

# LAGGAN MATTERS

Neoni as leith an t-sluaigh, gun aorta an t-sluaigh

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## Welcome to Laggan Matters

'Nothing on behalf of the people without the agreement of the people'.

Welcome to our Summer / Autumn edition of Laggan Matters. We have all been enjoying the recent wonderful weather ...

Thanks to Phil at Ardverikie for continuing to print hard copies for those unable to download electronic ones.

As always, we welcome your contributions as there wouldn't be a newsletter without them! Therefore please keep sending them in along with any ideas for articles to [jillvn@aol.com](mailto:jillvn@aol.com) or [amandagallagher17@yahoo.com](mailto:amandagallagher17@yahoo.com)





## Laggan Helping Hands The HH Team

### A Tea Fit For A King



We had a wonderful turn out on the 3rd May to celebrate the coronation of Charles 3rd in Laggan Community Hall. The afternoon saw over 30 folk enjoying a delicious array of homemade cakes and sandwiches kindly made and served by the Helping Hands Team.



### Summer Fete



Congratulations to Julie for winning the 'guess how many chocolates' were in the jar ...

Saturday 24th June's successful family event, in aid of our food share shed and the defibrillator maintenance, was really well supported and enjoyed by adults and children alike!

There was a wide range of stalls selling beautifully home made crafts and jewellery, plants, scrumptious cakes and the very popular tombola! Not of course forgetting the tea, coffee and cakes made and served by the Helping Hands Team.



## Laggan Defibrillators

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Thanks to grants from SSE and support from our Community Council our 4 new defibrillators, which are brand new G5 models, are now in place at Wolftrax, The Pottery Coffee shop, Laggan Hotel and at the Doctors' surgery. We have been advised that the surgery is a more appropriate place to have it, and also more protected from the weather.

Along with Kingussie and Newtonmore ones, our defibrillators are all registered on The Circuit - the national defibrillator network. This means that when someone has a life-threatening cardiac arrest, the ambulance service can tell the person calling 999 where to find the nearest life-saving defibrillator.

A local team of volunteers check all our defibs on a fortnightly basis to make sure everything is in order, and submit their results online to OneKingussie who monitor all the machines in the area.

Over the years the machines will need funding when replacement pads and batteries are needed. Our hope is that with continued support from SSE, and local events which are always so well supported by the community, we will be able to meet these costs.

## Laggan, Newtonmore & Kingussie Churches

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Laggan church and community picnic is on Sunday July 30<sup>th</sup> at Ardverikie beach. The barbecue will be on from 12.30pm onwards, there will be access to the beach, games and plenty of parking in the grounds. Everyone is welcome to this happy afternoon.

Alison Armstrong

Session Clerk Laggan and Newtonmore



## Stop Press

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A Planning Application by Speyside Distillers to build a new distillery and related infrastructure on land just to the south of the River Spey, east of the Spey Dam has been published recently under Highland Council planning reference 23/02656/FUL. This is a major development in the Laggan area and will be closely considered by CNPA - who has "called the application in" - and by Highland Council. Residents are encouraged to look at the application and make any relevant comments directly to Highland Council and/or the Community Council who will be discussing this in the coming weeks.

## Strath's Best Kept Secret

Jo Cumming

Sandy and I were the first passengers on a new bus service serving Laggan Bridge. The 39 leaves Aviemore Station at 10.10 and arrives 11.05 at Laggan Bridge.

After a quick turn round at the Laggan Coffee Bothy it leaves at 11.10 as the M39 for Inverness bus station via the UHI campus. It stops outside the Balavil Hotel going to Laggan and opposite the Newtonmore Co-op going north.

Until Stagecoach update their see system the new timetable is hard to find. Until it can be reprogrammed the route destination on the bus says Newtonmore although it is going in to Laggan Bridge, which is rather confusing.

There is one stop on the way at Cluny Mains Farm so walkers could return to Newtonmore over Creag Dhubh or along Glen Banchor.



### M39 - Laggan to Aviemore

Monday to Friday

	Timetable
<b>Laggan Bridge</b>	<b>11:10</b>
Balgowan Cluny Mains Farm	11:10
<b>Newtonmore Co-Op</b>	<b>11:25</b>
<b>Kingussie Duke of Gordon Hotel</b>	<b>11:32</b>
Kingussie The Glabe	11:32
Lynchat Post Box	11:35
Kincraig Wildlife Park Road End	11:38
Kincraig War Memorial	11:41
<b>Kincraig Community Hall</b>	<b>11:42</b>
Alvie Dairaddy Caravan Park	11:47
Alvie Hotel	11:49
<b>Aviemore Cairngorm Hotel</b>	<b>11:55</b>

The bus runs on weekdays only at the moment. During term time, passengers can use the school bus morning and afternoon with this late morning bus providing greater flexibility.

Editors note:

The driver on the route would only confirm that the bus is available up to the end of June but we remain hopeful that it will also operate during the school holiday in July and August, which the present 140 school bus does not. Hopefully this is just the start as Lagganites can now go to the rest of the Strath by bus at 11.10 from Laggan Bridge but not yet back in the afternoon - at least not outwith school term dates.

## Amenity Group

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A huge thank you to the members of the village for their recent and ongoing activities:-

- Clearing the play park
- Repairing & making safe the steps down to the play park
- Clearing the Richardson Memorial Garden and
- Planting out the village tubs



The beautiful rose (in the photo on the front cover) certainly welcomes everyone entering the village ... does anyone know who planted it? If so please do let us know.

## National Nature Reserve

June 2023

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Michaela (left) alongside residential volunteers Alice and Carol-Ann

We'd like to welcome our newest full time staff member to have joined us at the reserve this summer, local lass Michaela Kennedy. Based in Spean Bridge, she recently came away from UHI West Highland having graduated in their course in Countryside Skills & Ranger Training, and with her gained knowledge alongside experience working with Jahama Highland Estates; we have no doubt that Michaela will have a lasting effect in enhancing the reserve.

In her time with us so far she's not been afraid to get involved with the volunteer work and the general duties of the reserve, like helping feed the native birds in our ancient alder wood, managing the resident Highland cattle for conservation grazing, surveying for dotterel on the mountaintops as well as getting herself qualified and familiar with all the relevant training for using the on-site vehicles and tools.

Beyond her determined and hard-working spirit, Michaela is a passionate hill runner and camper, who tries to get out to enjoy the Scottish wilderness whenever she can with her partner and two boys. With the glorious weather we've been relishing and the approaching summer bringing our visitor numbers up tenfold, we're thrilled to see the demand for venison, use of the paths and facilities and overall energy of the reserve having grown immensely, and feel entirely capable with the extra help of Michaela and our wonderful volunteers in management over these busy next few months.

Recently, we held a deer management qualification 1 event as part of our community stalking initiative, welcoming locals under the expertise of our stalkers to help be involved in the crucial

management done on the reserve. Beyond keeping the deer numbers at a low to help regenerate our montane woodlands, we're ecstatic to see this work extended to community members in helping them gain new skills and insight, as well as bringing home some venison at the end of it all.



One of our resident highland cows enjoying some bog myrtle

The volunteers have also been hard at work putting together the fencing for our recently established orchard, which in a few years time we hope will provide the reserve with harvests of fruits like apples, pears, gooseberries and blackcurrants that we can offer to both visitors and the wider community.

The reserve has been teeming with wildlife as our woods have exploded with their lush summer foliage, with a number of recent sightings including some of our favourite winged residents like Golden eagle, dotterel, ring ouzel, merlin, hen harrier, and short eared owl, alongside our usual deer and mountain hares in the uplands. The warm dry period has seen the emergence of plenty of lizards, alongside frogs of all size and colour with the rainy spells.

With summer in full swing, there's no better time to come along to the Creag Meagaidh NNR and see all the wonderful nature we have to offer in its absolute prime.

Rory Richardson

## Fort William Mobile Library

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Highlife Highland Libraries visits Laggan village and Kinlochlaggan on a Tuesday ...

For dates and times either telephone 01397 703552 or go to [www.highlifehighland.com/libraries](http://www.highlifehighland.com/libraries)



High Life Highland Libraries

## Jahama

Jonathan Hart

It's been a super busy spring at Glenshero, and we have several key updates for the Laggan Community:

### Staff

Angus Macdonald has recently celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday along with colleagues from the Estate, the Smelter, and our Hydro teams. Angus's birthday event was combined with a long service award presentation at Sherramore Lodge, where many staff celebrated their shared experiences of knowing Angus, working with him, and simply enjoying his good company. Angus will be very well known to many reading this article and we're delighted that he remains an employee and that he can continue to make a huge contribution to all the great work we have underway at Glenshero.



Other staff recognised

by the company for their long service awards this spring have been Ishbel Hendry (10 years) and Shona Simpson. Shona has been recognised for her outstanding contribution to proudly maintaining and supporting staff, clients, and visitors to Glenshero and at Sherramore Lodge, stretching back over 38 years. Ishbel and Shona were presented their long service awards by Paula Ross, the new Estates Lead, who has transferred across from the operations team at the Smelter.

In addition to celebrating our long serving staff we have also been busy with new starts at Glenshero. We now have two new starts in the sporting team, namely Calum Frame (student second stalker) and Ryan Johnstone (Ghillie). We also have Armia Baltrunus joining us on the farming side of the operation and Angus Todd returns this summer as a seasonal ranger, having made a great impression last year in the same role. Many of you are likely to bump into our new staff when you're out and about enjoying walks and cycle rides across the Estate. Finally, we're super excited to hear the news that our stalker Edward Greenhalgh is an expectant father. Having new staff join us, families settling and working in the Badenoch Glens and the new generation coming through is a hugely important aspect of our wider contribution to the community and the region. We look forward to them enjoying their time as part of the wider Glenshero, Laggan Badenoch community and the Jahama Highland Estates family.

All picture credits: Advance British Aluminium



## Projects

Our peatland restoration continues at pace and for this season we plan another 50 hectares for later in the year. Our native woodland plans for the Estate are coming together and we will be finalising these details over the next few months. We continue to work closely with many



organisations at Glenshero including the RSPB for wader counts and the introduction of further wader scrapes (left), the Spey Fisheries Board, and the Spey Catchment Initiative for wider upper Spey catchment improvement projects as well as a host of other biodiversity and catchment improvement projects. We have met with SSE and are in agreement with the Laggan community Council in stating our position that any power distribution systems linked to the proposed windfarms at Dell and Cloiche, need to be underground.

Our work with the various upper Spey catchment stakeholders to improve the whole of the river catchment system has been particularly significant over the last year. We have introduced the wooded structures into the river (below left), made major modifications to the internal lighting within the Spey dam to improve and enhance fish movements, have trapped, and recorded a significant number of smolts in the upper section of the river (below right) and have proved that numbers of adult fish are moving through the Spey Dam and are spawning successfully. We remain focused on efforts to improve the whole of the wider upper Spey catchment and look forward to being able to bring the community further positive news over the coming year.



The Spey reservoir is a vitally important wetland for some of Scotland's rarest waders

## Arthritis in dogs and cats – new options

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As with us humans, most pets will suffer with some degree of Osteo-arthritis (OA) at some point in their life.

Traditionally treatment has been aimed at reducing the effects (e.g., pain and reduced movement) caused by bony changes in the joint. Once these changes occur there is no cure.

However, the arthritis effectively starts when there is inflammation of the lining of the joint and this progresses on to changes in the cartilage and finally the bone.

Modern thinking is that if we could diagnose the OA at an early stage, we could markedly reduce the progression of the disease and possibly reverse it in some cases.

However, dogs and cats are very good at hiding these early stages. Some signs to look for are:

- Stiffness, lameness, limping, or difficulty getting up.
- Lethargy.
- Reluctance to run, jump, or play.
- Weight gain.
- Irritability or changes in behaviour.
- Difficulty posturing to urinate or defecate or having accidents in the house.
- Stiff, swollen, or sore joints.
- Reluctance to be touched on some parts of the body.
- Reduced grooming, possibly with fur matting.



Traditionally treatment options have been aimed at reducing the pain associated with OA e.g., meloxicam, and whilst these drugs can be very effective, they occasionally will have side-effects.

Recently newer treatments have become available:

- A) Librela (Dogs) and Solensia (Cats) are monthly injections that help to block the transmission of pain. They appear to be effective in many animals and are relatively very safe.
- B) Intra-articular injections. This is when certain products are injected directly into the joint affected, usually under sedation. Several options are now available and appear to be effective, especially if used early on.

**One thing that can make a great difference is ensuring you pet is not overweight. Studies have shown that when some overweight dogs with OA were dieted and reached their correct body condition, they no longer needed pain medication.**

Trevor Warner MRCVS

## Stonelaig and Dunmaglass Wind Farms Scholarship Fund

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I am writing to make you aware of the launch of a new fund - Stronelaig and Dunmaglass Wind Farms Scholarship Fund. The fund is now open for applications and will close on 13 September 2023. <https://www.sserenewables.com/communities/scholarship-funds/>

The fund supports young people to attend college and university by providing two scholarships of £5,000 to students who are studying one or a combination of science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) courses in the coming academic year. The funds are paid towards the scholar's student loan, reducing the amount needing repaid when graduating.

To be eligible applicants need to live in one of the 7 surrounding community council areas:

- Stratherrick and Foyers
- Strathdearn
- Strathnairn
- Laggan
- Fort Augustus and Glenmoriston
- Spean Bridge, Roy Bridge and Achnacarry
- Glengarry

For full details on the fund and how to apply download the [Stronelaig & Dunmaglass Scholarship guidance notes](#).

Click [here](#) to go to the Stronelaig & Dunmaglass Scholarship online application form.

If you have any queries, please get in touch.

### **Carol Masheter**

#### **Community Fund Manager - Great Glen**

SSE Depo, Henderson Road, Inverness, IV1 1SN

E: [carol.masheter@sse.com](mailto:carol.masheter@sse.com)

P: 01738 351576

M: 07721443044

W: [sserenewables.com](http://sserenewables.com)



# Community Council

# Colin Morgan Chair LCC

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## CHAIR'S REPORT - LAGGAN COMMUNITY COUNCIL AGM - JUNE 2023

### MEETINGS

The Community Council has met 9 times since the last AGM in June 2022 with a welcome return to "in person" meetings. Thanks are due to all members of the CC for their efforts over the past year to ensure that Community wide issues are progressed in an open and transparent manner. During the year Gordon Stirling stepped down as Treasurer as he left the area and we were pleased that Jill Warner stepped into the treasurer's role. Changing office bearers with the RBS was its usual challenge. During the past year, we have been equally grateful for the support and views of the community, our area Highland Councillors and Ward Management. The Community Council routinely reviews a number of statutory items as noted below:

**PLANNING/LICENSING Applications:** The CC exercises its statutory right to review, and where appropriate, respond to all planning & licensing applications. It was disappointing that training in Planning policies and procedures for Community Councils and their officials had still not taken place in the past 12 months. There were a number of residential planning applications - most of which were broadly supportable. Having passed a resolution in the previous year to object to any retrospective applications, one set of applications was objected to, from a Balgowan property. Although these specific applications were ultimately granted by the planning authority, there remain a number of outstanding questions which are the subject of continuing neighbour dispute. A planning application for a wind farm development by SSE at Cloiche (next to the existing Stronelaig development) remains outstanding as does a potential application by SSEN Networks to erect Pylons connecting the Melgarve Substation to the Stronelaig plateau. That formal planning application has not been submitted as yet however the CC has already indicated that it would urge the developer to "underground" any potential cable connection. We continue to await information from Jahama Highland Estates (JHE) - owners of the Glenshero Estate - for their Forestry Management Plans in the coming years as well as from FLS for their 10 year Forest Management Plan for Strathmashie Forest.

**ROADS/TRANSPORT LINKS** - This continues to be the topic, which exercises and frustrates members of the community most during the year - with speed, road safety, road surfaces and "local connections" areas of most frustration. The topic of most significant interest to the community, and for which there has been little effective engagement from Highland Council transport officials is the urgent need for a public transport service connecting Laggan to the rest of Badenoch and Strathspey all year round. The present gap - i.e. no bus service during the school holidays is very frustrating for residents, local businesses and visitors to our area. We will continue to press for this service improvement with our local Councillors. STOP PRESS - without any discussion, a new service 39 was introduced from the beginning of June, Monday to Friday arriving in Laggan from Aviemore at 1105 and departing Laggan to go to Aviemore at 1110.

**COMMUNITY ASSETS - School** - The present “mothballing” of Gergask primary school was a significant blow to the community and came at a time when the local **Church** was not permitted to call for a new minister and so also putting this local facility “at risk”. The CC requested education officials to meet with us, and any prospective parents, to understand the guidelines to re-open the school. Consultation events were held in April 2023 and we await the outcome. The **Public Toilet** remains open, following support from the local Community Action plan events, and we are grateful to the Church for continuing to operate this facility under the auspices of the Highland Council Comfort Scheme. **Picnic Site and Play Park** - the work done by local volunteers in the community to tidy the play park area, repair the steps down into the area, pick up litter and attend to the various planters is always much appreciated and thanks go everyone who has helped out.

## **COMMUNITY CONSULTATION & COMMUNICATION**

With the encouragement of SSE - a provider of a significant source of Community Benefit funds (see below) - the CC, along with VABS’ facilitation, developed a new Local Community Action Plan in late 2022. Around 87 residents provided feedback to the on-line survey, attended local events and from this a revised Action Plan was created - this can be viewed on the [www.laggan.com](http://www.laggan.com) website as can all the minutes of Community Council meetings.

Fortunately the community did not experience similar emergency events that resulted in our power supplies going down in November 2021/January 2022 but the need for a **Community Emergency Resilience Plan** remains outstanding. A number of our community groups will be needed to establish such a plan.

The “Connecting Laggan” paths project proposing possible routes to connect all the hamlets of Laggan safely, by taking walkers and cyclists off the main trunk roads through our area, has unfortunately stalled with Transport Scotland’s inability to respond timeously to requests for assistance. Laggan Community Housing Ltd continues to undertake its feasibility study to provide additional affordable properties in Laggan Village with a community consultation event held at the end of March 2023 providing appropriate feedback for on-going discussions.

The publication of Laggan Matters continued during the year and we are enormously grateful to our current editors Jill Warner and Amanda Gallagher for their time and effort in this task and to Ardverkie Estate for printing copies of the newsletter for distributing. This newsletter is for the community and articles, large and small, are always welcomed by the editors and each edition is welcomed. All the editions can be seen on the [www.laggan.com](http://www.laggan.com) website.

**SSE COMMUNITY INVESTMENT FUND** - The Laggan Community continues to be a beneficiary of funds from the SSE Stronelairg Community Investment fund. The fund started in 2017 but only operational to Laggan in early 2019 - and specifically after the Community Council was formed in late 2018. The commitment of funds from SSE is for a total period of 25 years - the first 3 years of which operated via a local volunteer advisory panel under SSEs guidance (to April 2023). New panel arrangements are expected to be agreed after June 2023, when new guidelines for managing the fund for the next 19 years are determined. SSE has already “reserved” funds up to year 6 - to end March 2023. 4 members of the community continue to volunteer to administer the local Micro Grant process (for grants <£500). A

separate report on recipients of all grants, since inception, is available at [www.laggan.com](http://www.laggan.com) however the most significant recent grant award was to Laggans Helping Hands to acquire and install 4 new Automatic Emergency Defibrillators at certain facilities throughout the Laggan Community.

**FINALLY** - my thanks to everyone in the community who has supported the Community Council at its meetings as well as helping to progress a number of community projects. I will demit as Chair of the Community Council at the AGM and offer my thanks to all Community Councillors past and present, as well as members of the community, for all your support.

## Recipe - GF Sicilian Lemon Cake

Annette Reavley

Annette has kindly agreed to share the recipe for her delicious gluten free Sicilian lemon cake and we can vouch for how good it tastes! If you don't believe us, pop into the Laggan Coffee Bothy where they often have it on sale ....

Ingredients:

300g Stork margarine  
300g Caster Sugar  
5 large eggs.  
Grated zest of 2 -3 lemons  
300g GF self raising flour  
2 teaspoons GF baking powder  
1/2 - 1 teaspoon Xanthan gum  
Pinch of salt

Put all the ingredient in a mixer and beat until smooth

Pour into a 9 x 13 baking tin lined on the bottom and bake at 80\* C / 160\* F for approximately 40-50 minutes (or until cake tester comes out clean)



Butter Cream

250/300g of soft margarine  
500/600g icing sugar  
More grated zest and at least the juice of 1 lemon  
Decorate with either more zest or some fruit

## The Laggan Forest Trust

## Summer 2023

In the forest near the Wolftrax centre, the timber harvesting activities by FLS in the Squirrel trail was completed in early May with the trail re-opening with some spectacular views to the west now evident now that the trees are away.

However, felling in the Blackwood Area around the core path to Feagour started unexpectedly in early June with 1 working days notice. Some subsequent discussions provided some reassurance from FLS that no nesting birds would be impacted, that the core path will be re-opened by mid July and that timber haulage will be sensitive to any walkers/mountain bikers in the area up to Dun Da Lamh Hillfort. The contractor (Tilhill) was awarded the contract as part of its Long Term Contract commitment from FLS and so no local involvement was feasible - indeed such local involvement in contracts has not been feasible for quite a few years now. FLS has also undertaken to have no timber movements at weekends and at times when the school bus is in the Strathmashie area during the week.

It is also expected that the new FLS Regional Manager for the area - Alex Macleod - will be having a visit in the coming weeks to discuss many points of common interest for the Trust.

Our other on-going projects are: 1) The "Connecting Laggan" project - this unfortunately has stalled with Transport Scotland presently unwilling to support design proposals and requesting more road safety and re-alignment studies at the Laggan village junction. There is also a somewhat surprising budgetary issue within Sustrans who have still to confirm agreement for existing and future funding - perhaps a hint that Scottish Government budgets are presently very strained.

2) The building of a BLUE mountain bike trail at the Laggan Wolftrax Centre. With the co-operation of FLS, the contract for this has been issued and the contractor is expected on site by the end of June - a slight delay - with a section of the new trail being open by the end of July and the rest by end of September. FLS are also in the middle of regrading all the trails to a revised national standard - details of which will be very visible at the site. This is one of the sportscotland legacy projects to increase participation in cycling in Scotland. Plans and maps for the revised trail centre will be on display in the Laggan Wolftrax Centre,

3) On-going discussions are still being held with Laggan Community Housing Ltd on their need to make changes to the water supply system that serves the former Forestry Cottages at Strathmashie using a bore hole on LFT land.

Finally the AGM of the Trust was held on 31<sup>st</sup> May 2023 attended by sufficient members to enable a quorum - Reappointed as directors were Mignonne Khazaka, Angus Armstrong, David Narro and Michael Sharp with Colin Morgan being co-opted as a director until the next AGM. The charity's latest report and accounts are available on line at the LFT website [www.lagganforest.com](http://www.lagganforest.com)

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Colin Morgan,  
On behalf of The Laggan Forest Trust

# Laggan Community Fund Panel

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## Would you be interested in becoming a member of a local Community Fund Panel?

The Panel is a voluntary group of local people who meet 3 times a year to make decisions on the applications to the Stronelairg Community Fund for the Laggan area.

SSE are keen to hear for anyone who lives, volunteers or works within the Laggan Community Council area interested in joining the panel.

For further details or to request a nomination form contact:  
Carol Masheter T: 07721 443044 E: [carol.masheter@sse.com](mailto:carol.masheter@sse.com)

**Closing Date - 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023**



The revitalisation of the local Grants panel team was a key outcome of the Community meeting held with SSE and VABS in April this year. The panel application process is being handled independently by SSE, so that anyone resident, or with a property, or working, or volunteering in the Laggan Community Council area, is eligible to apply to be on the panel.

We would really like a large cross section of the community to apply to be members of this panel going forward - all with a shared interest in seeing Laggan develop as a vibrant community. (Editors' note)



## Laggan Heritage

**Pete Moore**

Around 80 folk from Badenoch and Strathspey came together for a ceilidh concert at Laggan Hall last month to celebrate Mrs Grant of Laggan. The event coincided with a visit to Laggan by Mrs Grant's Great, Great, Great Granddaughter, Rebecca Forrester, and her husband, Robert, who were visiting from Boston, USA.

With Michael Sharp compering the evening, singer and folklorist, Margaret Bennett, along with local performers Elizabeth Thomson, Dick Webster and the Badenoch Walking Group all performed songs of Mrs Grant's era. The Feis Spe juniors played a mixed set and Laggan exile, Roger Sharp returned 'home' to perform on the pipes and accordion. Throughout the evening, Mary Stewart delighted the audience with a wonderful selection of readings of Mrs Grant's letters.

Back in 2019, Laggan Heritage became concerned about the deteriorating condition of Mrs Grant's memorial and in 2020, successfully applied to the SSE Renewables Stronelairst Community Fund, for support to repair it. With funding from their own resources and a very generous contribution from Mrs Forrester, the work was undertaken by monumental stonemason, Jon Hearach from Inverness and a new gate for the railing enclosure, was made and installed by blacksmith, Davy Dingwall. The restoration involved lifting the heavy stonework and refitting it on site to stabilise the memorial, work on the marble fascia and the making of replica stone finials.



Rebecca and Robert Forrester at the memorial to Mrs Anne Grant - Rebecca's Great, Great, Great Grandmother



Rebecca and Robert Forrester with Laggan Heritage representatives from (L) Valerie Macpherson, Campbell Slimon and Graham Grant

## Grim Times

Graham Grant

Perhaps the editorial team of 'Laggan Matters' intend to propose a drastic solution in these troubled times. They have for several months been intent on identifying the ancient gallows sites in the parish!



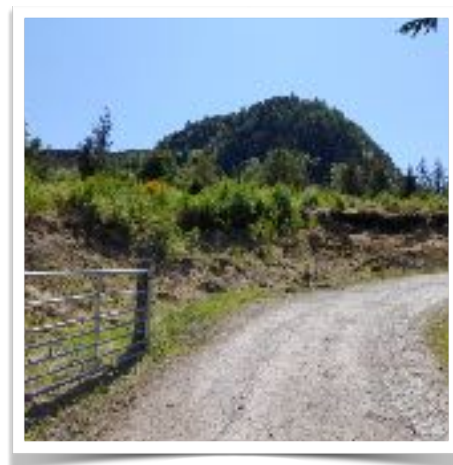
Angus Macpherson in 'A Highlander Looks Back' writes of Tom na Crochaire (Hangman's Knoll) just east of the Ghostie Bridge on the Glentruim road - "here was the very place where many weird executions took place when in bye-gone days one could be hanged for stealing a sheep and for less. To pass this place at night one often did so with fear and trembling as the ghost stories related by the old people were indeed most terrifying."

Dr I Richardson in 'Laggan' suggests this site was replaced by another more convenient at Cnoc na Cruach (heap, pile) in the field north of the junction at Catlodge. Hopefully this was pre the 1841 census, when 2 McDonald families with their 6 children lived in still visible houses at Tomnancrochairan, very close to the original gallows site!



Another site at Uvie Croft, Tom na Croiche (Gallows Knoll), east of the gate among the birches was described by the surveyor for the 1<sup>st</sup> OS map c1870, as never growing grass on its summit. Even today it is very bare!

Dr Richardson also contends yet another site at Creag nan Crocean (antlers?), very visible but now pine clad high above the Gorsteian forest car park and Drumgask farm.



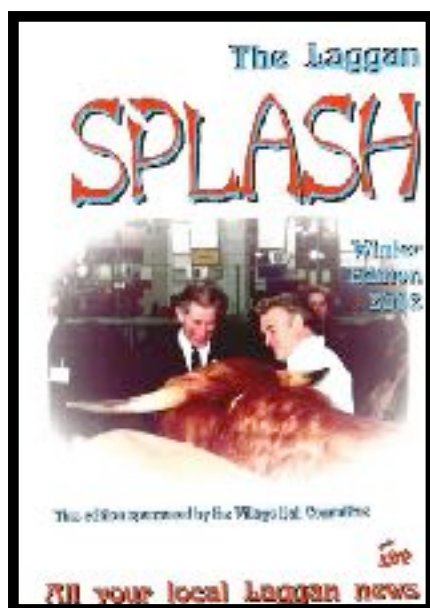
T Sinton in 'Poetry of Badenoch' writing of Ruthven across from Kingussie states "Here resided the Duke of Gordon's baron-bailie who wielded the awful jurisdiction of 'furcrum et fossa'. Nearby at Tom na Croich (that) grim machinery of pit and gallows (hanging for men and drowning for women) remained until heritable jurisdictions were abolished" in 1747 after Culloden. Here Allan Macpherson "retained until his dying day a fearful recollection of the creaking chain which used to terrify him as he took his way to and from school."

West in Invergarry, again the OS surveyor writes of a 'Gallows Tree' - "A fine old walnut tree, one of its arms which stretches out at an angle of about 90 degrees, is supported by iron bands fixed to strong stakes. It was here that criminals were hung during the power of the Glengarrys"

The last PUBLIC hanging in Scotland was of Dr Edward Pritchard on Glasgow Green in 1865 for the murders of his wife and mother-in-law. And astonishingly the last judicial hanging was only in 1963, of Henry John Burnett in Aberdeen for the murder of his wife's lover.

## Splash Back

## Winter 2002



### Cover Photo

Richard Thomson presents his Champion Steer to Prince Charles. The steer named 'Prince Phillip' was Champion Highland Steer at the Scottish National Fatstock Show in Perth and also Champion Highland Steer at the the Royal Smithfield Show in London.

Alistair Flemming's mother has kept many of her old copies of Laggan Splash and we thought it rather apt to include this 'front page' of our now King ....

Laggan Splash Winter 2002

## Laggan Community Housing Ltd - Catch-up

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**Proposed new housing** On the 30<sup>th</sup> March we had a good meeting with residents of Gergask Avenue and explained our thoughts on the hoped for housing on part of the picnic site. Owning the land plus having the water, sewage and electricity all available will help to keep the building costs as reasonable as possible.

We had considered taking the access through to Gergask Avenue along the front of the Albyn Housing Society homes. However we have been assured by the tenants they wish the grass to remain as it is their children's play area. So we are investigating alternative options.

Topographical investigations have just been carried out which will help us decide if or how many houses we might build.

**Play Park** We are pleased to report that the children's play equipment has been examined by Highland Council and all are in good order.

**Strathmashie Houses Water Supply** We are most grateful to all the residents for their patience over the past 18 months, and now with the planning application approved and now the grant to help with the cost, the new water system will hopefully be accepted. Thanks are due to Patricia Sheldon of Highland Council's Environmental Health for her patience and understanding over the grant application, which has had one or two hitches along the way.

Sheena Slimon  
Secretary Laggan Community Housing Ltd.

## Where is it?

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Do you know where the photograph below was taken?

Answer in the next issue ....

Photographed by Jackie Ashworth within the Laggan Parish



If you would like to send one of your photos for this regular feature, please email it to [jillvn@aol.com](mailto:jillvn@aol.com)

Answer to last issue's photo:-

Tin Hut at Blaragie  
Jill Warner



## What's on in Laggan July, August, September, October ...

### Community Picnic Sunday July 30th

- Sunday 30th July
- 12.30 onwards
- Laggan Beach



### Margaret's Ceilidh Saturday August 5th

- Saturday 5th August
- Time to be confirmed
- Laggan community Hall

### Laggan Community Council Meeting Monday 4th September

- Monday 4th September
- 6.30pm In Laggan Community Hall



### Laggan Helping Hands Wednesday 6th September

Afternoon Cream Tea

- Wednesday 6th September
- 2.30 - 4pm
- Laggan Community Hall



### Gilkes Energy Ltd - Lochan na h-Earba Tuesday 12th September

**Provisional** date for a public consultation re the proposal to build a pumped storage hydro electric scheme on Ardverikie Estate

- Tuesday 12th September
- 1.00 - 7.30pm
- Laggan Community Hall



### Laggan Community Council Meeting Monday 2nd October

- Monday 2nd October
- 6.30pm at Wolftrax



## Park Talk: Active Travel Is The Way To Go!

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June was a great month for biking with the Cairngorms Cycling Festival and the Kingussie Bikeathon happening. I was recently at the Vintage Day at the Highland Folk Museum and amongst the classic vehicles was an incredible display of classic bicycles. If you grew up in the 1970's you will know that the 'must have' bike was a Raleigh Chopper.

Looking at the Choppers on display reminded me of childhood years longing to own the most impractical bicycle ever mass produced. Unfortunately I never owned a Chopper, having to make do with more conventional but far less cool bikes to bomb around on with a shinty stick strapped across the bars. Regardless of what type of bike you owned as a kid, it represented freedom, getting you where you wanted to go quicker than walking!

Then we grew up, passed our driving tests and had a new found freedom -forgetting about the challenges associated with getting to places safely on two wheels.

In later life (who said mid life crisis!) I rediscovered the freedom that a bicycle gives you and have been fortunate to bike pack across the USA and Europe so I know the challenges associated with cycling in a motor dominated environment.

How people move about the Park - as well as how they get here - is a key focus for the Park Authority with the aim being to see increasing numbers of people switching to sustainable forms of transport (using the bus/train more) and active travel, which is essentially walking or cycling rather than relying on private cars.

Working with partners, we want to ensure that public transport is improved across the Park and that it caters for the needs of residents and visitors.

There is much work to be done but progress is being made such as the introduction of the new 'Aviemore Adventurer' bus which outdoor enthusiasts can use to get to Glenmore and Cairngorm Mountain with skis and bikes. More of this would be good - perhaps a service to take bikers to Laggan Wolfrax? That would be a 'win win' with visitors encouraged to explore a quieter area of the Park, easing the pressures around Glenmore, as well as providing a reliable public transport link for residents.

For people to consider cycling or walking more, it has to be easy and safe. While we already have many miles of excellent paths in and around communities, the Cairngorms National Park Partnership Plan sets out an ambition to further increase the number of kilometres of safe and inclusive off road or segregated on-road routes between communities by 2030.

There has been an ongoing programme of consultation over the past year looking at how we get about the Park and this is all part of the [Heritage Horizons: Cairngorms 2030 programme](#). Staff have been speaking to residents and visitors who have been keen to share their views.

In Aviemore alone, the team received more than 600 ideas and people have been equally vocal in Braemar, Ballater, Blair Atholl, Killiecrankie, Boat of Garten, Carrbridge, Dulnain Bridge, Nethy Bridge and Newtonmore.

Everyone wants to get around their villages and connect with neighbouring communities in a more sustainable way. A reliable public transport system and opting to “actively” travel if possible is good for the planet and it’s amazing for our health and wellbeing. If we can deliver on this vision we can make a difference for all our residents and visitors – whether they own a Raleigh Chopper or not!



Russell Jones, Cairngorms National Park Authority Board Member

## Jean Burnard

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I have the sad task of writing to let you know that we heard that Jean Burnard (of Am Bothan, Laggan) passed away this morning, June 21st, at the Mains, Newtonmore.

You will know that she was diagnosed with Alzheimers at the beginning of the pandemic but had managed to stay in her own home, with help from carers, until December last year.

Following a period of ill health last year, the decision was taken that she move into the Mains. However, her Alzheimers continued to progress and latterly she was not doing very well. For the last few days, she was receiving palliative care..

Details of funeral arrangements will follow as soon as we can put them in place.

Best wishes to all who knew her, for the family it feels like the end of an era.

Yours, Elspeth Rae Burnard (on behalf of the wider Burnard family)

# Contact Information

## **Church of Scotland**

Contact: [marythompson@icloud.com](mailto:marythompson@icloud.com) [www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk](http://www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk)

Telephone 01540 667226

## **Community Website**

[www.laggan.com](http://www.laggan.com)

## **Laggan Community Council**

Contact: [info@laggan.com](mailto:info@laggan.com) [chaircc@laggan.com](mailto:chaircc@laggan.com) [secretarylcc@laggan.com](mailto:secretarylcc@laggan.com) or  
[treasurerlcc@laggan.com](mailto:treasurerlcc@laggan.com)

## **Laggan Community Hall**

Contact: [cathyslimon@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:cathyslimon@hotmail.co.uk)

Telephone 01528 544309

## **Laggan Community Housing Ltd**

Contact: [sheena.feithbuidhe@icloud.com](mailto:sheena.feithbuidhe@icloud.com)

Telephone: 01528 544722

## **Laggan Forest Trust**

Contact: [business@lagganforest.com](mailto:business@lagganforest.com)

[www.lagganforest.com](http://www.lagganforest.com)

Telephone: 01528 544366

## **Laggan Heritage**

Contact: [info@lagganheritage.com](mailto:info@lagganheritage.com)