Christmas gifts for those last-minute presents.

Christmas trees, lights, decorations, and ornaments are all available in-store. You might not need to go into Inverness or Fort William for those small things that make your home that little bit more special this Yule tide!

Instead, why not pop into your local hardware store and get what you need. You can always have a coffee and a chat with the team while making your choices.

If you want to pre-order your essential food items for Christmas, do pop in and pick up the food order form. Orders must be in by 15th December for collection the following week.

Christmas opening hours for the shop are:

24th December and 31st December – open 8am till 3pm

25th & 26th December and 1st & 2nd January – closed.



Happy Christmas everybody.





Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Council

Memorial Hall Fort Augustus 25th October 2023 – 7.30pm

Present:
Deirdre MacKinnon (DM) Chair
Helen Clay (HC) Secretary
Claire Pegrum (CP)
Clare Levings (CL)
Cllr David Fraser (DF)

Apologies:
Mike Anderson – Treasurer
Cllr Chris Ballance

Inaugural meeting of Fort Augustus & Glenmoriston Community Council:

Convened by DF. Nine vacancies with five people elected. All community councillors stood down.

DM stood for re-election as Chair. Proposed by HC seconded by CL

HC stood for re-election as Secretary. Proposed by DM seconded by CP

MA stood for re-election as Treasurer. Proposed by CP seconded by DM

Iain MacKnocher to be an associate member specialising in renewables – Proposed by DM seconded by CP

Previous Minutes:

Proposed DM seconded CP

Matters Arising:

Redburn traffic -

Cars and tourist buses are causing a safety hazard when stopping to look at the Highland cows. Transport Scotland will put up bollards and a clear way notice for no stopping, they are not willing to advise for a lay-by. DF to contact Transport Scotland to confirm the Community Council are happy with the proposal and to go ahead. DM to email all small tour operators after confirmation from Transport Scotland to inform them of the changes. We will monitor how things go.

Glenmoriston Estates Access -

Stewart Easthaugh has contacted the estate and informed them that Highland Council is now taking legal action about the access.

Scottish Canals -

HC had contacted Ailsa Andrews concerning how often the canal bridge had opened during the season, sometimes letting through just one boat. Ailsa advised that the canal had been busier than before and also that there has been a lot of ongoing maintenance.





Scottish Canals have also repaired the pipe at the viewpoint.

Dropped Kerbs – ongoing

Oich Road - ongoing. Heather Masterton of Highland Council to come out to see the problems.

Village toilets – ongoing

We are no longer receiving any kind of communication from the Police. We have been told that it is due to a change of operational procedures.

Treasurers Report:

As of 25th October 2023, the balance is £6,138.15 which includes £546.83 payment from Highland Council and ring-fenced monies.

Renewables:

Culachy (Fred Olsen) – application due to go in. A representative will be at a future Community Council meeting (date to be confirmed).

Coire Glas – Mike Seaton will now be Director of Development for Coire Glas and will attend the CLG in December.

Community Amenity Issues:

Ardachy Road

Canalside has been patched up again but badly needs complete resurfacing.

Housing – empty housing association houses seem to be taking a long time to be allocated when the need for social housing is still high. The janitor's house is still empty and could be used for teachers at the school.

A.O.C.B:

Food Larders -

There are 3 local food larders set up by FAGCC, Fort Augustus, Dalcreichart and Invermoriston. These are to help people in need and to help stop food waste. Donations of food, (non-perishables) and toiletries and household goods are always welcome.

Remembrance Sunday -

DM to order the wreaths

Minute Taker -

Th CC are still looking for a minute taker for the Community Council meetings which is a paid position - DM to ask senior school pupils.

Next meeting – November 29th 7.30pm Memorial Hall Fort Augustus

Notice Board



BEFORE
ZUMBA

AFTER
ZUMBA

Wednesday 7.15pm
Glenmoriston Millennium Hall

zumbadebbiegg@gmail.com

Glenmoriston Craft Club

1st and 3rd Saturdays of the month

At Glenmoriston Millennium Hall
11am - 3pm

Cost only £3 per session

Come along to our friendly group
bringing whatever craft takes your fancy.

Bus to Fort William

*** Open to all ages ***
Wednesday 20th December
£3

Departing Fort Augustus Car Park 0945
Police Station 0950
Abertarff Place 0955
Newton 1005
Invergarry 1015

Leaving Fort William 1330
Return to Fort Augustus 1450 approx

Shopmobility scooters available. Please ask when booking.

To book please telephone
Jenny: 01320 366438

Fort Augustus
Senior Citizens' Association



SATURDAY, 2 DECEMBER 2023

INVERGARRY CHRISTMAS CRAFT FAIR



Free Entry

CHILDREN'S CRAFT AREA

10 am to 2 pm

Glengarry Community Hall
Invergarry, A82, PH35 4HG

AN EVENT FOR THE
WHOLE FAMILY TO ENJOY!



Notice Board



Christmas Parties

This year's parties are taking place on the 16th of December at Fort Augustus Village Hall
Babies to Primary 3 starts at 12pm until 2pm
Primary 4 to Primary 7 starts at 3pm until 5pm

We would like to thank those who have already donated especially Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston Community Company its very much appreciated.

Donations are always welcome. Many thanks Fort Augustus Children's Christmas parties committee.

Cobbs are looking for Trainee Hospitality Managers

Earn while you learn with our apprenticeships program.

Email jill@cobbs.info for more information

The Legion, Canalside, Fort Augustus

Upcoming Events at the Club

December

Every Monday Free Pool Table 6pm to 10pm
Tuesday 19th Quiz Night and Raffle 8pm
Saturday 23rd Karaoke Night
Sunday 31st New Years Eve Party[Tickets only]

January

Every Wednesday Free Pool Table 6pm to 10pm
Thursday 18th Quiz Night and Raffle 8pm
Friday 26th Karaoke Night

February

Every Wednesday Free Pool Table 6pm to 10pm
Thursday 15th Quiz Night and Raffle 8pm
Saturday 17th Feis Live Music Night
Friday 23rd Karaoke Night

March

Every Wednesday Free Pool Table 6pm to 10pm
Thursday 14th Quiz Night and Raffle 8pm
Friday 22nd Karaoke Night
30th Live music from 4play 9pm to 11pm

Everybody Welcome

See Posters at the Club for more details

WHIST is BACK!

Friday 26th January
7pm start.
9-9.30pm finish.

Church Hall
Fort Augustus

Entry £2 pp

All welcome.
(Over 10's)



Raffle

Half-time:
Tea/coffee.
Take own snack.

Next date:
Fri 23rd February



Tractor Run

THE FILLERS | CAROL SINGERS |
MULLED WINE | HOT REFRESHMENTS

SATURDAY 23RD DECEMBER

4pm - 8pm

PRIZE FOR BEST DECORATED TRACTOR

Entry by Donation to Mikeysline.

CASH ONLY

