

# Lairg Magazine

LAIRG & DISTRICT COMMUNITY INITIATIVES



Black throated diver: Steve Garvie



Bird hide: Steven MacLean

## Springwatch puts Loch Shin on the Map!

If you are a fan of wildlife, you may have been tuning into Springwatch, the popular BBC 2 series which has been running over the past couple of weeks. If so, you may know that presenter Lolo Williams from the Springwatch team has been broadcasting live from the Alladale Wilderness Reserve (by Ardgay), and as a result there has been a lot of focus on some of the best wildlife spots in and around Sutherland – including Lairg.

The team visited the bird hide on Loch Shin to film the relatively rare black-throated divers that can be seen on the loch. Although Lolo didn't get to see the elusive bird, the camera man returned and got some great shots of the striking creature. Lolo also got to see other interesting wildfowl that only tends to breed here in the north, and found evidence (in the form of regurgitated pellets) that a Barn owl has been spending time roosting at the hide... (More on page 2).

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# Recipe of the week

## Treacle Tart

### Ingredients:

#### For the pastry

250g plain flour  
½ tsp fine salt  
140g cold unsalted butter, cubed  
3 tbsp icing sugar  
2 medium egg yolks  
2-3 tbsp cold water

#### For the filling

400g golden syrup  
1 ball stem ginger in syrup, finely chopped, plus 50g of the syrup  
1 lemon, zested  
2 medium eggs, lightly beaten  
100g fine fresh white breadcrumbs



### Method:

**STEP 1** Sieve the flour and salt into a large bowl. Add the butter and rub together with your fingers to a fine breadcrumb-like texture (you can also do this part in a food processor). Stir through the icing sugar, then quickly add the egg yolks and 2 tbsp water, mixing swiftly with a cutlery knife to combine. Form into a ball (add another tbsp water if you need to), wrap and chill for 30 mins. Roll out to the thickness of a pound coin, and line a 22cm fluted tart tin with the pastry, leaving an overhang. Return to the fridge for 30 mins.

**STEP 2** Heat the oven to 200C/180C fan/gas 6. Put a baking sheet into the oven to heat up. Line the pastry case with baking parchment and baking beans, then put in the oven on the baking sheet, and bake for 15 mins. Remove the parchment and bake for a further 10 mins or until the pastry is golden brown. Leave the pastry to cool before trimming off the overhanging edges with a small serrated knife.

**STEP 3** Lower the oven temperature to 160C/140C fan/gas 4. Combine the golden syrup, ginger, ginger syrup, lemon, eggs and breadcrumbs in a bowl, briefly whisking everything together until combined. Carefully pour the filling into the pastry case put in the lower part of the oven to bake for 35-40 mins or until the filling is just set. Remove from the oven and leave to cool down for 20 mins before serving with ice cream or thick clotted cream.

### Springwatch continued...

Viewers have also been treated to some amazing shots of the landscapes and wildlife on the Alladale reserve (wildcats, red squirrels, black grouse, otters and more), and from Handa Island too.

If you missed seeing the shows which ran from 25th May – you can catch up on all of the series on BBC I Player or online at:

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b007qgm3> . The show is

broadcast at 8pm, with the final episode airing on Friday 11th June. The episodes featuring Loch Shin were: episode 1 (from 25th May) and episode 2 (26th May). Do you have any photographs of the black throated diver or other wildlife pics that you have taken? If so, we would love to publish them – please send any photos to [projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk](mailto:projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk).



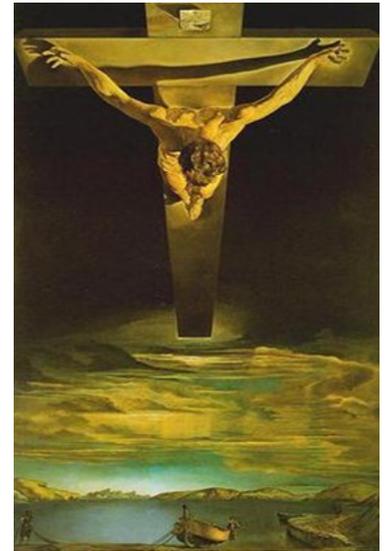
**(Answers on page 6)**

1. What does a somnambulist do?
2. Who directed the 1998 film 'Saving Private Ryan' starring Tom Hanks?
3. What Australian island used to be called Van Diemen's Land until 1856?
4. Which famous General of the 7th Cavalry Regiment fought and died at the Battle of The Little Bighorn in 1876?
5. The largest moon in the solar system 'Ganymede' was discovered by which astronomer?
6. To what was Winston Churchill referring in the quote "a riddle, wrapped in a mystery, inside an enigma"?
7. Which cartoon couple got married at Shotgun Pete's Wedding Chapel?
8. What is the name of the room located in the West Wing of the White House, opened in 1909 and used as working space by the President?
9. Kit was the name of the car in what TV show?
10. Of which country is Mogadishu the capital?
11. "Serve to lead" is the motto of which military training centre?
12. Oolong is a variety of which drink?
13. The Mistral is a wind that blows down the valley of which major French river?
14. Who wrote the hits "Manic Monday" and "Nothing compares to you"?
15. What was the name of the Paralympic-style games for injured troops, opened by Prince Harry?
16. Geoff Boycott became the president of which County Cricket Club in 2012?
17. What is the international dialling code for the Republic of Ireland?
18. In the film 'Mary Poppins', what is the surname of the children Jane and Michael?
19. What word has these 3 definitions – be put into effect, run a file or programme in computing, and carry out a death sentence?
20. William Rufus was the second king of which Royal House?



Salvador Dali - "Honesty was not my speciality".

On the 23rd June 1952 Salvador Dali's painting *Christ of St John of the Cross* (pictured to the right) went on display in Glasgow's Kelvingrove Art Gallery. Dr Tom Honeyman, director of Glasgow's museums, spent the city's entire annual purchasing budget of £8,200. It is now estimated to be worth £80 million.



Dali studied at the Academia Spain in 1926 and was expelled as he said: "that no one was competent enough to judge him."

When you look at his *Basket of Bread*, painted the same year, maybe he was right.



Basket of Bread, 1926      Swans reflecting Elephants, 1937      The Persistence of Memory, 1931

His painting *Swans reflecting Elephants* is from a period in his life called Paranoiac-critical. It is a double image. The swans' necks reflect the elephant trunks and the reflection of the trees became the elephant legs.

*The Persistence of Memory* - sometimes called *Melting Clocks* is in the Museum of Modern Art in New York. Dali was asked if the painting was inspired by the theory of relativity, and he replied it was inspired by watching a Camembert melting in the sun...

He was called Salvador after his brother who died nine months before he was born. When he was five years old he was taken to his brother's grave and told by his parents he was his brother's reincarnation which apparently he came to believe... saying that, "We resembled each other like two drops of water, but we had different reflections." His father was a strict disciplinarian, a middle class lawyer and notary. When he was 16 his mother died, of which he said: "It was the greatest blow I had experienced in my life."

Dali met Gala a Russian immigrant 11 years his senior and married her in a civil ceremony in 1934 and in a Catholic ceremony in 1958. When they met she was married to surrealist poet Paul Eluard. Dali and Gala rented a small fisherman's cabin at Port Lligat Figueres which they eventually bought. In the 1980's Dali's health took a turn for the worse as Gala who was nearly senile was dosing him with non-prescription drugs which damaged his nervous system. He appeared on the TV show 'What's My Line' and they guessed him at the last minute, his trademark was his long pencil thin moustache.

In 1940 he published his autobiography 'The secret life of Salvador Dali' Not knowing he would live for another 40 years!! He was 85 years old when he died, having lived a very varied life.

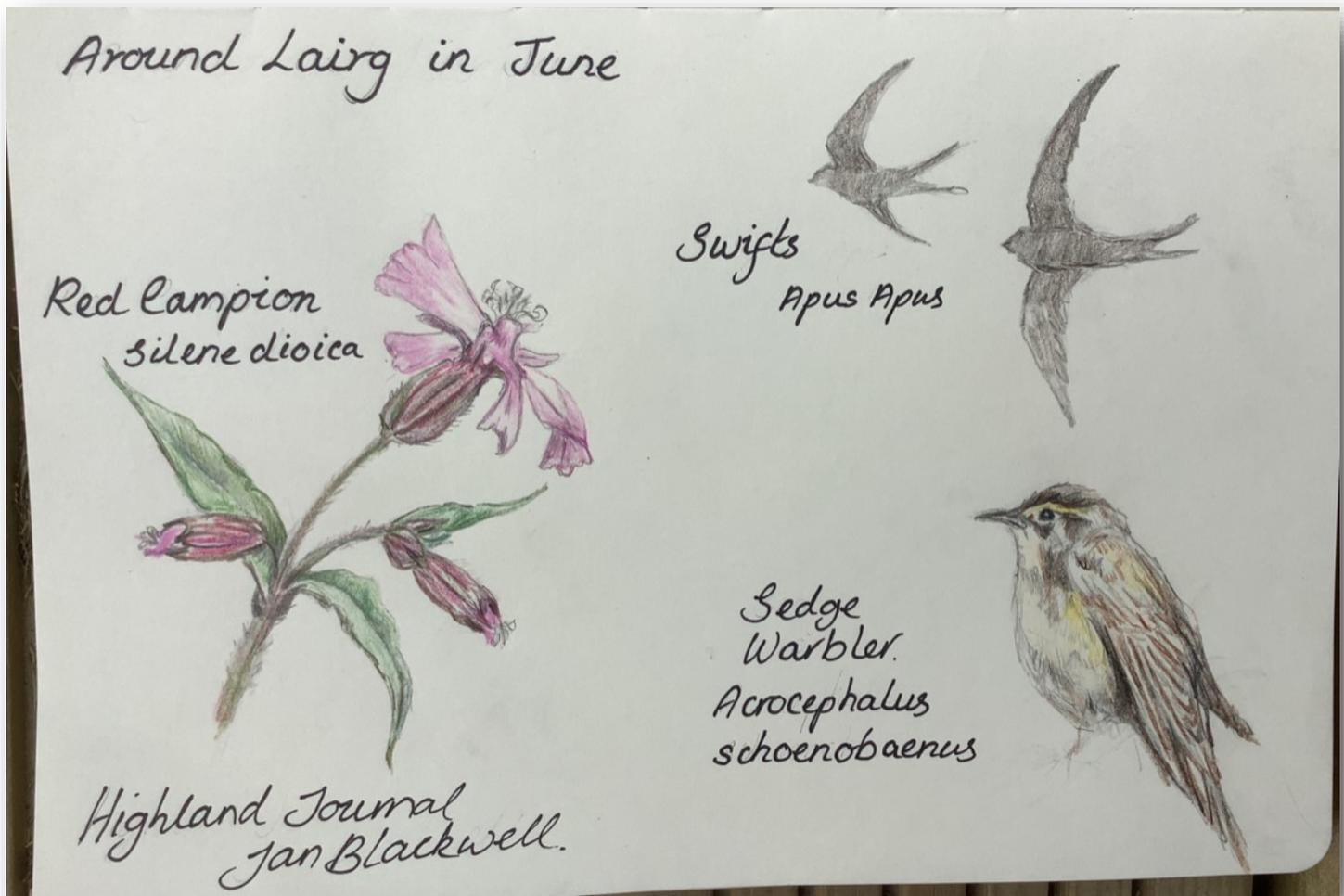


Lairg Post Office Social Evening, 1953



Can anyone tell us anything about this photo?

Thank you to local artist Jan Blackwell for allowing us to print excerpts of her illustrations and notes from her 'Highland Journal'. Here is June's diary entry. You can see or hear all of this flora and fauna around the village. *Swifts scream across the evening sky at dusk and the tiny sedge warbler can be heard in the early hours of a summer morning but are rarely seen...*



### LDCI Quiz Answers

- |                            |                    |               |
|----------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. Sleep walk              | 8. The Oval Office | 15. Invictus  |
| 2. Steven Spielberg        | 9. Knight Rider    | 16. Yorkshire |
| 3. Tasmania                | 10. Somalia        | 17. 353       |
| 4. George Armstrong Custer | 11. Sandhurst      | 18. Banks     |
| 5. Galileo Galilei         | 12. Tea            | 19. Execute   |
| 6. Russia                  | 13. Rhone          | 20. Normandy  |
| 7. Homer and Marge Simpson | 14. Prince         |               |

### How did you do?

1-5/20

Poor

5-10/20

Okay

10-15/20

Good

15-10/20

Excellent



Yeah, summer's out! And so is the lettuce!! With more and more of us building our own polytunnels, you can almost feel the excitement of speedy growth. It's truly amazing how much more quickly food grows protected – ironically – with plastic.

And now with covid restrictions lifted and hopefully remaining, we can all get together to develop community growing ideas. Whilst many of us are immersed with all the work needed in our own gardens, we may think that we don't have time to develop community gardens too. But, please step forward. The more of us that get involved with these ventures, the less work required by individuals and the bigger the over all benefit.



Community gardening helps not only with providing local food, but also helps us all to get back together, chatting, growing, learning, sharing, bringing generations together and helping with our emotional and physical health!

There are so many other exciting things going on which you can read about in full in our recent newsletter including info on: Carbon Cafes, the new Food Producers Network, The Million Mile Beach Clean, The Climate Feis on Skye, the Northwest 2045 plans and our Crazee, Lazee, Funzee climate action tips. Read more here : <https://planetsutherland.com/may-21-newsletter/>

And finally, on the food front. If you'd like to hear about the achievements and plans of the Highland Good Food Partnership, please sign up and join the event on the 22nd June here – <https://food22june.eventbrite.co.uk>. The discussions, networks and excitement around this initiative is truly amazing. Together we can really improve our Highland Food, eating, buying and growing locally.

Please do get in touch if you'd like to join our carbon cafes. Email: [anna@planetsutherland.com](mailto:anna@planetsutherland.com).



## Golspie Bothy Led Rides June 2021

DATE	TIME	MEET AT	DESTINATION
Tues 1st June	9:30am	Seafront Centre	Little Ferry
Tues 8th June	9:30am	Heritage Centre Brora	Doll Hall
Tues 15th June	9:30am	Seafront centre	Little Ferry
Tues 22nd June	9:30am	Heritage Centre Brora	Loch Brora
Tues 29th June	9:30am	Seafront centre	Little Ferry

### Golspie Bothy

Golspie Bothy are holding a series of 'led rides' - see advert to right. They are also holding led health walks throughout June. These are sociable, risk assessed walks on easy terrain with plenty of rest opportunities. To find out times, book or chat - email: [amandawagstaff@cyclingsuk.org](mailto:amandawagstaff@cyclingsuk.org) or call 07833938938.

These rides are at a steady pace. The routes are flat, short and routes which have low traffic or on off road trails. There's opportunities to stop, rest & chat.

"Led rides" are sociable, risk assessed rides on easy terrain with plenty of rest opportunities. Riders must wear a helmet, wear suitable clothing for the weather. Riders must be able to ride with others, Have a road worthy bike. If you do not own your own bike, we have a small fleet of bikes to loan free for the rides only

To book or chat about the rides email [amanda.wagstaffe@cyclingsuk.org](mailto:amanda.wagstaffe@cyclingsuk.org) call 07833938938 or visit Golspie Bothy FB for the booking link.





### Plans for Reopening - by Rhionna Mackay

Well it's been a long 15 months since we closed the doors to the centre and moved everything online. During that time we have offered courses and workshops in languages, cookery, growing, sewing, mindfulness, nutrition, art and more. We've had students from all over the world join us; some students have joined from as far away as New York, Hawaii, Thailand and Greece.

We know that many of our locally based students have found joining us for online classes difficult or not to their liking and we are working towards reopening for face to face learning this summer. We are figuring out what we can offer, where we can offer it and how many students we can work with. We are changing the layout of our garden and purchasing a sturdy gazebo so we can teach classes outside, rain or shine! A new wooden picnic bench will be joined by some more outdoor seats and we are clearing the outdoor space at the back of the centre for a second outdoor learning space.

We've been having a good old clear out too, digitising a lot of our records and reducing the amount of office furniture we have to enable social distancing for any indoor classes. Our technology has had an upgrade with a 63 inch smart board and 360 degree camera being installed so we can teach in our class room and at the same time deliver the class online for people joining in at home. We also plan to update our IT suite to focus on offering digital skills classes including how to use a laptop, how to use email and how to join a video call.

Two new staff are joining our team; Zoe Chambers has joined us on a 12 month placement as our Office Administration Assistant to support our Administrator with their growing list of tasks and Natalie Dunbar joins us as our Digital Marketing Assistant, focusing on growing our online classes for local, national and international students. The income we make from online learning can be reinvested back into offering subsidised quality learning opportunities for our local students.

We want to thank our existing and new students for your support and understanding since we have been closed and we are looking forward to welcoming you back safely very soon.



**Volunteers' Week** has just taken place – the week is a time to say thanks for the contribution millions of people make across the UK through volunteering, and Lairg is no exception... LDCI would like to recognise the fantastic work that volunteers make in our village – from the members who help out litter picking to Light Up Lairg, Lairg in Bloom, the Crofters Show, and all the committees, clubs and groups. You know who you are!

Lochview Rural Training is situated in Shinness, Lairg. We are a social enterprise and Scottish Charity with our key aim to promote, organise and deliver rural learning, training and career opportunities, improving awareness, knowledge and access to our rural landscape and to promote an understanding of the value of rural life for social wellbeing for all.

We hope to provide an informal setting for you to experience a range of activities that will help to develop your skills and knowledge of all that is rural. Whether you are a young person looking to develop a more practical approach to learning, an individual or a family wanting to spend time outdoors and be close to animals and nature we can provide you with these experiences.

As a social enterprise it is our aim to offset our educational program costs by offering a range of courses to the general public.

During the year we will be hosting a range of one day workshops that will include: practical lambing, agricultural machinery maintenance courses, practical crofting, beginners guide to crofting, poultry keeping, animal health to name a few.

We will have a dedicated youth education programme which will include SQA Rural skills, and employability courses to promote rural skills as a pathway to employment. What we do:

We pride ourselves on creating a happy and inclusive family atmosphere for our staff and students where everyone can thrive.

We offer meaningful land-based activities and training to any individual or group of students in a relaxed, happy atmosphere. We believe in the therapeutic value of working outdoors and being around animals, which has been shown to reduce stress, resulting in better physical and mental well-being.

As a rural training centre based on a working croft our activities naturally follow the seasons:

Spring – is a season of new life, here on the croft we have lambs, calves, piglets and chicks so you will have plenty to do and see.

Summer – is all about hay making and a busy time of year working with the sheep and lambs, you will enjoy learning about animal welfare and the husbandry side of keeping livestock.

Autumn – A time for getting the machinery ready to be put away for the winter, preparing sheep for the annual visit to the ram and making the croft ready for the winter months.

Winter – is all about the animals and making sure that they are being well looked after, lots of feeding and ensuring the water is still running. We also do our repairs during the winter months, so fencing, dyke repairs and any other jobs we find – we are never quiet!



We are very excited to be launching our summer sessions for 7-11 year olds and a young crofters club for 11-18 year olds.

We have recently installed a wonderful larch clad training room here on the croft so no matter the weather we have an area to learn, we know this will be especially useful in the winter months. On the croft we have a range of livestock including critically endangered Large Black pigs, sheep, poultry and horses.

You can find out more information by looking us up on facebook or our website [www.lochviewruraltraining.co.uk](http://www.lochviewruraltraining.co.uk) .

## Make a Sun Clock

**NEVER LOOK DIRECTLY AT THE SUN, IT WILL DAMAGE YOUR EYES**



Picture 1 by Simon Bubloz

The Sun Clock is best set up at Solar Noon, 12.58 p.m. BST, but any time will be just fine. Picture 1 illustrates the pole, the shadow of the camera. The pole shadow is obscured. The Solar Noon can just be seen. The Sun is on the back of the person taking the picture, who is standing on the other fixed marker.



Picture 2 by Simon Bubloz

Picture 2, taken from the same position shows how far the Sun has moved in 1 hour. Have a contest with family members to put markers down after 3 hours, 5 hours and 8 hours.

If you start the Sun Clock at 12.58 p.m. the first hour marker will be at Solar Noon, and the shadow of the pole will be due North.

This magazine is funded by:



Thank you for reading issue 36 of the Lairg Magazine! If you would like to submit something to the magazine, please send it to: [projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk](mailto:projectofficer@lairginitiative.co.uk).

Phone for Chair Kaye: 07500453301, Vice Chair Norman: 07742025719 or write to us at:

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