

Ben Ledi View

Feb/Mar 2020

Issue 310

Cover Price £1



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Ben Ledi View

Convenor: Steve McGowan
convenor@benlediview.org

Editorial Team:

John Nelson, Mary Buckland, Elaine Martay
editor@benlediview.org

Editors & Compilation:

Alan Derrick (Specialist)
Mary Buckland (Callander Past)
Chris Cunningham, Jean Thewlis (Arts & Entertainment)
Rosalind Sannachan (Charities & Clubs)
Steve Routledge (Community)
Ivan Condon (Information, Crossword, Sports & Leisure)
Carol McGowan (Environment)
John Nelson (Health & Wellbeing)
Hilary Gunkel (What's On and Proof Reading)
Olga Watkins (Proof Reading)
Mary Buckland (Young People)
Neil Michael (Letters & announcements, Pets)

Grateful thanks to everyone who has provided us with articles and pictures

Advertising:

Isla Routledge (339388)
advertising@benlediview.co.uk

Advert Preparation: Catherine Nelson

Distribution: Alan Davidson (330680)

Secretary: Vacant

Subscriptions & Media Milan Cech
benledionline@gmail.com

Administration Assistant Alexandra Russell

Technical Assistance Caroline Kenny

Contact:

The Ben Ledi View,
c/o McLaren Community
Leisure Centre,
Mollands Rd,
Callander FK17 8JP
www.benlediview.co.uk

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Cover Photo by Homo Vulgaris



Hello Readers

Greetings to all readers and contributors to the Ben Ledi View and best wishes for the new decade.

I'm writing this in early January and Callander is its usual dark and damp place for this time of year. What has been unusual, however, has been the mild temperatures we have been having. I don't think we've had a proper fall of snow in the town as yet and very few hard frosts in the morning. I heard that a village in North West Sutherland achieved the UK record for a December temperature a few days ago, 18.7C! Is Scotland's weather being influenced by global warming? Talking about climate change, it's great to see the considerable amount of contributions from the young people of Callander about this important issue in the Ben Ledi View.

On the subject of winter, I'd like to thank everybody who was involved in organising and presenting this year's *Winterfest*. It's important to promote Callander at this time of year and attract visitors who may have otherwise been content with shopping in the nearby larger towns and cities.

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We all occasionally need inspiration in our lives. For me, one recent public-spirited and inspirational act has been watching a local man painstakingly refurbish the footpath that separates the car park at the end of North Church Street and the bowling green. Well done that man!

Things to look forward to in this new year include the 2020 salmon fishing season on Stirling Council Fisheries. It will be officially opened by Team GB Para snowboarder Andrew Macleod. The pipe band-led parade will leave Ancaster Square at 09:15 on Saturday 1st February from where the procession will make its way to the banks of the River Teith at the Meadows.

By the time you are reading this, the new footpath from the Lower Craggs carpark to the Bracklinn Falls path should be complete. Although it has necessitated cutting some of the woodland down, it will give people a traffic free route to one of the most popular viewpoints in the area. Another thing that I'm looking forward to is the hoped-for reopening of the Visitor Information Centre. As we go to press the info that I have is that Callander Community Council and Callander Community Development Trust hope to have the centre reopened by Easter.

I'd like to finish by thanking again the many volunteers that give up their valuable time to produce this magazine, with a special thanks this time to the editorial team, led by John and Catherine Nelson, who have been multi-tasking for the last two editions as we have not replaced our advert prep person as yet. If there's anyone out there with some desktop publishing skills who would like to give us a hand, please send me an email,

convenor@benlediview.org



One Of The Best Winter Days

That day was Saturday 30th November when the *Winterfest* parade arrived at Ancaster Square and the Christmas tree lights were switched on by Citizen of the Year, Lesley Hawkins. The weather was picture-postcard perfect, with bright sunshine, freezing temperatures, no rain, and Santa hats in abundance. A number of individuals and groups were involved in *Winterfest* activities, donating time, talent, goods, services and work. Thank you to them, we hope to include them all below.

Cambusmore Estate, Callander Firefighters, Mhor Bread, Deli Ecosse, Callander Film Society, Callander Chorale, CAOS, Junior Choir, Callander Brass, Rusty Strings, Callander Chimes, Song Squad, Callander Rotary, 41 Club, Callander Kirk, St Andrew's Church, St Joseph's, Callander Community Development Trust, Callander Community Council, Callander Enterprise, Meet and Make, Lynne Schroder, Ian Mathisen, Malin Heen, Brian McKay (DJ and MC), & Santa.

Thanks also to the shopkeepers who took part in the late-night opening on one of the wettest winter days, and to the shoppers who came out to support this new venture. We hope it will become a regular part of *Winterfest* in future.



New Town Coordinator

The post of Town Coordinator was created in 2013 following the Callander Charrette, when it was agreed that the aspirations the community had for the town would need someone to oversee their development.

Sheila Winstone has been that person for the past six and a half years, supporting project leaders by providing advice on funding applications and budgeting, guiding them through the complexities of contacting relevant local and national agencies, linking groups with each other to avoid unnecessary duplication of effort, publicising projects and marketing what Callander has to offer its visitors, encouraging the pursuit of ideas, all geared to putting the Community Action plans into reality, now or over time.

Sheila has now retired and taking up the challenge and continuing to provide the support needed is Helen Terry, who steps into the post of Town Coordinator in January 2020.

We thank Sheila for her endless dedication to Callander and welcome Helen to this demanding post.

Anne Docherty

St Kessog's Update

Sadly, St Kessog's has been shut for a long time, but the Community Council has been in discussion with Stirling Council with a view to a partnership arrangement for future management of the building. Following the flood from burst pipes, Stirling Council who own the building, had to strip it back to a shell; they have also repaired the roof, so it is watertight but completely empty. The Community Council held a drop-in day on Saturday 14th December to ask for suggestions regarding the use of the community space in St Kessog's. Thank you to everyone who supported it by coming along, offering their thoughts, with lots of enthusiasm and several offers of help. We have picked up even more of your suggestions from Facebook and several emails and each has been added to a growing wish list. It appears the community supports the idea of working in partnership with Stirling Council and making the building as flexible as possible to accommodate many ideas. Thank you. Discussions are ongoing to determine the best way forward to reopen St Kessog's, so although we have been here before, watch this space.

Richard Johnson, Elaine Watterson, Sue King

The Development Trust is exploring the option of acquiring the building through an asset transfer scheme. It has been successful in attracting funding from the Scottish Land Fund to undertake a Stage 1 feasibility study and SKS consultants have started to look at the proposition and will report back in March as to whether the project meets the criteria to acquire the building for the community. The situation is fluid, with no decision likely until at least April or May as to which is the best course for the community. Whichever option is deemed to be best will then be the subject of a thorough consultation with the community.

Chris Corden, Community Council

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Powers of Attorney

For many people, Powers of Attorney are seen as only being necessary for older people who have diminished mental ability through illness or simply becoming elderly. Very few people see the need for Powers of Attorney whilst they are young but unfortunately accidents can happen and being prepared for the unexpected can save a family unnecessary upset. We would be happy to assist in the preparation of the required documents and guide you through the process.

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Callander Flood Protection

Following the Stirling Council open meeting on the proposed Meadows Car Park Flood Alleviation Scheme held on 23rd October (with a follow-up session on 10th December), a short account of that potential scheme was published in the December BLV. However, this description inspires a series of observations and questions.

The proposed scheme: what is included and its cost?

According to Stirling Council, the protected area includes “1 residential property, along with numerous commercial properties. It also protects access points / ground floor entrances to numerous flats from river floods.” The scheme does not provide alleviation for all potential flood areas of Callander, but is a limited scheme around Meadows Car Park, at a cost of £3-4 million.

What is excluded from the scheme?

The 1 in 50 year Baseline Flood Map of Callander clearly marks 10 properties (9 residential), outside the scope of the scheme, at the same level of risk as the Meadows Car Park. None of these properties in Bridgend, Grant Court and South Church Street are protected under the proposed scheme. The scheme also does not cover flooding from small watercourses.

Small Watercourses

Flooding can come from small watercourses, not only from the river. On 11th December, after two days of heavy rain, blocked culverts in small watercourses caused water to over-spill, flooding Station Road, Leny Road and Main Street. Properties and traffic were affected. Culverts at Coilhallan Wood and the Mellis Burn had to be cleared, and the A81 was closed during the afternoon. All this came from small watercourses.

Bridgend

The December BLV article had a statement that was repeated by Council officials at the public meeting: that the scheme for Bridgend was previously considered, but ruled out as not being financially viable, and having the potential to increase flood risk elsewhere in Callander. When challenged on this omission Council officials could not provide any detailed information as to where these flood waters would be displaced, and to what extent.

What is surprising is that the Mouchel report 2013 indicates that the scheme for Bridgend West scored higher on financial viability than the Meadows Car Park.

Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Callander

This assessment, produced by the National Park Authority, concludes that “a significant number of properties in Callander are at risk of flooding from a number of sources. The River Teith is by far the most significant flood source and the most well understood. However, several other sources, including small watercourses, combined sewer systems and overland flow routes, pose a substantial level of flood risk”.

It is understood that a Surface Water Management Plan for Callander is currently in its initial stages of development by Stirling Council, for delivery by autumn 2020. At the same time, specific work is being done to identify mitigation measures for the frequent flooding to the back of Ancaster Road properties.

What now?

Whilst attempts by Stirling Council to provide a much-needed flood alleviation scheme are welcome, the proposals as they stand do not address the needs of the community. They do not protect areas of the town which are affected by rainwater run-off, nor all properties at risk from river flood.

Community trust and confidence in the scheme's credibility has further been undermined by the attempted community engagement employed by the Council. Only after it had completed the WSP report in 2018 and secured 80% funding for a project from Scottish Government last year, did Stirling Council choose to engage with the community.

This late rush to engage has resulted in two poorly planned public meetings, and lack of communication with local people and elected representatives. The Community Council at their November meeting decided not to support the project in its current format.

Is there not a need to consider all the various elements within one comprehensive, overarching flood alleviation plan for Callander? If the proposed flood gate at the entrance to the Meadows Car Park had been closed on 11th December, the flood from the blocked Station Road culvert would have had serious consequences.

Each area of Callander cannot be taken in isolation, and the community needs to feel reassured that the various studies and proposals are being considered together, using local knowledge and personal experiences, in order to produce a thoroughly discussed, costed and comprehensive scheme which will provide both reassurance and protection for the future.

References

- Callander River Teith Optioneering and Benefit / Cost Appraisal (Mouchel 2013)
- Callander Meadows Car Park Flood Alleviation Scheme (WSP 2018)
- National Park Authority Strategic Flood Risk Assessment for Callander

Ian McCourt

Ruth Thompson from Stirling District Council notes the concerns about flooding in Bridgend which the council is now in the process of addressing. She says 'the high turnout at the public consultations was pleasing and we received positive responses and hope to hold another consultation in the Spring'.

6 Community

Callander 2020 and Beyond

Callander Enterprise will be hosting a community drop-in evening on Tuesday 3rd March, 6pm to 9pm at Callander Hostel on Bridgend. We invite the community to come to this free event and find out about what is being delivered within our community and by whom. Callander Community Action Plan is the driver for delivering projects locally; we are hoping each organisation will demonstrate past successes, current and future projects. We are inviting Callander Community Council, Callander Community Development Trust and the Hydro fund to showcase their projects and outline the resulting impact for the community. Callander Enterprise will be showcasing the newly refreshed community website, along with projects that have been delivered for the benefit of the business community. There will be an opportunity to join Callander Enterprise and be listed on our website www.incallander.co.uk.

The evening will provide an informal forum for the local community to gain a better understanding of all the hard work our community volunteers do to make Callander a great place to live and work. We hope that Stirling Council and the Loch Lomond & Trossachs National Park will also be represented amongst many other groups. Please take the time to join us and see all the great work that is being done to improve Callander. Refreshments will be available throughout the course of the evening.

Callander Enterprise was formed in August 2005, a rebirth of the former Callander Business Association which had been going for a number of years. We are a member association run by business volunteers with the purpose of making Callander an attractive destination for visitors and to encourage new businesses. We are a not-for-profit organisation and all funds are returned to the business community. If you would like to be part of Callander Enterprise group or would like to come and talk to the group about a service you provide, then please get in touch via our contact form on

<https://incallander.co.uk/contactcallander-enterprise>.

Our meetings, which usually start with an open session of an interesting talk, are held on the first Tuesday in each month at Deli Ecosse, starting at 6pm.

On behalf of Callander Enterprise

Callander Community Development Trust (CCDT)

CCDT would like to encourage residents in the Callander area to become Trust members. To find out more about CCDT and join, we have a new easy way to sign up via our website www.callandercdt.org.uk/join_ccdt or www.eepurl.com/gDygvD

There will be an opportunity to join and find out more about CCDT, at the upcoming drop-in event on the 3rd March (see above). You can also let us know if you are interested in volunteering with CCDT or with any of our projects, such as being a Board member, helping at the Visitor Centre or getting involved with any of the festivals. A paper version of the membership form will also be made available at the library and can be returned by post to Anne Docherty (details of the return address is on the form). You can sign up to receive an email newsletter from CCDT. We will print a small number of any newsletters for residents who would like to receive the updates, but don't have access to an email system, again these will be available for collection at the library.

What does being a 'member' of the Trust mean? A member is a part-owner of the company. Members can attend all general meetings, as well as the AGM.

Members elect the Directors and is open to anyone over the age of 18, residing within the Callander Community Council Boundary and subject to approval from the board. There is no annual subscription fee, however, all donations are appreciated. Details of how to donate will be available via the website soon. By becoming a CCDT Trust Member, you are showing your support for the work CCDT does, as volunteers. We look forward to you joining as a Trust member and becoming part of our organisation.

Visitor Information Centre (VIC)

Following the successful first season of opening the VIC as a community run service, staffed by local volunteers with support from staff of the Sir Walter Scott Steamship Trust, plans are now being prepared to open again in April for the new visitor season. The use by over 20,000 visitors in May to October 2019 proved that the VIC is providing a much-needed service which should be maintained and developed.

It is hoped that a part-time manager can be appointed, depending on suitable funding being available.

Meanwhile, anyone interested in joining the team of volunteers who meet visitors should contact

secretary@callandercdt.org.uk

Facing the Flood

Tuesday 7th January. It is so dark that all morning lights have been essential. The rain is torrential, at times with thunder and lightning. Water is pouring across the Station Road car park and streams are racing past the Dreadnought and the Post Office into the Main Street. The Meadows car park is not flooded, yet! The lady from the Handy Corner Shop is clearing the drain in the pavement. It is a constant battle as the water leaving Station Road is avoiding the drain in the road and heading towards Taste of the Trossachs before turning back down hill to form a huge puddle in the road above her shop. Every car that goes past hurls a drenching spray into the air that flies over the rails to add to the puddle on the pavement she is trying to clear.

She does not expect to stay open long; she will tidy up, put her flood gate in place, leave and hope the water does not rise too far.





Walk in the Park Christmas Lunch



The walking group held its annual Christmas Lunch in the Old Bank on Tuesday 10th December when we were treated to a delicious meal. Volunteer Walk Leaders were thanked for their support and the amazing contribution they make to the success of the project. Volunteers were presented with a gift and certificate from Paths for All in recognition of the contribution they make to the walks and strength and balance sessions in Callander.



The photo shows the walk leaders with their gifts.

Robert's story

When I retired a few years ago, I knew I wanted something to do outdoors that would keep me active. As my wife Cathy is the coordinator of Walk in the Park, I decided to get involved with the walks in Callander.

I had a long career in a strenuous job as a forester and I suffered from sore knees and a painful back. I had seen a consultant about my right knee, and he had suggested surgery. So, when I joined the walking group I walked with a stick for support and could sometimes only walk a short distance. Cathy advised me that the strength and balance exercises would help my knees, so I started attending the sessions and to my amazement they did make a difference. Gradually over several months my knees and back became stronger. I still feel pain in my right knee from time to time, but I no longer need a stick for support.

After a while I trained as a walk leader to help support the walks and to be able to demonstrate the strength and balance classes. By attending walks and strength and balance sessions in other places (Killin and Aberfoyle) on different days of the week with Cathy, I have met a lot of interesting people and walked in new areas of the National Park. I would like to encourage anyone who would like some more exercise to join the group. It is good to meet other people on the walks and to have a social time in a cafe afterwards - suitable for all ages. It would be good to have some more men along, as sometimes we men struggle to do something new.

Robert Scott

Please see the BLV 'What's On' page for Tuesday morning meeting times and routes in the Callander area or pick up a flier from the Medical Centre or Library. All walks are free. Walks are followed by optional refreshments in a local coffee shop. Walkers pay for their own refreshments. Strength and Balance exercise sessions continue to be held in Callander Fire Station from 2-3pm: gentle Otago based exercises to keep you walking with confidence. Session is free and open to all ages.

Booking is not necessary, however, if you have any questions about joining in any of our walks or exercise sessions please contact the Walk in the Park Coordinator - Cathy Scott [07852 334272](tel:07852334272) or send an email to: cathy.scott@lochlomond-trossachs.org

For more information about Walk in the Park and walk schedules for all groups including Callander, Killin, Aberfoyle, Drymen, Balloch and Arrochar visit

www.trustinthepark.org/walk-in-the-park



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NHS Forth Valley

Audit Scotland's report on our NHS Board tells us that:

The following Key government targets were met

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- Diagnostics
- Child Mental Health waiting times
- Accident and Emergency

However, the following failed to meet those targets:

- Cancer wait for those suspected of cancer, but not diagnosed
- Outpatients time for appointment.
- Treatment time from diagnosis
- Psychological therapies

This report identifies that substantial financial savings are required for next year. £3.6m of this has not been identified and up to £10m are considered high risk and may not materialise

CALLANDER MEDICAL PRACTICE

It is now 3 months since the merger, and things are starting to take shape. Most of the staff are working from one side of the building, although we are waiting for the Health Board to make structural changes to accommodate the rest of the staff. The dedicated prescription line is working well, and patients have commented that they appreciate the receptionists' undivided attention at the front desk. We also have a nurse 5 working days. There are still a lot of improvements to make, the most important being a lack of doctors. Although there are more appointments now than prior to the merger, we appreciate that patients are not used to waiting 2 weeks for a routine appointment.

We are very pleased to announce that in a few months we will have a full complement of doctors. Dr Jay Mackenzie will be joining us in April as a new partner and will work 6 sessions per week, and Dr Iain Webster will be joining us for 2 sessions per week. Both doctors come to us with a wealth of experience, fresh ideas and the enthusiasm of youth. We are sure you will all welcome them to the practice team.

The merger has come about due to the NHS Scotland's vision for GP practices. Part of this is to include new multi-disciplinary teams in each practice allowing more time for the doctors to look after patients with more complex needs. We now need your help and support -

Our receptionists are trained to "signpost" patients to the most suitable person. If you are advised to go to a pharmacist, optician, dentist or minor injury unit, please take that advice, as they are the most suitable professional for your problem. If you need to see a doctor, the receptionist will offer you the next available routine appointment. However, if you have become acutely unwell and need to see a doctor urgently, you must tell them, and you will be offered one of our "urgent" appointments which are available at certain times during the day. The most efficient way for us to run the GP practice is with an appointment system. Please do not turn up at the surgery expecting to be seen there and then. There may not be a doctor available or the doctor may already have a full surgery for patients who already have an appointment.

Please cancel your appointment as soon as possible if it is no longer required or

COOK'S CORNER

by Audrey Corrieri

EGG and SMOKED SALMON TIMBALES (Serves 4)

Ingredients

Butter for greasing
175g smoked salmon cut into thin strips
1 tbsp lemon juice
3 eggs (medium)
150ml double cream
Melba toast

Method

Preheat oven to gas no. 4, 180c, 160c fan. Thoroughly butter 4, 150ml ramekins and place them on a baking sheet. Put salmon strips in a bowl, toss with the lemon juice and season with black pepper. Divide between ramekins.

Beat the eggs with the cream, then carefully pour into the ramekins. Bake in the oven for 20-25 minutes, or until puffed and just set. Serve at once with warm melba toast.

To make melba toast:

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you cannot attend. We are experiencing a significant increase in patients not turning up for an appointment, and this creates extended waiting times for other patients.

Non-NHS services such as form signing and patients requesting letters are an extra service the practice provides. They are not an urgent part of our service, and you should not expect them to be done the same day. Please give us as much time as possible for these to be completed.

Prescriptions are not taking any longer to go to the pharmacist than they did prior to the merger. We have always required 2 working days, however, the pharmacy systems have changed and they may take longer to process your request.

Finally, let's all be positive about the merger which is sustaining a GP practice in Callander for your future. Our receptionists have been hurt and upset by comments made by patients (both in the surgery and outside) who have not got what they want, when they want. Aggressive behaviour is not acceptable. If you are unhappy with the level of service you have been offered, or you wish to complain, we would appreciate your putting your concerns in writing to the Practice Managers, and not venting your anger or frustration on the receptionists who are trying their best to help you!

TALK TO US

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The Drain Saga continues...

By now everyone must know of the problem with blocked drains in Callander; it has continued with Scottish Water teams unblocking and repairing drains.

On December 9th the first team of public spirited young people, the Guides, headed out to start the delivery of leaflets to every home in Callander. In the dark it was a bit of an adventure; but with sweets from Tesco as a treat at the end. Thank you Tesco.

The only problem, they could not access blocks of flats. We have been lucky enough to find 'Honorary Guides' to help out, thank you! We failed in 3 blocks in Ledi Court - is help possible there, please?

Festivities and bad weather have stopped all action by the other groups who hoped to be involved. I think they will all be looking forward to the modest donation from Scottish Water.

Climate Crisis. Can we learn from pop groups?

If you keep up with the pop world you will know Coldplay are not touring while they work out how to make this environmentally sustainable!

Last December, Massive Attack announced they were going to play a gig in Liverpool in October and it was to be used as research on reducing their carbon footprint. The results they produce are going to be studied by the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change

It is obvious that with all that goes on during a concert, these events have a massive carbon footprint. They will have to minimise their carbon production from the band, crew, and equipment transportation, production power, catering options, audience transportation, merchandising, and show sponsorship. wow!

The group will transport everything by rail. The council will close carparks for the day so the audience will use public transport. They hope the buses will be electric and all energy will come from renewable sources.

Glasgow is staging the next climate change conference. Is it going to make this a 'deeds as well as words' event as Liverpool is attempting?



For a few weeks now I have been working with the Ben Ledi View team to help photograph events around Callander. Whilst I have only been doing photography and filmmaking for 3 years, I still feel confident with my camera and so wasn't especially anxious when I was asked to take photos of the Guides handing leaflets out to houses in Callander. I knew I was prepared because the night before I had crammed every piece of equipment I owned into my bag, hoping that some unforeseen disaster wasn't going to pop up and if it did, I might have something to battle it with.

However, one piece of equipment was more life saving than I ever thought it could be... my light. The late time of the Guides meeting didn't seem too much of an issue at the time

of organising my gear. But what I forgot was how dark it would be and, thanks to my terrible technique of cramming I had the tool I needed. Without that light, the camera wouldn't have seen anything and it was a huge help to the Guides trying to navigate dark driveways and doors. With my light attached to the camera, I photographed the incredible work that the Guides do, so late at night in the freezing winter, with relative success. So, the moral of the story is always bring half your house on your back wherever you go?... maybe not. But certainly I encourage everyone with even just a phone to pursue photography, as it is both deeply rewarding and can have the ability to highlight the best and worst areas of our world.

Fraser Cronin

Transport For The Future in The National Park

By now everyone has heard the term STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). It's practically taken over the world of work with new careers in the STEM field being created every year. McLaren High School has definitely caught the STEM bug!

Four years ago, a group of teachers started a STEM Project programme, where pupils design, plan and execute a project on their own! The programme works on a three-year cycle and at the end pupils present their projects at a STEM festival.

This year, the second year the programme has been running, around 40 pupils have signed up, each with a different project idea. The focus this year is around STEM in the National Park. With a growing awareness around environmental issues such as Climate Change and Plastic Pollution, many pupils have come up with cunning ideas to clean up and solve the mess.

My project is on 'Transport For The Future In The National Park'. I am finalizing my plans and arranging meetings with organisations who can help with my project. My project is collecting data and analysing data. This will include a survey of teachers, employees from local businesses and residents of Callander. Please look out for surveys and events related to my project soon!

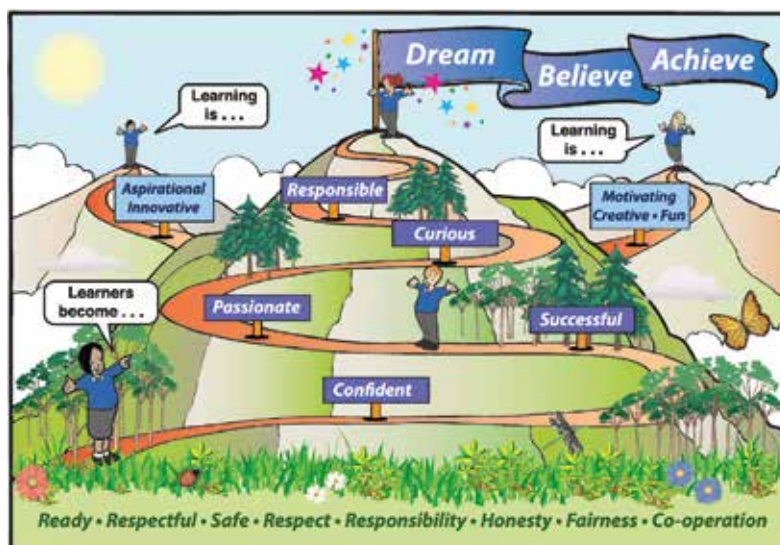
Aidan Cronin



Callander Primary School



In October 2019, Callander Primary was awarded Digital Schools status. This is a nationally recognised award which focuses on how well schools have embedded different approaches to using digital technologies across the curriculum. As well as having access to a variety of technological equipment such as laptops, interactive whiteboards and iPads, the children at Callander have been developing their skills with robotics, coding and web page design too.



As a school, we are making use of an increasing variety of platforms to showcase our learning which includes our school Twitter Page, and our school website. We also have our school YouTube channel where groups of children have shared with viewers their understanding of different mathematical concepts as well as themes such as "nurture".

We have a child-led Digital Leaders group who work hard to make sure our digital framework is embedded across our school. Our Digital Leaders have been busy developing their own skills and have even led on some training for staff. We have a strong focus on internet safety, with children discussing issues such as password security, online profiles and sharing data.

Some of our classes have introduced Google Classroom which allows children to develop new communication skills and complete homework using an online platform. Older children and parents in the school have contributed to school self-evaluation and improvement through the use of Microsoft forms for questionnaires and surveys.

We are currently looking at cyber resilience and are planning to introduce some basic coding skills to the younger classes later on in the session too.



COME ALONG FOR LOTS OF FUN, GAMES,



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Callander Kirk Hall

29 February 2020

28 March 2020



Flanders Moss

Before we hit the mince pies and cheesy biscuits at our December SWT meeting, Dave Pickett of NatureScot (previously SNH) entertained us with a talk on the history and wildlife of Flanders Moss. This raised bog habitat is increasingly recognised as environmentally important, locking up large amounts of carbon. Its formation began 8000 years ago when bog mosses began to grow on the water-logged clay soils formed when the Carse of Stirling was under the sea. The mosses hold water and continue to grow and die but do not rot down, the dead material continues to pile up to form peat domes up to 7metres above the surrounding land, identified as a 'raised bog'. Such domes contain a record of changes in climate, sea levels, plant life and human activity over 8000 years.

In the 18th century landowners saw the fertility of the underlying clay soils. They recruited Perthshire Highlanders who lost their land after the Jacobite rebellion. These 'Moss Lairs' lived rent-free in return for clearing peat and digging drainage ditches. They also used to float peat down to the River Forth. Over a third



photo Mike Hawkins

of Flanders Moss was turned into rich farmland and the rest dried out. The remaining legacy can be seen in aerial photographs. A planning application for a peat-fuelled power station that would have decimated the rest of the peat, luckily, didn't go ahead due to boundary arguments then SNH bought the peat extraction rights for £1.8m.

Since 1992 restoration has included removal of trees and shrubs which dry out the land and blocking up old drainage channels to retain water. Fenced grazing by sheep is being re-introduced to control shrub regrowth but groups of up to 150 large, healthy red deer are less easily controlled. They lie in safety on the Moss during the daytime and wander onto adjoining farmland at night.

The success of these actions is measured by the 'squelch factor' and the range of wildlife which can be observed from the all-ability access

walkways and from the viewing tower. Several plants have adaptations to survive in this wet, acidic habitat: round-leaved sundew gets its nutrients from insects, cranberry has thread-like roots which float above the sphagnum moss. A wildflower meadow by the car park was planted with local schoolchildren and lesser butterfly orchids are found in dryer areas. Different dragonfly species frequent fresh and sphagnum water pools. Moth trapping has shown so many species that it is categorised as a 'moth assemblage', an indicator of a healthy environment. In summer adders frequent the drier areas and lizards can be found sunbathing on the walkways. A rare spider, the tiny Bog Sun Jumper, is only found in 7 UK sites, but 6 are in the Carse of Stirling. Barn owls hunt over the area and insect-eating birds such as redstarts, whinchats and tree pipits nest there.

Having this National Nature Reserve so close, it can be visited in all seasons. Dave particularly recommended a May visit for the dawn chorus. For more information, visit <https://2bog-saswampandsomeislands.wordpress.com/>. Of course, you can easily help to preserve other important peat habitats by using peat-free garden compost.

Lesley Hawkins

Coppicing

With all the talk of climate change, we all know that trees remove carbon dioxide from the air to grow and planting trees is good for the world.

Coppicing has been a way of managing woodland, used probably since man first cut down deciduous trees. Cut a young tree down and, from below the cut, new stems will grow and grow more quickly than the single one would have done. Willow, poplar and perhaps hazel are grown commercially this way. The crop may be harvested up to every 2 years in the right conditions by cutting the 'trunks' and leaving a small stump with a sloping cut to carry any rainwater away from the centre of the clump so it can grow healthily.

'Why bother?' people might say! Any plant growing rapidly is removing more carbon dioxide from the air than those growing slowly. The rapidly



grown straight stems can be used for many things: making charcoal, fencing, gates, furniture, baskets, roofing shingles, cricket bats, pea sticks, walking sticks and shepherds' crooks are all coppice products, but there are more. It is probably better for the climate to use locally grown natural products than plastic, if possible.

These days, coppiced wood is used for biomass heating. One system using a combined heat and power boiler really appeals. This is used to produce electricity with the hot gases heating

buildings or cooler gases used in green houses, where the extra carbon dioxide will also speed crop growth.

Of course, this cycle would be spoilt if the wood was transported long distances, using lots of fossil fuel before it got to where it was useful.

Coppicing is also a good way to manage woodland for wildlife. If you walk through Leny Woods, for example, you can see where different types of trees were coppiced in the past. Many of these were species that would, if left, have a relatively short life, but coppicing regularly enables the tree to last much longer, so the woodland has a greater range of living things in it than woods that are totally cleared and replanted.

Mary Buckland

The South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project

The South of Scotland Golden Eagle Project aims to reinforce the small and vulnerable population of golden eagles in the Scottish Borders and Dumfries & Galloway. Rick Taylor, the Community Outreach Officer for the project, came to the Callander SWT group in November to talk about the work to conserve these birds.

Golden eagles have a long history in the south of Scotland: throughout the region, populations were once healthy but, over the last two centuries, human activity and changes in land use have caused populations in the south to fall as low as three breeding pairs. However, through a proposed series of translocations over five years, the project aims to increase numbers and prevent the loss of this wonderful species from southern skies. The project team has undertaken a formal assessment of habitat and other management measures to reinforce the population in the south of Scotland. These reports concluded that southern Scotland could support up to 16 breeding pairs of golden eagles.

Five custom built aviaries were constructed and sited at a confidential location in the Southern Uplands. The first eaglets arrived in early summer



2018 for a short two month stay before being released into the Moffat Hills. In the last two years six eaglets have been released. The initial three released birds survived very well and have wandered widely around southern Scotland. The birds were even joined at a feeding site by another eagle from Dumfries and Galloway.

However, in 2019 tragedy struck when one of the females released in 2018 attacked and killed two of the males released that year. Golden eagles can be aggressive to other eagles and this, although unusual, is not unheard of. The remaining bird released that year was re-released at another site and all four surviving birds continue to do well.

The project aims to bring together all the landowners and conservation communities as being critical for successful delivery. It also has a strong emphasis on community engagement. Rick's work as a Community Outreach Officer includes delivering talks, guided walks and activities such as 'Eagle Schools', where children discover the life-cycle of the golden eagle and some of the challenges it faces and its benefits to society.

The talk was enthusiastically received by the group, being of special interest since golden eagles are present in our area.

Kevin Duffy

The Wonders of Deadwood

Over the past decade, insect populations have declined by 41%. This is mostly caused by intensive farming, urbanisation and climate change. (Urbanisation refers to the increasing number of people moving to urban living, whether by choice or with infrastructure change.) Over the summer holidays and October holiday, I undertook my Explorer John Muir Award. To complete my award I needed to do four things: Discover (Find a wild place, Callander Craggs), Explore (Walk, cycle etc..), Conserve (Surviving different aspects, such as trees or bugs) and lastly Share (Writing an article and sharing on social media). The minimum time commitment is 8 days.

As part of my award I completed the Bugs Count OPAL survey. The survey required me to look around a survey site, counting the types of bugs that I could find, but much to my surprise



photo Carol McGowan

I didn't see very many! This could be down to several reasons, but it is most likely because my survey site included a public path, so dogs and humans could have disturbed or scared bugs away from the site.

So what does this have to do with urbanisation? With more housing being built, it means more people living in the same area. More housing equals habitat loss. But what do insects do for us? For most of us, we have bad encounters with them, midges in summer and bugs scurrying around.

But insects do so much more, they are a vital part of the eco system.

But why is this article called 'The Wonders of Deadwood'? Just like humans, insects need a place to live. Insects love to live in rotting trees and fallen wood. It is like living in a house full of food. If you go for a walk up-Callander Craggs, you may notice that when the forestry commission fell some trees, they leave the deadwood still standing. It's important that they do that, for several reasons (birds of prey, woodpeckers, red squirrels and insects). You can also see this in the Coillhallan Woods.

You can help protect insect populations by staying on paths when going for walks and avoid lifting rocks or fallen branches. After all, you wouldn't disturb a 6ft grizzly bear in its home, would you?

Aidan Cronin

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On Pine Martens....

She usually arrives about dusk, her bright little eyes shining in expectancy, cute little pinkish ears protruding from that glorious reddish-brown hair that just invites one to stroke it. Not that I would dare.

Long in the body, lissome and obviously very athletic, she cavorts about the garden as if she owns it.

Who is she? Where does she live?

My wife and I watch in amazement as she forages here and there. First on the red squirrel nut feeder, perhaps hoping to catch one unawares, although they have the advantage of being able to go along branches that are so thin they would not bear her weight. With claws semi-retractable like a cat, she can climb up tree trunks very quickly as many a grey squirrel must have found to its cost.

Then it is off to the various bird feeding points to look for scraps. We have made her female, although in these crazy days of gender fluidity or uncertainty that probably is not PC. Has she got young to feed? Where are they hidden?

We'll never know. Just enough time to get the camera out. Has it got the correct lens on? SNAP and she has gone, my lady of the twilight. Please come back soon. I might get the focus spot on next time.



photo Mike Hawkins

Homo Vulgaris (His excellent photo is on our front cover)

Scotland is a beautiful country - no doubt about that. But take off those rose-tinted spectacles and look again with a bit more depth of thought and you will soon understand why Scotland has been described as a 'green desert'. Scotland's ecology has been vastly impoverished through several thousand years of human activity to the extent that it has amongst the lowest percentage of natural tree cover of any country in Europe. Along with the loss of the Caledonian Forest, Scotland's wildlife has dwindled accordingly. This includes the pine marten. Pine marten losses were accelerated in more recent times through persecution and eradication by land users.

Fortunately, populations of pine marten have survived and, with legal protection and conservation measures, numbers are now increasing. The pine marten's range is spreading and their future is starting to look a little brighter. Most people seem to like pine martens, myself included, and we are lucky to have them here in the Trossachs. In fact, just a few days ago I was actually standing in the dark beneath a tree near the Bracklinn Falls talking to a pine marten to hold its attention as its eyes reflected back at me from my head torch. It was just a few feet above me and you could almost read its thoughts....'who's that idiot down there talking away to

himself?' I was happy anyway!

Apparently not everyone is happy with pine martens though. In December's Ben Ledi View there was a strange insert which seemed to be soliciting a more vindictive view against these fascinating indigenous creatures. Ok, everyone has a point of view and, to be fair the author was a little upset because his or her local pine marten had viewed their barn nesting swallow chicks as an easy meal. But it was surprising to me so I decided to pen a reply - but before doing so, I posted an image of the BLV article on a social media site for re-wilding that I belong to and asked for the thoughts of others. This prompted a large response and extensive discussion ensued about the relationship between pine martens and people, which is still continuing as I write this one week later. I won't go into all the points and arguments made but the comments were overwhelmingly in favour of the pine marten. So my response to the pine marten insert in the previous edition of the BLV, fully in the spirit in which the original was written, is the box at the end of this article.

As the pine marten population recovers, conflicts will inevitably arise between their activities and those of humans, as seems to be the case with predatory animals large and small. For

those who wish them harm, it must be understood that pine martens are a Protected Species under Schedule 5 of the Wildlife & Countryside act 1981. It is a criminal offence to :- kill, injure or capture a pine marten, damage, destroy or obstruct access to a den, possess, control, sell or transport any living or dead pine marten. You have been warned!

For those more benevolently interested in pine martens, try these links :

<https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/trees-woods-and-wildlife/animals/mammals/pine-marten/>

<https://scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk/species/pine-marten/>

<https://www.nature.scot/plants-animals-and-fungi/mammals/land-mammals/pine-marten>

P - Patient predator
I - Integral to our landscape
N - Now endangered
E - Ecosystem enhancer
M - Magnificent mustelid
A - Acrobatic animal
R - Rare beauty
T - Terrifically territorial
E - Energetic escapologist
N - Nocturnal hunter
S - Saviour of the red squirrel

Nick Parish

The Sky Above Us

One of the best bits about winter is the increased opportunity to get outside and enjoy the night sky. Over the winter months a group of local volunteers has been busy helping with the Dark Skies project as part of Callander's Landscape. Armed with a light meter and a head torch,

the volunteers have been helping to audit the night sky, searching out the darkest and also most accessible places for stargazing in and around Callander.

Callander is a great place for viewing the stars and you don't have to walk too far to find good dark skies. From the town it is easy to spot some common constellations such as Orion's Belt and the Plough, and you may even see the Milky Way. You just need the sky to be moon free and for it to be a nice dry clear night, which given our weather systems can be quite hard to coordinate!



Milky Way at Loch Venacher
by Douglas Cooper

In March, there will be some great opportunities for everyone to learn more about the sky above us. Thanks to some funding from the Institute of Physics Scotland, we are planning a weekend of astronomical discovery. On 14-15th March, there will be a variety of activities taking place, for all ages and abilities and they are all free.

The pop up planetarium will return, there will be evening stargazing, hands on workshops and guest talks. Please check Callander's Landscape website or follow us on Facebook, where the full schedule will be published along with the booking information. Look forward to seeing you there!

If you are interested in finding out more about the Dark Skies project or becoming a volunteer then contact Julie, julie.wilson@lochlomond-trosachs.org or call 01389 727 723.



2020 Gardening Season

It's now time to start thinking about what you want to do in the garden this year! It all gets very exciting when you think about the possibilities of what you could grow. I will probably scroll through seed websites, finding the best deals and best varieties. But after three hours I think about sowing, germinating, potting on, growing, fertilising, pruning, mulching, harvesting and then cooking. Boredom hits and I suddenly feel don't want to grow anything. So, I'll close my laptop and fall asleep, waking up in the morning with the same feeling. It's like a gardener's writer's block. I'm sure many gardeners will have felt like this before. But why should we complicate things. Many gardeners take up gardening to fill time and enjoy time outside not to feel a constant strain.

When planning a garden, initially we grow what we like to eat! So why grow a pumpkin if you only have one bowl of pumpkin soup a year, when you could use that space to grow something more useful?

So, I took a moment to think what I actually eat often. Well, the most used cooking ingredients are onions and garlic. So why not just grow two vegetables that I use all the time! So this year I will be focusing my efforts on growing onions then planting garlic for 2021 in autumn. It excites me more than fifteen different crops.

So, if you are a first-time gardener, grab a pot, fill it with compost and chuck in a vegetable seed that you eat a lot and watch it grow! Look out for garden tips through out this year in the BLV! Happy Gardening!

Aidan Cronin

STEM Transport Project

By now everyone has heard the term STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths). Four years ago McLaren teachers started a STEM Project programme, where pupils design and execute their own project and present it at a STEM festival. This year, the focus is STEM in the National Park and around 40 pupils have signed up. With a growing awareness of environmental issues such as Climate Change and Plastic Pollution many pupils have come up with cunning ideas to solve the mess. My project is on 'Transport For The Future In The National Park'. Across the world car companies are quickly creating their own electric cars. You may even be considering buying one. I want to see how we will be getting around and how our supplies will be, in the future. I will investigate how current transport is used and its effect on the environment, then how transport will look in the future.

I'm going to need as much help as I can get! I would be very grateful if you could fill in one of my surveys, as every one will help shape my project's outcome. If you are interested in my project or are able to help, please get in touch, 04pcroninaidan@glow.sch.uk. This project will hopefully shape awareness raising for better transportation in the national park.

Aidan Cronin



Toad Patrollers needed!

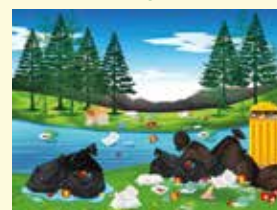
Lots of volunteers are needed to help patrol the Leny Road Toad Crossing.

starting mid-February

contact Steve McGowan

steven.mcgowan@sky.com

Callander Spring Cleaning Community Litter Pick



**10-12pm Saturday 4th April
Meet in Ancaster Square**

contact Lesley Hawkins

mlhawkins@tiscali.co.uk



Fireworks!

We love fireworks. And sky lanterns. But a German zoo recently went on fire. A tragic loss of life for some 30 rare breeds of animals who died unnecessarily and painfully. Witnesses said they saw sky lanterns flying through the sky shortly after midnight in the area. Sure enough, a lantern with New Year wishes written on it was found in the debris after the fire. Never mind that sky lanterns are illegal in Germany. They aren't in Scotland. Yet. But fireworks are such fun. And so beautiful. Aren't animals also beautiful? They say horses and dogs and cats suffer PTSD after Guy Fawkes Night and New Year. And we are a nation of animal lovers! Yet we continue to love our fireworks.

Confused or what? Think about it!!!!

Disgruntled Callander

Mobility Scooters

It all started with a walk along Main Street. Suddenly behind there was hooting and shouting. When I turned around there was a mobility scooter hurtling towards me. Of course I leaped to the side and the lady shot past with a smile, saying she had an appointment. Down the street she went, at jogging plus speed. The lady with a stick and the mother with her toddler all went to the wall. The machine stopped, abandoned in the middle of the Co-op doorway. Obviously a 'sprout' emergency appointment! The number of scooters is increasing rapidly. Is this safe for pedestrians? Are there accidents? Should all scooters be on pavements?

No, it is not safe for pedestrians; any research shows cases where people have been knocked over by drivers. One got the machine stuck on top of the victim, (class 2 vehicles that go at 4mph have no horn, so you may not hear them coming). Is it safe for the

Blame -----Don't you find when an adult uses the word they are far from perfect themselves? Most adults who make a mistake instantly 'Throw their hands up!' so either the matter is ended or a solution can be found. It can be used to cement a team. Instead once the B word has been used time is wasted, at least explaining the reasons the other person is at fault, or explaining why the blamer is not at fault.

I think most of us know the name of probably the best blamer in the world! Don't you admire his maturity and thoughtfulness?

All groups who have banned the B word, if not in name but action, should feel proud. When problems happen you don't waste time, you just sort things out and get on with life.

Personally I always blame the weather. It never argues but just gets on and does what it wants.



Marion McKay

drivers? Some have been killed, colliding with things, hit by cars as drivers can't see them when they are reversing.

Not all scooters should be on pavements. 4 mph or less is what is allowed. Class 2 scooters go at 4mph and must be there. Class 3 are road vehicles, some able to go up to 15mph (UK speed limit 8mph). What a shock for other drivers to find these machines on dual carriageways, even if they have a flashing beacon.

The perfect machine for criminals. Forget to register with the DVLA and you have the perfect urban getaway vehicle. Get drunk as a skunk and you cannot be prosecuted for drink driving! No road tax or insurance needed. If you are not disabled you can always be taking it for maintenance.

Now for the reader's complaint

about fast cycling along the Main Street pavement. This is illegal and could provide a nice income stream for the police; £30 on the spot fine! Why no fining? The number of accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists on pavements is increasing! Business for lawyers is increasing! Perhaps everyone is under 12 so not prosecuted?

And scooters! Well that is total confusion. e-scooters can go up to 30mph and have been regarded as motor vehicles, but there have been government announcements that they should not be used on either pavements or roads. Just as well that they don't seem to have hit Main Street yet.

Should I finish with a phalanx of buggies to complete the picture?

Grumpy

Fun Facts - Pluto - 90 years of dis- covery



It will soon be 90 years since Pluto was discovered. It is a world that has fascinated people ever since.

In the early 1900s, American astronomer Percival Lowell was looking for a ninth planet, after his research had suggested some deviations in the orbits of Uranus and Neptune. A photo taken in 1909 is now known to show Pluto, It wasn't picked up at the time, and Lowell didn't get the breakthrough he wanted. Then, in early 1930 Clyde Tombaugh, a young astronomer at the Lowell Observatory in Flagstaff, Arizona, took up the search. He took two photographs of the same section of sky six days apart in late January, and was then able to look for anything that had moved. On 18th February, through this process, he found Pluto. A short time later Venetia Burney, an Oxford schoolgirl, came up with the name for this discovery, Pluto; a Roman god of the underworld.

Since its discovery, Pluto has been found to be a tiny world. At around 2,370km across, its diameter is roughly only half that of the states in the USA that touch. Its surface is methane, nitrogen ice and rock. Its distance from the Sun ranges from 30.2 to 48.5 times Earth's distance from it. In 1978, its largest moon, Charon, was discovered. As Pluto and Charon always have the same side facing the other, they effectively form a double system; this particular feature between two celestial bodies is called tidal locking. Further moons have been discovered since the turn of the millennium - Nix, Cerberus, Styx and Hydra.

Other similarly-sized objects beyond Pluto have been discovered, in what we now know as the Kuiper belt. This led to a reassessment of Pluto's planetary status, it was reclassified as a dwarf planet in 2006. Tombaugh conceded in an interview with Patrick Moore in 1980 that Pluto may not have been the planet that Lowell was looking for. In 2006, the New Horizons probe was launched to explore Pluto.

With some of Tombaugh's ashes on board, it made its closest approach in 2015, discovering canyons to rival the Grand Canyon, and mountains to rival the Alps - Pluto had given up fascinating secrets. Not expected of what had seemed an unremarkable little world.

Despite its reclassification, Pluto certainly hasn't ceased to fascinate.. Its 248-year orbit, which occasionally takes it closer to the Sun than to Neptune, will mean that it will take until 2178 to complete one full orbit around the Sun since it was discovered. Contrary to its dark and cold position, the future of discovery around Pluto until then at least looks very bright

Mario Crevecoeur

Main Street Wandering



This month we continue our Callander meander on the North side of Main Street,

Starting at the Ancaster Arms Hotel on the corner of Cross Street.



This fine red sandstone building, now divided into offices and shops, housed a stylish hotel. Much loved by local people for wedding receptions, dances and other functions in the restaurant /ballroom. It also hosted some top line folk acts during the 70s folk revival.

The hotel in those days was owned by Scottish & Newcastle Breweries, through their subsidiary Thistle Hotels and patronised by well-heeled older English guests, delivered to Callander by Wallace Arnold coaches.

There were 2 bars, a lounge for pre-dinner drinks for residents and a public bar to the right of the entrance,

with no direct access to the hotel. This bar, if not quite spit & sawdust, was certainly spartan, with lino floors, florescent lighting, tiny bar tables and a few saloon style chairs. There was a dartboard, dominoes and importantly no ladies toilet.

The cherry on the cake, for us, was the colour TV mounted high up in a darkened side room. This where a cult following met on a Monday to watch a tongue in cheek cowboy series 'Alias Smith & Jones'; I will not try to name check all the guys, you know who you are.

Star of the show was barman Jimmy Munro, he also drove Graham Collier's tipper around building sites. Jimmy was an old school barman, and stood for no nonsense. Sadly, Jimmy Munro had to leave due to decimalisation. You cannot teach an old dog new tricks. Jimmy confused 50p coins for half crowns, £1 tendered would get you a drink and £1.50 in change. There was no point in trying to explain as Jimmy would get embarrassed and agitated. Shortly after this, the public bar closed, to be replaced by the popular,

'Poacher's Bar'. This, with time, flared and waned. Scots hotels found it hard to compete with foreign holidays. Next door was Thos. Allan plumbers' showroom, office and store, a very

narrow unit but there was space to display a bathroom suite. Avocado, Damson and Peach were all in vogue. How times have changed!

I am a little confused by the chronology, but recall there being in this area, a bigger unit showcasing the latest gas cookers with eye level grills. I digress a little. Westwood on Ancaster road opposite Ellangowan which had been the gasworks manager's house, was opened as a showhouse for gas central heating, and furnished with the latest gas appliances. Anyone able to help with memories?

More to follow



Trossachs Search + Rescue



Formed 21 years ago, we have 43 members – all volunteers but with a strong base in the professional emergency services and NHS.

Covering the core area of Strathblane to Strathyre and across to Dunblane brings its challenges in terms of ensuring adequate membership, vehicles and equipment and so, at the end of November we took on the lease of a unit at Geisher Road Workspace Units in Callander as our new main rescue post, bolstering our use of accommodation at Aberfoyle and Dunblane Fire Stations and Balfron Ambulance Station. The new base is ideally located being across the road from the medical centre and fire station – which also houses the ambulance service, as we work with staff from each of these during the course of our work.

2019 proved to be our busiest year so



far with 206 callouts. Our Heartstart Instructors delivered 126 sessions teaching emergency life support skills including CPR to 2,310 people and we now manage a network of over 160 public access defibrillators.

So, what do we do locally and nationally?

Community CPR Classes



including for Walk in the Park walking group leaders. In 2019 we delivered 126 classes, training 2,310 people in lifesaving skills. If you wish to attend a course please send an email to heartstart@trossachs-sar.com and our Heartstart Co-ordinator Dr Jan Chesham, from Callander, will respond.

Search Dogs

Our search dogs have proven to be a reliable resource used by the police and HM Coastguard in missing person searches and by the fire + rescue service at collapsed buildings. Our dogs have been called to operate as far away as the Outer Hebrides, Hull and Portlethen whilst also proving themselves at the Stockline factory and Clutha pub tragedies in Glasgow. Taz retired as our senior search dog at the end of 2019 but during his career, he and handler Gayle attended many searches including the Clutha tragedy. He won the Extraordinary Life of a Working Dog category at Crufts in 2018 – out of a field of police, military, fire and other search dogs.

Jess has taken over as our senior dog. She and handler Bob live at Gartmore and have attended many searches, again including The Clutha. (Picture Jess and Bob)

We'll cover more about our amazing six dogs and their handlers in another edition.

Community First Responders

Twenty-one of our members perform this role in partnership with the Scottish Ambulance Service and do rostered duty to respond to life threatening medical emergencies in our core area. These emergencies can include someone in cardiac arrest, unconsciousness, chest pains, breathing difficulties and strokes or other incidents including falls and assisting with patient transport services during snow and flood. These volunteers must be PVG cleared, attend a four-day course followed up by other skills training and monthly sessions.

Recently, Iain Hartley and Andrew Hannah from Callander qualified as CFRs bolstering our numbers in Callander, Thornhill, Strathyre and Aberfoyle. We also have several new responders in Dunblane.

Public Access Defibrillators

We have for the past seven years placed and managed public access defibrillators so that these are available for use prior to the arrival of first responders or an ambulance. With over 160 units now looked after by us, we have seen over 20 people resuscitated by members of the public. Within Callander there are several units, thanks to fundraising efforts by various organisations including the Royal British Legion, The Rotary Club of Callander and West Perthshire, Callander Golf Club and the Craig Hodgkinson Trust.

Our members check and clean these defibrillators monthly. They are registered with the Scottish Ambulance Service and on our own defib locator app at <https://www.trossachsdefibrillator.co.uk>



Technology Enabled Care Service

In partnership with Clackmannanshire and Stirling Health and Social Care Partnership we provide assistance every single evening and overnight to their MECS staff by way of having at least 2 personnel on duty to respond to people who have had falls at home or for some other reason have activated their MECS alarm. Our responding personnel have been trained and PVG cleared by Stirling Council, and have additional first-aid skills as they're also all community first responders.

Between the launch of this service in September and the end of 2019 our personnel had responded to 114 callouts for home fallers/ emergencies. Sometimes these fallers sustain serious injuries and so the ability for us to respond quickly and provide first-aid prior to the arrival of an ambulance is of real benefit to the patient.

One of the vital pieces of equipment used to raise people who have fallen is a Mangar ELK inflatable cushion, Airflo pump and associated equipment. All in, these pieces of equipment, accessories and holdalls cost around

£1,500 each.

Thanks to The Trossachs Community Choirs who performed at two winter concerts in Gartmore and Drymen Parish Churches and raised £1,500 that has



enabled us to purchase our third Mangar ELK. Our first was provided by Clacks and Stirling HSC Partnership, our second was purchased by a Community Grant from Stirling Council.

This has allowed us to have a Mountain Equipment 100L wheeled holdall containing a Mangar ELK and accessories in each of our three team vehicles.

Flood Response + Water Rescue

Our team is a registered provider of these services in support of the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and we also work closely with the Risk and Resilience Dept in Stirling Council.

With a boat, water safety clothing and equipment, we can be deployed to support any of the emergency services at local flooding, for example, or other incident beside water. Recent deployments have included flooding in the main street of Aberfoyle where we made flood sacs available to shops, businesses and homes. We have conducted the same duties in Callander in partnership with the Callander Resilience Group (sadly now folded).

We also have membership of Water Safety Scotland, Stirling and Clackmannanshire Flood Group, The Bracklinn Falls Working Group and the City of Glasgow Water Safety Group – all involved in water safety initiatives.

Funding

We rely on funding from within our local communities and grant applications, with much appreciated support from Arnold Clark (vehicle provision), Sneyd Wonderfeeds (dog food) and Keela Outdoors (clothing) and Safequip (water rescue clothing).

Along with other independent organisations, we are making strong representation to the Scottish Government for identical funding to that given, quite rightly, to our colleagues in mountain rescue teams. For example, they receive money to cover vehicle running costs, callout fee, costs per man hour, the provision of their communication equipment and their insurance costs. We do not get any such funding.

What would that mean? Over the past 5 yrs (2014-9) for example, Lomond MRT received £63,931; Killin MRT received £64,958 and Ochils MRT received £58,254 and above that the two mountain rescue SAR dog associations received £55,012.

It's right and commendable they receive such grants but we don't do anything less worthy and it is wholly

wrong that we can be involved in the same incidents, yet we receive no funding.

2020 has proved to be busy for us, averaging two callouts per day so far, and we already have a diary full of events and Heartstart classes. We look forward to building upon our new rescue post in Callander to support the local community

*Stuart Ballantyne
(Secretary + Call-Out Organiser)*

Fighting Illness

At this time of year none of us needs reminding that illness is rife. Many of us are keen to blame this directly on the cold weather, as more of our energy is directed to keeping warm than fighting infection. However, spending more time indoors in an enclosed environment with people and their captive bacteria is more likely the main cause and consideration of hygiene becomes even more important as our correspondents highlight in the following "colourful" articles.

Not getting sick

Aged 5, though I often watched TV in a shop window in Bishopton on my way back from school. The one programme I remember seeing was the man in the white coat with the bacteria.

Years later, I did a bit of Bacteriology. After training, we grew, examined, identified and generally got to know lots of different types of organisms, friendly and extremely dangerous. My holiday job was as a ward cleaner in the local hospital, so I knew why really hot water with a strong disinfectant was important for the daily clean of everything in the ward. It was spartan, nothing that was not medical could be seen. Everything was in a locker.

Eventually, I was teaching young people who were going into careers in the health, beauty, or catering sectors, about hygiene and preventing people becoming ill. They collected apparently nothing from places they thought bacteria might lurk, including themselves, and smeared agar-filled



Petri dishes. The use of biohazard tape was excessive, they thought, there was nothing there. 2 days later the nothing had turned into lots of colonies of millions of bacteria! They also carried out experiments using 'friendly' bacteria to test disinfectants and antibiotics: these didn't always kill as they should! Everything used was sterilised before disposal. Nobody could accuse us of spreading disease.

Everyone knows travelling can make you ill: waiting on stairs in an airport a man standing above can sneeze violently and his droplets rain down from above. The cold is always spectacular.

Canada should have been safe! There were worrying things on the 4 day canoeing trip down the Athabasca River. Some of the group came from less developed countries, hygiene was a problem during the wild camping, but frantic hand washing and only drinking boiled water was the best that could be done by a not very brave traveller. After a nightmare flight home, it was an emergency trip to the doctor's just before he closed for the weekend. He guessed Giardia, the pills would cure it in 24 hours. No, the bleeding continued, then there were sore kidneys & liver; obviously highly infectious, not something to share. A long and frightening weekend passed. On Monday lunchtime a smiling doctor appeared on the doorstep to thank me! It was E.coli 0157. He had never had a case before. He did not come in! For that week, kind friends left bread and milk on the doorstep. The first visitors to enter were the



Environmental Health Officers. This is a notifiable disease, they had come to help Canada trace the source. Every event can teach if you want to learn! Ingesting 20 bacteria will cause this illness! It can take up to 10 days for the illness to develop! Some people carry 0157 without symptoms; !

But E.coli, was one of the friendly

bacteria. We all have it living in our intestines. It is easy to grow in a laboratory; it can even grow without air. It is not one that has spores to help it survive heat so it is easy to destroy. BUT E.coli 157 is different. It comes from cattle. It is a strain that has managed to get DNA into itself from other types of bacteria so it is now much more dangerous as it releases toxins in the body.

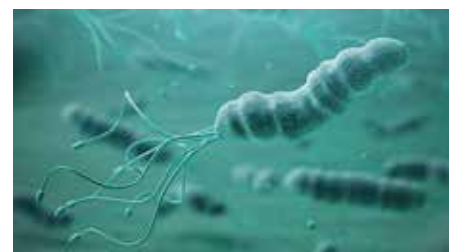
There have been outbreaks of illness linked with other new dangerous strains of bacteria. It is thought that even though these may be diagnosed in countries with advanced medical techniques and high standards of hygiene, they probably develop in places where hygiene is poor, many bacteria mingle and share genes.

Under-cooked food and water were always blamed for these illnesses but, research last year says 'People not washing their hands after going to the toilet, rather than undercooked meat, is behind the spread of a key strain of E. coli'.



HYGIENE is a word we all know but don't always put into practice. Growing up on a dairy and pig farm, we were reminded daily of the importance of washing our hands - not that we were that good all of the time !!!! When the vets came we were often sent to get hot soapy water for them to scrub up, so by the time I started my nursing career, hand washing and hygiene were firmly part of my life.

Times have changed. We all have the opportunity to travel to many places around the world by plane, train, bus or car. How many times have we

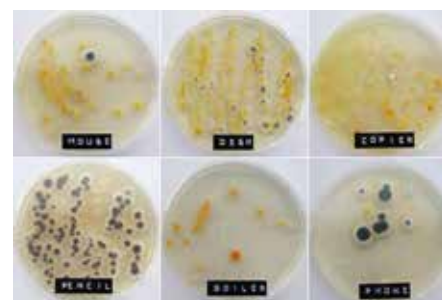


arrived home with various coughs and sneezes or worse, often due to not washing our hands properly or covering our faces when sneezing or coughing? REMEMBER 'coughs and sneezes spread diseases', especially in confined spaces.

Helicobacter Pylori (above) is a bacteria that can live in the body for quite some time. Approximately 40% of people in the U.K have the bacteria in their stomachs but it doesn't always present problems. There are a few ways that the bacteria can be passed on; e.g. contaminated water and body fluids. With so many people enjoying sport today, places like gyms and pools are just two areas where we have to make sure that not only do we WASH our hands properly but also any equipment we use.

We are fortunate that we have clean water available at all times. Let's make 2020 a year to eradicate as many infections as possible and remember to WASH OUR HANDS.

Maureen Jones



Safe & clean

A workplace is where diseases caused by bacteria and viruses can be spread. Full marks to our 'hot desking' bank where, in quiet periods, the duty manager can be spied cleaning the equipment on the desks the staff share.

Mary Buckland

What's on in February and March

REGULAR MEETINGS

Mondays:

- Active Life class 9.30am McLaren Leisure
- Weekly drop in WORK I.T. 10.00-11.00am Callander Library
- Yoga 9.15-10.30 McLaren Leisure
- Chair Yoga 11.15am -12.15pm McLaren Leisure
- Gentle Yoga 3.00-4.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Scrabble 2.00pm Dreadnought Hotel (1st and 3rd Monday)
- Climbing Club (children) 4.00pm and 5.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Soccer School (5-7 yrs) 5.00pm, (8-11 yrs) 6 pm McLaren Leisure
- Highland Dancing 4.00pm Kirk Hall (except 17th February)
- Golf Coaching Sessions for Juniors 6.00-7.30pm Golf Course
- Cubs 6.15 pm Primary School
- HIT Circuits 7.00-7.45pm McLaren Leisure
- Cycle Fit 7.00pm and 8.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Callander Bowling Club Open Night 7.00pm (contact Donald on 07513488453)
- Guides 7.00 --8.30pm St Andrew's Church Hall
- Zumba fitness class 7.00pm Kirk Hall
- Callander Pipe Band practice/teaching 7.00pm Masonic Hall
- Yoga 7.00-8.30pm McLaren Leisure
- CAOS rehearsals 7.30pm McLaren High School

Tuesdays:

- Music Bugs (pre-school) 10.00 and 11.00am McLaren Leisure
- Weekly drop-in I.T. and ME 2.00-4.00pm Callander Library
- Craigard Club 10.30am to 1.00pm Kirk Hall
- Walk in the Park 10.20 am (see schedule by date below)
- Callander Cycle Meander meet 10.00am Ancaster Square (contact 01877 339074)
- Strength and Balance exercise sessions 2.00pm Fire Station
- Callander and W. Perthshire Rotary Club meet 6.00pm for 6.30pm
- The Old Rectory, Leny Road. Visitors always welcome
- Army Cadet Force training 7.00pm Kirk Hall

- Hatha Yoga 7.30-9.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Badminton Club 7.30pm McLaren Leisure
- Taekwondo 7.00-9.00pm McLaren Leisure

Wednesdays:

- Trossachs Tiny Tots 9.30-11.30am McLaren Leisure
- Citizens Advice Bureau 10.00am-4.00pm Callander Library
- Teapot Café 10.30am Kirk Hall Library
- ESOL classes (beginners) 3.00pm Burgh Chambers
- Bridge Club 6.50pm Old Bank
- Song Squad 7.15-9.15pm Fire Station
- Body FIT BOOTCAMP 7.00-8.00pm McLaren Leisure

Thursdays:

- Aqua Therapy 9.00am McLaren Leisure
- Yoga 11.15-12.45 McLaren Leisure
- Chair Yoga 2.00-3.00pm Trust Housing, N. Church Street
- Callander Brownies after school at CYP ,Callander Hostel
- Golf Coaching Sessions for Juniors 6.00-7.30pm Golf Club
- Scottish Country Dancing 7.00pm Masonic Hall
- Texas Hold 'Em Poker 7.30pm Lade Inn
- Kwik Cricket and Hardball 5.30-7.00pm McLaren Rugby pitch
- Callander Brass practice Training band 6.30pm, main band 7.30pm Primary School
- Kettlebells 7.00 -8.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Hatha Yoga (adults) 7.45-9.15 pm McLaren Leisure
-

Fridays:

- Craigard Club 10.30am to 1.00pm Kirk Hall
- Spike Island: Pool Inflatable Fun 7.30-8.30pm (8 yrs+), 8.30-9.30pm (High School up to 15yrs) McLaren Leisure

Saturdays :

- Kiddy Kicks (2-5yrs) 9.30-10.30am McLaren Leisure
- Taekwondo (children) 12noon-2.00pm McLaren Leisure
- Trossachs Tigers Training 9.15-

10.00am McLaren Leisure

Sundays :

- Rugbytots 9.00am-12 noon McLaren Leisure
- Sundays @ Six Stirling Baptists in Callander 6.00pm St Andrew's Church Hall

February

Saturday 1st

- Start of fishing season, parade starts 9.15am, opened by Para-snowboarder Andrew MacLeod

Friday 7th

Ben Ledi View published

Saturday 8th

- CAOS coffee morning 10.30am Kirk Hall

Sunday 9th

- Film Society 'If Beale Street could Talk' 7.30pm Callander Hostel

Monday 10th

- Community Council meets 7.30pm Callander Hostel

Tuesday 11th

- Walk in the Park NCN7 to Keltie Bridge meet 10.20 Medical Centre
- SWT talk 'The Celtic Rainforest' speaker from Plantlife tbc 7.30pm Kirk Hall

Thursday 13th

- Thursday Club meets 2.00 -4.30 pm Kirk Hall Library

Monday 17th

- Kids' Camp McLaren Leisure (until 21st February) contact rachel@mclarenleisure.co.uk

Tuesday 18th

- Walk in the Park NCN7 at Strathyre meet 10.20 Ancaster Square (car share)
- Arthritis Club Ann Artis talk 'Woolly Days' 7.30pm Kirk Hall

Wednesday 19th

- Heritage Society talk Ian McNeish 'The McNabs of Callander and the Beheading Stone' 7.00pm for 7.30pm Masonic Hall

Thursday 20th

- Guild meets 2.00-4.00pm Kirk Hall

Saturday 22nd

- Conservation Volunteer Day 10.00am-3.00pm Craggs Woods to book julie.wilson@lochlomond-trossachs.org

Sunday 23rd

- Callander Target Sports Club Clay Pigeon Shoot 10.00am contact Bob

What's on in February and March (contd.)

Farquhar 07721 744229

- Film Society 'Vice' 7.30pm Callander Hostel

Tuesday 25th

- Walk in the Park Bridgend and Meadows meet 10.20am Ancaster Square

Thursday 27th

- Thursday Club meets 2.00-4.00pm Kirk Hall Library

Saturday 29th

- Scottish Opera Highlights show 7.30pm McLaren High School (tickets from Deli Ecosse)

March

Tuesday 3rd

- Walk in the Park NCN7 towards Leny Falls meet 10.20 Ancaster Square (car share)
- Callander 2020 & beyond Community information evening 6.00-9.00pm Callander Hostel

Thursday 5th

- Guild meets 2.00-4.00pm Kirk Hall

Friday 6th

Ben Ledi View copy deadline

Saturday 7th

- Callander Thistle Quiz Night, Waverley Hotel

Sunday 8th

- Film Society 'Capernaum' 7.30pm Callander Hostel

Monday 9th

- Community Council meets 7.30pm Callander Hostel

Tuesday 10th

- Walk in the Park Golf Club walk meet 10.20am Ancaster Square
- SWT talk 'Lampreys & Fresh Water Pearl Mussels' Jo Girvan, Forth Rivers Trust 7.30pm Kirk Hall Library

Wednesday 11th

- Heritage Society talk Dr Catherine Mills 'Pollution and Poisoning: Scottish Leadmining in the 18th and 19th Centuries' 7.00pm for 7.30pm Masonic Hall
- Forest Theatre Company - 'Into the Woods', Gartmore Village Hall 7.30pm

Thursday 12th

- Thursday Club meets 2.00-4.00pm Kirk Hall Library
- Forest Theatre Company - 'into the Woods', Gartmore Village Hall 7.30pm

Friday 13th

- Forest Theatre Company - 'into the Woods', Gartmore Village Hall 7.30pm

Saturday 14th

- Forest Theatre Company - 'into the Woods', Gartmore Village Hall 7.30pm

Sunday 15th

- Callander 10K, McLaren Leisure Centre starts 12noon

Tuesday 17th

- Walk in the Park Doune ponds meet 10.20am Ancaster Square (car share)
- Arthritis Club Sue Mitchell talk 'Emmett: An Alternative Therapy' 7.30pm Kirk Hall

Wednesday 18th

- CAOS *The Sound of Music* 7.30pm McLaren High

Thursday 19th

- Guild meets 2.00-4.00pm Kirk Hall
- CAOS *The Sound of Music* 7.30pm McLaren High

Friday 20th

- CAOS *The Sound of Music* 7.30pm McLaren High

Saturday 21st

- CAOS *The Sound of Music* matinee 2.30pm McLaren High

Sunday 22nd

- Film Society 'The Favourite' 7.30pm Callander Hostel

Tuesday 24th

- Walk in the Park NCN7 towards Kilmahog meet 10.20 am Ancaster Square

Thursday 26th

- Thursday Club meets 2.00-4.00pm Kirk Hall Library

Sunday 29th

- Callander Target Sports Club Clay Pigeon Shoot 10.00am contact Bob Farquhar 07721 744229

Tuesday 31st

- Walk in the Park, Tulipan and the Meadows, meet 10.20am Ancaster Square

April

Friday 3rd

Ben Ledi View published

Saturday 4th

- Visitor Information Centre re-opens
- Community Litter Pick 10am-12pm meet Ancaster Square

Citizen of the Year

Ronnie Forbes



Voted Citizen of the Year, Ronnie will be a popular choice. Well known in Callander, having for many years run the Fiery Cross fish & chip shop. Since giving this up Ronnie has probably been even busier in his many community activities, such as in the Scottish Tourist Information Office until its closure.

He is also Right Worshipful Master of the Callander Masonic Lodge and he runs the Callander Whisky Tasting Society.

Many of you will have seen him recently in his bright yellow suit with his brush and shovel cleaning up Callander. And, if you did see him mowing Ancaster Square with his lawn mower, you certainly would not forget that! He claims it is the best way to collect the leaves from the Square. Many congratulations Ronnie!

A collage of images showing various leisure activities: a person climbing a wall, a person swimming, a person playing on a soft play structure, and a person sitting on a bench. The McLaren Leisure logo is prominently displayed in the center, with the text 'McLaren Leisure' and 'Mollands Road, Callander, FK17 8JP'. Below the logo, a list of activities is provided: Swimming pool, Fitness classes, Climbing wall, Soft play, 3G Pitch, Cafe, Holiday Activities, Birthday parties, Kids' Activities, Fitness Suite, and Sport hall. Social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are also shown.

www.mclarenleisure.co.uk 01877 330 000

How to identify a puppy dealer

I have had the joy of seeing young puppies at the Riverside Veterinary Clinic recently, which, whilst being a lovely part of the job two cases have reminded me that not all puppies get a good start in life.

Sadly, across Europe there are puppy farms breeding dogs at an alarming rate. Many of these puppies are being bred in appalling conditions with very little, if any, concern for the welfare of the animals involved. They are shipped across to the UK to be sold using rented homes as a front for puppy dealing rings, who will sell you a sick and traumatised puppy for a quick profit. Buying a puppy from one of these places could mean that you get a puppy with serious and long-term health and behaviour issues that can be expensive and difficult to treat and distressing for you and your new puppy.

Although it's tempting to 'rescue' the puppy, you are actually fuelling the trade and creating demand. Here are some pointers to help you spot one of these dealers:

1. Many of these puppies are sold online and dealers may create many adverts providing the same mobile contact number. Try googling the contact number they give to see if it is being used on numerous puppy adverts.

2. Descriptions for puppies may also have been used multiple times. Copy and paste them into Google to again see if they have been used on other adverts.

3. Always visit the puppy in the place where they have been bred and reared. Don't agree to meet in a car park, lay-by or any other unusual place. You want to see the puppy with its mum and siblings and make sure that the "mum" is demonstrating a maternal bond with the pups.



4. If the puppy is advertised as having a passport, the chances are it has been imported.

Be prepared to walk away if:

1. The mum isn't present.
2. You're not invited past the doorway.
3. The seller makes you feel uncomfortable for asking questions or tries to pressure you.
4. The seller asks you which puppy you have come to see. This can indicate that they have different breeds available and the home is just a front.

5. The sex of the dog is different to your previous enquiries.

6. If the puppy has been advertised as being vaccinated, you want a vaccination card which has been signed by a vet with the vet's name and contact details on it. Check the date of birth on the certificate and parasite control the pup has been given and when, ask what food the pup has been weaned onto so you can feed it the same diet. A caring breeder will happily volunteer all this information.

7. The puppy is not microchipped

I will talk about how to get a puppy the right way another time. In the meantime let's make puppy farming history, make sure all puppies get a good start in life and go to a forever home first time round.

Thank you for your time. I hope this was of help or interest.

Marslaidh Smith BVM&S MRCVS.

Riverside Veterinary Clinic Callander



Looking after your best friend!

- Join our Pet Health Plan and budget monthly to reduce your pet care cost.
- Call us to make an appointment for our nurse clinics, or to consult a vet.
- Get your pet food and pet accessories from our in house pet shop.
- Professional grooming and bathing facilities for large and small dogs.

Tel: 01877 381213

enquiries@riversidevetsstirling.co.uk

www.riversidevetsstirling.co.uk

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1 Lagrannoch Industrial Estate
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Callander Thistle FC

2019/2020 Season so far

It has been a mixed season so far for the Jags with some good additional players being added to the already talented squad in the summer. It was, unfortunately, a slow start to the season with the Jags struggling to find form and so we found ourselves near the tail end of the league table. Thankfully, this slow start was put to bed with a run of good results including wins over Weir, Stirling University, Holytown Colts and Dal Riada, which led to finishing the year in the top half of the table.

In terms of club development, 2019 saw Callander Thistle take massive strides by creating a youth team (2010-2012). This has been met with a great response from both parents and the bright young talented players that have joined the club.

Fundraising

Last year saw Callander Thistle host their first annual golf day held at Callander Golf Club. The day was a huge success with many local people and businesses showing great support and helped raise over £1000 to help towards running the club.

Rainbow Valley Charity

In November the Jags decided to do a bit of fundraising to support the incredible work done by the people at the Rainbow Valley Charity. By taking part in Movember and growing some 'interesting' moustaches, the boys managed to raise £1,180.

Quiz Night 7th March 2020

Moving forward into the New Year we would like to invite you all to the Callander Thistle Quiz Night which will be held at the Waverley Hotel. Teams will be made up of a maximum of 6 players and will cost £5 per head. All money raised will go to the further development of the club.

Sponsors & Support

Callander Thistle would like to say a massive thank you to all those who sponsored and supported us throughout 2019. The generosity and support of the local public and businesses has been amazing. We would really like to say a huge thank you to all our sponsors including Waverley Hotel, Crags Hotel, Kings Joiners and Manufacturers, Sea Farms, Lion & Unicorn, R&R Campbells, Blair Craig Plumbing and Heating and David Gillespie Tiling. Finally, everyone at Callander Thistle would just like to thank the community for their continued support and hope everyone has a great New Year.

David Gordon

Badminton

The Badminton Club has now been running for well over 10 years. Open to anyone 16+ whatever their skills level at playing badminton. We have great fun and good games of badminton, and a social night out together at least once a year. The Club meets every Tuesday at 7.30pm in McLaren Leisure Centre and new members are always very welcome.

McLaren Badminton Club held its annual club competitions recently. The winners were :

Mixed Doubles 1st Jean Cowie & Mark Robertson, 2nd Eleanor Hamilton & Stuart Ogg;

Ladies Doubles 1st Jean Cowie & Natalie Underwood, 2nd Rachel Clive & Isla Routledge;

Men's Doubles 1st Rod Johnson & Mark Robertson, 2nd Roger Drapper & Oliver Underwood;

Ladies Singles 1st Natalie Underwood, 2nd Jean Cowie;

Men's Singles 1st Mark Robertson, 2nd Roy Pearson.

Photograph shows the winners with their trophies.

Jean Cowie



Callander Target Sports Club

Stephen O'Keefe Trophy



Following the sad and untimely death of club member Stephen O'Keefe, his family wished him to be remembered by the club in the format of trophy competed for annually. The competition was to be held over three disciplines. Mr O'Keefe senior arranged for a trophy to be made that depicted these disciplines. At our Christmas shoot in December which was attended by Mr O'Keefe and his son Gary (also a club member) the three disciplines were keenly contested. Once the smoke cleared in the ranges, Bob Farquhar, the club Secretary emerged as the winner.

The picture shows Mr O'Keefe with the trophy before Gary presented it to Bob.

In his speech, Jimmie Innes, club Chairman expressed the club's sadness at the passing of Stephen who was a keen shooter. However he was pleased that we now had an annual trophy in his memory. He also confirmed that the club would spend the donation that Stephen left in his will on a specific item.



Wilful Fire-raising at Christmas

At teatime on Christmas day, a wheelie bin was placed against the front door of the club and set on fire. Thankfully, an alert neighbour in Menteith Crescent heard our fire alarm and saw the flames engulfing the door; she immediately called the fire brigade, who promptly turned out and professionally dealt with the fire. Fortunately, the club is well built and the fire door did its job, leaving the club with external superficial damage only. The full incident was captured on recently installed CCTV, which was passed to the police, who subsequently arrested and charged a local man with wilful fire-raising. The club would like to pass on their grateful thanks to our neighbour and our local fire crew for their prompt action in tackling the fire – also apologies to all for disturbing your Christmas dinner.

Club Competitions:

Perthshire Winter 25 Yard Benchrest (after 4 rounds).

Div 2 Colin Tawse is 1st, closely followed by Kevin Woolley in 2nd.

Div 3 Mark Griffiths is 1st.

Div 4 John Johnston is 1st with Jimmie Innes and Bob Farquhar in joint 2nd.

Results for the remaining competitions will be in the next BLV.

For further club details, contact our secretary Bob Farquhar 07721-744229.

John W Russell

Stirling International Cross Country



Thousands of runners braved the wind and rain to deliver a top-class day of sporting action at Run Stirling where Scotland claimed double cross-country gold and Scotland re-wrote the Home Countries XC International history books to claim two sets of team golds as the Senior Men and U20 Women both won their particular 'Battles of Stirling' across Kings Park

There were teams from all age groups taking part in events on the day

In addition to the various Senior and Junior Cross country events there was a Mass 7K Fun Run around the Castle.



All events were held in appalling weather conditions therefore particular congratulations to all who took part.

**t Welcome to 2020****Continual Professional Development**

This summer McLaren Leisure will be 22 years old and over this time we have had many members of staff, all of whom have gone on to complete many courses ranging from Leisure Management to fitness instructing, swimming teaching, hospitality and so much more. We are proud to continually invest in our staff and help them progress in the areas they are interested in and bring our community new and exciting activities and classes. Over the past five years alone we have had nine members of staff complete their SVQ in Leisure Management. In the last year two of our staff members have completed their personal training and fitness instructing courses and we have had many staff complete various other courses this year. This month we have had two more members of staff sign up to complete their SVQ in leisure management and we wish the best of luck to Leigh and Scott on this course.

Light up McLaren Leisure!

Our regular visitors may have noticed a big change to our building so far this year. Local electrician, Varney Electrical LTD has been busy replacing our light fittings, upgrading to LED lighting. Part of our strategic aim is to maintain and increase business sustainability by improving self-sufficiency. This project brings us a step closer, with the added bonus of a lovely, bright and welcoming pool and changing area, reduced running costs and less environmental impact. Along with our new lighting project we are upgrading our boilers to new and more efficient boilers. This, again, will reduce our running cost and our environmental impact. Both of these projects have been supported with interest free loans through Resource Efficient Scotland and Energy Savings Trust.

**Access Forth Valley**

McLaren Leisure are proud to have been part of the Access Forth Valley Promotion. Led by Falkirk Delivers, in collaboration with Falkirk and Stirling Councils, Discover Clackmannanshire and Loch Lomond & the Trossachs National Park, as well as local businesses across the four areas, the campaign will create a collection of downloadable itineraries along with three films highlighting the full range of accessible attractions and accommodation providers in the area.

The itineraries will be designed for visitors with autism, dementia and mobility issues and will cover three themes: family fun, heritage and outdoor activity. We are excited to have been part of this great campaign and we can't wait to share the first promotional film with you this month.

Customer Survey 2019

Staff of McLaren Leisure have been busy over the past few months implementing exciting changes from our 2019 customer survey. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to give us their feedback, it is important to us to know your needs and requests. Here is what we have achieved so far:

- New towel and soap dispensers throughout the centre.
- Improvements to before and after school sport club offering. These have been implemented from January 2020 and include a set breakfast, snack and dinner menu and pre planned activities for each session.
- New café menu with new breakfast, lunch and snack options available.
- New fitness classes are now on offer including Aquacise, Kettlebells and bootcamp and some of our oldies but goodies continue to run such as yoga, active life and cycle fit. – Check out the 'What's On' page for days and times.
- While we were closed over the New Year, staff from McLaren were working hard on our annual maintenance day getting ready for 2020.
- We are actively fundraising for new sensory equipment in our soft play. You can help by shopping at the Co-op!
- We are addressing our investment plan to meet priority needs.
- New upgraded and more efficient lighting and boiler systems.



Callander and West Perthshire Rotary Club

November and December were busy months for the club. It started with the Christmas Coffee, Lunch and Crafts in Callander Kirk Hall at which we raised £920 for the club's charity fund. Our thanks go to the stallholders, the Gargunnock Gargoyles singing group and the Shoogelee, but especially to all the local people and visitors who came along.

Next came *Winterfest* in the square. The young people could try a few games including Splat the Rat. There was also a competition to make a model Santa Claus and prizes could be won at the the Treasure Map. A good time was had by all while waiting for the arrival of Father Christmas.

At the end of December it was our annual session of bag packing at Callander Co-op. This raised £733 for our charity funds. Thanks to the shoppers and the Co-op staff. We are already preparing for our next fundraising events. The Easter Bottle Stall will be on the 11th April and the next Coffee, Lunch and Crafts will be on the 2nd May. We hope to see you there.

If you would like to find out more about any of these events or Rotary in general please look at our website, www.callander.rotary1010.org or Facebook or contact the number below. If you would like to come along to a meeting you would be made welcome any Tuesday evening at 6.30pm at The Old Rectory or to find out more about membership, please contact Derek House on [01877 330103](tel:01877330103)

CHAS

Our Coffee Morning in November raised £1077. Thanks to Mhairi McKay and her Doune Gaelic choir for the lovely music and to everyone who attended. Thanks also to Callander Co-op for allowing us to do a collection before Christmas. We raised £290.

Fiona House.

Craigard Club

The Craigard Club has just received a generous donation from the Co-operative Local Community Fund and would like to thank everyone in Callander who contributed by donating a portion of their expenditure in the local branch to the fund. Craigard Club members really appreciate this support from the community in Callander.

Anne Docherty

Callander and District Arthritis Club

I do hope everyone had a happy festive season and is ready to get back to normal on Tuesday, 18th February, when Ann Artis is coming to talk about "Woolly Days". Ann takes a fleece, makes it clean, spins it and then uses it. It should be interesting. We meet at 7.30pm in the Kirk Hall and have refreshments and a raffle after the talk.

Fiona Snow, Secretary

Callander and West Perthshire U3A

It's a new year. What will you make of this fresh start?

If you would like to:

- Do something different;
- Follow your interests;
- Learn something new;
- Meet new people; and
- Have fun.



Callander and West Perthshire U3A may be just what you're looking for, if you are retired or semi-retired. More than thirty interest groups are listed on our website. Please have a look. There is something for everyone and for the second half of the year the fee is only £5.

Joy Henderson

Lodge Ben Ledi



On a dark, damp Sunday in November 40 members and guests met within the Lodge, for a Sportsmens' lunch.

A fine meal was followed by entertaining chat by accomplished after dinner speakers. Ally Logan warmed the audience up with some ribald tales and introduced Chick Young of SportsScene fame (the butt of Jonathon Watson's 'Only an Excuse' - the wee man with the Ho, Ho Ho laugh). Chick continued in a similar style, with some jokes and stories definitely not suitable for mixed company (it was an all male affair).

Our final speaker Paul Reid, Marketing Executive at Dundee United and regular on TV sports programmes, was altogether more refined and proved to be a perfect mimic. You could believe the room was full of sports personalities.

The audience suitably enraptured, the earnest business of fund raising began with an auction. There were many interesting items including golf tuition, a four ball at a top course, fishing on different beats on the Teith, a whole Red Deer hind butchered and ready for the freezer and many others. This was followed by an extensive raffle, for which we thank all contributors.

This annual event has now raised £16000 for Strathcarron, whilst entertaining those present.



Colin Mackay, Claire Kennedy, Strathcarron, Ronnie Forbes, Stuart Drumond

Ronnie Forbes, RWM



Callander Heritage Society

At our November meeting Dr Ross Crawford talked on 'The Age of Forays - Warfare in the Highlands and Islands 1493-1615'.

Aonghas Og MacDonald was given the title Lord of the Isles by Robert the Bruce as a reward for his support during the Wars of Independence. In the early 1400s the MacDonalds and their supporting clans challenged the power of the Crown. In 1493 James IV seized the land and the title for himself (Prince Charles is the present day Lord of the Isles). This then left the clans vying for power in the Highlands. It was an unsettled time but the Highlands were no more or less violent than the rest of the country. Highlanders did fight in a different way, however.

Most armies were small (200-300 men) so there were few sieges or pitched battles, nor were horses used in battle. Highlanders fought on foot using bows and arrows, axes, dirks and one-handed swords. They wore little armour, perhaps a helmet and some chain mail. Most wore a saffron tunic and deerskin boots – no tartan!

Fighting mostly took the form of raids damaging houses and crops, stealing cattle or in ambushes where a few clansmen might be injured or killed. Battles were riskier and much more costly in man power. Many raids were looked upon as a proving ground for young men and with their fighting reputation many clansmen earned money as mercenaries in Ireland and Europe.

Our December meeting was a social evening when members met to chat over wine and nibbles.

Our next meeting is on Wednesday

19th February when Ian McNeish will be speaking about 'The McNabs of Callander and The Beheading Stone'.

Then on Wednesday 11th March Dr Catherine Mills will be speaking about 'Pollution and Poisoning: Scottish Lead Mining in the 18th and 19th Centuries'.

We meet in the Masonic Hall, Callander and doors open at 7pm for a 7.30 start.

Kath Millar



Music and Memory

In the last issue, we invited you to come along to one of our meetings and enjoy familiar songs and a cuppa.

We thought readers might want to know a bit more about what to expect. We have a team of volunteers who create the playlist of songs for the meeting. We then make up a computer presentation with all the words in an easy to read font so that everyone can sing along.

At the moment we meet once a month, on a Monday afternoon from 2-3.30 pm in the Kirk Hall. During the meeting we have a cuppa and biscuits. It is so nice to see everyone singing along to all the old favourites, bringing back great memories!

Everyone is welcome including those with dementia and their carers. We would love to see more people at the sing along!

Our next meeting dates are the 10th February and 9th March.

For more information, please contact Ann Ross on [07720887720](tel:07720887720) or Anne McLachlan on [07743125966](tel:07743125966)

Anne McLachlan

Fishing in 2020 The Teith at Callander

Residents and visitors to Stirling's river banks in 2020 will be able to cast off with some of the best value salmon fishing in the UK.

Permit prices are again being frozen to encourage anglers onto the banks of the Rivers Teith and Forth when fishing season begins on 1st February, 2020. The first week after the opening ceremony will be free.

Anglers can fish for just £200 (residents) or £298,00 (Visitors), while youths aged 12 to 21 can now fish the whole season for only £15. Up to the age of 12 youths are welcome to fish for free with a paying adult on a catch and release basis.

The reintroduction of day permits in September and October, and the extension of the youth discount from 16 to 21, are also both being maintained this year. As is the three-month permit, ideal for those who are unable to fish the entire season. Unlike a full season ticket, they are restricted to a single river only, so either the River Forth or the River Teith



There is a compulsory catch and release until 1st June

Permits can be purchased at James Bayne & Co, 76 Main Street, Callander, FK17 8BD

After the pipe band led Opening day Parade (9.15am) there will be an opening ceremony performed by Para-Snowboarder Andrew MacLeod and then free whisky tasting, free tea, coffee and hot food and fly tying demonstrations from Franc N Snaelda pro team member John Richardson.

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Tuesday	10am – 1pm	2–7pm
Wednesday	Closed	
Thursday	10am – 1pm	2–7pm
Friday	10am – 1pm	2–5pm
Saturday	10am – 12 noon	

Telephone/Fax 331544

**Callander Library**

The Stirling Libraries children's book festival, Smallprint, is back for its second year from Thursday 5th – Saturday 7th March, with events across all of its libraries. Callander Library is holding a digi micro-bit session for 8 – 12 years on Friday 6th March 3.00 – 4.00pm. There will be lots of fun to be had learning basic coding and getting hands on with some nifty little gadgets. The session is free but spaces are limited so must be booked in advance at the Library.

Fiona Frize



Thornhill Players are pleased to announce that we have entered the SCDA One Act Play Festival which will be held in the Cowane Centre, Stirling, on 6th & 7th March 2020. As part of the production we are having an OPEN Dress Rehearsal on Sunday 1st March in the Thornhill Community Hall. If you would like a preview of our 30 minute comedy, please come along at 5.30pm – no entry fee but if you have enjoyed our performance, please feel free to make a donation.

If you think that being part of a stage production looks like fun, then Thornhill Players are always on the lookout for new members. As well as performing there are other ways to be involved, as part of the backstage crew, helping with front of house, with costumes or technically with sound and lighting. Our ambition is to expand our range and number of productions each year. We meet every Thursday at 7.30pm, usually at Thornhill Community Hall while rehearsing, but play-readings are often at members' houses in a more informal environment. Our meetings always generate a lot of fun and laughter whatever we are doing. If this sounds like a good way to spend a sociable evening most weeks, then we would be very pleased to hear from you. You can either contact us on 01786 850288 or [email cjohnston447@btinternet.com](mailto:cjohnston447@btinternet.com).

Want to find out more? Our Facebook page is: <https://www.facebook.com/Thornhill-Players-266020370461137/>

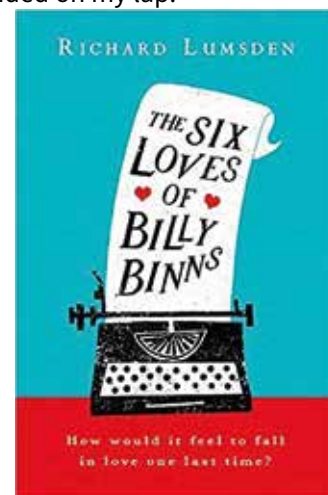
Book Club Review

This issue's book review title is *The Six Loves of Billy Binns* by Richard Lumsden (Tinder Press, 2020). You may recognise the author name, Lumsden being a famous actor and composer, ubiquitous on television and in theatre. This is his debut novel.

The Six Loves of Billy Binns is told from the perspective of our central character, Billy Binns - a west London man born-and-bred. Billy is now well over 100-years old and living out his days in a Shepherd's Bush care home. Too elderly and frail to move about much, he spends the long days sitting with his thoughts and memories, and he has tasked himself with remembering what love feels like one last time. With this focus, the novel moves between the present day and the recollection of the handful of relationships that have shaped Billy's life spanning a century - from 1900 when he was born, to somewhere in the early 2000s.

The book grips you from the off and never really lets go. Lumsden's writing style flows beautifully and is never clunky, with the narrative perfectly balanced between Billy's recollections and his present-day life in the care home. Billy's is an extraordinary life, in that it is both ordinary and unique – a working class upbringing, kids playing on the streets, young men at war on the frontline, work, marriage, another war and then what? Billy's hardly even approached middle-age by the end of World War Two and is tired.

The Six Loves of Billy Binns is about memory and remembering. It questions how reliable our memories are when we recall the story of our lives and the need for narrative, chronology and meaning. Of course, life is never so neat and tidy. Whilst Billy's tale is chronological, his recollections skip decades, as recalling the loves of one's life doesn't necessarily follow a stringent timeline. It's hard to read this book without considering the important things in your own life and how people and events have shaped the path taken. We can all look back on acts of youth, irrationality, cowardice or bravery, but even with the most considered decisions, so much of what happens in our lives is based on chance and a big dollop of luck. In short, a lovely warm book that forgives human flaws and demonstrates that kindness is key. I feel lucky it landed on my lap.



The next BLV book club review will be *Caging Skies* by Christine Leunens (John Murray, 2019)

Maggie Magor



CAOS have great pleasure in sponsoring this edition of the Ben Ledi View.

We are very excited about our 2020 show, *The Sound of Music*. No doubt some of you caught up with the TV and film versions which aired over Christmas and New Year – come and see whether our performance can compare! We believe it can!! Once again there will be some great talent, of all ages and some exciting new faces in prominent roles.

There was an added dimension to our concert in November when the idea of a Christmas Gala Concert was resurrected. This marked the beginning of *Winterfest* and was a huge success. About 200 packed McLaren High School and were treated to a wonderful mix of show favourites, seasonal songs and music, directed by Linda Cantlay and Ian Milligan. However, CAOS members were upstaged by the Callander Kirk Junior Choir and younger members of the cast. Callander Brass provided musical interludes and Callander Chorale brought tears to the eyes with a beautiful performance of "O Holy Night".

Rehearsals restarted on 9th January with the cast putting in a lot of hard work. The show will be staged in McLaren High School on 18th - 21st March, Wednesday to Friday, doors open at 7.00pm with a 7.30pm start, and a Saturday matinee at 2.30pm doors open at 2.00pm. Seats will not be numbered so arrive early to ensure a good view! If you would like a reserved seat then become a Patron for just £40, for which you will receive two reserved seats at a performance of your choice, complimentary drinks and a programme. For details contact Steve Murphy on 07484 637811.

Tickets are £14 for adults, £11 for seniors and students and £5 for 12 and under. (Please note only full price tickets are available for the Friday performance). These will be on sale at our Coffee Morning on Saturday 8th February 2020 when we will be singing some numbers from the show – doors open 10.30am. After the coffee morning, tickets will be available from Callander Post Office or from Society members – see our web site for details: www.c-a-o-s.org.uk

The Sound of Music is an amateur production by arrangement with R&H Theatricals Europe

Steve Murphy for the CAOS Committee

Behind the Scenes of the Film *The Sound of Music*

As *The Sound of Music* is one of my favourite films, I have had a great time rehearsing it with CAOS. I was keen to investigate the background to the film as it is based on a true story. The film was released in 1965 and was adapted from Rodgers and Hammerstein II's musical which, in turn, was based on Maria von Trapp's book *The Story of the Trapp Family Singers*.

Robert Wise, the producer, made it into a dramatic film, rather than a documentary. There were many adaptations in the film version, one of which is that if the family had crossed the Alps, as portrayed, they would have ended up in Nazi Germany! When the real Maria Von Trapp complained about this, the producer retorted that "In Hollywood you make your own geography".

Another example is that, although the father did summon the children with a whistle and made them wear sailor suits, they disliked the portrayal of him as a harsh disciplinarian, as he was described by his own children as 'a very charming man, generous and open...'

Bethan Jones

Callander Jazz & Blues Festival

Now that another successful Callander Jazz & Blues Festival is behind us, we'd like to offer a GREAT BIG THANK YOU to everyone who participated and made the 14th festival a memorable one. To the loyal festival supporters (and friends) who come year after year, we couldn't do it without you. It was much tougher this year with the loss of festival founder and friend Graham Oliphant, but we managed to get the show on the road and deliver a successful festival of which Graham would have been proud.

Festival funding always seems to be a major issue each year, so huge thanks have to go to our main sponsor, Deanston Distillery, for again supporting the festival and making sure we offer up a unique collaboration. Also thanks to the local venues, businesses and bodies who contributed financial support this year (so many that it's impossible to name them all in this small space!) Many thanks also to all the amazing performers and performances throughout the weekend..... and there were many. It wouldn't be a festival without you.

Finally, saving the best till last, a huge shout out to the festival committee and their merry band of volunteers, who try valiantly every year to maintain a calm serenity on the surface while paddling madly throughout the weekend.

Same again next year from 2nd-4th October 2020 anyone?

John Martin & Duncan Boyle

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The Friends of Scottish Opera, JTH Charitable Trust
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Scottish
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McLaren High School, Callander
Sat 29 Feb, 7.30pm

£15/£5 (u26s)

Booking fees may apply online.

Tickets: Deli Ecosse, 10 Ancaster Sq,
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01877 331 220

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Illustration by Lauren Humphreys



Our BLV Delivery Squad

This being the first issue of 2020 we would like to give a big thank you to all the people listed below who delivered the Ben Ledi View through rain, hail, snow and sunshine (maybe not too much of the last) during 2019

Achray Avenue Dave/Annette Cooper **Ancaster Road** Moira Rice, Kliskey Family, Ann Tweedie, Anne Luti
Aveland Road Joan Elcock **Bracklin Road** Moira Rice, Kliskey Family, Joan Elcock **Bridgend** Jen Shearer
Balgibbon Drive Russell Drummond **Buchanan Place** Julia Mitchell **Callander Holiday Park** Liz Black
Camp Place Joyce Edwards **Campbell Court** Colin Edwards **Castle Grove** Jen Shearer
Craigard Road Moira Rice, Anne Luti **Cross Street** Moira Rice, Ivan/Gwen Condon
Drummond Drive Andrew Devaney Ellengowan Helen Little **Esher Crescent** Nick Parish **Finglas Gardens** Ray Reed
Gart Fiona House **Glen Gardens** Andrew Devaney, Cherie Bettison **Glenartney Road** Moira Rice, Elizabeth Haddow
Glengyle Place Janette McKendrick **Gullipan View** Angie Stallard **Health Centre** Kath Millar **High School** Alex Mitchell
Invertrossachs Road Liz Black, Elaine Martay **Katrine Crescent** Rosemary Harrison **Keltie Bridge** James Holmes
Kilmahog Fiona Snow **Kirk Care** Alex Mitchell **Lagrannoch Drive** Bob Clough
Lagrannoch Drive, Way and Crescent Emma Fitzsimmons **Ledi Court** Ivan/Gwen Condon **Leighton Place** Hilary Gunkel
Leisure Centre Alex Mitchell **Lendrick Avenue** Audrey Corrieri **Leny Feus** Grace Brewer, Morag Wright
Leny Road Morag Wright, Alex Graham **Library** Alex Mitchell **Livingstone Avenue** Margaret Kemp
Lubnaig Drive Dave/Annette Cooper **Marshall Crescent** Nick Parish
Main Street Moira Rice, Janice Mathisen, Fiona McAdam, Alex Graham, Margaret Warnock, Lorraine Pritchard, Elizabeth Haddow, Hilary Gunkel **McLaren Terrace** Iain/Vanessa McAllister **Menteith Crescent** Jean Thewliss, Bob Donaldson
Molendhu Road Paul McKendrick **Mollands Road** Dave/Annette Cooper **Murdiston Avenue** Muriel Sinclair
North Church Street Anne Luti, Elizabeth Haddow **Pearl Street** Susan Allan, Julia Mitchell **Post Office** Mark Griffiths
Ritchie Place Angie Stallard **Robertson Way** Iain/Vanessa McAllister **Ruskie Avenue** Dave/Annette Cooper
School Lane Moira Rice **South Church Street** Janice Mathisen, Susan Allan **Station Road Flats** Ros Sannachan
Stirling Road Kath Millar, Stephen Mackay, Joan Elcock **Subscriptions** Milan Cech **The Lane** Ivan/Gwen Condon
Tourist Office Mark Griffiths **Tulipan Court/Crescent** Chris Gillespie **Vennacher Avenue** Lesley/Mike Hawkins
Vorlich Crescent Sue Hewitt **Waverley Drive** Andrew Devaney **Willoughby Court** Linda Sutherland
Willoughby Place Colin Edwards

Our BLV Bag-packers and Drop-off squad

Fiona House, Alistair/Sheila Johnston, Anne Luti, Elaine Martay, Alex Mitchell, Kenny/Sheila Morrison, Kath Millar, Moira Rice and Alan Davidson

We are also very grateful to the following who have often stepped in when some of the above deliverers, drop-off squad and/or bag-packers are away that weekend:

Anne Artis, Johnny Gold, Steve McGowan, Alex/Shirley Walker, Ray Watkins and Steve/Marilyn Willet

If anyone has been forgotten then our sincere apologies

The Ben Ledi View hope you had a very merry Christmas and that this year will be a good one for you all.

OCCUPATION MATTERS!

Occupational Therapists have a Bachelor of Science or Masters degree in Occupational Therapy and are registered to practice with the Health Care Professions Council. Occupational Therapy (OT) promotes health, wellbeing and independent function through participation in activities or occupation. These are the things that make us who we are and give our life meaning. Occupation is every human activity that you do! "Occupational Therapy enables people to achieve health, wellbeing and life satisfaction through participation in occupation" (Royal College of Occupational Therapists)

WHO CAN BENEFIT FROM OT?:

EVERYONE- Babies, children, adults and older people

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPISTS WORK IN MANY FIELDS:

- Physical health
- Mental health
- Ageing and health
- Children and young people
- Social Work
- Housing
- Vocational rehabilitation
- Public Health
- Independent practice

Occupational Therapists work in partnership with a range of professional such as doctors and nurses, physiotherapists, speech and language therapists, dieticians, social workers, teachers, architects, equipment suppliers; as well as working closely with families, carers and employers. OTs work in a diverse range of settings including hospitals, health centres, schools, children's centres, social work departments, prisons, client's workplace, and client's own home. Occupational Therapy is key to preventative and integrated health and social care. Working across boundaries, helping people to improve, regain or maintain their independence by being as active as they can be in order to get the most out of life For further information contact: www.rcot.co.uk

Mary Jordan BSc OT, MBAOT

Mindfulness

Have you heard about mindfulness? And do you wonder why there is such a hype around it? In this article I am going to tell you a bit about its relevance to our lives.

Why do we need mindfulness?

Most of us these days live in a world that seems to be too fast and too full. We don't seem to have time for anything. We are constantly chasing our tail or feeling frazzled or overwhelmed. We become stressed and anxious and the tasks we have to perform seem to become bigger and more difficult by the minute. Meanwhile life seems to be passing by in a daze. We get ill, because we do not pay attention to what our bodies tell us. Our relationships feel strained, or wrong, because we are not aware of what we bring to them or even how we relate to ourselves. It is as if we are in a trance. Our minds have become too full with thoughts of what was and what will be and our hearts too full with fears and fantasies about what we have or have not done, or what we should, could or don't want to do. There is no room or awareness left for what actually IS. Our minds are full!

The magic of mindfulness

Mindfulness can help us. Mindfulness makes us more aware and brings us back to what is. It helps us become aware that a lot of what is going on in our minds is just story telling, it is not the truth or real. Through mindfulness, we learn how to just be and rest in the moment. It gives us room and inner space and brings us back to ourselves. It frees us up to notice what went unnoticed. It brings us back to the only point in time where anything ever happens: HERE and NOW! Because of this it is a powerful tool for healing, transformation and growth.

Mindfulness gives us the opportunity to make the unconscious beliefs that drive us visible. It helps us to become aware of the meaning we attach to everything we experience. This is hugely empowering because it gives us choice. It allows us to examine and question how we interpret an event, and what the values and beliefs are that drive us. Being aware puts us into a position where we can make more conscious choices about what we want to think and how we want to be, or behave. It gives us the opportunity to let go of old and outlived beliefs that do not serve us anymore and create new, more life enhancing ones.

Mindfulness has been researched extensively and mindfulness ideas and practices have been adapted for the treatment of a variety of conditions, such as addictions, eating disorders, self harming, depression and anxiety as well as stress-induced illnesses such as migraines, chronic pain and insomnia. It also gets used by athletes and actors to enhance and improve their performance.

Britta Schuessler MA

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Rural Stirling Housing Association aims to support local communities by providing quality homes at affordable rents for families, couples and single people in housing need.

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Deansston	Killearn	Strathblane	

We may be able to build in other communities in the future - please let us know if you want to live in a village that is not listed above. Information on local housing need and demand helps us plan for the future.

If you are interested in renting one of our properties when they become available please contact us:

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www.rsha.org.uk

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Carolyn Dunion from McKendry Dunion Financial provides a personal service to those looking to get on the property ladder or review their mortgage arrangements.

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Based in the Loch Lomond and Trossachs area they can offer help to clients throughout Scotland.

MD | McKendry Dunion Financial

To have an informal no obligation chat to see if they can help you contact
Carolyn on 07957252223 or carolyn@mckendrydunion.co.uk

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Local Council Office & Registrar:
01877 33004

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Post Office: 01877 330267

Stirling Council: 01786 404040

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331000

Prescriptions 01877 331001 (10.00am
till 3pm)

District Nurse 01877 330150

NHS 24 111 or www.nhs24.scot

www.nhsinform.scot

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Callander: 01877 381213

Doune: 01786 841304

Schools

McLaren High: 01877 330156

Callander Primary: 01877 331576

**Callander Kirk**

The Church of Scotland,

South Church Street, Callander

Sunday services

Every Sunday except last Sunday in Month

10.00am Early Service

11.15am Morning Service - On 1st
March will be a Communion Service

Last Sunday in Month

11.15 All-Age Worship

Informal Communion follows Morn-
ing Service on 16th Feb, and 15th
March

Every Sunday

7.00pm Time for Silence

First Sunday of every month

3.00pm Trossachs service including
Communion Service on 1st March.

Details at www.callanderkirk.org.uk

**St Joseph's**

Catholic Church

Glen Artney Road, Callander

Weekly Masses

Monday, Thursday, Saturday Mass,
10.00am Callander

Tuesday, Friday Mass, 10.00am Doune

Wednesday Eucharist Service 10.00am
Callander

Sunday 11.30am Callander

Rev. Leszek Wiecek, S.A.C.

01877 330702

Bin Collections**FEBRUARY**

Grey/Blue bins Sat. 8th, 22nd
Brown bin/Blue box Sat. 1th, 29th
Brown/ Green bins Sat. 15th

MARCH

Grey/Blue bins Sat. 7th, 21st
Brown bin/Blue box Sat. 28th
Brown/Green bins Sat. 14th

APRIL

Not available

www.stirling.gov.uk/waste

Lagrannoch WRC Opening times

- Monday - Friday 5.00pm to 8.00pm
- Saturday 10.00am-2.00pm
- Sunday closed
- Lagrannoch depot 01877 330492
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- Stirling Council Main number 08452
777000 (Functions as emergency
number from 5.00pm to 9.00am and
over weekends. Also use for non-col-
lection of wheelie bins.)

**Saint Andrew's**

Scottish Episcopal Church,

Leny Road, Callander

Sunday: 10.00am Holy Communion

Wednesday: 10.00am Holy Communion

For any information please contact:

Rev Richard Grosse tel 382887

www.standrewschurchcallander.org.uk

**Callander Baptist Fellowship****Weekly Services:**

Sunday Morning Family Worship at

10.30am in Pastor's homel

Sunday@Six 6pm in St. Andrews' Church
Hall

Prayer Time - Monday 8.00pm

Callander Home Group - Wednesday

7.30pm

Doune Home Group- Tuesday 8.00pm

Everyone is welcome to all our services

For venue details for our weekday serv-
ices please contact

Pastor Brian Gooding tel 01877 331845

brian.gooding@stirlingbaptist.co.uk

Facebook: #stirlingbaptistatcallander

Recreation

Rail Enquiries: 0845 7484950

Bus Station (Stirling): 01786 446474

Travel Line Scotland: 0870 6082608

Leisure Centre: 01877 330000

Library: 01877 331544

Visitor Information Centre: 01877

330342

Floods & Environment

SEPA emergency: 0800 807060

SEPA website:

www.sepa.org.uk/flooding/index.htm

Floodline: 0845 9881188 Select option

1 followed by: 06213 121 (the Teith at
Callander)

Scottish Water emergency

information re flooding from mains or
sewers: 0800 0778778

Location of defibrillators

Dreadnought Garage

Callander Golf Club

McLaren Leisure Centre

The Post Office

Ancaster Square

West Dullater House and Grace Cottage

Invertrossachs

Mobile unit based in Callander with

Scottish Ambulance Service

BLV DEADLINES

The next issue of the Ben Ledi View
will be published on **Friday 3rd April
2020.**

Advertisements copy & artwork

Please send all advertisement copy

for the April/May issue to our

Advertising Co-ordinator Isla

Routledge at [advertising@benledi-
view.org](mailto:advertising@benledi-view.org) by **Friday 7th March 2020**

Full details of sizes for advertisement
and artwork specifications are at

www.benlediview.co.uk under the

Advertise tab. Please call or email for
advice if in doubt.

We request full payment before we

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Editorial copy

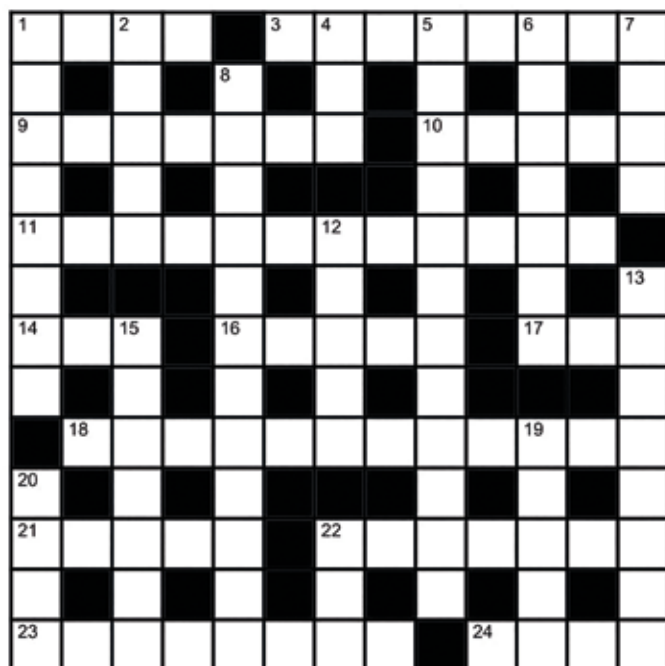
All editorial contributions for the

April/May issue should be emailed to

blveditor@benlediview.org or hand-
ed in to the Callander Library by

Friday 7th March 2020

Items received after the deadline may
be held over to the next issue.

**Across**

- 1 After job (4)
 3 I left lad going astray, destined to a hapless end (3-5)
 9 Kept stock where herd can run free (7)
 10 Initially one vital university lecture examines part of plant essential for fertilisation (5)
 11 Wherein PM has wandered in a state! (3,9)
 14 No Clue
 16 intense annoyance when park official loses head (5)
 17 In library there's bound to be something that could be uplifting! (3)
 18 Proverbial sign of a more hopeful outcome when over our heads. (6,6)
 21 Fear losing time at the start is a mistake (5)
 22 Supple Bussell is so memorable in part (7)
 23 Family dust-up? (8)
 24 Do not be seen when told 'this doctor is a changed man and danger to the public!' (4)

Crowword Solution 143**Down**

- 1 Soldier with no ID, one with a problem (8)
 2 Function with source of power (5)
 4 Was leading light (3)
 5 Most rash when toughest led by idiot (12)
 6 Rearrange tribute, but only when time is right, for one of seven with direct attachment (4,3)
 7 Meeting of French and the Spanish in potentially lethal confrontation (4)
 8 Start up and pull out are grammatical examples (7,5)
 12 Run after hotel employee for messaging device (5)
 13 Nice resident maybe supporting criminal group? What a rotter! (8)
 15 Witty poem involving Eric initially and two farm animals (7)
 19 This key topping no longer allowed (5)
 20 Document that's binding whichever way you look at it. (4)
 22 Garland the French first introduced (3)

Crossword Winner no. 143**Anne Tannock****17 Anchorscross Dunblane FK15 9JP**

BLV CROSSWORD No. 144. Please return completed entries to The Library, South Church Street, Callander by no later than FRIDAY 7TH MARCH 2020 The first correct entry opened will win £5. Don't forget to supply your name and address below

NAME:.....

ADDRESS:.....

38 Announcements & Letters

If you wish to put a personal message in the BLV, please note we need your name, address and phone number (we will only print your name) with your message. There is no charge for announcements, but if you wish to give a donation to the magazine please leave a cheque with your message at the Library or McLaren Community Centre (cheque payable to the Ben Ledi View Community Newspaper SCIO). There is no charge for letters. Thank you.

Cameron Gibson (24th June 1995 – 20th October 2019)

Cameron spent most of his 24 years in Callander and attended the Nursery, Primary School and McLaren High School. He loved the town and its people and returned to be here whenever he could. Cameron so enjoyed growing up in Callander, firstly at Robertson House just adjacent to the Primary School and latterly at Easter Dullater, along the Invertrossachs Road. He loved the mountains, lochs, rivers and wildlife around us.

Cameron studied veterinary medicine at the University of Glasgow, graduating in 2018. He had always wanted to be a large-animal vet and fulfilled that dream, working in rural Lanarkshire. He had a large group of friends and colleagues and spent his off-duty pursuing his passions of surfing, skiing, hill-walking, photography and growing his flock of cherished Hampshire Down sheep, as well as all-things Scottish.

However, in the early hours of Sunday 20th October 2019, Cameron decided that this world was not where he wanted to be any more and he took his own life. With no apparent mental health issues, Cameron's suicide has shocked us as his family and also his friends, colleagues and clients. In the weeks following Cameron's death, we have been inundated with cards, letters, emails and texts from across the world. All of these have shared with us an expanding picture of Cameron's love for life, his diligence as a veterinary surgeon and his care for others. He was scheduled to be with his family in Ireland for Christmas and then, in January, to attend a friend's wedding in Canada before skiing in Whistler. He left his house as if heading out to buy a pint of milk. No note was left and his death by suicide is a mystery. All we know is that the suicide rate amongst veterinary surgeons is four-times the national UK average and that suicide is the highest

cause of death in men under 45 years in the UK.

Our grief as a family has been assuaged by the kindness and generosity of the people of Callander and surrounding area. We have been blessed with so many messages of condolence and support and also with meals, baking, flowers and hugs. Thank-you to everyone who helped us in any way, particularly in those very early days of raw grief. Ross Anderson, the funeral director, deserves special mention as he and his team dealt so professionally with us in our grief at the same time as dealing with his own grief, knowing Cameron and our family. Thank you, Ross.

Early on 1st November, we had a small service at Stirlingshire Crematorium for family and close friends. We are most grateful to Brian Gooding for his sensitive and helpful leading of that service and to Linda Cantlay for playing at the service. Thank you to everyone who then attended the service celebrating Cameron's life held at Callander Kirk. We were uplifted by the number of people who attended and we have been moved by letters written to us subsequently mentioning how meaningful and helpful the service was to so many – allowing some to address the issue of suicide in their own families, often for the first time.

We are grateful to the minister, Session Clerk and elders of Callander Kirk for use of the Kirk for Cameron's service and to the elders who kindly assisted on the day. Douglas Pearson provided great technical support for the service and we are thankful to him. The musicians who played at the service – Francis Cummings, Angus Walker and Kenneth Walker – are all friends of the Gibson family and played so beautifully whilst dealing with their own grief. Gillian Girvan worked diligently to ensure that the floral tributes were sensitively prepared with local, seasonal flora. Thank you, Gillian.

Following Cameron's death, our friend Rev Howard Espie travelled

immediately from Canada to support us in our grief and conducted the service in Callander Kirk. He helped us through the toughest of days and touched many lives with his comments during the service. Thank-you, Howard.

A team of local folks dealt with transport arrangements to allow the marquee refreshments to take place at Cameron's home. They also decorated the marquee so beautifully and supplied copious chocolate brownies – Cameron's favourites. Thank you! We were delighted that so many people came out to Easter Dullater after the service and very grateful to Martin Luti of Artisan Food for the catering arrangements.

Our hearts have been deeply touched by the outpouring of grief in Callander and by the acts of great kindness offered by so many. Specifically, thanks to everyone who offered accommodation and meals to our family and friends travelling a distance to Callander for Cameron's funeral service; and, finally to Paul, our cherished postman, who has brought so many letters, cards and parcels to us, has seen us at our lowest and has been a friend, counsellor and life-coach! Thanks everyone!

For us, life will never be the same. We are moving towards some understanding of "the new normal" without our beloved Cameron. We miss him so very much. If you meet us, please don't worry about "saying the wrong thing" or indeed having to say anything at all. Hugs are good! This is uncharted territory for so many of us. Some people have told us they are worried about mentioning Cameron in case that makes us sad by reminding us that he has died. Please be reassured that you are not reminding us – we will never need reminding. What you are reminding us of is that you know Cameron lived, and that is a great gift!

With our love and sincere thanks,

*John & Isobel
Malcolm & Eilidh
John & Agnes*



Shop Closure

One of Callander's oldest businesses closed permanently on 29th December 2019. The East End Paper Shop was established by Willie and Maggie MacDonald in the 1950's and I have been at the helm since June 1999.

The business suffered a setback in 2009 when, as part of the national sub-Post Office closure programme, the Post Office Counter part of the shop was shut down.

Since then I have continued to operate as a stand-alone newsagent but with newspaper sales decreasing month-to-month I have come to the decision that the shop is no longer viable. I wish to express my sincere thanks to all my loyal customers who have supported the shop during the past 20+ years and I would also like to thank Graham, Wilma and Margaret for their help in running the shop. Lastly a Special Thanks to the army of Paper Boys/Girls who have been out delivering papers in all weathers 52 weeks a year.

Fraser Mackenzie

A BIG Thank You

Two stalwart Ben Ledi View deliverers - Jean Hammerton and Morag Wright - have recently retired from their rounds delivering the Ben Ledi View after many years of helping out. We would like to thank them both very much for their sterling service.

Another Thank You

A huge THANK YOU to the Youth Project and the Waverley Hotel from the Senior Citizens of Callander for the wonderful meals and entertainment they provided, free of charge, this Christmas.

Their generosity was much appreciated by all who attended on either occasion. Indeed, thanks to everyone who contributed to our enjoyment, especially to local businesses and their donations.

Shirley and Alex Walker

Donna Beaton

Sheena, Fraser and family would like to thank everyone for their cards and kind words of support. Many thanks to the staff at Ashlea for their care and kindness to Donna over her time there. Thanks also to Callander Medical Practice and to the Reverend Jeff McCormick for his lovely service, and to Ross Anderson for his help and professional service.

Sheena Allan

Birthday Bash

The photograph below was taken at The Statue of Liberty on Staten Island in New York, where Sheena Macleod, Liz Morgan and Ruth Barrie were visiting last December. The occasion was their 60th Birthdays and they were joined by Evelyn MacDonald and Ashley Rose for the celebration.

Liz Morgan



VE Day-75th Anniversary (8 May 2020-10 May 2020)

Acknowledging 75 years since VE Day is being recognised by a commemorative bank holiday on Friday 8 May 2020.

Following the Remembrance Day Service in Callander Kirk and later watching the parade at the Cenotaph in London on TV made me recall some of the stories from my own family. My Mum had just started her nursing training and together with other nurses jumped on a tram to dance the night away in George Square. My Dad was in hospital with half his leg burnt.

But what happened in Callander? Following a chat with Dr Monica Holloway of Callander Heritage Society, she told me about the oral history programme and suggested that they could help with recording a separate record of VE Day memories.

Most of all I think Callander should have a party to celebrate and commemorate the end of the war in Europe and pay tribute to the millions who sacrificed so much to secure the freedom we all enjoy today.

Events will be taking place all over the country. The Nation's Toast, a toast for peace and to the Heroes of World War 2. Bagpipes across the land playing the Battle's O'er, even at the top of Ben Nevis. Church bells ringing out for peace.

We are at the early stages of planning our party and would welcome readers' thoughts, offers of help and ideas. Please contact me at elainewatterson@btinternet.com.

If you or family have stories to tell please contact Monica at monica.holloway@btinternet.com.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Elaine Watterson

Callander Community Council

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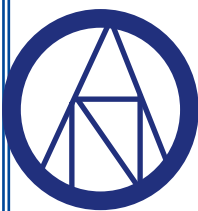
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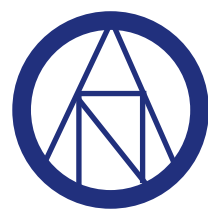
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