



## To Cromarty folk near and far - we send best wishes for a Happy New Year

And if you're around on New Year's Day you may wish to gather at the harbour at noon, to support the stalwarts who insist on upholding the tradition of a mad dash into the firth. Although no longer an official event it is still an opportunity to greet one another as a community to welcome the new year.

## Cromarty Rising Hail The End To A Successful Campaign



In a statement released at the beginning of December the Port of Cromarty Firth announced that they were no longer pursuing an application to conduct ship-to-ship oil transfers in the Moray Firth. Duncan Bowers writes:

Cromarty Rising wishes to say a BIG thank you to all who gave their support, attended public meetings, stood side-by-side, held banners, shared knowledge and correspondence, all of which contributed to the success of

the recent campaign to prevent ship to ship oil transfers in the Moray Firth.

Supporters grew to include master mariners, an underwater acoustics specialist and an astonishing number of PhDs, Professors of Law and academics. Thank you to everyone who gave donations and thanks to Cromarty & District Community Council for holding those funds and providing fund management. We must also record our thanks to major financial backers, their presence in the background brought confidence and strength (and still does).

We cannot emphasise enough the importance of the Freedom of Information (Scotland) Act 2002 as a significant factor in the success of the campaign. The knowledge gained provided invaluable insight, allowed analysis and went on to shape both legal and campaign strategies.

Thank you to Bindmans LLP, our London based solicitors renowned for being at the cutting edge of legal developments and challenges. With Bindmans expertise Cromarty Rising was able to mount a serious challenge in opposing the award of an STS licence inside the Moray Firth Special Area of Conservation.

We owe an enormous debt to Mr Ian Cowan of Highland Environmental Law. His contribution in our challenges to the Scottish Government, the Public Petitions Committee and our formal complaint to the EU Commission has been invaluable.

His personal commitment and generosity to community representation has been exemplary in protecting our natural environment.

Thanks also to Scotland's major wildlife protectors RSPB, WDC, Scottish Wildlife Trust, National Trust for Scotland etc. and a special mention for Marine Connection in Moray.

A big thank you too for the support of 38 Degrees Scotland which has become such an important part of expressing the democratic voice of communities in today's vast political landscape.

We must thank members of the press from many different newspapers, who stuck with us and followed developments with genuine interest.

Our campaign against ship-to-ship crude oil transfers taking place inside a Special Area of Conservation has succeeded, we have no doubt that this was:

The Wrong Plan, In The Wrong Place.



Images by Greg Fullarton. Top: Campaigning outside Hollyrood.  
Above: Demonstrating on Nairn beach.

## Christmas Dance Fundraiser

Clinging to the Wreckage, the local group of guitars, ukuleles and singers, raised just over £1300 at their latest gig in the Victoria Hall on Saturday 15th December. Around 100 people sang and danced along to a selection of Christmas music, from traditional to modern. The money raised will be used to fund local projects. Some drink was taken.

## Businesses Boosted By A Bumper Christmas

Many of the local businesses have reported an increase in people choosing to shop local in 2018. A significant number of visitors also commented on how much nicer it was to do their Christmas shopping in Cromarty rather than battling with the crowds in Inverness. In the last few years the town has seen a marked improvement on what can be sourced locally. Why not make it a new year's resolution to buy as much as you can without getting in the car, taking the bus or going online? Research suggests

that 80% of money spent locally stays in the local economy. That has to be good for the future prosperity of the town.

### **Sutor Creek**

'Sutor Creek at The Old Brewery' will re-open on Friday 18th January 2019. Open Fridays, Saturdays and Sundays for lunch 12-2pm and dinner 6-8.30pm. The Wee Bar is open Friday and Saturday evenings from 6pm.

#### **SPECIAL EVENTS:**

**BURNS' NIGHT TASTING DINNER FRIDAY 25TH  
JANUARY AT 6.30PM**

Join us for a celebration of Robert Burns with a special Tasting Dinner featuring the best of Scotland's natural larder. Four courses and whisky toast, £45 per person. Limited spaces. Call 01381 600 855 for reservations or book online at [www.sutorcreek.co.uk](http://www.sutorcreek.co.uk).

**CURRY NIGHTS AT THE CREEK FRIDAY 1ST &  
SATURDAY 2ND FEBRUARY, 6-8.30PM**

Heat up your winter with Curry at The Creek! Mild, medium and hot curries available with a wonderful selection of authentic side dishes and desserts. Call 01381 600 855 for reservations or book online at [www.sutorcreek.co.uk](http://www.sutorcreek.co.uk).

Our renovations at Sutor Creek are coming along nicely – hoping to be operational again on Bank Street in March. We would like to wish all our customers all the best for 2019!

### **Calluna**

We've had a great first 6 months at Calluna and appreciate all the local support we've received. As a thank you (and in a preparation for all our beautiful Spring goodies about to arrive) we are going to hold a SALE from January 7th – come visit and find yourself a bargain!

### **Couper's Creek**

Open daily from January 3rd for a lovely selection of home-made cakes, freshly ground coffee, soups, stovies and paninis.

### **The Cheese House**

Closes for its annual holiday from 1st – 16th January - opening again (Thursdays – Mondays) from 17th January. (Apparently this is allowed as one of the editorial team says they bought enough cheese at Christmas to last them long into the new year).



### **The Cromarty Live Top Five - Highlights of 2018**

As is customary at this time of year we've been looking back over the past 12 months and selected some key moments in the life of the town. (Cue Radio 1 theme tune for the music charts...)

**5. Launch of Tess.** As featured in our last newsletter, the construction and launch of the town's third skiff was a magnificent achievement and testament to the success and impact of rowing for much of the community.

**4. Hogg wedding.** Everyone loves a Cromarty wedding and it was especially delightful to have a member of one of its oldest families get hitched. Our congratulations to David and Elisa on their marriage in September and best wishes for many happy years together.

**3. Film Festival Finale.** The 12th Cromarty Film Festival felt bigger and better than ever – and we look forward to its continued success in years to come. This year's highlight had to be the screening of Lindy Cameron and Don Coutts's 'American Cousins' – such a rarity for a

festival to showcase the work of two home-grown film-makers (and long overdue).

**2. Open Gardens and Flower Festival.** This event just seems to grow and grow! Now firmly established in the Cromarty calendar it is a magnificent example of the town doing what it does best – providing a warm welcome and displaying genuine creativity. Congratulations again to all the volunteers who made it such a success this year.

**1. Black Isle Regatta – Saturday night party on the Links.** Back in June the town played host to the hugely successful rowing regatta – with 16 clubs from across Scotland represented. Having the Links full to bursting with campers, and a wonderful DJ set from Iain Hogg, we really showed the world (well this part of it at least) how to party. Here's to more such events in the future!

### Friends of Hugh Miller

Looking back on the year just gone The Friends of Hugh Miller were proud to be part of the second National Hugh Miller Writing Competition which they co-sponsored. They were also delighted to play host to the winning poet's subsequent visit to Cromarty. They made links with the Glasgow Poets' Group who had a residency at the Old Brewery. A cold late September's evening was cheered by some high-spirited readings from the group members – aided by a smoking chimenea in the Old Police Station garden.

### History Society

We are looking forward to the first of our new year talks at the West Church Hall, 7.30pm, 17th January. History Society committee member and current chair of the Courthouse Museum Trust, Gordon Haynes, will present "Making Plans for Daldon - The story of Cromarty's Provost and Edinburgh College of Art's Class of '62". This will reflect on the sad condition of the town in the early 1960s then chart its subsequent rise and will dwell briefly on the perception of history itself as seen through the thoughts of others. Some local heroes will also be singled out for their part in Cromarty's regeneration. Our website is [www.cromartyhistory.scot](http://www.cromartyhistory.scot)



## The Cromarty Community Rowing Club

AGM to be held on Thursday 16th January - 7pm in the West Church Hall.

## Cromarty Arts Society



Image by Calum Davidson. Hugh Who? project marking 200 years of Hugh Miller.

After 31 years of providing a range of creative offerings, (someone should write a brief history of this), CAS is winding up operations. There will be a final meeting in the Hugh Miller Institute on Saturday 19th January - 6-7pm. - to agree where to distribute any remaining funds. No doubt many would like to join the Cromarty Live team in thanking Jenny Gunn, Helen Rowson, Alison Dunn, Rosie Newman (amongst others) for contributing so much to the creative liveliness of the town over the years.

## News From The Development Trust

Arguably the high point of 2018 was clearing out the old dairy, felling the trees and scrub round about it and Townlands Barn, and starting to tidy up the latter. This was all undertaken by volunteers who are members of the trust. All agreed that 'actually getting our hands dirty' was welcome after the years of debate and discussion about the barn, which pre-dated the establishment of the CCDT. The work should allow the proposed thrift shop to open in the old dairy on a pop-up basis, next summer. This will be run by trust volunteers to help raise money for other local

initiatives and provide the CCDT with a High Street presence to act as an information point.

More debate, however, is still needed and all residents are invited to an open 'brainstorming' meeting early next year to thrash out what exact role the renovated barn should play in the life of Cromarty. This will be a vitally important decision, as it will dictate which funding agencies will be approached to support the transformation of the oldest building in Cromarty into a 21st century community asset. Anyone interested in being more involved in this, should ensure they are fully paid up members of CCDT – still great value at only £1 a year.



Image: The ferry slipway on the Cromarty side.

Another high point was in early December when we heard that the Cromarty Tourism Development Project, submitted by the CCDT had made it through to round two of the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) awards programme. This could see up to £400,000 being invested in Cromarty, split between two elements of the project. These are: the restoration of the slipways to secure the long-term future of the ferry; and the establishment of a modest site for motorhomes. Hitherto these vehicles have been using the Links throughout the late spring, summer and early autumn, without any management or charge. Two sites are being explored. The first is near the bottle-bank at the Western End of the links, across from where cinema is planned. The second is at Whitedykes beside the industrial estate.



The Whitedykes site is owned by the Highland Council and offers real potential. But it also presents a significant problem in the form of thousands of tonnes of spoil from the work done on the primary school extension. This would have to be removed before there would be any chance of establishing a motorhome facility. The CCDT has appealed to the Highland Council to remove this material and is currently awaiting a response.

Cromarty is just one of 48 community projects across Scotland competing for RTIF support. CCDT has formed a partnership with the members of Nigg and Shandwick Community Council, who also have a clear interest in securing the future of the ferry and increasing tourist traffic flows. The next round application is due to be submitted by the end of January, but there are many hurdles to overcome before that can be done.

Jon Palmer conducted a survey of local business opinion on the importance of the ferry to the commercial life of Cromarty, and the impact of unmanaged motorhome parking on the Links. The results will be presented as evidence to support the RTIF application. If it is successful, more detailed proposals will be presented to the community.

If anyone would like to comment further, or thinks they can help with this or any other of CCDT's activities, please contact [ccdt-main@googlegroups.com](mailto:ccdt-main@googlegroups.com) or a CCDT director: David Fraser; Estelle Quick; Jacquie Ross; Sheila Currie; David Ross; Greg Fullarton; Nigel Shapcott; and Ronald Young

### **Whisky Galore - The Cromarty Whisky Investment Society**

A small group of local individuals has recently set up an investment club focusing on whisky. It already has purchased one 250 litre hogshead of Arran malt which is currently maturing nicely in the distillery at Lochranza on the Isle of Arran. The group is properly and legally constituted and meets occasionally to discuss investment opportunities. It has a maximum number of members but there are a few places left. If anyone wants more information, they can contact Jeremy Price at Clunes House for details.

We trust you've found this an interesting and informative read.  
Please let us know what you think, or send suggestions and ideas  
for articles via [editor@cromartylive.co.uk](mailto:editor@cromartylive.co.uk)

The Cromarty Live Newsletter team is Jon Palmer, Jeremy Price,  
David Ross, Laura Shepherd

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