



February 2023

With huge thanks to our benefactors (who would prefer to remain anonymous), the cost of producing the newsletter is covered for another 12 months. So read on and enjoy all that our wee town has to offer in the way of news.

Cromarty Community Development Trust

East Church Hall

Highland Council (who look after this Common Good building) remain keen to see this building used for Community Development and to generate income to pay for itself.

We're still waiting for the go-ahead from Highland Council to host an 'Open Day' at the Hall (they will be doing a Fire Test first), where potential renters/users can see round the building and think about what the various spaces could be productively used for.

We've already had several community groups and others express an interest. There are potentially three separate spaces in the building, so different groups could be in together.

The Development Trust has no preferred user in mind – it's what's best for the whole Community and what meets Highland Council's terms.

An open day will also be a great opportunity to talk to Trust Directors and Julie Macrae our Development Officer about other future ideas and projects around the town.

The Directors of the Trust VERY MUCH want to get back to the way things were done before Covid, with lots of members leading on lots of projects and ideas. It is the COMMUNITY'S Trust, after all...

Ferries

Scottish Government has a group working with communities about how best ferry services can meet their needs. Obviously we're not an island and haven't the CalMac problems others have, but our wee ferry is still important, and we were able to share some of what our needs might be in a recent Workshop with transport providers, communities and government.

Not just in terms of the ferry itself, but integrating transport connections and providing facilities for travellers to eg hire bikes, charge Electric Vehicles etc to take over the water.

Camper Van Site

Some of you will have spotted the Digger on the Campervan site at Whitedykes, which means work is - at last - starting on constructing the site. Aardvark, from Whitebog near Fortrose are doing the work and expect to be finished by Easter.

This means we should be open for business this season!

This also means that we must develop our marketing & ticketing/booking systems and recruit a member of staff to oversee running the site (liaising with visitors, organising cleaning, social media, promoting the venue, setting up a Paypal account, building up our presence in camper van circles etc).

We've been looking at how other Highlands community-led Camper sites operate. The Development Trust has some funds to develop a website and booking system, but the Directors and Development Officer can only do so much; so anyone reading this who wants to help develop the business side of things, please get in touch now.

Guyana Links

On 6th and 7th January Simon and Jill Evans hosted a couple of house concerts at Barkly House to raise money for a project in Guyana given the close links between Cromarty and Slavery in Guyana.

David Alston told the two audiences that the Barklys were big time slave owners who benefitted hugely from the compensation scheme of 1835 so the concerts felt like a very minor act of redemption or at least acknowledgement.

Ian Sharp from Fortrose (piano) and Simon Evans (violin) played music by black composers or dedicated to black artists, including the Sonata in G minor by Joseph Bolgne, Chevalier de St George (a contemporary of Mozart), Samuel Coleridge Taylor's Sonata in D minor (1898),

Errollyn Wallen's Woogie Boogie. Wallen is a contemporary Scottish composer. Finally,

Beethoven's 'Bridgetower' Sonata Op 47 formerly known as 'The Kreutzer'.

Full houses of around 25-30 appreciative attendees relaxed over wine and nibbles to hear the repertoire, almost all of which was music nobody attending had heard before and around £600 was raised for projects in Guyana.



Ian and Simon taking a post-concert bow.

Spring Hopes, Eternal

Cromarty Allotments have a couple of plots or half-plots available for anyone who wants to grow their own food this year.

Contact the Cromarty Allotments and Gardens Society Secretary (Della Matheson) via cagssecretary@gmail.com if you are at all interested in taking one on.

There are tools to share if you don't have any; and the other plot-holders will be only too happy to help any newbies get started and give advice about eg what grows best, when is a good time to sow or plant or harvest etc.

Also, from Transition Black Isle...

Seed Swap

Transition Black Isle will be bringing a seed swap stall to the Cromarty Community Market (Saturday 11 February: 10.30 – 12.30), so either bring along your excess seed to swap or just browse and take some seed, or a small donation.

Tattie Day

TBI will be holding the annual Black Isle Seed Potato day at North Kessock Village Hall on Saturday 4 March (11am to 3pm).

Many Varieties of seed potato will be on sale to grow your own (20p a spud), plus onion sets, seed swap, advice, competitions and café. Entry £1 (kids go free)... Don't forget to bring your own bags.

For more info go to www.transitionblackisle.org

Some varieties of Seed tatties will also be available at the Cromarty market a week later on Saturday 11 March.

Our Local Larder

For anyone new to the area or just forgot, there is a great website which shows all of the local food growers, producers, suppliers, markets, restaurants, distilleries/breweries across the whole Black Isle. Click [here](#) to take a look.

There's maybe more than you realise! And if you could help maintain the website, please get in touch with them – it's a great way to get to know what we have on our doorstep.

Youth Cafe

A break down of what's available currently for young people through the week.

Day	Activity	Time	Age
Monday	Multi-Sports ran by our Young HLH leaders Athletics' starting (6 th Feb)	4.15pm – 5.15pm	P1 +
Wednesday	Football Coaching with Inverness Caley Thistle	3.15pm – 4.15pm	P1+
Wednesday	Junior Youth Café, Arts, Crafts, Sports, Bakewell/ Cookwell	4.15pm – 5pm	P1+
Wednesday	Snr Youth Café range of activities provided	4pm - 7pm	S1+
Wednesday	Indoor Rowing - Organised and ran by Teagan	4.30pm – 6.30pm	P7+
Friday	Outdoor Rowing (Weather Dependant)	2pm – 4pm	S1+



Business Updates

Cromarty Post Office

Royal Mail issues:

There's still no news about more strike dates but the dispute hasn't been resolved so further strikes are likely in the next few weeks. I'll post on the community FB page as soon as I know anything definite. And the problems with international mail caused by the cyber attack haven't been fully resolved either. We can now accept ordinary international letters and large letters as long as they don't need a customs form. This basically means letters and cards only, nothing that contains goods. International tracked services are still not available. Again I'll post on FB as soon as there's any news.

Apart from that everything's fine at the post office. There's new stock coming in regularly and sometimes it doesn't stay around very long so keep your eyes open! And don't forget we now close at 5pm on our full days.

The Cheese House

Currently open Thursday, Friday and Saturday (10.00-17.00) until the end of February. Just saving a bit of energy during the quieter months. We are genuinely happy to open up at other times on request – please don't be afraid to knock on our front door.

Sutor Creek

Our renovation is complete and we are now open with indoor tables! Our Take-away and deli continue as normal but we can now accommodate customers throughout the day from 10am for coffee, cake, brunch, and our seasonal menus & wood-fired pizza. We have introduced Brunch to our menus which is proving to be very popular! Tables can be reserved for evening meals from 5.30 to 7pm, Wednesday to Sunday.

The Stoltman Pizza: The world's strongest brothers, Tom & Luke Stoltman from Invergordon, have helped create our latest pizza at Sutor Creek. Loaded with Black Pudding, bacon, shredded pork, venison salami, buffalo mozzarella and fresh thyme, For every Stoltman Pizza sold there will be a donation made to the Invergordon RNLI.

To order take-away use our online system at www.sutorcreek.co.uk or phone us to order or book a table on 01381 600 855. Limited space so book in advance for special occasions!



Calluna

All new spring stock now in! Lovely bright colours in an assortment of knits, tops, jackets, skirts, dresses, trousers and jeans - all in sizes XS to XXL. Well worth a wee visit to see what's new!

The Royal Hotal

Thanks to everyone who joined us in January, your custom and company have been much appreciated! It's been great to see so many of you enjoying Fish & Fizz Fridays, our Bingo night and our first Tapas night. Thank you.

We're planning another **Bingo night in February**, please keep an eye on social media (facebook & Instagram under @royalcromarty) for details.

Our popular Tasting Menu returns on **Saturday 25 February!** A perfect excuse to spoil the one you love or catch up with friends and celebrate the fact that spring is just around the corner... Spaces are limited so if you haven't already done so, please get in touch to book.

We are now taking bookings for brunch and lunch on **Mother's Day on Sunday 19 March**. Spoil your Mum, she's worth it! Please get in touch to book.

Dog-friendly

We've always welcomed dogs into our conservatory and public bar, but it's chilly in the conservatory at this time of year, so we now allow small, well-behaved dogs into our lounge bar restaurant during the winter months. Please be respectful of other diners and make sure your doggie is on a lead, quiet and clean. Dogs are always welcome in our public bar.

Stay with us for less – continued!

We've extended our 'Stay for Less' offer of a 10% discount for B&B on stays of 2 or more consecutive nights until the end of May. Reservations must be made directly with us, either via our website or over the phone (bookings made with third parties like Booking.com will not qualify). Offer applies to our Superior rooms as well as our Standard rooms, and is not limited to particular nights – so you can

stay at the weekend too! The rate includes our famous full Scottish breakfast. www.royalhotel-cromarty.co.uk

Our opening hours for February remain unchanged:

Wed-Sun 11am – late (please note we currently close at 5pm on Sundays)

Late Lazy Breakfast 11am-12noon, Lunch 12noon-2.30pm, Dinner 5.30-8pm

And finally...

February 2023 marks 13 years since I took over at the Royal – time flies when you're having fun! Many thanks to my loyal team, and to all our customers & guests for your support, custom and banter over the years. There have been some tough times but they are definitely outweighed by the many, many fantastic times we've had. The time has come for me to move on though, and the Royal is for sale. So, if you are interested, or know someone who might be, then please get in touch for more details. Thanks! Jenny xox

Cromarty Library

BookBug Sessions

Join us every Thursday at 11.15 for songs, rhymes and ridiculously good fun. If you are aged between 0 and 4 years old, you and your grown up should come hang out with us and sing along.

Gaelic Chat

Interested in learning Gaelic? Come along and join in with our new group held on a Tuesday evening at 6.15pm.

Cosy space

We offer a warm, cosy space where you can enjoy a few board games, jigsaws, tea and coffee as well as a chat. Everyone welcome.

Library Opening Hours: Monday 10am-12noon, Tuesday 2-7pm, Thursday 12-5pm

For more information please phone us on 01381 600318
or drop us an email

Cromarty.libray@highlifehighland.com

James' Support Group

James Support Group have been shortlisted for Highland Heroes, and are one of three in the charity section to be announced on 10 March at The Drumossie Hotel. The Inverness Courier group will have a survey where **you can vote for us** from 2 February so please do!!!!

Here is our story:

LOSING a loved one by suicide has a devastating impact unlike any other bereavement but finding support to help cope with a loss or suicidal thoughts is hard, especially in the often remote communities throughout the Highlands.

When Patrick and Wendy Mullery from Cromarty lost their 28-year-old son James in 2017, they reached out for help but found none in the local area. So, they set up James Support Group.

The group has helped hundreds of local people, bringing those who have been bereaved together with those who have suicidal thoughts and are struggling with their mental health.

In April, the Inverness group will have been running for five years and there are now groups in Dingwall, Invergordon, Thurso, Aviemore, Nairn and Elgin. There are monthly meetings in each location, one-to-one support at a meeting or at home, and a 24/7 helpline. The charity is also planning to expand with groups in Fort William, Ullapool and Grantown on Spey.

James Support Group also runs Sport Support, visiting various sports clubs to talk about positive mental health. On October 1, the charity will be participating in the Baxters Loch Ness Marathon to raise funds.

A nomination said: "It is a small charity, and does not have the funding, sponsorship or media profile that other charities do. Despite this, the group works tirelessly, and

is dependent on donations. This couple are true Highland heroes.”

Patrick added: “It’s a beautiful thing to see a group come together. They are not only helping another person but also helping themselves. I feel amazed and very grateful to those who nominated us.”

James’s Partner Jodie and their three sons will all be taking part in the 5k event on 1 October, along with Patrick and some of the support group members. If you would like to take part, we will provide a running T shirt (you don’t have to run!) and sponsorship forms. Entry for charities is reduced to £35 with a suggested minimum target of £400. Contact Patrick for further information 07754 271963

Or scan the QR code to donate (get us with our hi-tech! - Ed)





Cromarty Courthouse Goes Digital

Six Highland museums are preparing to put their collections on the world stage after being chosen to participate in a unique collaboration between XpoNorth Digital, Highlands and Islands Enterprise's specialist digital support programme for the creative and heritage sectors, and Smartify, the world's most downloaded museum app.

Offering a digitised version of each museum's exhibitions, along with a curated video recounting their stories, a multi-media tour and even an e-shop, the Smartify app will allow smartphone users around the globe to engage with archives, artifacts, and memories from across Scotland's north.

The app's innovative nature will help to bring the storied history of the Highlands and Islands into the light for a wider audience, allowing museums to improve accessibility and further optimise the possibilities offered in the digital era.

The six museums participating in the initiative are Inverness Museum and Art Gallery; Gairloch Museum; Highlanders' Museum; Cromarty Courthouse Museum; Clyne Heritage Society (Brora Heritage Centre), and Stromness Museum, Orkney.

Liz Broumley said of the Courthouse's involvement: 'Cromarty Courthouse Museum is delighted to be involved in the XPONorth and Smartify Digital Application Programme. A presence on Smartify will make us more accessible, extend our audience, enhance local skills and knowledge and help us become more financially sustainable. It will enable us to share our heritage globally on the world's most popular museum app.'

and, it is recruiting...



Good-day to you. Sir Thomas Urquhart here...

It has come to my attention that some former staff have absconded!

The Sheriff has been informed, but awaiting their apprehension, there is forthwith an urgent need for additional seasonal paid staff (yes, payment indeed for the privilege of serving me) at the fine Courthouse Museum which draws many visitors to my little town of Cromarty.

*Hours are reasonable – 11.45am until 4.15pm (museum
open Easter to October)*

*Payment is sufficient - £10.90 per hour (Real Living
Wage)plus holiday pay*

*Appointments for diligent individuals may be made for
the following days:*

*Saturday, Sunday and Monday (ONE DAY OR MORE
CONSIDERED)*

*Duties will include turning me on (no ribald
observations, I pray you); greeting those who come for
an audience with myself and other lesser Courthouse
residents; ensuring that monies due for shop purchases
are levied and dealing with enquiries.*

*Full training shall be given, so verily I suggest you apply
forthwith by emailing courthousecromarty@gmail.com
by 18 February, this year of the Lord 2023.*

God spede you to my aid!

CROMARTY HISTORY SOCIETY & Friends of Cromarty Courthouse

IN
MEMORY OF
GENERAL SIR RICHARD
NUGENT O'CONNOR
KT. GCB. DSO. MC.

GENERAL **RICHARD O'CONNOR**
of Rosemarkie
A hero of two world wars

1889 to 1981.

Speaker:
Roger Young

7.30pm Tuesday
21st Feb 2023

Victoria Hall
Cromarty

ALL WELCOME NON-MEMBERS £3.00
www.cromartyhistory.scot

General O'Connor had a distinguished military career in both WW1 and WW2 and also between the wars. His wife was part of the Ross family of Cromarty House. He is buried in the St Regulus burial ground next to her. O'Connor lived in Rosemarkie after WW2 and during that time was appointed Lord Lieutenant for Ross and Cromarty and Lord High Commissioner of the Church of Scotland. The talk focuses on O'Connor's overwhelming success against a much larger Italian Army in North Africa in 1940-41, his accidental capture by the Germans close to the beginning of Rommel's campaign in 1941, his escape from imprisonment in Italy on his third attempt and his contributions to the gruelling British campaign against the Germans in Normandy and beyond in 1944. O'Connor's military abilities are compared with those of Rommel, the German commander in North Africa. An overview will be given of the rest of O'Connor's life.

Roger Young was born in 1949. He grew up with a father who served in WW2 in the British Army in North Africa and Italy. His father was of the opinion that a defect of the British Army at that time was a shortage of good officers. Since then Roger has had an interest in this topic. He studied philosophy at Oxford and spent his working life teaching philosophy at the University of Dundee. One of the courses he taught was "Philosophy of Peace and War".

Film Festival - 'New Realities'



Image: Sabine Hellmann

The December 'TRAILER' weekend offered a colourful flavour of things to come on **24-26th March**.

Projections on the Lighthouse were visually striking. We were delighted to be joined by such great numbers of folk with delicious food + drink from Sutor Creek helping to keep everyone warm. More to come in March - Lighthouse projections will mark the start + end of the festival.

We're a new team - Steffi, Sabine, Susan, Wyn - separate from Cromarty & Resolis Film Society, taking on running the festival for the first time. We're keen to warmly welcome anyone who'd like to help during the festival weekend. Please get in touch if you'd be interested - 07841 591873.

TICKETS - Festival team members will be based at a couple of places locally in Cromarty + Fortrose in mid-February so that tickets can be easily purchased in person as well as online. We know some folk much prefer buying

tickets in-person. We'll be happy to chat about the films, speakers, workshops as well as the welcome return of the Screen Machine! Programme + tickets + where to buy them to be announced soon.

Cinema

In February we welcome all film fans to sample the smorgasbord of films we have managed to fit into a short month, all for your enjoyment! The fantastic Jacques Tati continues, with four classics being introduced by Dave Newman. February's volunteers' classic film choice is Cinema Paradiso which is very fitting, as it's all about falling in love with cinema. If you haven't seen it yet, now's your chance. And if you have, you will no doubt want to see it again and on the big screen.

As yet another special treat, we're bringing you Heading West: A Story About A Band Called Shooglenifty. Many will be familiar with this band that has reached national treasure status, plus we're even getting an introduction from the director Donald Coutts!

If you've kept up to date with the Oscar news, you'll see that we're screening quite a few nominated films in different categories this month. These include The Whale, starring Brendan Fraser in a very different role; Empire of Light, featuring the ever pitch-perfect Olivia Colman; documentary All the Beauty and the Bloodshed, where a photographer and activist seeks to hold Purdue Pharma accountable for the opioid epidemic; and Babylon which takes us back to 1920s glamorous Hollywood.

And that's not even all so please feast your eyes on our entire February programme and book your tickets at cromartycinema.com, the human box office on Thursdays 12-2, or at the door.

Finally, the end of January marks our three-year anniversary! So please raise a glass to celebrate our lovely community cinema! if you'd like to take part in all the cinema action even more, please consider becoming a volunteer. To find out more, please drop a line to admin@cromartycinema.com.



CROMARTY CINEMA

February 2023



Wednesday 1 February	7pm	Les Vacances de M. Hulot (Mr Hulot's Holiday) (U) 1hr 54m - <i>Jacques Tati Season</i> Another classic from the Tati season. Escape the weather in the 1953 holiday slapstick classic.
Friday 3 February	7pm	Tori & Lokita (15) 1hr 29m Young immigrants in Belgium get lost in world of illegal drug production.
Saturday 4 February	7pm	Cinema Paradiso (12A) 1hr 55m - <i>This month's volunteers' choice</i> Tornatore's 1988 classic about a young boy falling in love with the cinema in a small Italian town. Morricone's score is an added treat.
Sunday 5 February	3pm	Hallelujah: Leonard Cohen, A Journey, A Song (12) 1hr 53m Documentary views Cohen's life through the lens of that famous song.
Wednesday 8 February	7pm	Mon Oncle (My Uncle) (U) 1hr 46m - <i>Jacques Tati Season</i> We meet M. Hulot again, this time in Paris, for another masterpiece of visual comedy.
Saturday 11 February	7pm	All The Beauty and The Bloodshed (18) 2hr 02m Documentary following artist Nan Goldin and the downfall of the big pharma Sackler family.
Sunday 12 February	3pm	Empire of Light (15) 1hr 55m Sam Mendes directs and Olivia Colman stars in this love letter to the cinema set in 1980s Margate.
Tuesday 14 February	7pm	Empire of Light (15) 1hr 55m - <i>Descriptive Subtitles</i> Sam Mendes directs and Olivia Coleman stars in this love letter to the cinema set in 1980s Margate.
Wednesday 15 February	7pm	Playtime (PG) 2hr 35m - <i>Jacques Tati Season</i> M. Hulot attempts to meet up with a business colleague in a gadget-filled Paris - with some chaotic results.
Friday 17 February	7pm	The Whale (15) 1hr 57m Reclusive English teacher tries to reconnect with his estranged teenage daughter.
Saturday 18 February	11am	Puss in Boots: The Last Wish (TBA) 1hr 40m Antonio Banderas returns as the sassy Puss in welcome sequel of the Shrek franchise. Never a dull frame!
Saturday 18 February	7pm	Babylon (18) 3hr 09m Brad Pitt and Margot Robbie star. Drama charting the transition of silent film to the talkies in decadent 1920s Hollywood.
Sunday 19 February	3pm	Casque d'Or (12A) 1hr 39m 70th anniversary re-release of the 1952 French classic. Simone Signoret is luminous in this dark tale of gangs and love in the Belle Epoque underworld.
Tuesday 21 February	7pm	Ephemeral (NONE) 55m Scottish winter climbing documentary with stunning photography and terrifying first ascents.
Wednesday 22 February	7pm	The Illusionist (PG) 1hr 30m Beautifully drawn animated tale of a conjurer who leaves France for London and ultimately Edinburgh.
Friday 24 February	7pm	Magic Mike's Last Dance (TBA) 1hr 50m Channing Tatum stars and Soderbergh directs again. Mike leaves Florida for London for a final dance gig.
Saturday 25 February	7pm	Heading West: A Story About A Band Called Shoogenifty (12A) 1hr 26m Documentary charting the Edinburgh band's rise from early gigs in 1990s to enduring national treasure status. <i>With an introduction from director Donald Coutts.</i>
Sunday 26 February	3pm	Women Talking (15) 1hr 44m Rooney Mara and Frances McDormand star. A fact-based drama about women in an isolated religious colony in Bolivia and their struggle to reconcile with their faith after systemic abuse by men in their community.

Adults £8.50

Under 26 £5

Friends £7

- More film info and book online at: cromartycinema.com or at eden-court.co.uk or in person at Cromarty Cinema on Thursdays 12 – 2pm.
- Become a Friend of Cromarty Cinema, show your support and reduce your ticket price. Visit cromartycinema.com or email admin@cromartycinema.com

Cromarty Arts Trust

The Arts Trust have been busy putting 2023 plans in place and you can now find details for lots of exhibitions, courses, events, workshops and performances on our website www.cromartyartstrust.com

The **Winter Wednesdays** continue at the Old Brewery, we'll be open from 2 – 4pm for tea, coffee and goodies. All sessions are free, everyone is welcome, children and babies too! On 1 February there is an optional poetry workshop about The Northern Lights. On 8th and 15th February there are **rag rug making workshops**. Come along and have ago!

Saturday 18 February sees our current poet in residence running a free poetry workshop looking at the work of Cromarty folklorist Donald Mackenzie, focusing on his poem The Nimble Men, about the Northern Lights. Details on the website or from the office, do let us know if

you plan to come along. Lots more to come in March and beyond.

Our **first performance of the year** is on Friday 17th February at the Stables. Unfortunately, the Trio Orfeo who were booked, have had to cancel their Scottish tour. Instead, we have an evening of solo piano from Duncan Honeybourne. “Duncan Honeybourne’s gripping performances” (The Times) and “great technical facility and unfailing imagination” (Musical Opinion). Duncan will play Chopin, Schubert and more, full details of the programme are on the website, tickets are £10, free for under 18s, and available now from the office by phone, in person or email.

PIANO RECITAL
Friday 17 February
The Stables, Cromarty, 7.30pm (doors 7pm)



Duncan Honeybourne
play a programme of Chopin, Schubert, Baines and
Alexander Mackenzie's Scenes In The Scottish Highlands

Tickets: £10 - Under 18s FREE
info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk / 01381 600354 / on the door
More info at www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk

And finally...

Even though February is the shortest month, following straight on from January (which feels like the longest!) it can be tough. Look out for one another and stay safe. We can get through this! And we'll be back in a month's time when there will definitely be more daylight, and lot's more to tell no doubt.

- *The Editorial Team*

Forward

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 and Laura Shepherd.

If you have an interest in communication and would like to join the team please get in touch.

The Newsletter is currently sponsored by a private benefactor.

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