

# 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 had lots to celebrate so far this year and are looking forward to more village activities to come ...

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)



## Jubilee Celebrations



A great turnout of about 65 Laggan Residents past and present attended one of the first community wide events held since the various Covid 19 lock downs, to mark the Queen’s Platinum Jubilee. A team of volunteers from the community led by Jill Warner organised Laggan's street party on Friday 3rd June with a very welcome afternoon tea, children’s games and a cake decoration competition won by Fiona Grant. Many locals supplied their own “tray-bakes”, cakes and scones for a veritable feast of goodies and children had great fun with the various party games laid on. On a glorious day in the sun, it was fantastic to be able meet up again socially and celebrate each other's company - a welcome change. Colin Morgan



Photos courtesy of Fiona Grant and Colin Morgan.

## Village Planters



### Summer Planting

Thanks to the Village Amenity group again this year who received bedding plants from Highland Council again and were able to plant out all 29 village planters in the village just before the Jubilee street party. The plants have blossomed out in the favourable weather of late but they still sometimes need regular watering!!

Colin Morgan



## Helping Hands The Helping Hands Team

### Daffodil Tea



In April over 60 folk enjoyed a delicious afternoon tea in the village hall, hosted by the Helping Hands Team. Rory Richardson kindly set up his rolling photographs of beautiful local scenes and old and not so old locals, to entertain us.



### Defibrillators



Fiona Grant and Alison Armstrong with one of the new defibrillators acquired for the village with an SSE grant. They will be located at ...

- The Laggan Hotel
- The Village Hall
- Wolftrax
- The Pottery

Lucky2BHere are having difficulties in obtaining 2 more cabinets for the defibrillators for The Laggan Hotel and the Pottery Coffee shop. The cabinets will require to be wired into an electricity supply as they need to be kept warm to prevent the defibrillators freezing up in the winter and Finlay Binnie has kindly volunteered his services.

## Food Share Shed

Hopefully over the next few weeks you'll notice a small shed appearing in the Laggan car park. Laggan's helping Hands have received an SSE microgrant to purchase a weather proof shed, plastic base and shelving. Its purpose is to cut down on food wastage by encouraging us all to put in it any excess dried food or vegetables we have, and also of course take food from it if we run out of something, and save a journey to a shop. It will not be possible to leave cold food or food past its sell by date. Helping Hand volunteers will check it regularly and remove any unsuitable food, but it will not be locked and people will be free to use it whenever and as often as they like.

Hopefully this will be a happy way of doing something which is good for us and the planet.

## What's on .... July & August

### Garden Open For Charity      Shanvall, Glentruim



- **1st July to 15th August** by arrangement only
- T 01540 673213 or email [beth.alder@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:beth.alder@yahoo.co.uk)
- Admission by donation for Laggan and Newtonmore Church of Scotland & Scotlands Gardens Scheme



### Laggan Village Hall      Margaret's Ceilidh



- ♦ **Saturday 6th August** from 7.30 for 8pm
- ♦ Donations on the door
- ♦ Refreshments & raffle
- ♦ Ian Cameron, the Senior Fèis Spè Band and other local guest artists including Margaret Bennett.
- ♦ All proceeds will go to the Fèis Spè.

### Laggan Community Housing Ltd AGM

Annual General Meeting, **Thursday 11th August** in Laggan Hall at 7.30pm.

All welcome

## Community BBQ on Ardverikie Beach

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All Welcome ...

- **Sunday 14th August** from 1pm onwards
- BBQ
- Family games
- Parking near the beach



## Where Is It?

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Do you know where this photograph was taken?

Answer in the next issue ....

Answer to last issue's photo:-

The Church Spire, The Monarch



Photographed by Jill Warner 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)

## Jamhama Highland Estate

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“We have been continuing with our environmental improvements over the last few months. During recent weeks the Hydro team have undertaken improvement works in the fish pass at Spey Dam. The works included a three-dimensional topographic survey, which has enabled us to build a virtual model of the fish pass, and the installation of a unique lighting arrangement. The internal lighting system is programmed to mirror the external lighting conditions to maintain a steady light level throughout the full migration journey.



Ana, Bruce and Chloe have been working on a wader project at the farm. Bruce has created scrapes with the digger which will provide a muddy feeding ground for birds such as Curlew, Lapwings and Oyster Catchers. Bruce has already spotted birds on the scrapes; we’re delighted they’re working.

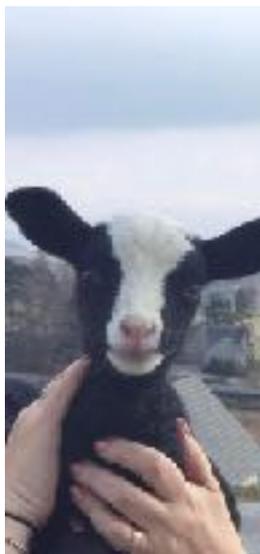
Angus has been busy using his years of knowledge to create more bird boxes and has started making planters. We are hoping to use these at our holiday cottages to add a pop of colour and attract insects. The cottages are becoming increasingly busy as we head into the summer holidays and stalking season, we are delighted to be welcoming Zoe from Breakachy to join Shona and Ishbel in the housekeeping team.



We continue to host the MoD and there have been a number of military training exercises across Glenshero. We are often hosting our local regiment, the Highlanders, an Infantry Battalion based in part, out of Fort George”

Ana Young

## Farming life in Balgowan



In 2005 due to an infestation of ragwort on the croft, I was persuaded that sheep are the best eradicator of this weed, so I purchased 5 Zwartble sheep which are of Dutch origin. I now have no ragwort. The next step I was told - you must get a Tup (male sheep) for them to produce lambs. Over the years I have built up a pedigree closed small flock of between 20-30 sheep. They are quiet sheep, easy to handle and make excellent mothers. The lambs usually make good prices when they are sold at market in the autumn.

I have to admit when I got them to having no knowledge of sheep, but thankfully due to George Raspy (who I purchased them from) and the local crofters and farmers of Laggan, who I must say a big thank you for your help, I have now built up knowledge of lambing and problems associated with this and the health of sheep/lambs etc. (I am still constantly learning!)

The highlight of the year is the Lochaber Show, Fort William where the sheep and lambs have got a few rosettes. Susan Macpherson



Photos:  
Jackie Ashworth



**M**eanwhile Ewan Fraser's Scottish Blackface sheep are under the watchful eye of the beautiful Fay. Here she is 'holding' the ewe while she feeds her young lamb.

You might be forgiven for thinking there is a fox rounding up the sheep in the background in the photo below, such is Fay's beautiful coat colour!  
Photos: Ewan Fraser



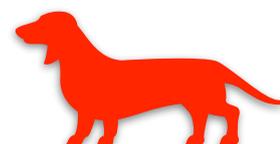
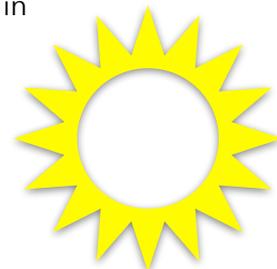
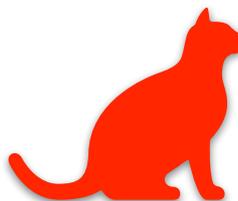
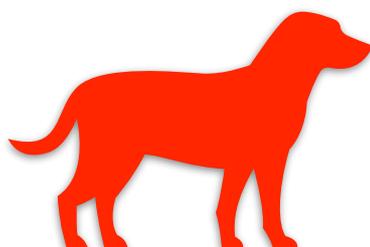
## Vet Talk

Trevor Warner MRCVS

Every year hundreds of dogs are treated for heat stroke. Some end in tragedy. Many cases are a result of dogs being exercised when temperatures are at their peak. Heat related illnesses are always preventable but it's important to know when dogs are at risk ...

Symptoms of heatstroke in dogs and cats include:

- Heavy breathing/ panting
- Bright pink tongue or gums, a lolling tongue
- Excessive drooling
- Vomiting
- Restlessness
- Dizziness
- Collapse



Out door Temperature		Risk Rating
<b>32+0C</b>	Heat stroke is a major risk regardless of condition, size or breed.	10/10
<b>28-310C</b>	Dangerous for all, but. Life-threatening for larger breeds and puppies as well as dogs who are flat faced (brachycephalic) or obese.	9/10
<b>24-270C</b>	Exercise caution as most dogs, particularly those who are large, obese, flat faced and very young, will find these temperatures uncomfortable.	8/10
<b>20-230C</b>	Even at this temperature dos are at risk of getting heat stoke if exercised too rigorously, or if they suffer from an underlying condition such as obesity or breathing difficulties.	6/10
<b>16-190C</b>	Generally safe to exercise dogs at all times of the day, although keep a close eye on large, obese and flat faced breeds.	4/10
<b>12-150C</b>	No evidence of heat stroke risk so enjoy your walk.	1/10

**If at all concerned about your pet, contact your vet immediately.**

# Laggan Community Council

Colin Morgan Chair LCC

The Community Council held its AGM on 20<sup>th</sup> June 2022 and the undernoted residents were appointed as officials for the coming year. We were also please to welcome our new Highland Councilor to the meeting, Russell Jones and he will be taking an active interest in our priorities.

Colin Morgan - Chair; Mignonne Khazaka - Vice-Chair; Amanda Gallagher - Secretary; and Jill Warner as Treasurer. Lauren Hendry continues as an elected councillor and Valerie Macpehrson as a co-opted one. Gordon Stirling has advised his intention to resign from the Community Council shortly, as he is moving away from the area. We have been very grateful for his commitment to the Community Council as a member and treasurer.

With the next Community Council elections not until November 2023, there are vacancies available for residents to be co-opted on to the CC until then. Please contact any member of the community council if you are interested in supporting your community in this way. Dates for 2022/23 meetings will generally be on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each month at 1900 and details are posted to the [www.laggan.com](http://www.laggan.com) website and village notice board.

Priorities for the Community Council in the coming months will be;

1) to progress elements of the Community Action Plan - a consultation on the outcomes of the Connecting Laggan project is expected in late August.

2) a revised Community Consultation to re-determine the priorities for the Laggan Community post Covid (requested by SSE) and to ensure that future operation of their Community Benefit Scheme is fit for purpose and any revised local priorities.

3) Planning - there will no doubt be a few applications which could impact on the community and these will continue to be monitored and advised to ensure community interests are represented.

4) An emergency resilience plan for the community - power outages last winter impacted electricity, water supplies and broadband coverage in our area, so these are important to secure. Community facilities such as the Village Hall and the Wolfrax Centre can both play an important role in such plans.

5) Road and Pathway improvements along the A86 and A889 (Transport Scotland) - and on-going road safety issues to Police Scotland/BEAR and Highland Council.

6) From Forest & Land Scotland, a discussion on their next 10 year Forest Development plan for the Strathmashie Forest estate;

No doubt, a number of other questions and issues will arise for the Community Council to try and address on your behalf. Comments on any matter can be sent at any time to our various e-mail contacts [chairlcc@laggan.com](mailto:chairlcc@laggan.com) [secretarylcc@laggan.com](mailto:secretarylcc@laggan.com) or [info@laggan.com](mailto:info@laggan.com)

## Laggan Community Housing Ltd

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Laggan Community Housing Ltd Management Committee are pleased and relieved that Highland Council agree in principle and supportive of the proposed houses in the Picnic Site and the Scottish Government have accepted our application for help from the Rural Housing Fund.

The Management Committee are pleased and relieved that John Grant is again keeping the Picnic Site and play area paths strimmed for us. Highland council are still carrying out yearly inspections to ensure all the play equipment is in good condition, and cover its insurance .

The Secretary  
Laggan Community Housing Ltd. - 07398 305278

## Dark Horse

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This drink was born in a cocktail bar called The Dark Horse in Bath, North Somerset, one chilly afternoon & combines three ingredients to make an all-seasons drink ...

Ingredients:

- ✦ 25ml London Dry Gin - you chose your favourite!
- ✦ 100ml dry cider (I used alcohol free cider!)
- ✦ 75ml ginger beer.
- ✦ Ice is optional - if the ingredients are chilled simply combine in a glass.



# Laggan Heritage

## St Michael's cross

Campbell Simon



St Michaels was built on a "cold, stormy and inconvenient site", below Dun da Lamh, above the Spey. A thatched building, it was built 1803-06 by Father MacEachan of Arisaid. He translated the New Testament into Gaelic and with his "pure Arisaid Gaelic" he also composed a Gaelic dictionary.

In 1844 there were 135 communicants and 21 baptisms.

The Chapel was rebuilt in 1846 and sat 270.

By 1879 Kingussie was being served once a month, but three years later once a month in winter and three times in summer. The chapel at Laggan was closed in 1928 and the present chapel in Kingussie opened. St Michaels's was demolished in 1956. The pews were taken to Pluscarden Abbey near Forres.

Sometime in the 1980's Ronnie Campbell, crofter of Bohuntine, Roy Bridge, was showing a New Zealand relative where is ancestors worshipped when he noticed the cross. With landowner, Cameron Ormiston's blessing he took it back to Glenroy. But as time went on Ronnie thought it should be returned to Badenoch. It is unfortunate that he passed away recently and is unable to see it in its new position.

On Sunday 19th June at 3pm, Isabel Campbell, Ronnie's sister, unveiled the cross which now sits at St Kenneth's, Aberader Lodge by kind permission of Andrew Fielding of Ardverikie Estate.

Laggan Heritage are indebted to David Campbell who built the cairn voluntarily.



## Commonwealth War Grave

Graham Grant

A recent inquiry asked for information on the War Grave mentioned on the Commonwealth War Grave Commission, CWGC, notice at the gate of St Kenneth’s Chapel, Kinlochlaggan. Within can be found the burial place of Michael Gladney, aged only 19 years.

Michael, born 1921 in Clarenville, Newfoundland was one of the up to 400 members of the Newfoundland Overseas Forestry Unit NOFU, who during WW2, felled and extracted timber. They lived in 6 camps and ran 3 sawmills in Strathmashie and Ardverikie.



Michael probably helped to build, and was living in, the camp in the sloping field just east of Inverpattack Lodge. The work was hard and dangerous. Whilst loading logs onto a lorry, he suffered a haemorrhage in his lungs due to presence of Pulmonary Tuberculosis, and was admitted to Culduthil Hospital, Inverness. His father had also died of this rife disease and it would be another decade before TB would be becoming controlled by the use of vaccination, antibiotics and improved hygiene .



Michael asked his brother, Larry, also serving in the NOFU, but in Perthshire, to come and see him. On their parting, Michael demanded “Shake hands with me now boy ‘cause you will never see me alive again”. Shortly after, Larry writes that he received word that Michael had died, everything had been taken care of and that he was buried in Kinlochlaggan

Five other members of the NOFU also died during their time in Laggan but they are buried in the Parish Church graveyard. Information on them and much more on the NOFU, can be found in the book “Laggan Remembers” available from Coffee Bothy, C Slimon or myself.

## The Laggan Forest Trust – Summer 2022

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The Trust held its AGM in late June 2022 with 13 members attending in person or by proxy. Trustee Directors continuing for the coming year are Mignonne Khazaka, Angus Armstrong, David Narro, Michael Sharp and Colin Morgan. The charity's report and accounts can be found at the LFT website [www.lagganforest.com](http://www.lagganforest.com)

The Trust's activities have been curtailed of late however not idle. The past 12 months has seen an extension to the Wolftrax Centre with a new external facility to house visitor interpretation panels for the Laggan area and increase the capacity of the centre to allow meetings to be held. Some audio-visual equipment has been donated and we were also very pleased to receive one of the new Automatic Emergency Defibrillators acquired by the Laggan Helping Hands team on behalf of the community.

On the forestry side, FLS continue to plan felling and re-planting in the forest, and the forestry company has been able to secure some small contracts. Felling Plans for the coming winter suggest that the popular walking Squirrel trail near the Centre is to be included in the next round of felling - this area was the site of some considerable wind fall during the last winter storms, has been partially re-opened but is likely to close again from November 2022. Clearance work is still also needed on the Blackwood to Feagour trail path but a temporary diversion has been made to open this route to the Pattack Falls.

A potentially very significant project, in collaboration with FLS and Sport Scotland, is the building of an additional mountain bike trail at the Laggan Wolftrax Centre to complement the existing trails, some now nearly 20 years old. Already considered to be a premier destination for the mountain bike community and particularly the more experienced rider, the new trail is intended to complete the set of trails to allow skills progression for all abilities and ages and encourage more families to the area.

The addition of a BLUE trail will be a welcome addition judging by surveys undertaken at the cafe. A planning application is to be submitted soon and will go through the usual assessment process. All being well with both weather and fund raising, the new trail will be constructed in the Spring of 2023 on the hillside to the east and south of the present EE emergency telephone mast, with a hub connecting all the upper trails and providing great views of the surrounding hills. It is hoped to be open for next summer. Plans and maps will be on display in the Laggan Wolftrax Centre

Members attending the recent AGM strongly supported this development along with related cycling skills programmes being developed in conjunction with all the primary and secondary schools in the area.

Colin Morgan, Chair LFT

## Wolftrax

Cristian Pizzaro

The Laggan Forest Trust has just completed a project to deliver a few promotional videos portraying some of the highlights for cycling and walking around Laggan. The filming was predominantly made using drone footage to capture a wider view of the amazing landscape we live in.

There are four 4 themes portrayed:

1. Mountain Biking at Laggan Wolftrax
2. Children learning cycling skills at Laggan Wolftrax
3. Family cycling and walking experience to Dun da Lamh and Pattack Falls, and
4. E-bike ride to Glenshero and Garva Bridge



A link to their videos can be found on their social media and website pages.

A video was also made for the Laggan Wolftrax Café where the new team are focussed on new menu offerings for the summer months.

We are very grateful to the all volunteers from Laggan and the surrounding Badenoch area who took part in the filming.

The videos were filmed and produced by Aviemore based Kirk Watson from Perfect View Productions. They have been involved in several main-stream film series including recent BBC productions such as Countryfile, Attenborough, the Mammut Graveyard among others.

The Trust will be continuing to work on a few other projects focused on promoting cycling as a healthy option for all levels of ability, from everyday journeys to the highest technical level of the sport.



Photos from the E-bike ride to Glenshero

## Interview with Zoë McMinn

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Zoë moved to Laggan in April 2021 with her partner Ric, who is manager of the Pottery Coffee Shop.

### What Made you move to Laggan?

We'd escaped to a bothy in the Cairngorms between lock-downs in 2020 - it was our first time in Scotland and we were awestruck, transfixed, agog - all those things. Like a lot of people, lock-down gave us the time we'd never had to re-asses and pull ourselves together, update CVs and, in Ric's case, search for live-in jobs in the highlands. The Pottery Coffee Shop looked too good to be true, but then so was all of the Highlands. Our first time in Laggan was the interview, it was perfect. It was like Laggan chose us!

### Best bits?

The night after the interview - we were staying in the bunkhouse - we were standing out on the deck watching the sky, and the silence, complete, heavy and windless - like nothing i'd ever experienced - it was like a physical thing. It was so unfamiliar. I suppose the people here know it well, but i'd never felt it before. Even better are the evenings when you can hear curlew and snipe and owls. These wild sounds, right on our doorstep! Laggan is a magical place for wildlife - I never would've found it, if the Coffee Shop hadn't given us a life here.

And then there's the people. We met some of the local people on the first night, and within days i was loch-swimming with Jackie, Amanda, Jill, Mairi - it was a warm welcome, warm enough to make up for the chill of that swim. There are more lovely people than I can mention.

### Any challenges?

There's down-sides to every big change, and for me it's missing my former outdoor job, and not being able to meet those cracking people for the pub quiz or book club every month, or just knock on the door. It feels right to be up here, but it's hard to miss so many people who are far away.

### How have you found village life?

Community-wise I've felt very welcome but physically this little house and coffee shop feels so remote. I have to drive to walk my dog as the lack of pavement between Cat Lodge and Laggan Bridge make is a necessity. Having a pavement would give a physical connection to an already strong community.



### Any advice for anyone wanting to live in the Highlands?

For us it was a case of finding a job and home in the place we wanted. So find a live-in job and go for it because that's you up here! I'd say if you value a frank and patient kindness in people, if you commit to helping the environment, if you love the outdoors, love watching the skies change, the winters come and go and the mist pour over the hills, you belong here.

Jill Warner

## Contacts Information

### **Church of Scotland**

Contact: [marythomson835@brinternet.com](mailto:marythomson835@brinternet.com) [www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk](http://www.stbrides-newtonmore.org.uk)

Telephone 01540 661772

### **Community Website**

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

### **Gergask Primary School**

Contact: Telephone 01528 544272

### **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  
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### **Laggan Community Hall**

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

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

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### **Laggan Heritage**

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