

# SLATEST GOES VIRAL

Edition 21 – Easter 2020

## WELCOME!

In order to help support the community during the Coronavirus restrictions, Slatest News will be produced more frequently and distributed online. We are therefore looking for articles for an May edition.

The deadline for the next edition is Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> May, please send items in in the normal manner:

Via e-mail to [rileyrob@btinternet.com](mailto:rileyrob@btinternet.com)

Into the Black Letter Box at the village hall

Or via Facebook @SlatestNews

Whilst we are obviously reluctant to deliver to homes, we are aware that many of the most vulnerable in our community are not online. We will therefore be able to print copies for delivery direct or to friends / relatives / neighbours on request as above.

THANK YOU EVERYONE!

## SLATEST IS NOW ON FACEBOOK

To help keep us all in touch during these interesting times, Slatest News has joined Facebook. Please post anything that you wish to appear in Slatest on the facebook page, and even items that have just missed a deadline, or events that fall just before the next edition. @SlatestNews

## AN AMAZING TEAM

Before we proceed any further, we need to say a huge thanks to the amazing team at our @Covid19Balla HQ. There are too many people involved to list everyone here, but between them they have put in an awful lot of hard work to ensure that every resident in our community is looked after to the best of our ability over the coming weeks and months. After an initial meeting on Friday 13<sup>th</sup> March, they have worked tirelessly to put together a huge list of volunteers, contacts and resources, so that within a week almost half of our residents were offering help of one sort or another. Thanks to everyone who got in touch, it just shows what a special community we are part of.

If you haven't volunteered yet, it isn't too late, please contact them via facebook @covid19balla

# Happy Easter



*Young lambs on the hill – proof if it is needed that life will go on!*



## DUROR AND ST MUNDA'S CHURCH

During this difficult time it's comforting for us to see and know the amount of community support that there is in place. Some of this is currently helping to keep us safe and some of it is held in potential for the possibility of the local situation getting worse. We're blessed in having so many people selflessly volunteering to help others.

Like so many businesses, organisations and other aspects of society churches are severely restricted in what we can do. We're helping to support one another practically, on the phone and by email and Zoom conversations. Since we can't meet together on Sundays we have both recorded worship available on our Facebook page and Youtube and are experimenting with Zoom worship gatherings.

At Easter we think about God bringing light out of darkness and new life where there was death. I hope and pray that this message becomes real for us in the weeks to come.

May God bless us all.  
Rev Sandy Stoddart



## ARE YOU BORED?

- *Have you cleaned the House from top to bottom?*
- *Have you read a dozen books?*
- *Have you done all your jigsaws and puzzles?*
- *Have you weeded and pruned the garden?*
- *Are you fed up with daytime TV?*
- *Have you paired up all those odd socks?*
- *Have you done all of this twice?*

Now obviously we all need to follow the Governments latest advice about self isolation and social distancing but at the time of writing it is still possible to head outside, beyond the garden gate and do something useful around the village while taking your daily exercise. At this time of year we normally have the community clear up – litter picking and cutting back the overgrown vegetation. This still needs doing this year, and it is something that many of us can help with out in the fresh air. Please consider taking a pair of secateurs or a bin bag with you when you go out and help with some of the following:

- Litter Picking around the whole village
- Cutting back Brambles and other weeds where they are overgrown or overhanging pavements, footpaths and roads
- Trimming bushes and small trees and removing unwanted saplings before they get too big.

Please do not enter any gardens without the owners permission.

Rob hopes to be out on the Tractor Mower at the village hall over the Easter weekend, but help is needed to lift and move the numerous pieces of slate and rock that are buried in the ground and damage the mower. If you want to help with this, please pile any stones neatly together so that they can be collected.

If working outdoors is not your thing, you may be able to help in other ways at @Covid19Balla HQ – please contact them to see what you can do.



## BALLACHULISH LEADS THE WAY

Several years ago we set up a Community Resilience Plan to assist our community in the case of an emergency. At the time, we envisaged it would be used to deal with the aftermath of a natural / weather related event, or major incident on the roads near the village, we never considered a medical emergency in any way. However, having this plan as a starting point has allowed our community to hit the ground running in many aspects of the current situation. The red and green flags we all have in our windows were planned to deal with a long-lasting power cut. The databases of resources and volunteers were already set up, even if there was little or no data in them. A number of local businesses had already been contacted about their ability to help, and even if much of this was 4 years old, it has given us a good head start.

Because of this, and the excellent work of the @Covid19balla HQ team, our community was one of the first, not just in the Highlands, but seemingly in the whole of the UK, to act and start communicating with and reassuring our residents. The press (STV, BBC, Channel 4 and several national newspapers) have reported on and described our 'innovative approach', aided by the Covidgo.uk website that has been set up to share our documents and ideas with the world. There are many other communities, the length and breadth of the country who have been in touch for advice and support in setting up a similar system in their area.

## SHINTY MEMORIES

Even though we are not able to hold Shinty Memories meetings at present, we are still keen to gather more of the Balla' nicknames. The last meeting we had was fantastic – the names just kept coming but we know that there are many more out there, ancient and modern! We have a copy of the statistical account and what we aim to do is put the nicknames to the house/houses they lived in at the time. And, as usual, if people contact me that would be great.



We have our first Memory of Sobs Shop (above in 1992) from a Balla' girl who now lives up North.

Marjie Thornton [greasort23@gmail.com](mailto:greasort23@gmail.com).

If you don't use email why not write down your story and pop it into the black letterbox at the village hall, from where it can be collected.



# COVID 19 –SAFE PRACTICE IN OUR COMMUNITIES

## What Is Covid 19?

Belongs to a group of viruses known as the CORONAVIRUSES, the 19 is named after the year it was first detected (China in Dec 2019 ) and the Covid stands for Corona Virus Disease.

## How is It Spread?

Spread by droplets which occur when someone coughs and/or sneezes.

You have to be within a 2 metre distance to become affected and the longer the period of time you are within that proximity the more you will be at risk of infection. That contact has to be face to face!!!

These 'droplets' eventually settle on surfaces (they are not in the air) and when your hands come into contact with these surfaces, your hands could then touch your eyes, nose, mouth and that is how you become infected.

## What does it do and how is it treated?

In vulnerable people and (recently not so vulnerable as younger age groups have been affected) it causes a severe pneumonia type illness that requires ventilatory support in intensive care units. These are in the most severe life threatening cases. Other cases are being treated with support such as oxygen and other types of special masks that aid in breathing.

Where people have worsening symptoms at home during self isolation call NHS 24 if out of hours or if you are finding it hard to breathe call 999. If you have a local contact person as part of the Community Covid Resilience Group call them.

## What we can do to be Safe?

- Stay at home and follow government advice on the restricted reasons for going out i.e. exercise, walk the dog, shopping, etc. Vulnerable members in our communities who may have underlying health conditions are already being 'shielded' for a number of weeks as they are considered more at risk.
- Keep a safe distance from others – 2 metres (at least 2-3 steps away)
- Wash your hands on entering and leaving your home, use warm soapy water, lather up well and make sure you cover all areas especially the **tips of your fingers** as they are the parts of your hands that most come into contact with surfaces .
- If you are shopping and have already washed your hands or used your hand sanitiser before you enter the shop

there is absolutely no need for you to stop and wash your hands again on the way out provided you have not touched anything on the way out.

- If you wear gloves for your 'protection ' please be aware that they are not a substitute for hand washing and if you insist on wearing them during this pandemic they **MUST** be changed after each task and hands washed well afterwards. Gloves have been found to have microscopic tears not visible to the naked eye through which bacteria/germs can enter, hence the importance of hand washing afterwards. They can also be a source of cross infection if the same gloves are worn repeatedly.
- Do not use hand sanitiser / gel on top of gloves. It is not effective and is manufactured for use on your hands only.
- Masks are not considered to be effective unless you are working in the Intensive Care Unit or working with patients who are symptomatic in the hospital. In that instance they will be visor type masks which give full face protection. If you do have a mask and wear it in the community whether it is cotton, paper etc it must be changed once it becomes damp. PLEASE remember and wash your hands afterwards as mouth, nose etc are entry points for the virus.

I hope you find this guidance useful, there is so much great work going on in our communities, working together and sharing knowledge and good practice is key to us all getting through this together. Stay Safe and Well everyone.

Feel free to get in touch if you have any specific concerns either via the editor [rileyrob@btinternet.com](mailto:rileyrob@btinternet.com) or my email [gatsbycass@gmail.com](mailto:gatsbycass@gmail.com)

Jo Watt (Former Infection Control Nurse Specialist, NHS Highland)

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## QUIZ 1: AROUND SCOTLAND'S COAST

Work your way around the Scottish Coast using the following clues, some cryptic, some factual:

1. A place to get married?
2. Silent and cold?
3. Get your hairpiece, or a book here
4. Patron Saint of Ireland's Harbour
5. It's all around us
6. Torturing a young sheep?
7. New town on the banks of the Clyde
8. Home to Duke of Argyll
9. Most Beautiful shortcut in Scotland
10. Home
11. In the shadow of Ben Nevis
12. Welcome to Balamory
13. Kings Harbour
14. Tasty fruit marks the spot
15. Former home of Loopallu
16. It's in your mouth
17. Light a Candle
18. If you haven't got a doorbell
19. This town has an oily Firth
20. He discovered MacBeth's crime
21. Scotland's most famous Phone Box?
22. Most easterly point of Scotland is here
23. Rocky Harbour
24. Fancy a Smokie?
25. City of Discovery
26. William's University town
27. A chilly church?
28. St Margaret's Crossing
29. A London Market comes to the capital
30. Two parts of your face

## QUIZ 2: WHICH ANIMAL FILLS THE GAP?

1. Gift .....Chestnut
2. Clothes ..... Hair
3. Computer .....Trap
4. Sacrificial.....Casserole
5. Black .....Gut
6. Greedy .....Ugly
7. Round .....Redbreast
8. March .....Brush
9. Little Red .....Party
10. Rutting .....Night
11. Cheshire .....Nap
12. Sly .....Glove
13. Grumpy .....Shoot
14. Legal .....Eyed
15. Toma .....Eyed
16. Red .....Stalker
17. Noisy .....Glove
18. Sea .....Wing
19. Red .....In a china shop
20. Guide .....Star
21. BarbeQue.....Licken
22. Stop .....Tail
23. Aslan .....King
24. Triumph .....Party
25. Smoked .....Pink

- I could eat a .....
- Are you a man or a .....
- As Mild/Meek as a .....
- .....In your throat
- As Dead as a .....
- Curiosity killed the .....
- Like a .....to Water
- Raining ...s and ...s
- .....in the Hole

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## THANK YOU!

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all of the local businesses who have offered help and support through these difficult times, especially those who continue to operate in some form to ensure that life can go on.





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## RAINBOWS

Across the world and in our own communities people and children are lifting our spirits in one of the best ways possible; by putting on rainbow displays.

'A symbol of light after darkness', thank you to all who have made the days brighter by participating.



## SADLY MISSED

Ballachulish Community Association would like to express their sincere condolences to the family and friends of Jeanette Watt who passed away on Sunday March 29th. Jeanette was for many years an active and valued member of the fund raising committee whilst also taking on the busy role of bookings secretary.

She participated hugely in hall 'fun' fund raising. Even if you didn't know Jeanette personally, if you had been at a hall event in recent years, she probably served you a hot cup of tea or bowl of soup with a smile. She will be sorely missed in the Community.

We would also like to express our sincere condolences to the family and friends of John McGarry, who passed away in March. This lovable, big hearted, self confessed 'Fud' attended most of our Christmas Markets with his exquisite home made pens, just one of many talents he had. His cheeky smile and sense of humour will be missed by all who knew him.

*We would like to make it clear that neither death was as a result of Coronavirus.*



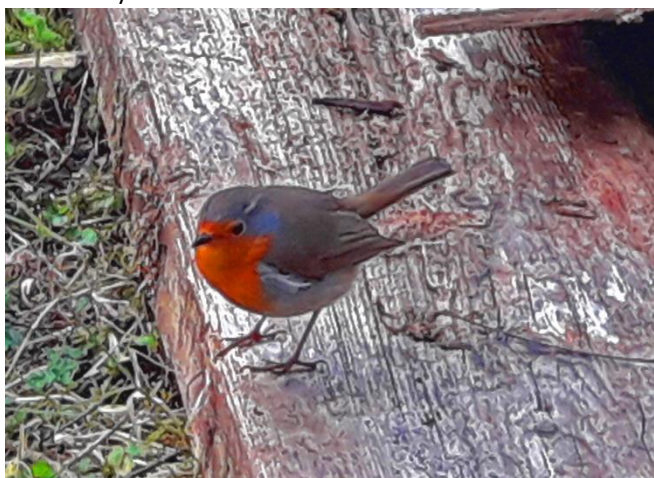


## THE SOUND OF SPRING

We normally live our lives here in Ballachulish with the background thrum of traffic on the A82. Not now, however. With a great reduction in traffic passing by, it is possible to stand out in your garden and identify each individual vehicle out on the main road. The rest of the time, there is a very different sound filling the air – that of birdsong.

We may all be familiar with seeing and hearing pigeons and gulls, but there are many more birds to see. Blackbirds and Robins, of course, but also Blue Tits, Chaffinches, Sparrows, Gold Finches, Starlings, and soon the Swallows will be back too. So take a look out your window, or stop for a moment in your garden and see how many you can see.

Unfortunately, all but a quarrelling pair of Robins seem to be camera shy!



## ASH DIEBACK

A virulent disease that originated in Asia, sweeping across Europe... sound familiar? No, not Covid-19, but Ash Dieback. This fungal disease, also known as Chalara, kills ash trees by making the leaves wilt, discolour and turn black. Shoots, branches and eventually whole trees succumb, with old trees surviving longer than saplings. The fungal spores that cause the disease live in leaf litter and can be blown long distances on the wind, so controlling the spread of the disease is impossible. Ballachulish has lots of beautiful ash trees, several of which are already infected. As the trees come in to leaf in the coming weeks, they will be easy to spot.

Please keep an eye on any ash trees overhanging property or paths, if they become infected be sure to get them felled before they become dangerous.

There is some hope for the future, with a search under way for ash trees that are tolerant of, or resistant to, the disease <https://livingashproject.org.uk/news>.

Meg Pollock

SRUC Hill & Mountain  
Research Centre, Kirkton  
& Auchtertyre Farms

*Right - Dead shoots on a  
young ash tree above the  
boat sheds; Below A  
lovely ash tree growing  
just to the West of the  
Village Hall.*



## SOUTH LOCHABER BOWMEN

Archery Club at the Leven  
Centre, Kinlochleven

**Although we are currently not  
meeting, please keep an eye  
on our facebook page for re-  
activated meeting times and  
dates as soon as we can.**



Archery sessions are run by qualified coaches in both Field  
and Target Archery.

Find us on facebook: [www.facebook.com/SLBowmen](https://www.facebook.com/SLBowmen).

### Co-op Opening Hours

Please be aware that the Co-op is currently closing at 8pm.  
They are also giving priority to vulnerable people from 8-9am  
each morning, except 10-11 am on Sundays.

### RBS Operating Hours

The RBS mobile van is not visiting the village at present,  
however the branch in Fort William is open from 10-1pm  
Monday to Friday.





## 4<sup>th</sup> Lochaber Scout Group

Beavers 6-8 years,  
Cubs 8-10½ years,  
Scouts 10-14 years,

Whilst we are unable to meet, the Scouts have been set a number of challenges. Here are the first two, which you may like to tackle yourselves!

### Spring 2020 – Challenge 1

To help people who are affected by Coronavirus, perhaps in self isolation, we are asking our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts to produce one of the following:

- A Stop Motion video animation
- A drawn cartoon or cartoon strip
- A drawing/picture or photo

There is no theme as such, but all entries must be of a light hearted nature, designed to entertain, and please consider that they will be shared with people of all ages etc. Any photos or videos must not include peoples faces please. Entries can be posted on Facebook, You Tube or WhatsApp, but please ensure a link is posted either on the Slatest or 4<sup>th</sup> Lochaber Facebook page to ensure we can share it.

Below are 2 entries, from Michael (top) and Callum McKenna.



### Spring 2020 – Challenge 2

This week we are asking our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts to produce one of the following:

- Bake and Decorate a Cake for Easter
- Decorate Fairy Cakes or Biscuits for Easter
- A drawing/picture of an Easter Cake

Any photos must not include peoples faces please.

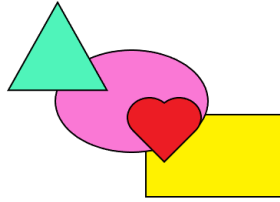
Below are Arron Callendar's eggcellent Easter creation of decorated fairy cakes and Callum & Michael McKennas imaginative Banana and Chocolate muffins!





# KINLOCHLOVIN'

Since the outbreak of coronavirus stopped us being able to carry on with our face to face work we have tried to keep connected with the community by starting a YouTube channel. We normally hold our youth and community workshops within the Ballachulish Hub and in the Kinlochleven Workshop. In order to try and support creativity at home to help us all feel more positive and still connected we have been posting crafts, challenges and learning activities online. It may not be a replacement for our normal work but we hope it's giving a backlog of ideas and inspiration for things to do at home, plus giving us all a bit of a laugh. So far we have had drawing tutorials, crafts like elephant tea lights and bookmarks plus superhero dress up challenges. The YouTube channel is called Kinlochlovin Live and there are links running from our Facebook page.



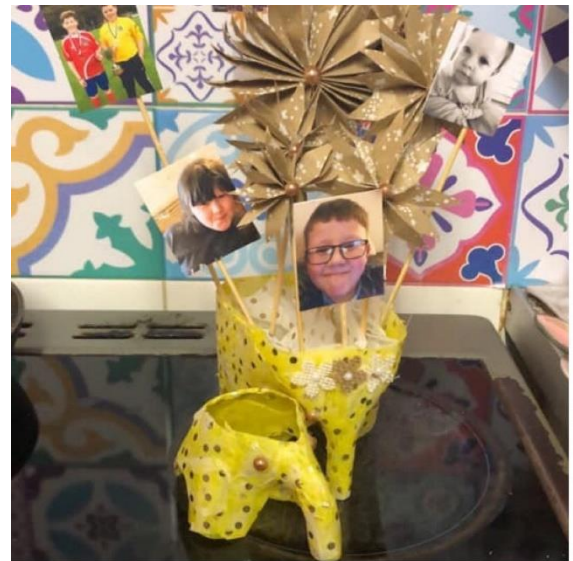
This is a new type of activity for us and we are delighted with the support and encouragement from local people. We are happy to take ideas so if people have requests just get in touch.

We are also trying to put together some creative parcels which can be safely delivered to people at home in order to help keep our minds busy and fingers nimble. These will be suitable for both adults and children and hopefully available for those who have limited creative material at home. We are just working with a funder to confirm this.

We would also like to launch a community creative challenge of art, doodles, photos and stories from this time. So please take some time and create a doodle, paint a picture, take a photo, write a poem or come up with something yourself and we will happily collate them all. You could email us a contribution or keep hold and we can collect when this is all over.

Keep smiling and keep creative.

[Kinlochlovin@outlook.com](mailto:Kinlochlovin@outlook.com)



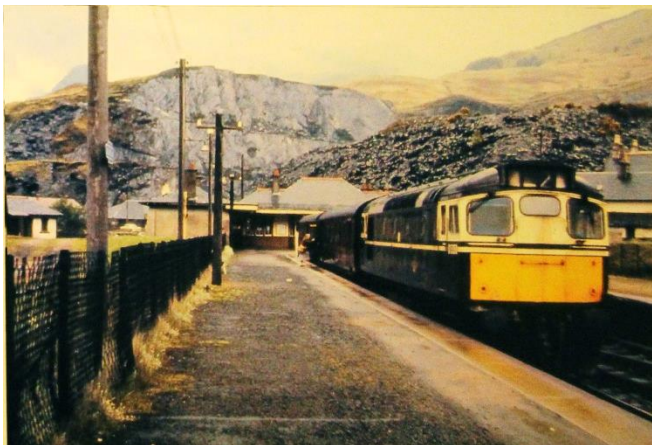


## BALLACHULISH BRANCH LINE

In 1896 the Callander & Oban Railway gained an act of parliament to open a branch line from their mainline at Connel to the Slate Quarries at Ballachulish. Construction started two years later and the railway was opened in 1903. However, less than 60 years later Dr Beeching published his report, within which the Ballachulish branch was earmarked for closure.

Three years later, on 26<sup>th</sup> March 1966 the railway closed for good. The anniversary of this closure became one of the first posts on the new Slate News Facebook page, eliciting a range of memories, including Sammy Cohen's shop at the station, Chrissy Findlays Tearooms, Craftsman jeans with the ruler pocket from Barr Stores, and many people whose parents and grandparents worked on the railway.

Here are a couple of photos from the last couple of years of service on the railway, when the line was operated by Diesel locomotives.



If you have any memories, or snippets of information to share, please get in touch on facebook @SlateNews or via e-mail – [rileyrob@btinternet.com](mailto:rileyrob@btinternet.com)



## A YEAR IN THE LIFE — 1992

Throughout April we are posting photos from the Year in the Life project in 1992 on the Facebook page. As you would imagine, these have produced a range of comments and memories, with photos from that year's Gala proving particularly popular, so here are a few of them:



Ballachulish Community Council, Ballachulish Community Company and Ballachulish Community Association SCIO (SC023308) have worked together to produce this newsletter. Ballachulish Community Association SCIO, Ballachulish Village Hall, East Pier Road, Ballachulish PH49 4LE