



## Cinema Update



Nicola White reports:

'The Cromarty and Resolis Film Society held a public meeting on the 28th of March to talk about progress with the project and future running of the cinema. For all those who didn't make it, here's the news in a nutshell:

We received planning permission last year to build a 34 seat cinema next to Slaughterhouse coffee shop, in the fenced off area. Since that time, the cinema working group have been focused on raising money for the project and were thrilled to be able to secure Highland Leader funding last November. With generous support from Creative Scotland, The Robertson Trust and Viridor Credits, we now have around 90% of the amount we need to build and equip the cinema, and so are proceeding to construction, which we hope will start in May and be completed by December. It's a tight schedule, because the Leader money comes from EU funds, and so has to be spent within this year.

Our aim has always been to provide Cromarty with the best facilities – comfortable seats, good sightlines, state-of-the-art sound and vision and access for those with mobility challenges or sight and hearing issues. Not only that, but we will be partnering with Eden Court to allow us to show new releases and wider range of film than we have in the past (though we'll still be running programmes of classic and international films alongside). Additionally the venue will also be available for private rentals, parties and community events.

We still have money to raise, however, and our initial push for support during the film festival was met with great generosity – all of the cinema seats have now been 'bought' by generous individual sponsors. We've launched a 'wall of stars' initiative also, ideal for those who want their support, or the name of a loved one, commemorated in the fabric of the building. Further information on how you can help is on our website.

<http://www.cromartyfilmfestival.org/cinema>

Looking forward, we are interested in people's views on what kind of films they would like to see, what times/days they would like to see them at. We'll be popping up at community markets over the coming months to talk through plans and we'll also be looking for film-loving volunteers to train as projectionists and hosts for the new venue. Do send comments questions through the 'contact us' link on our website, above.'

## Harbour Latest

Pat Haynes writes:

### SMEATON MOLE REPAIR

You will have seen the temporary repair under the bridge; we appointed Lochshell Engineering to remediate the stonework which at the time of writing has just been completed and looks quite splendid. We need to give thanks to Marine Scotland and SSE Sustainable Communities Fund for awarding us a substantial grant for this particular work stream, without it, other aspects to our programme would have been at greater risk than is the position today.

In the process of undertaking this work we uncovered what appears to have been a chamber constructed from concrete and stone to house a WW2 mine. Fortunately, there were no longer any munitions in the hole but many thanks to the Police and Coast Guard who responded with alacrity to advise on the situation and our contractors who bravely excavated by hand in strong winds and encroaching darkness.



Harbour after cleaning...



and after grouting (I thought doing my bathroom was difficult - Ed)

#### REPAIRS TO THE INNER ADMIRALTY PIER (WEST AND EAST SIDES)

We are delighted to announce that Historic Scotland has agreed to support the next phases of restoration works, initially to repair the concrete columns and decks of the Inner Admiralty Pier. We are immensely grateful for this substantial grant and we have also been successful in being awarded a grant from Viridor towards new fendering. Whilst these funding successes are encouraging, we still need to raise more funds to ensure both projects can be fully implemented. We hope to award a contract for the first phase of the repairs in the near future.

On completion of these works we will be able to proceed with the other improvements funded by the Fisheries Local Action Group (FLAG) and SSE

Watch out for notices and the potential for this other work to be underway when boats are launched in April and May.

#### REQUEST FOR HELP

Our annual appeal, we are grateful for the support of volunteers to ensure the smooth running of the Harbour, however we would welcome the injection of new blood and new ideas. If you can offer some skills, some spare time or just want to get involved, please get in contact with us, using the harbour email below. With so much to do and encouragement from funders, these are exciting times for the Harbour, but we need more human resources. Thank you to David Kent, a new arrival at Urquhart Court, for joining our team and taking up the Health & Safety brief. David, Ronald Young and John Ross have also tidied up around the harbour and started on a programme of improvements.

**Auction and quiz night – Please sign up** Last year we had a great success with around £1,400 being raised through the combination of the raffle, auction, quiz and a new buy-back-in feature for heads-n-tails. The work has now started for this year's event on **18th May**. We would like to do an auction again along similar lines to last year. Those there last year may recall the Anna Louise trip, the Ian Rankin meet, lobsters and crabs from Dougie Grant and afternoon tea on Aimee. Well thinking caps on, if you can help by offering a promise please do let us know, we would be most grateful. Some suggestions that are looking promising now would be:

- A trip over to Nigg and to Global in particular
- Graham Fox in your kitchen for up to 6 people
- A trip around the firth in Port of Cromarty Firth's pilot boat
- EcoVentures private hire

Please do come back to us at [info@cromartyharbour.org](mailto:info@cromartyharbour.org) if you would like to put forward a promise. It's something different and has the potential to raise good funds for the Harbour. Ideally, we'd like to go with ten promises on the night (the quiz will be six rounds only and it will be part multiple choice).

Lastly on this, book a table for an evening meal prior to the big event by calling Helen/Kenny at The Arms on 01381 600230 or at [info@cromartyarms.com](mailto:info@cromartyarms.com)

## After-school Follow-up

Local parents are expressing their “massive gratitude” to local people and businesses for their help and support in raising funds to save the after-school provision in Cromarty.

They had been informed by the Care and Learning Alliance (CALA), which organises the Out of School Club in the old church hall beside the East Church, that the club was running at a £10,000 loss. CALA had proposed closing it on Mondays and Fridays, unless £5,000 could be raised to fund the gap in the meantime. With no alternative provider in or near Cromarty, this would have made it impossible for many parents to hold down a full-time 9-5 job.

However funds were received from Global Highland, Caintech, Highland insurance brokers, the staff and regulars of the Royal Hotel, the Wednesday Warrior class, the Clinging to the Wreckage group and the Craigie Urquhart Trust. Offers of help for future years from others, are also being discussed.

The parents issued a statement: "We are completely overwhelmed by the support received from near and far. The centre is vital to current users but we're so thrilled others share our concerns and also see the huge importance of the service. This will allow both current and future Cromarty residents the opportunity to access excellent care while working, and will keep the community vibrant. We will continue fundraising to ensure the service is preserved, and we very much thank the community for their ongoing support."

# Musical Cheers for Playgroup

Cromarty Playgroup is a small group of parents and children who meet on Tuesdays between 10 and 11.30am during term times in the West Church hall. It has been running for a number of years – decades, in fact, and has always remained very popular with parents and children alike.

After paying its rent this year, the funds were not sufficient to purchase some £270 worth of new or replacement toys which were badly needed. Denise McFarlane had the bright idea of doing a wish-list of toys on Facebook to see if anyone would consider helping them out by donating one of them.

The power of social media came to the playgroup's aid when Wendy Mullery saw the post. Wendy and her husband Patrick host a group of guitarists, ukulele players and singers who perform occasionally in Cromarty for charities under the name of 'Clinging to the Wreckage.' The group had some funds left from its last concert and agreed to purchase the entire wish-list for the playgroup!

Denise was absolutely delighted and said "We are incredibly grateful and honoured to have received our new wonderful toys - it has given us a new lease of life! We are so lucky to live in such a tight knit community where other people put their own personal difficulties aside to help others!"

Most of the group attended the playgroup's regular meeting on 5th March to present the toys and enjoy some home baking. Seen here in the picture with some of the children are (left to right): Jeremy Price, Scott and Barbara Lindsay, Dotty Mullery, Wendy Mullery and Laura Shepherd.

The group members were delighted, too, when they were surprised at their Friday evening practice by Denise and a couple of other representatives from the playgroup who presented them with a lovely 'thank you' plate made especially for them.

The Playgroup is holding a quiz night on Saturday the 27th of April in the Cromarty Arms, to raise some money

to keep the funds coming in. Raffle prizes and donations will be gratefully received!



The band in full 'swing' - they're the ones at the back.

## Yee Haw!

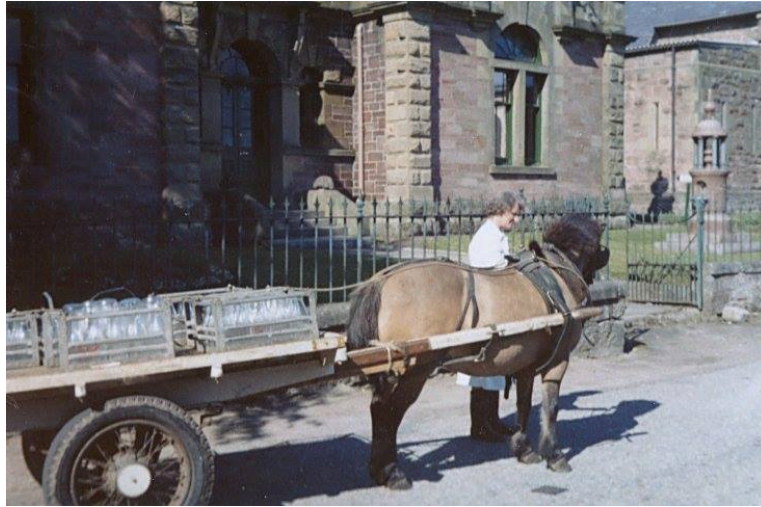
Clinging to the Wreckage will be next performing on Saturday 20th April at the Victoria Hall. The theme is 'Country' and there may well be line dancing involved at some time during the proceedings. It will be an adults-only dance this time and tickets are available from Jalidor, Bayview Crescent or on the door for £10 each. Bring your own refreshments and entertainment will most definitely be provided!

Proceeds will be going to support the work of two local organisations.

## Cycling Without Age name their trikes

A recent competition to guess the names of the two Cromarty trikes was won by Kevin Fraser (who selected 'Patsy') and Sheila Currie ('Gracie')

For those who don't know, Patsy was the milk pony who, along with Gracie, went round Cromarty every day delivering the milk from the late 1930's until around the early 1960's.



## A Tourism Strategy for the Black Isle

Two local residents, Shirley Matheson and Jon Palmer, are members of the Black Isle Tourism Team Steering Group which is launching a strategy consultation for the Black Isle. The draft document can be viewed [here](#) and anyone who wishes to make comments, ask questions or give feedback on the proposals can attend the launch event in Culbokie on 8th April (11.00am). Reserve a place by contacting [tourism@black-isle.info](mailto:tourism@black-isle.info) Alternatively talk with Shirley or Jon.

## Seasons Begin, Seasons End

Mary Bowers writes:

**'Cromarty Courthouse Museum** will be opening again on Sunday, 7 April for the season (closing on Sunday, 20 October).

We have been busy restyling and restocking our shop and send out an open invitation for you to attend a pre-opening relaunch of the shop on Saturday 6 April from 6.00 – 7.30pm, with light refreshments. On offer is an interesting range of new products, nearly all sourced from Scotland. Our shelves also feature work from local artists and crafts people. The whole museum will be open for you to reacquaint yourselves with the courtroom



characters and the exhibitions about our town.

There will also be a chance to check out our new temporary exhibition introducing a local worthy of the Victorian era, John Bain, and his newspaper - The Cromarty News. Come and see how many of the stories told sound familiar today!

We are open every day from 12.00 – 4.00pm and look forward to welcoming you.'

The final meeting of the current season of the **Cromarty History Society** will be on Thursday 18 April. This is our AGM meeting and after business we will hear a talk from the curator and the chair (Paul Monk and Gordon Haynes) of the Cromarty Courthouse Museum Trust about the history of the building up to the current day. The CHS acts as the Friends Group of the museum and is keen to help promote this cherished property – the notable building, the artefacts held and also the interpretation to both community and visitors alike. You are welcome to the meeting which takes place, as usual, in the West Church Hall, Cromarty at 7.30pm. Please check our website, [www.cromartyhistory.scot](http://www.cromartyhistory.scot), for further information nearer the event.

The Cromarty Outdoor Bowling season will start with the throwing of the first jack by our president at 2.00pm on Saturday 27th April. **The Bowling Club** meets on Sunday afternoons at 2.00pm, Wednesday evenings at 7.00pm and on Friday afternoons at 2.00pm. The green is however open for members to play on at any time. New members are always welcome.

**Cromarty Tennis and Sports club** are looking for new members to join the club and the committee. Get in touch if you are interested. Contact [jeff-vicky@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:jeff-vicky@tiscali.co.uk)

## Other Events Coming Up

**The Friends of Hugh Miller**

PUBLIC TALK BY KENNY TAYLOR ON HIGHLAND WRITING TODAY, Saturday, 6th April 2.00 - 3.30pm at The Old Brewery. Entry free.

LAUNCH PARTY FOR MILLER LEGACY BOOK, *CONVERSATIONS IN STONE*, Saturday, 6th April, 4.30 - 6.00pm at the Old Brewery. All welcome

A NATURAL HISTORY ADVENTURE. Marvels of Natural History for all the family, Sunday 7th April. Three venues: 11.00-12.00 at Hugh Miller Museum. 2.00-4.00 pm at The Old Brewery. 2.00pm (approx) Elsa Panciroli on Skye dinosaurs and mammals. Exhibitions of Jurassic fossils, ores and minerals. Plus Excursions to Cromarty fossil deposits. Entry free to all events. Donations welcome.

## Easter Worship

**Cromarty West Church** are celebrating Easter with a joint-service with the Culbokie Church Centre in Culbokie at 11.00am. As always, the service is open to the public. Additionally, there's a pre-church porridge breakfast at 9.30am at Culbokie; again it's open to the public.

## Arts News

### Cromarty Singer/Songwriter wins X Factor

Well, the Highland version at least. Rua Nicole was recently crowned champion of the Fox Factor - a knockout competition for musicians and performers organised by Johnny Foxes in Inverness. 22 different bands/artists from across the Highlands entered and Rua, who writes all her own material and is supported by a four-piece band, was voted through to the final, and won! The prize includes the opportunity to record her own record.



## New album release from the East Church

\*The Reeling\* was recorded in the East Church, and we're delighted to see that the harmonium features as special guest.

The album is by small pipes player [Brìghde Chaimbeulwww](#) from Skye, who at 20 years old has already lead the Highland military tattoo and won the Radio 2 young folk award. On this album she plays alongside her hero Rona Lightfoot, legendary small pipes player, who first inspired Brìghde as a small girl.

Listening to the album it is easy to imagine the church filled with the wonderful resonance of the small pipes.

## More Blackhaven Podcasts on the way

A newly constituted association, Blackhaven Productions, has been set up to support the creation of live and recorded drama in Cromarty. Its main purpose is to be a

vehicle for funding to purchase recording equipment, and to enable more episodes of Blackhaven to be released onto an unsuspecting public. The intention is for the podcasts, which feature local voices in all the roles, to be recorded in Cromarty. If anyone wishes to get involved, and develop skills in recording and editing radio drama, contact [jon@cromartycheese.com](mailto:jon@cromartycheese.com)

## Cromarty Arts Trust Events

**AN EVENING OF JAZZ SONG** – Thursday 11 April,  
The Stables. 8.00pm (doors 7.30pm)

**Liane Carroll, Fionna Duncan, Sara Colman,  
Sophie Bancroft, Brian Kellock**

Colman, Carroll and Bancroft, three established singers and songwriters in their own right, draw on their deep friendship and history of collaboration spanning over a decade to present a very special live show. Duncan, the doyenne of Scottish jazz singers is joined by her long-term musical partner, Scotland's pre-eminent jazz pianist, Brian Kellock. With a repertoire consisting of familiar jazz songs seamlessly blended with original tunes, the stunning musicianship, spontaneity and humour creates a captivating, emotionally-charged and powerful yet intimate musical event.

Tickets: £13/£11 conc/£5 under 16 –  
[info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk) / 01381 600354

**THE BRODICK QUARTET** – Sunday 21 April, Easter  
Sunday, The Stables. 4.00pm (doors 3.30pm)

Formed in 2016, The Brodick Quartet is comprised of four of Scotland's most promising young string players, who are quickly making a name for themselves in Scotland and beyond. Having individually studied at the Royal College of Music, Royal Northern College of Music and the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland, the quartet met post-study whilst working in Glasgow in groups such as BBC SSO, Scottish Chamber Orchestra, Scottish Ensemble, Scottish Ballet, Scottish Opera, RSNO and London Concertante. Programme: Beethoven C minor Quartet; Webern – Langsamere Satz; Mendelssohn F minor quartet. Easter Sunday home-made treats on sale. What a lovely way to spend the afternoon!

Tickets: £13/£11 conc. School children go free! –  
[info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk) / 01381 600354

**TAMZENE & Band** – Saturday 27 April, The Stables.  
8.00pm (doors 7.30pm)

“Bursting with potential and talent, Tamzene has it all to challenge Adele for her soul pop crown. Yes, she’s that good.” *Record of the Day*. And so say all of us! Cromarty is very proud of home-grown talent, Tamzene, and we’re delighted to welcome this young singer, writer and multi-instrumentalist (together with her band) back home for a gig not to be missed. Come and witness this enthusiastic talent in an intimate setting before you’re queuing in festival fields to catch a mere glimpse!

Tickets: £13/£11 conc/£5 under 16 –

[info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk) / 01381 600354

**EXPLORE PAINTING & DRAWING OUTDOORS**  
**with Jonathan Shearer** – 27 & 28 April (repeated 20 & 21 July), outside & the Old Brewery. 10.00 – 16.30

Jonathan returns by popular demand – few places remaining! The aim of this workshop is to explore the versatility of painting and drawing through the process of mark-making and how to translate our direct response to the landscape. Working directly in the landscape, we will explore ways of working in sketchbooks, translating this up to larger-scale pieces outdoors. Throughout, tutor Jonathan Shearer will provide books and information on a variety of artists who work outdoors and will demonstrate a variety of different techniques. Open to all abilities.

£110 for two days, includes lunches. Book:

[info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk](mailto:info@cromartyartstrust.org.uk) / 01381 600354

[www.jonathanshearer.co.uk](http://www.jonathanshearer.co.uk)

Check out [www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk](http://www.cromartyartstrust.org.uk) to see the full programme of arts, crafts & music workshops and courses plus live music, events and exhibitions throughout 2019!

## Development Trust News

The Cromarty Community Development Trust (CCDT) should hear within the next few weeks whether the application it submitted to the Scottish Government’s Rural Tourism Infrastructure Fund (RTIF) has been successful.

If it has, it would see up to £400,000 being invested in the community. This would be spent upgrading the slipways to secure the long-term future of the ferry service, and establishing a site for motorhomes at Whitedykes. Additional funding may yet be needed. Members of Nigg and Shandwick Community Council are CCDT's partners in the project.

### Visit by Kate Forbes

Constituency MSP Kate Forbes asked to meet representatives of the CCDT to be briefed about the RTIF application. She came to Cromarty and heard of the trust's plans, and how they had **been designed to address two pressing problems - the decaying state of the slipways**, and the pressure created by motorhomes camping on the Links without charge or any management throughout the summer months.

She was taken out to Whitedykes, to see the proposed site for motorhomes. She thought the wooded area round the units could be attractive to visitors. She agreed to write to the various public bodies that would be involved. She will underline that she supports the project and wants to be kept informed of developments.

Ms Forbes also wanted to hear of other issues facing the community. She was told of the deep local concern over the dramatic fall (over 40 %) in the school roll. That led on to the desperate need for affordable housing and the impact of holiday houses and second homes. She said that it was a problem facing many communities and discussed the different approaches in trying to tackle it.

She was briefed on the community consultation on the future of Townlands Barn, and how the barn working group was currently assessing the different suggestions.

### Taking our temperature

Representatives of CCDT also met Local Energy Scotland, the body which administers grant funding for communities, to look into the feasibility of renewable community district heating projects. Given Cromarty's location off the mains gas network and its relatively high housing density, such a scheme, combined with energy-saving measures, may work well for local homes and businesses. Things are at an early stage, but CCDT

intends to apply for grant funding for a feasibility study. This would include community consultation.

### **And finally...**

The Community Council are considering ways this newsletter can reach as many people as possible. If you know of someone who doesn't have access to a digital version and would like to receive a paper copy, please contact us.

We hope you've found this an interesting and informative read. Tell us 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

The Newsletter is currently sponsored by The Cheese House. If any other business or individual would like to be a sponsor please get in touch.

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