

SLATEST NEWS

Your free community newsletter produced by Ballachulish Community Forum

Edition 5 – October / November 2017



THE GODDESS RETURNS!



Inside - five page special about recreating the Ballachulish Goddess and her tour of the local schools!



New equipment for the Scouts, thanks to the Co-op

WELCOME!

Thanks, as always, to everyone who has supplied articles for this edition of Slatest News. The next issue is planned to go to print in November 2017, for delivery at the end of the month, and so will be our Christmas and New Year Special. Deadline for submissions is 14th November. If you would like to submit an article, please send anything, and we mean anything to Rob Malpas – rileyrob@btinternet.com; Sheila McLean – sheila@brecklet.co.uk or drop it into the Black letterbox at the village hall.



4th Lochaber Scout Group

Beavers 6-8 years, 5.30-6.30pm

Cubs 8-10½ years, 6.45-7.45pm

Scouts 10-14 years, 8-9.15pm

All groups meet at Ballachulish Village Hall

It seems hard to believe, but the 1st November marks 5 years since our Scout Group reformed. Over those 5 years, we have averaged over 50 young people as members across the 3 sections, enjoyed over 8 camps, with another as Slatest goes to print, and welcomed well over 100 young people, from as far away as Appin and Kinlochleven on a Thursday evening. This year we will celebrate our milestone, as we started, with a Halloween party, and if any more young people would like to join us, they will be more than welcome.

We have also recently purchased some new sports equipment with money from the Co-op fund (see front cover).



Ballachulish Rainbow Baby & Toddler Group

Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9.30 – 11.30

£1.50 per child

(includes a snack)

Everybody welcome!

Contact: Sara McLean

07826 187053



VILLAGE HALL NEWS

To many of us Christmas may seem like a long way away, but there are a number of community events that are already being planned. More details will be in the next issue of Slatest, but as a taster we have the following:



Coffee Morning – 11-1pm 11th November

To raise money for the Kids Christmas party

Christmas Market

Sunday 3rd Dec 12-4pm

Santa's Grotto only £3

Christmas Raffle

Refreshments

Craft & Produce Stalls

And More...

And through the rest of December:

- Kids Christmas Party – 10th December
- Community Carols – 19th December
- Lantern Parade – 31st December



In Other news, the Community Association is currently working on a number of ideas to improve the hall, in-line with the comments within the Community Action Plan. More details will follow in future editions of Slatest News.

Colours Fashion Show

The recent Fashion show was again very successful with just under 100 people attending, and raising nearly £700. Some of this is already earmarked for an event in the spring.



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COMMUNITY COMPANY NEWS – August 2017



Folks, its that time again, here is our Summer update. I know that we haven't had the best of the weather, unless you have an operating Community Hydro Scheme, but that is part of living in such a beautiful green place. First matter is our thanks to Mike Smith who has retired from the Board and as he said in his final newsletter moved, back to his original area Norfolk. We wish him all the best.

Your Community, Your Community Company time to get involved.

Our Annual General Meeting date is pencilled in as Thursday 9th November, 2017 at the Jubilee Pavilion, Ballachulish at 7.30 pm. We will publicise it again nearer the time. Alongside the AGM is the time for Membership Renewals, fees are still £5.00 per member, per annum and can now be paid by BACS. The account is in the name of Ballachulish & Glencoe Community Company, the sortcode is 83 20 16 and the account number is 00665870. If you add your surname and the last part of your Postcode after the PH49 bit as your reference then we can make sure the records are updated. If you want to pay direct you can give it to Treasurer Simon Ingram, Stoneybrook House, Laroch Beag, PH49 4LB postmaster@simonmags.plus.com 07716 331084 , any other Director or post it in the Silver PostBox at the Village Hall , which is our Registered Office, with your name and Postcode on it for reference. As usual we will be delighted to collect membership fees at the AGM. As you know from past newsletters we have vacancies for Directors and at the AGM that is your opportunity if you are interested in stepping forward also we are always seeking new members.

The purpose of the company is to bring areas of land and built assets into community ownership and control, for the good of local residents. The Land Reform Acts and other legislation allows communities like ours to access funds to purchase land.

The company was formed in 2002 and since then, a number of members of the community have taken membership. The company has an annually elected board comprised of local representatives.

Membership of this company allows you to get further involved in the future of your community and only costs £5.00 a year. This subscription indicates a local commitment to grant bodies. Please spread the word for membership application forms and any queries feel free to contact me at 01855 811540 or at Ballachulishcc@aol.com

On other matters:

We are still trying to get an answer from Scottish Water about possible disposal of their assets at Brecklet.

A feasibility study of having a private wire from the proposed River Laroch Hydro scheme directly to the consumers, for the supply of electricity, was conducted by Ricardo Energy &

Environment on our behalf. The results were disappointing in that without increased subsidy it would not be viable. We are in discussions with Local Energy Scotland via CARES as to the way forward.

The Board are as always monitoring what progress is being made in regard to the Hydro Scheme on the Abhainn Greadhain at Glenachulish and have entered discussions with the current developers in regard to the possibility of negotiating a bigger part in this. To that end we are investigating possible sources of funding/grants to finance consultant/project manager fees if we proceed.

The Quarry

The Company, along with the Community Council, explored the possibility of acquiring a Public Entertainment Licence for the Quarry, which would cover the Fireworks and maybe other projects for a period of 3 years. So far little progress has been made, but discussions are still ongoing led by Kevin Smith, Chair of the Community Council.

Discussions with the Community Council, and with the Highland Council with regard to possible community acquisition of part of the quarry continue. It is envisaged that the Company would be the legal entity for negotiating and agreeing contracts with Highland Council if we proceed.

KINLOCHLEVEN FITNESS CLASSES

Aerobics (cardio, tone & stretch) Mondays & Thursdays 6-7pm. A great mix of exercises to increase cardio fitness and tone the body, all done to great music!

Metafit Interval Training (squats, lunges, press ups etc) Mondays & Thursdays 7-7.30pm
Amazing quick 30 min class which burns loads of fat and calories, builds strength!

Both classes can be adapted and exercises altered to suit any level of fitness.

Classes held at Kinlochleven Primary Gym Hall (use main school entrance). £5.60 per class or free to Highlife Members. Phone Sharon 07894 856849 for more info.



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NEWS FROM ST MUNDA'S CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

Duror and St Munda's Parish Church

We were grateful to have local support in a couple of recent initiatives which helped to raise money for WaterAid. This is a charity that helps to provide sources of clean water as well as decent toilets where they're so desperately needed. St Munda's Church had a two-day Book Sale outside the Tourist Information Centre and the Duror and Kentallen Community Choir gave a concert in Duror Church with over £700 being raised between these two events.



We continue to support Re-Act who work to help refugees in this country and abroad. St Munda's Church is a collection point for donations and volunteers are frequently at the local distribution point in Caol helping to sort donations. From time to time we publish updated lists of preferred items.

At St Munda's Church we are also now operating a 'Book Swap'. The church and church hall are open during the day and anyone is welcome to browse the books in the hall which are available for swapping or borrowing. Donations of paperbacks in good condition will be welcome.

Church isn't just about Sunday morning and if anyone would like to spend some quiet time in the building during the day you would be most welcome.

I've been delighted to welcome the new Episcopal 'Priest in Charge', the Rev Amanda Fairclough and look forward to opportunities where our churches can work together.

Recently we've had Harvest Thanksgiving Services, our Praise Band enhanced the September Joint Service at Duror, all are welcome to Communion on 1st October and on every other Sunday too. If there's anyone you would like me to visit I'd be very happy to – just phone 01631 740285

Rev Sandy Stoddart

HAPPY 70TH BIRTHDAY!



Alistair MacMillan was born on 19 July 1947, and has lived in Ballachulish all his life, spending the last 68 years in his current home. He celebrated his 70th birthday alongside family and friends with a magnificent meal at the Laroch Restaurant and Bar situated within the village. Just to prove he still has "va va voom", Alistair took to his push bike the very next day and cycled the length of the island of Lismore from Point Lismore to the far end of the island and back, some 18 miles. Alistair said "It was pleasing to know that I still have the puff to get up the hills, but the saddle found parts of my body I didn't know existed, so it will be a few days before I hit the saddle again."

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THE GODDESS RETURNS

Although the figure known as the Ballachulish Goddess was found at Ballachulish Moss in North Ballachulish, the return took place on our side of the Loch.

Originally found in November 1880 when workmen were digging trenches in the grounds of Alltschellach House, the enigmatic Ballachulish Goddess is believed to date from c600BC. Carved from Alder, it is unlikely that she was above ground for long, as evidenced by the good quality of the artefact when discovered. Sadly, preservation techniques were limited back then, and the Goddess was oiled to prevent cracking. It didn't work, and the figure dried out, producing the strange warped shape that is now displayed in the museum in Edinburgh.



Whilst carved wooden figures have been found across north west Europe, the Ballachulish Goddess is the only one known from Scotland, making her rather special internationally, not just to the local area!

In early 2017, Gavin MacGregor of Northlight Archaeology, an associate of the Pallas Boy Project, contacted our community to inquire about coming and carving a replica of the goddess in the area where she was found, using replica tools as part of their experimental archaeological work. Naturally we said yes, and so a few months later in early August, the team arrived. They included Dr Ben Gearey Photo opposite - (centre left), the team leader; Orla Peach (left) who amongst other things has laser scanned the original, and the copy; Brian Mac Domhnaill (right) an Archeological photographer with special interest in Paleo-ecology; and most importantly Mark Griffiths (center right), a woodworker who has been working on restoring and recreating wooden artefacts, and was the carver of the new Goddess. On the Thursday evening, they gave a very interesting talk about their work, and the Goddess, which included a debate about the various possible find sites that have been put forward over the years.

The hard work started on Friday, having sourced a piece of suitable timber the evening before from Kevin Smith's garden. It was Birch rather than Alder, but a good substitute that was local and green, having been felled on Thursday evening. The progress made in one day was impressive, getting the shape of the goddess, and starting on some of the details. Mark had resorted to some modern tools for some of the work, in order to speed things up, but the replicas worked well. The team had many visitors over their two days, both locals and visitors coming in to see what was happening, checking on progress and both passing on local lore and asking questions, which the team were more than happy to answer.





On the Saturday, the team discovered a mystery bunch of flowers outside the hall, presumably given as an offering to the goddess, and supplied by Glencoe Florist. The work continued and by lunchtime it was just the final details needing to be done. Bearing in mind that there is just a single photo of the goddess when she was found in 1880, it was somewhat difficult to

decipher how the original had looked. However, the team discussed the work as it progressed, and their interpretation of the evidence from the photo seemed very plausible. By mid afternoon, it was the finishing touches, such as inserting the eyes, two pieces of quartz chosen from a selection supplied by locals and visitors who had been in to visit the project.

With the Goddess more or less complete, she was taken out onto the grass for some photos, before going on a little journey over to Ballachulish Moss. This is perhaps the first time that any 2500 year old Goddess had travelled in a car, so understandably she chose to travel incognito!



As noted above, the precise find site is uncertain, but the landscape of the moss has hardly changed in places since 1880, and perhaps not since the goddess was first buried in the peat 2500 years ago. Therefore, as well as visiting some of the possible locations, the Goddess also enjoyed a photo shoot on the nearby surviving open ground on the moss, giving an impression of the landscape she may have seen before being buried. Not only was there a brief shower, but the midges were out, no doubt making her feel at home! We will leave you to wonder at why she was created, and buried.

The Goddess is being left with the community. However, in order to preserve her and prevent the wood cracking and warping, she is being buried. It is hoped that the team will come back next year and dig her up, perhaps with the local schools present, so that we can see how she has fared.

VISITING THE SCHOOLS

After her time in North Ballachulish, the Goddess retired for a week or so before enjoying a tour of our local schools. Accompanied by Rob Malpas and Morag Watt from Glencoe Museum, she intrigued and enchanted our local children. They had many intelligent questions, not just about the Goddess, but about many aspects of Archaeology.





Duror School (above) and the younger pupils at Glencoe (right) also welcoming their oldest new pupil!



Below & left: All of the schools were allowed hands on with the Goddess, and here we see Ballachulish pupils getting up close and personal!



STEP IT UP WALKING GROUP

Friday Walk Report

Our Friday walks last about an hour.

We started from Loch Leven hotel and walked around Bishops Bay along the beach path to the little island, where we looked at the cup marks in a rock. There are some fine views down the loch from the island. We then returned through the grounds of Altshellach House (with a swing, below right), and passed near the site where the Goddess was found, and so back to the hotel for coffee.



Monday Walk Report

Our Monday walks are more ambitious & last about 2 hours.

We had a pleasant up and down walk to James of the Glen's Bothy in Glen Durr where a picnic table afforded us a welcome rest in the sunshine. This building is, of course, related to James Stewart who was hanged for the murder of the Red Fox in 1752. On our walk back to the cars we saw a seaplane flying overhead. Our car journey back was eventful as we had to draw nearly off the road onto the verge to enable some oncoming very large plant on trailers (they occupied 2/3 of the road width) to pass with a police escort.



Come and Join Us

We meet at 10.00am at the TIC to arrange car sharing and usually finish at a café, where the next week's walk is planned, before returning by car to the TIC.

Reports by Hilary Malpas.



STATISTICAL ACCOUNT 1793

In 1793 Ballachulish was in the parish of Kilmallie. This was a large parish, approx. 30x60 miles and included Glenelg and Lismore. It was decided that throughout Scotland the minister should write an account of his Parish, so here are a few extracts relating to our area:

"...to the dampness of the air may no doubt be attributed the frequency of rheumatism, which is the disease that prevails most in the parish; and since people have ceased to wear flannel shirts it has become much more general.

"Of late years the dropsy is become pretty common, particularly among the poorer sort of people. This is ascribed to their feeding so much upon potatoes, which is now become a substitute for meal.

"Last harvest 3 whales appeared in Loch Eil, of great size: one of them seemed to measure about 600feet.

"Near the farmhouse of Ballachulish there is a ... marble rock of a beautiful ashen grey colour... finely sprinkled with pyrites and... grains of lead ore. This would make a bright and beautiful metallic marble... What a pity that such sums of money (are spent importing) when our own country abounds in the very best quality.

"The sheep were first introduced in the parish in the year 1764. Now 60,000 sheep, something more of black cattle, horses down to 500 and 1000 goats.

"There are no ale houses in the parish but many whisky retailers. Indeed, they are so numerous that they are a nuisance, and tend very much to encourage idleness and to corrupt the morals of the people."

Extracts from later Statistical Accounts will be in future issues of Slatest News

Submitted by Kath Small

RAT RACE — COAST TO COAST

Rat Race (events) Ltd held their annual Coast to Coast event this year on the 9th & 10th September. This event is a proper adventure race seeing competitors run, cycle and kayak 105 miles from Nairn to Ballachulish. iPowerboat Ltd have provided the water safety cover every year to date, and this year was an exceptional year for the event, with 1750 people attending. This year, everything was scaled up, from the number of kayaks to the number of safety vessels. The most challenging part of the entire race are the kayak stages. We have 120 kayaks for 1750 participants, so not only do we provide safety cover for those on the water, we also have to provide an efficient and effective towing service to take kayaks back across the Loch from the finish. It is a massive challenge, and iPowerboat can only achieve this success with the help of our team. We would like to say a massive thank you to all those that displayed professional seamanship when helming the safety and tow vessels, and to the rest of our team that stood up to their waists in cold water all day, to ensure the towing operation was a success. Next Years event takes place on 8th & 9th September.

Ryan Tozer

BALLACHULISH MEDICAL PRACTICE

PATIENT PARTICIPATION GROUP

Pulling together for health



THANK YOU -WHAT AN ACHIEVEMENT!

The members of Ballachulish Participation Group would like to say a big THANK YOU to everyone who contributed towards the purchase of the Public Access Defibrillators. The project has been a great success with an enormous amount of help and support from local businesses, residents of the communities and Highland Council.

There are now three Defibrillators in the local area -

- Ballachulish Medical Practice
- Glencoe Ambulance Station
- Onich

THANK YOU also to the Scottish Ambulance Service staff who supported the Project and provided local CPR training.

And finally THANK YOU to those who gave up their time to attend the training sessions.



With Sympathy

The Ballachulish Community Association would like to express their sincere condolences to Elizabeth (Wild) and family on the recent loss of Simon. Elizabeth played a very active role in the recent cup cake day fundraiser in the hall, as reported in the last issue of Slate News, that raised the magnificent sum of £1175 for Alzheimer's Scotland Action on Dementia.



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SOUTH LOCHABER BOWMEN

Offering you the opportunity to learn the Ancient skill of Archery.

Based in the Leven Centre, Kinlochleven. Coaching and practice sessions are offered to interested people.

- Monday nights from 18:30 – 19:30 for our younger members 5-11 years (Cubs and Otters)
- Monday nights from 19:30 - 20:30 11-17 years (Juniors)
- Tuesday nights from 19:00 – 21:00 17+ (Seniors)

During each month on Tuesday nights, there is a friendly competition within the Senior Club with a wee perpetual trophy as well. (Returned at the end of each month to be presented to the new winner). It is a bit of fun and interest and allows each member to see improvements in their skill

We also accommodate all abilities persons.

Club meets are available all year round. Fees apply to all sessions. Enquiries can be made through the Facebook pages which are available for both Junior and Senior clubs.



Congratulations to Ilona Munro Lawson of Bright Productions who had a very successful run of their show The Recovery at the Edinburgh Fringe . Well done to all involved.



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WHAT'S GOING ON??

Boatsheds

The Community Association were recently awarded some money to get a condition report survey of the Boatsheds undertaken. Therefore, at the beginning of September, a chartered building surveyor & heritage consultant spent the day in Ballachulish to survey them and gather information for the report.



This is just the very first stage of a long process, and we have to submit the report before the end of the year. Once approved by the relevant bodies, we can then use it to gain further funding for the next stage in the process of restoration.

On a slightly less positive note, we have had reports of vandalism of the boatsheds, both intentional, and as a by-product of youthful adventure. We would ask that if you see anyone causing any damage to the boatsheds, or walking on their roofs, to approach them if you feel it is safe to do so, and explain that we are hoping to get the boatsheds restored, or at least report it to the community council.

Free Entry to Local Residents

Glencoe Folk Museum



Present this voucher on your arrival at the museum for free entry

Museum will be closed from the end of October until late March 2018

Offer Valid 2017 & 2018

Email: curator@glencoemuseum.com

www.glencoemuseum.com



USEFUL CONTACTS

If you have any questions about what is going on in the community, or would like to help with anything, please get in touch with someone below:

Community Council: www.ballachulish.org.uk

Our Community Councillors are: Shirley Grant (Vice-Chair), Alisdair Jack (Treasurer), Dave Kitson (Secretary), Rob Malpas, Kath Small, Kevin Smith (Chair), Jimmy Waugh

Community Association: www.balla-hall.co.uk

Our Trustees are: Brian Dickie (Vice Chair), Rob Malpas (Secretary), Sheila McLean, Isobel Robertson (Treasurer), Sandy Stoddart, Marjorie Thornton, Jo Watt (Chair)

Community Company: [on Facebook](#)

Simon Ingram (Treasurer), Dave Kitson, Angus MacInnes, Sheila McLean, Kevin Smith, Morgan Smith, Jimmy Waugh (Chair)

Patient Participation Group: Bill Strachan or Shirley Grant



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*From 20th October our Winter Opening Hours are:
Wednesday to Saturday 4:30 - 8:30pm*

REGULAR WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

Please note some activities do not meet during school holidays.

Monday

- 10am Step it Up Walking Group meet at TiC 
- After school primary football – Jubilee Park
- 7pm Highland Hustle at School
- 8-10pm Scottish / Country Dancing at Village Hall


Tuesday

- 9.30-11.30am  Playgroup at Village Hall
- 6-8pm Junior Shinty Training at Village Hall / Jubilee


Wednesday

- 6.30-7.15pm Zumba at Village Hall
- 7.15-9pm Youth Club at Village Hall

Thursday

- 9.30-11.30am  Playgroup at Village Hall
- 10.30-1pm Knit & Knatter, Coffee & Crochet at TiC
- 5.30-9.15pm   &  at Village Hall
- Evenings – Shinty Team Practice at Jubilee Park

Friday

- 10am Step it up Walking group meet at TiC 
- After school dancing session at school

Sunday

- 11.30am Church of Scotland Service at St Munda's
- Episcopal Church Service at St John's
- Catholic Church Service at St Mun's

RBS Mobile Bank

Tuesdays

10:45-11:30 Abbeyfield

11:45-13:00 V Hall

Fridays

10:30-12:00 V Hall



Mobile Library

Thurs 12/10, 2/11 & 23/11

12:40-12:55 Square

13:00-13:10 Lochside Cottages

Wed 18/10, 8/11 & 29/11

(13:30-14:25 School)

14:30-15:15 W Laroch

15:20-16:00 Park Rd & Abbeyfield

16:05-16:30 Albert Rd



As you can see, ours is a very busy community with lots going on. However, if your group isn't mentioned above, please get in touch!

If you are interested in any of the above, we're sure you will be made very welcome. Contact details can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, on facebook or simply ask us and we shall pass your enquiry on!

Also active locally:

- South Lochaber Bowmen – Archery Club
- Ballachulish Football Club

COMMUNITY CALENDAR

The Community Calendar is available to see online at

<http://www.ballachulish.org.uk/our-community/community-calendar/>

Not everything is listed yet, so if an event is missing, please contact Rob Malpas. Activities and events are also advertised on our village notice boards and via facebook.

Noticeboard at Co-op

If you would like a poster inserted in the community noticeboard outside the Co-op, please put it in one of the letterboxes at the village hall for consideration. No Small Ads.

FORTHCOMING DATES

October

- 3rd Community Council Meeting, 7pm at shinty pavilion
- 9th – 20th School Holidays
- 28th Halloween Party at Village Hall 6.30-8.30pm
- 31st Halloween



November

- 2nd 4th Lochaber Scouts Halloween Party, celebrating 5 years
- 7th Community Council Meeting, 7pm at shinty pavilion
- 9th Community Company AGM, 7.30pm at shinty pavilion
- 11th 11-1pm Coffee Morning at Village Hall to raise funds for Kids Christmas Party.



COMING IN THE NEXT ISSUE

Everything you need to know about what is happening over Christmas and New Year. Christmas Fayre and Santa's Grotto at Village hall on Sunday 3rd December.

Advertising

If you would like to advertise your local business in this newsletter, please get in touch. Adverts will cost £20 per issue, for a quarter page which includes a small banner advert on the Community Website. We will take a maximum of 10 adverts per issue, and can do the artwork for you if that helps.

Ballachulish Community Council, Ballachulish Community Company and Ballachulish Community Association SCIO (SC023308) have worked together to produce this newsletter.

Editors: Rob Malpas and Sheila McLean

Distribution: Sheila McLean and Kath Small (with helpers) to approximately 370 properties in the Ballachulish and Glenachulish community. Funded through Ballachulish Community Association SCIO, Ballachulish Village Hall, East Pier Road, Ballachulish PH49 4LE