

Welcome to another busy month
in our wee Highland town.

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Cromarty Has A Cinema!



Fraser Mackenzie writes:

'After nearly three years of feasibility studies, design, negotiation, planning and fund raising by a small team of volunteers from the Cromarty and Resolis Film Society, ably advised throughout by Architect Lynne Sproull, the 35-seat purpose-built Cromarty Cinema is opening for business on 31 January 2020. The launch screening is "The Personal History of David Copperfield" but prior to this, the cinema hosted an open day on Wed 29 Jan, offering a first glimpse of the auditorium and screen to local residents. 202 folk turned up!

The Cinema is being run in partnership with Eden Court, without whose assistance on film programming, licensing, ticketing and marketing this venture wouldn't be possible. However, unlike Eden Court the Cromarty Cinema will be primarily run by volunteers - so if you are interested in helping out please do let us know.

Tickets for screenings will be available from Eden Court, both online and at the box office within the next four to

six weeks but before this date tickets can be purchased directly at the Cromarty Cinema a half hour before each performance. Information on the Cromarty Cinema programme will be included in Eden Court's monthly film guide on their website and also on the Cromarty and Resolis Film Society website

www.cromartyandresolisfilmsociety.org/cinema

We'd like to encourage everyone locally to become a friend of the society. Membership forms are available from Ingrid's House, Church Street Cromarty, or on our website. Membership is £25 per year and gives you £1.50 off the regular films' ticket price and early bird access to tickets to the Cromarty Film Festival.

The cinema is also available for private hires by members, for parties, conferences etc.

The cinema was made possible by: Highland LEADER, Creative Scotland, Viridor Credits, The Robertson Trust, Beatrice Partnership, Highlands and Islands Enterprise, The Foyle Foundation plus the generous support of individuals who donated to the crowdfund, purchased stars and sponsored seats.

Hats off too to Fortrose-based Wyvis Homes who did a fantastic job on construction to bring the Cinema in on time and on budget.'

In their coverage of the story the Ross-shire Journal quoted James Mackenzie-Blackman, chief executive of Eden Court, who said: "I was first presented with the idea of collaborating with the Film Society on their vision for a new cinema in Cromarty not long after arriving at Eden Court.

"It immediately appealed as a bold and innovative project that would ensure world-class cinema reached more people across the Highland region we are proud to serve. This partnership is nationally unique."



For those who enjoy a bit of irony it will not have gone unnoticed that this project, made possible with European funding, opens on the day the UK officially leaves the EU.

An Inspiring Evening with Lesley Riddoch

Continuing the film theme... Locals were treated to a highly informative presentation at West Church Hall on Saturday 25th January, organised by the Film Society. Following her visit as a guest at the Film Festival in December Lesley Riddoch returned for a screening of her documentary about Norway. Parallels with Scotland, as well as the differences, were clearly articulated and gave much food for thought. A lively post-screening discussion was facilitated by Kenny Taylor who stated afterwards:

'It'll be tricky for Scotland to catch up with Norway's couple of centuries of social and political progress, but that doesn't mean we shouldn't try to take more steps along that road.'



From left to right: Kenny Taylor, Fraser Mackenzie, Lesley Riddoch and Dave Newman demonstrate some solidarity.

First Youth Member Community Councillor

Alan Plampton writes:

'Cromarty has its very first Youth Member Community Councillor. 16 year old Gregor Fox has been appointed to serve a 2 year term. This opportunity is as a result of changes to the rules establishing Community Councils. For the first time 16 to 18 year olds will have a voice, and a vote, when it comes to representing their community.'



Gregor said, "I'm really pleased, and excited, to accept this challenge to represent the views, and needs, of young people in Cromarty. In particular, I will be looking to find ways for the Community Council to help create outdoor activity facilities, in Cromarty, for all age ranges from 5 to 25. So many aren't able to get to facilities at Learnie and in Inverness. As a result they get bored and frustrated."

There are still a minimum of three positions available on the Community Council and a new round of recruitment will be open from 4th February. With a major housing development on the way, not to mention a host of other projects taking place, it could prove a lively time to represent the views of the community. Further details can be found at www.highland.gov.uk

Development Trust News

The Barn

As the Newsletter was going to press, final arrangements were being made for a meeting between CCDT directors and architect Peter McIlhenny at Townlands Barn.

This is to discuss the options and designs for building and the land around it. Following public consultation, the CCDT's barn working group has recommended a mix of retail, café, residential and workshop areas in the old barn and proposed new accommodation outside. Mr McIlhenny has been assessing these, and other ideas.

Once a plan has been finalised, the appropriate funding agencies will be approached for support.

Housing

Meanwhile we are still seeking an update on the planned housing development in the field beside the Victoria Park.

We had hoped to have reached this stage some months ago, but fresh representations were made to Albyn. We have now received a commitment from the housing association, to meet the Cromarty and District Community Council (CDCC) and the Cromarty Community Development Trust (CCDT) in the near future.

This followed a useful discussion between CDCC and the CCDT on how best to make progress on what was agreed to be one of the most pressing challenges for Cromarty – the desperate local need for affordable housing.

The community council officially will take the lead on the issue, but the development trust will share the workload as close partners.

The Press & Journal, with its recent front-page report on the “madness” of a Cromarty Primary's £4m extension being left empty, while the school is deemed to be full, underlined the inter-related troubles Cromarty faces.

The school roll has fallen by more than half, with the lack of affordable houses one of the main reasons. Teaching staff are lost, and the roll is capped, so any new children will have to be bussed to other schools. Parents of young families are therefore unlikely to move to the area. But there are next to no affordable houses for them anyway.

These will have to be built, if Cromarty is to have the children needed to ensure a viable community in the future.

Slipways/Campsite project

We have just heard that the Assessment Panel for the Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF), the body which was going to withdraw funding last year, has been persuaded that real progress has been made. As a result, it has agreed to extend the deadline for resolution of all outstanding issues to the 31st March 2020 to enable all the planning and associated arrangements to be completed.

The Assessment Panel members have also agreed to a maximum level of RTIF funding for the Cromarty slipways of £240,506. (The balance of the £300,000 from RTIF will go towards the campsite at Whitedykes).

The tender documents and drawings for the upgrading of the slipways have been distributed through the Scottish Government's online tendering & procurement system. This allows contracting bodies to obtain competitive quotes electronically for smaller projects.

Meanwhile plans for the campsite have been submitted to the Highland Council and comments so far have been overwhelmingly positive. Suppliers for a toilet block have been found, but are pricey – circa £18,000. The architect is looking at possible cheaper bespoke options

The application to Scottish Water application for connection to the mains, has also been submitted.

Thrift Shop

Initial contact has been made with SSE to reconnect the old dairy to the mains electrical supply.

Harbour Update

Pat Haynes writes:

Harbour Jigsaw

Following a very successful launch of our first Harbour Jigsaw, showing images from award winning local photographer David Kent, we will shortly have a reprint in

stock. These can be ordered through the harbour website www.cromartyharbour.org or our [Facebook](#) page.

Check out Chatterbox for Fran Tilbrook's account of her family Christmas attempting to complete the puzzle.

Seasonal Harbour Berths

It's the time of year for all aspiring sailors to apply for berths in the harbour, Please check out the harbour website and noticeboard for more details. Please note the closing date for applications is 29 February, preferably electronically.

Harbour Restoration

Whilst we wait for lighter nights, hopefully calmer weather and better tides to allow our contractors Lochshell to complete the installation of the new greenheart fendering system, F & G builders are busy prefabricating elements of the new sheds with a view to erecting them as the weather permits in the next few weeks.

Rental Opportunity

We will shortly be advertising the new harbour sheds for lease, details will be available on the website and Facebook pages and interested parties should contact us at info@cromartyharbour.org.

Congratulations

Finally congratulations to our new neighbours the Cromarty and Resolis Film Society on the successful completion of Cromarty's very own cinema.

Business News

Sutor Creek

We are now open daily 12-9pm for lunch, dinner and wood-fired pizzas. Reservations and take away orders can be made by phoning 01381 600 855 or book tables through our website www.sutorcreek.co.uk.

TAKE-AWAY SPECIAL OFFER: Buy One Pizza Get One 1/2 Price, Monday through Thursdays in February.

Special Events

Tapas Night - Friday 7th February Enjoy a taste of Spain with our popular Tapas Night - lots of dishes to choose from. A great night to spend with friends and family. Reservations available 6-8.30pm.

Valentine's Dinner - Friday 14th February

Celebrate this special day with a romantic dinner at Sutor Creek - recently awarded Best Fine Dining Restaurant by Inverness Business Awards. Reservations available 6-8.30pm.

Apprentice Tasting Dinner - Friday 28th February

Celebrate our young culinary talent with a Tasting Dinner created by Sutor Creek's Modern Apprentices, guided by Graham. A great way to support our trainees in their further education! £50 per person with wine pairing options.

Calluna

Our Spring lines from Great Plains and ICHI are now in store! Gorgeous fabrics and Spring colours in tops, trousers, dresses and jumpsuits - sizes 8-18. New scarves, bags and jewellery also arriving regularly. Open 10-5pm daily.

Snowdrop Walk

A special event in aid of the RNLI is being held on **Saturday 8th February**, 11am - 2pm at Wellington House, £3 with homemade hot soup and a roll.

Cromarty History Society

This month's talk is 'One of the Best Portes in the Yslande - a history of Cromarty Harbour' presented by Pat Haynes. **Thursday 20th February**, 7.30pm at West Church Hall. www.cromartyhistory.scot

Pancake Day at Cromarty Sunday Club

Cromarty Sunday Club is back on after the winter break on 23 February at 3.30pm in the West Church. Both local congregations (St Regulus and West Church) invite all local children and parents to this event.

We celebrate Pancake Day and the subsequent start of lent) with our hugely popular pancake race and tossing and this time we may even play pancake memory. We'll have plenty of fresh pancakes and will decorate them with various sweet and savoury toppings. Of course there will also be tea and coffee for the grown-ups.

All free, just come along!

The Sunday Club Programme for the rest of the year looks like this:

March, 22nd, St. Regulus Theme: Mothering Sunday

April, 26th, West Church Theme: Local Saints

May, 31st, St. Regulus Theme: Pentecost (may change if we can't find enough suitable child friendly material)

June 28th, The Beach Summer BBQ

July – Summer Holidays – No Sunday Club

August, 30th, West Church Theme: Friendship, New School Year, Sunday Club Sponsored child Alvio

September, 27th, St. Regulus Theme: Autumn

October, 25th, West Church Theme: All Saints

November, 22nd , St. Regulus Theme: Christmas Crafts and First rehearsal of Nativity Play that will be performed at the Community Christingle

December, 13th, West Church – Community Christingle Possible Candlelit procession to St. Regulus for Pot Luck Soup Supper

Cromarty Open Studios

Pop it in your diary: **Saturday 6 June and Sun 7 June**
11.00am - 5.00pm

If any makers/artists are interested in getting involved
please contact Janie via wapiti32@hotmail.com

Cromarty Arts Trust

THICK SKIN, ELASTIC HEART - Sunday 2nd Feb at
the Stables, 8.00pm (doors 7.30pm)

From porn addiction to miscarriages to mental health to queer identity, this darkly comedic show is about the overwhelming pressure of high societal expectations and constant digital connection. Putting Millennial voices to the front in all their over-sharing glory, thick skin, elastic heart explores life in modern Britain for a generation that is frequently reduced to a sound-bite in mass media as ineffectual, lazy, oversensitive 'snowflakes'. On at Eden Court the night before - but cheaper and more intimate in Cromarty!

With a support slot from Cromarty's own talented young singer-songwriter, LILY MAY MULLERY.

Suitable for age 14+ No interval. BYOB. Approx 80 mins duration

Tickets: £10/£6 for school/students/unwaged. Buy on the door or in advance: info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk
/01381 600354

The CROMARTY ARTS TRUST 2020 programme of workshops, courses, concerts, gigs and events is now up on the website at www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk and bookings are open for EVERYTHING! Don't miss out as many get booked up quickly - get in touch today to reserve your place or purchase tickets.

We hope 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

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

The Newsletter is currently sponsored by Cromarty Stores. Printed copies are also available at the Stores for those unable to access the online version.

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