

Kilfinan Forest Community News

Edition 3 – Spring 2021



Community Ownership at KCFC

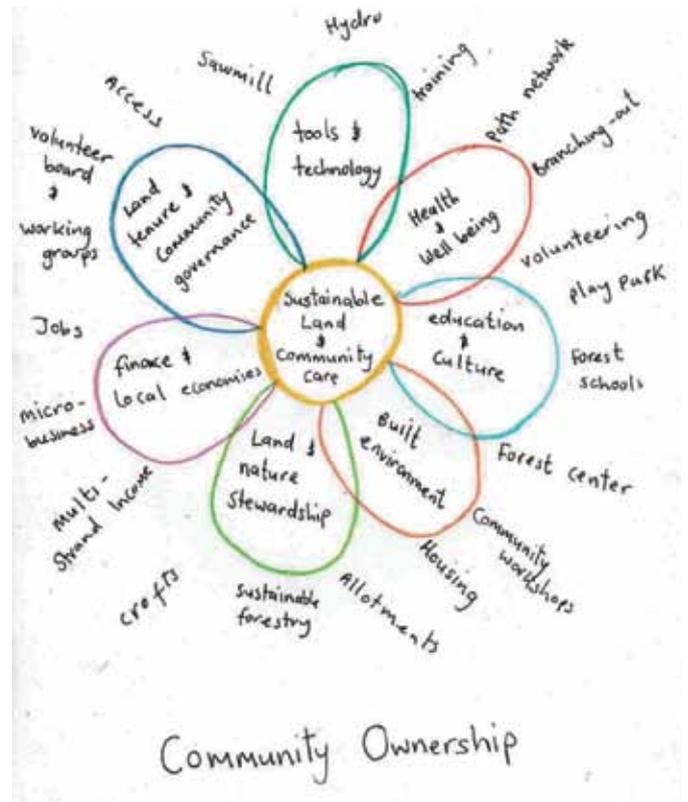
By *Kilfinan Community Forest Board of Directors*

Land reform in Scotland has created the opportunity for communities to purchase land and for new models of land ownership to emerge. The Acharossan forest was purchased by KCFC, on behalf of the community, with the aims of sustainable land management and rural regeneration. KCFC is a company with charitable status meaning that it is both a charity and a social enterprise. Our charity's constitution and the social enterprise's legal documents set out our model of community ownership. These documents are available on our website.

During the past year the pandemic has brought challenges and opportunities. We have focused our attention on looking after jobs and the people who work at the forest. We have also been reviewing our internal processes and practices to make KCFCs governance more robust. 2020 began with the establishment of Volunteer Cowal South West, and throughout the pandemic we have been pleased to support the activities of VCSW. The question we continue to walk with is - How can we look after the forest well? How can we evolve systems to be a better fit for our community needs? As we find ourselves emerging from a global lockdown into a new world, our discussions are moving outward and looking at what community ownership of the forest means and asking, how can we create a model that embodies our values?

Over the past ten years there have been many members of our community involved with KCFC and they have worked together to create access, build governance structures and projects that meet the main aims of sustainable land management and rural regeneration. During this time a web of interconnected projects has been created by, many hands, hearts and heads. These projects are all connected to our key aims and cover land and nature stewardship; the built environment; tools and technology; culture and education; health and wellbeing; finance and local economies; land tenure and community governance.

The flower image is a visual representation of that. The heart of the flower and the petals show the main domains and how they are all connected to the principles of regeneration, of both land and community.



info@kilfinancommunityforest.co

As a community, all of this is our responsibility. KCFC has a board made up of volunteers. This board has set up working groups to look at specific projects and areas. KCFC employs staff and works with contractors. Many

Continued on page 2

NEXT ISSUE: SUMMER 2021

Please send any articles or advertisements for future publication to info@kilfinancommunityforest.com
Cost for adverts; full page £45, Half page £30, Quarter page £15, Eighth page £8.

other folks are involved more informally in specific areas and through the volunteer group. Successful community ownership happens when every member of the community has a stake in the project's success, and where every member of the community feels able to bring forward their ideas and visions.

At KCFC we know it is important to build capacity so that everyone feels able to contribute and that their contribution is valued. Everyone needn't be an expert. Community ownership is about recognizing the skills we already have as a community and the skills we can nurture – in both ourselves and the future generations. It is about

everyone being part of a learning culture, being up for learning about leadership and being given the opportunity to get involved. In nature, healthy ecosystems thrive on diversity and we can learn from this.

We know this is an ongoing process. We are interested in everyone's ideas for how this can be achieved, and their vision for the forest – so get in touch with your thoughts. If you are interesting in getting involved, by; joining one of our working groups, volunteering with Volunteer Cowal South West, joining the Board or working at the forest we look forward to hearing from you. Due to the current restrictions we are unable to meet up face to face, but drop us an email and we'll be in touch.



Firstly I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers for their commitment to supporting our community during the pandemic. You have really shown us what an amazing community we are a part of. Thank you each and every one.

We have been pleased to receive further funding to continue support of the community until the end of May 2021. This funding will provide the volunteers with personal protective equipment to reduce any cross infection of Coronavirus during deliveries of prescriptions and food. We also have funds to cover volunteer expenses such as for travel.

The funding will also provide more newsletters to encourage community cohesion. This will include another one in the summer, please send in any articles or letters you would like to be included to volunteer@kcfc.scot

We are looking at ways for us all to recover from lockdown and reintegration. The summer newsletter will contain a diary of community events and volunteer opportunities.

Volunteer opportunities will include jobs in our community forest such as tree planting, tidying, invasive species management and also beach cleaning events. If you are part of a local community organization you are welcome to advertise your reopening event in the Kilfinan Forest Community Newsletter diary.

Our future plans include building a shed, for storing volunteer tools, a toilet and hand washing facility at Kilfinan Community Forest. We are also planning on having office space in the new Kilfinan Community

Forest Centre, when it opens post lockdown. Exploring the use of electric bikes for volunteer transport.

Thank you to all the contributors to the newsletter, from writers to producers to those delivering it door to door. Everyone gives his or her time and effort freely to make it happen. A big thank you to Stewart who does such a wonderful job of formatting.

I hope you enjoy reading this Spring issue, do send in your feedback and what you would like to see in your future community newsletter.

Warmest regards
Nicola Greenall
Volunteer Cowal South West Coordinator
Nb. new email address; volunteer@kcfc.scot

Coming together for a brighter community

Please send in any:

- Events for summer 2021
- Reopening dates
- Letters for the Letters page
- Any feedback on the Newsletter
- Volunteer opportunities
- What you would like to see in your newsletter

Tighnabruaich Primary School

by Mrs F. Hamilton, Head Teacher

This photo sums up the joy with everyone being back at school together week beginning 15th March. From 22nd February, Nursery to P3 had returned. For Primary 3 pupils it was especially strange as more than half their class was missing.

We welcomed 8 new children in this strange situation who have come to live in the area. The photo captures the joy of the reunion of P3/4 pupils at playtime, enjoying creating and playing with the loose parts. They are so creative.

If you have any 'junk' please consider gifting it to the school instead of taking it to the dump or binning it. Kitchen equipment is always very welcome for our mud kitchens (no glass topped cookers please). Sinks, pots, pans, scales, whisks etc. If you've been DIYing, we're happy to receive old guttering, pipes, hoses, cable drums.

The school is very much looking forward to being able to work directly with volunteers and have the children benefit from your time, experience and energy. Thank you to all who remain on standby.



'Local Health for Local People!'

By Rhyddian Knight, Forest Ranger, Glennan Woods

Kilfinan Foraging Blog

Last week, there was a chap bemoaning someone bringing food into the area from out of town. What with the hungry gap soon to be over, the birch sap rising & food appearing to appear again on the wild margins; now is a good time for making a return to eating local.

Foraging, it's fair to say, saw a resurgence in the noughties amongst the middle classes. Traditionally, gathering was a means by which our ancestors sourced much of their food for millennia; prior to being shamed by the meme that exotic fruit and vegetables should be aspirational by everyone but the destitute and the poor.

Nowadays, many folk have either inherited seasonal family traditions and continue to gather, eat, store, ferment and pickle. Others, like myself, have adopted it as a pushback against consumer capitals and to supplement their diet with readily available quality food. Whatever your origins, long live you all and the land, shore and waters we share.

The case for local food ... & grazing in the sunshine.

This time last year, with travel restrictions in place, & taking a precautionary approach to visiting the shops; I discovered some old friends just across the road from our home....my daughter and I would

socialise with them most days throughout the spring.

Regularly & often, we'd bring these wild garlic stems home; sometimes with flowers or buds for the table. We blended the plant with a little oil and ladled it into those silicone moulds you get; to make giant green ice cubes. Once they got hard, we put the cubes in a freezer bag and repeated the process whilst the plant was in season. It lasted as vegetable stock for our household meals until the end of September.

As it turns out, gathering those tender stems was just as important for my mind as it was for my body; and we look forward to gathering again this year as we enter wild garlic festival season.

It's Life Jim, but not as we know it.

It's true to say that plants, like us, respond differently according to the conditions in which they are given.

Continued on page 4

Foraged plants are uniquely adapted as a response to environmental conditions, and have grown to live in community as a part of complex feedback mechanisms in the microregion.

A good example of this are the leaves of ribwort plantain:

In healthy meadows it can taste delicious, rich, nutty and like raw mushrooms. In less healthy environments, like the car-park in Lidl; it's distinctly not something you would put in your mouth. This is because healthy soils contain many and varied mycorrhizal species; which allows the plant to become a part of greater whole, and mingle in it's flavas. Car parks; less so.

These fungal roots, known as mycelia, produce soluble compounds as plant nutrients as a by product; which are assimilated by the plantain's roots. It tastes of raw mushrooms because mycelia are the roots and branches of mushrooms. The magic in all this is those soluble compounds become bio-available to the family eating the plant. Now you wouldn't get that in your salad shipped in from a sterile factory farm from god-knows elsewhere.

Some plants also contain single cell Endophytic fungi, sometimes up to 200 species in a single plant. EF's function is to help the plants strengthen it's immune system and resilience, and connect it to other plants; as well as mainlining minerals it could not otherwise assimilate.

The presence of fungal cells and compounds is also modulating and strengthening our own immune system. By ingesting it's wild plants, we become localised, entering the biological matrix we call South West Cowal.

Positive gatekeepers - Guard the wild inside.

It always used to marvel me as a boy watching our dogs graze occasionally on wild plants. I'd ask my mother what they were doing and she'd say 'it's finding what it needs for it's body love'. Perhaps it's a bit like us selecting the plantain from a particular place for our salad.

It is Fred Gillam that reminds me that, even inside us; we are hugely outnumbered by other forms of life. The role of the immune system he says, is to let good stuff in as well as keeping harmful stuff out. He describes the human organism as comprising:

"30 trillion human cells ,32 trillion bacterial cells, three trillion fungal cells and 90 trillion active virus particles inside us, This is not including parasites and archaea".

He goes on to say that:

"The human being contains way less than 50% human cells. 90 per cent of this non human life lives in our gut and weighs about 5lbs. 50% of the volume of that is living fungus. There's 240g of living fungus on average walking around in each one of us. All of these living creatures interact directly with our nervous system and our immune system by signalling using compounds called chemokines & cytokines and through signalling compounds called interleukins. They communicate directly with neurones.

"There is a direct feedback mechanism between the microbiome and the nervous system."

Adam Haritan talks about eating mushrooms as ingesting the forest it came from, that mushroom is made up of the elements that built the forest. Of course, there's plenty of harmful funguses in the world, better to establish a good fungal community to suppress the proliferation of bad un's.

The organisms in our microbiome will favour certain foods, if you don't feed it; it will die and the ecosystem will break down. If you, like me, were taught to idolize processed food as a kid, it takes dietary discipline to turn a tamed belly back into a healthy microbiome. From an atrophied state, regenerating the health of the ecosystem of microbes in our gut, just as we seek to restore species diversity in the landscape; is a case of rewild or die. It's just as well food tastes good.

Professor Fred Provenza came up with the idea that: "Palates connect humans with landscapes through flavour feedback mechanisms".

Introducing kids to wild food from an early age, ensures an appetite for seeking out the food through the body registering the compounds it contains as 'good'. Last week, I observed the little one with this year's first shoots of wild garlic. Under supervision, she recalled, ate the plant readily and registered it as 'good'; even though she has currently taken a dislike for spicy and strong flavours.

Having tried to reconcile the implications of these facts, I have a notion that the more intact the landscape, the better the health in the gut; the greater for the capacity of the body to respond and adapt. This makes for a more resilient and robust state of health.

Amazon vs Atlantic rainforest. Mental health benefits.

Evolutionary speaking, we are supposed to be addicted to finding food. This is a life affirming impulse. Putting



your hand around a plant, or a mushroom and cutting the stem, stimulates a dopamine hit; resulting in feelings of satisfaction and reward.

We only have to check in with our behaviour, visit a social media feed, or check the frenzied footage of black friday; to realise that the natural biochemical release of dopamine has been co-opted by consumer capitalism.

Addiction, as a positive behavioural state; has been subverted. It's the same neural network that gives us feelings of reward associated with foraging, shopping online or knee jerk reactions on social media.

I've found during lock-down, as restraints in human relationships has been necessary or enforced, it has been easy to retreat into consumerism, processed food and social media as reward based behaviour. This is negative spiral in terms of mental and physical health. Being so, for anyone noticing similar patterning, I'm recommending a conscious emphasis on foraging. Let 2021 be a year for getting to know the edible wild plants, nuts, tubers and mushrooms.

Serotonin and melatonin has been known to be stimulated by regular non structured time in nature; which makes us far more chilled people to be around and far less likely than to have a low brain, knee jerk freak-out when we do go online.

Speaking about getting outside, we are seeking support under the canopy for tending our pilot regeneration exclosures, regular harvesting of rhododendron & bracken control on the paths; scything the meadow as well seasonal activities throughout the year. Please let me know if you'd like to volunteer.

'Do or do not' - 'there is no 'try'.

Please take great care and be meticulous in your identification of wild-plants before consuming them. Putting unidentified or misidentified things in your mouth can be very hazardous; causing death in some cases. Fortunately, there will be friends and neighbours that have strong relationships with some plants as well as excellent identification books specifically tailored for foraging enthusiasts.

Resources:

1. 'Foraging for Kids' facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/21015788358876>
2. The foragers handbook by Miles Irving: <https://www.goodreads.com/book/show/6616813-the-forager-handbook>
3. Or check out who knows stuff in your circle, come up with some questions and ask to go for a walk with them.

Letters

Thank you

I would like to thank the community forest for providing new flower boxes for the village and I wait with much anticipation for Bruce to add his magic and make the village bloom again.

Di Wilson

Clan MacEwen News

We are always busy with a bunch of irons in the fire! We are organising the hybrid Gathering for the first week of June– virtual and whatever physical is allowed

in locations worldwide. We are sending gifts from Argyll to our society members worldwide so they can join in with the online workshops wherever they are in the world and have mini gatherings in their part of the world if allowed. But even in the comfort of their own home they can enjoy a sample of Argyll with Eve's coffee, Fiona's Argyll botany soaps etc. We are compiling a Clan cookbook and a Kilfinan calendar and postcards at the moment and are still working on getting a site for our MacEwen wood and a larger heritage centre and shop in Kilfinan.

Sandra McCuin

New access path at Kilfinan Community Forest – now completed

The new path that runs up the side of Allt Mor Burn in the community forest, Tighnabruaich has been completed. It was more of a challenge than anyone anticipated due to the terrain and the amount of water coming off the hillside, but Tommy did an amazing job and thanks go to Donald for his patience!

It will take some time to settle in and tighten up. It makes for a beautiful walk with great views over the reservoir and out to the Kyles making a round loop with the Kilfinan Way of about 5km. There are some steep sections so do wear sturdy footwear as it may still be muddy towards the top. The work was jointly funded by Kilfinan Community Forest Company and Tighnabruaich and District Development Trust



Tommy Mueller, machine operator for Donald McVicar.



Michaela Blair explores the new track with the dogs.



Map of new path at Kilfinan Community Forest East of Alt Mor Burn.

Wild Kitchen

'Wild Kitchen' was started in 2020, the love of foraging, growing food and preserving the harvest inspired Leoma to turn this into a small business in Tighnabruaich, Argyll. Leoma produces all 'Wild Kitchen's' products from her home kitchen in Tighnabruaich using local ingredients to make jams, jellies, chutneys and Scottish tablet.

You can also find home made cakes, traybakes and pastries from Wild Kitchen at the local cafe 'Five West' in the village. Locally Wild Kitchen preserves and tablet are available to buy from Kyles Store & Five West Cafe. www.wildkitchenargyll.co.uk

Leoma also shares a recipe for *Wild Garlic Pesto*. She picked the wild garlic at Kilfinan Community Forest.

Ingredients

- 250g wild garlic.
- 60g walnuts or pine nuts.
- 60g Parmesan.
- 150ml Scottish Rapeseed Oil.
- Sea salt & black pepper.

Method

Rinse wild garlic and drain. Lightly toast walnuts in a dry frying pan for a couple of minutes. Blitz walnuts in a food processor; add finely grated Parmesan & wild garlic. SLOWLY add rapeseed oil, season, jar in sterilised jars, add a wee bit of rapeseed on top of pesto in the jar. Keep refrigerated for a few weeks!



Beinn Capuill and Beinn Bhreac

By Willie MacAllan

One of the more demanding local walks is to the summits of Beinn Capuill and Beinn Bhreac. The round trip is approximately 12 kilometres and the route is straightforward on a clear day. The views make the effort well worthwhile!

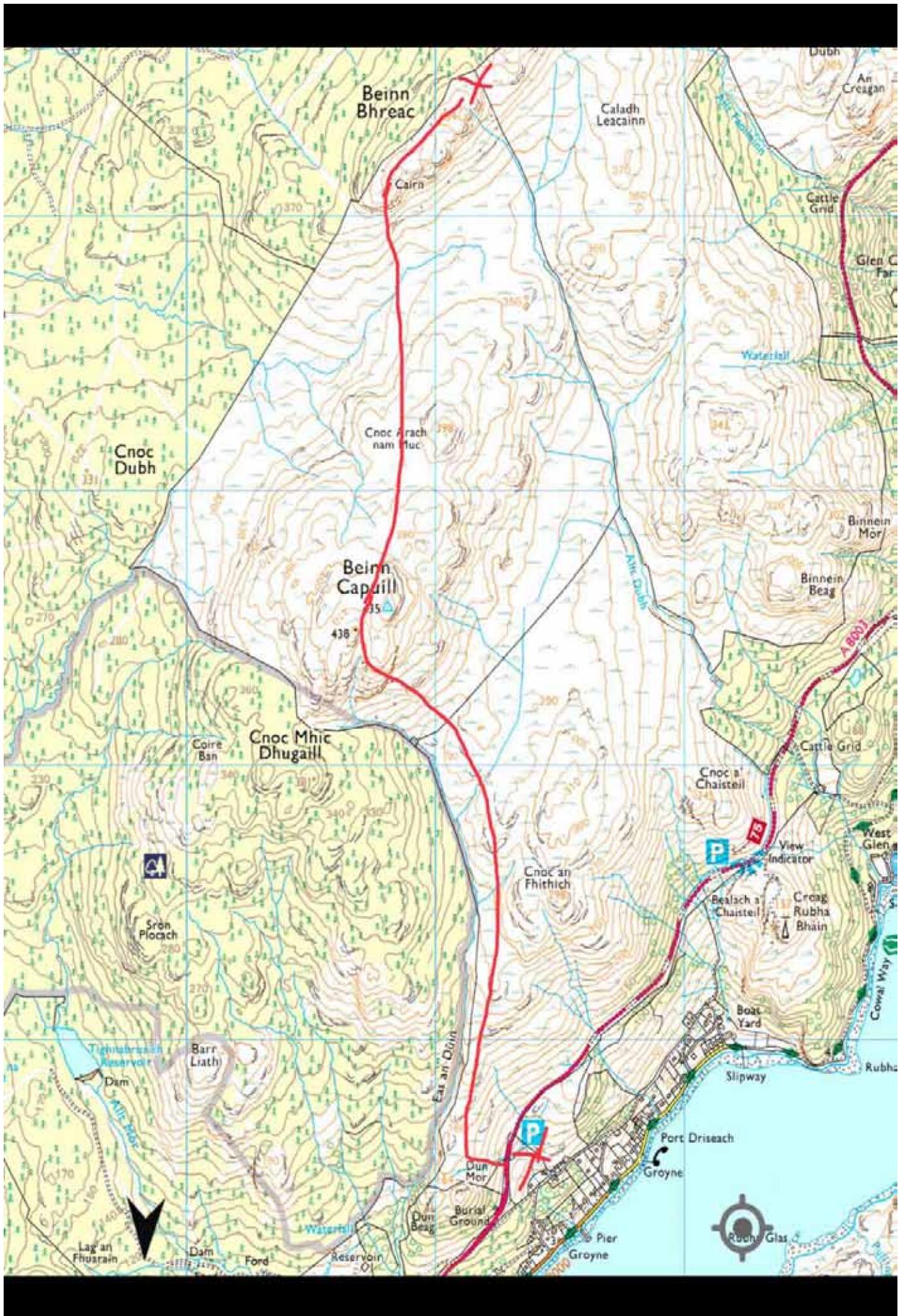


Start at the lay-by under the Dun Mor hill and head steeply up the path alongside the trees until you can see The Big Chair. Go through the gate to your right (north) onto the hillside. Follow the faint path uphill with Beinn Capuill on the skyline. The path is not well defined and there is some tough walking through the grass tussocks. Keep the burn and the tree line on your left and eventually you come to a fence with a gate

leading to the steeper south east facing slopes of Beinn Capuill. Head upwards and follow a rising ramp on the north-eastern flanks which leads to an easy slope to the summit and trig point. Enjoy the extensive views. Beinn Bhreac lies ahead (NNW) across the moor and it is a steep scramble onto the ridge. Follow the ridge to the summit which is the middle top beside a distinctive rocky outcrop. Again a fabulous viewpoint.

I recommend returning from Beinn Capuill by retracing your outward route but the more intrepid walker may prefer to return by way of the Kilfinan Community Forest. In this case my advice is to head for the top marked Cnoc Mhic Dhugaill and then try to follow the forest fire breaks, brash and boggy ground towards Barr Liath. Finding the route is part of the fun!

For safety always tell someone where you are going, dress for the Scottish hills and take care on steep slopes.





The Old Curling Pond

By Willie MacAllan

It is difficult to believe now that the old Tighnabraich curling pond was lost for many years and only uncovered in 2013 after the removal of what had been an impenetrable jungle of rhododendrons. The almost square pond measures 53 x 55m and is surrounded by a low flat bank some 3.5m wide. The bank was topped by thick rhododendron hedge to still the air and aid freezing. Water for the pond was supplied by the small burn that runs down from Lag an Fhuarain. A wooden sluice gate can still be seen on the south-western side of the pond which would have been used to help maintain the correct water level and aid the production of the layers of ice

There is some local memory of the curling pond still being in use into the early 1950s. The relics of a tin shed are located on the southern side of the curling pond and until recently housed wooden shelves for the curling stones. An iron gate and fence located to the east are probably associated with access to the curling pond. Should probably read a match a

The club was formed on 17th December 1878 in the Tighnabraich Hotel where a resolution to form a Curling Club was undertaken by Messrs D Gunn, R Duncan, J Duncan Jnr, J Scott, J McCallum, J Dalton, T Dobie and L Davies. The pond is later in date, constructed at a cost of £60 and rented for a price 1/- (12 pence!) per annum. The site first appears on the

Ordnance Survey one inch to the mile map published in 1906. The Tighnabraich pond was the venue for a District Medal match on February 3rd 1912 against the Innellan Wyndham Curling Club. The ice was described as “good”. Tighnabraich won the match (hurrah!).

Nowadays the pond has silted up and small birch trees have taken root and our warmer winters mean there is little prospect of a return to outdoor curling in Kilfinan Forest. Perhaps an area could be cleared where ice might again form on those few icy days and we could experience something of what it must of been like on those curling glory days 100 years ago.

The full Archaeology Report is on the Kilfinan Community Forest website

Signs of Spring

By Katharine Lowrie, ecologist, Millhouse

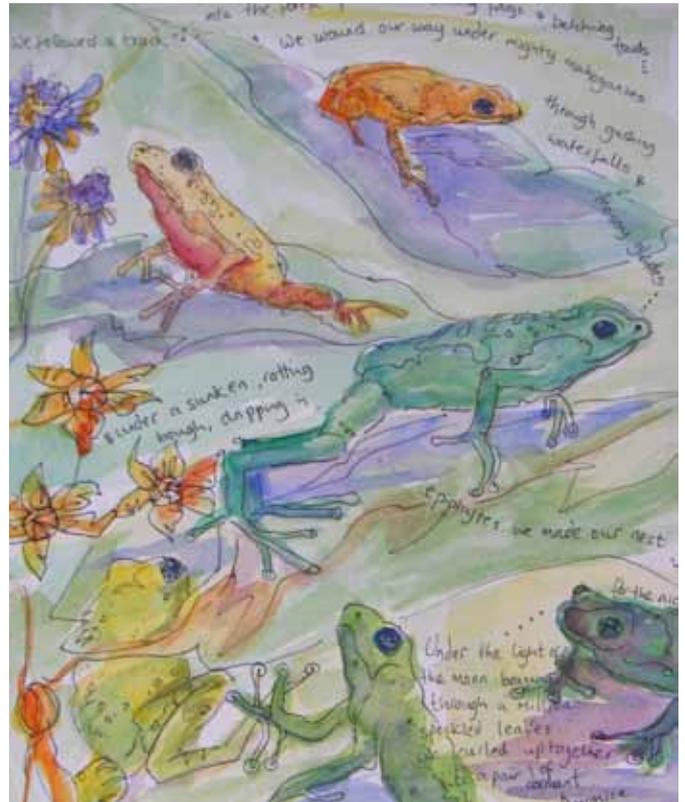
Spring is coming. Light pours into each passing day. Evenings extend, time fattens. Wildlife seems audibly to heave a sigh of relief.

First it was frogspawn. I stopped running. A burping orchestra was in full throttle. I looked down into the ditch on the Cowal Way and hillocks of spawn were being lorded over by battalions of frogs. The following days and weeks were spent spotting the wonderful gelatinous treasure. Often in the most unlikely of places, strewn over fields, even in the farmyard. We gathered up the frogspawn which could never survive and moved it into ponds. We have made many ponds from dustbin-lid-sized, to larger convoluted shapes. The plan is to provide a variety of residents for the amphibious and aquatic community, also for bathing and drinking for the other wildlife. And who does not like digging a hole? Whether you are three or one hundred and three, it seems the joy never wares off.

Then one day, bird song drifted into our mornings. Song thrushes repeat their favourite phrases from a lofty perch; the robin's melancholy winter song shifts to springtime hopefulness; the fluty mistle thrush, the 'storm cock' and first to sing, even in the steely grey of winter, still echoes through the valley. The Kames rookery inmates return with deep hoarse voices and 'baggy underpants'. They rearrange their nest of sticks, carefully adding choice branches and reaffirm their love for life-long partners. While on the mosses and moors skylarks ascend and fill the sky with song as the males vie for females. Imagine sprinting while screaming above the wind of your unremitting love?!

We are building next boxes and cleaning out last year's boxes. Terraces for gregarious house sparrows, so that they will not take over the house martins' homes when they return from southern Africa. We desperately hope both species will stay, as their populations have plummeted over recent decades. Boxes for starlings, the ventriloquists with their crazy other-worldly techno songs, who are on the red list of conservation concern. As well as boxes, our priority is creating habitat for birds and other wildlife. Ensuring they have summer and winter food (because many will change their diet from invertebrates in the summertime to seeds in the winter) and somewhere to nest, hibernate or make their home.

Biodiversity- the variety of life- is declining all around us. The empty space where a yellow hammer or tree sparrow, wild cat or goshawk once lived makes our world less varied, less alive, less meaningful. Wildlife fills the notes of songs, verses of poetry, whispered fireside words. It creates our soils, composts our waste, pollinates our fruits and vegetables, drives our ecosystems and our



own internal health. We don't need to stand and watch its demise. There is so much we can do, so much many people are doing. Here are a few examples:

- Plant shrubs with berries.
- Create hedgerows for nesting, cover and to connect habitats.
- Encouraging plants which attract insects.
- Allow nettle beds to grow.
- Provide wood and brash piles which newts, common lizards and hedgehogs can hibernate.
- Plant climbers – ivy is a crucial late season nectar source- climbers also provide nesting habitat.
- Create a wild patch with bramble or nettles where butterflies can lay their eggs; badgers, foxes and birds can feast.
- Create ponds or scrapes to provide bathing, drinking and damp mud for nesting material .
- Do not use slug pellets. They kill thrushes, hedgehogs and other species that consume the poisoned snails and slugs.

For other steps on how to attract wildlife to your garden: [Wildlife Gardening | The Wildlife Trusts](#)

For bird box instructions: [Make a nest box | BTO - British Trust for Ornithology.](#)

My experience with Argyll and Bute Rape Crisis

By Heather Muir

4 Years ago my partner and I fell in love with Glenahuil, the house on the hill overlooking Ardlamont point. The views of Arran, Holy Island, Bute and Inchmarnock sold it to us. When we did move into the area we discovered a friendly and kind community which welcomed us with open arms. Shout out to Mick Eyre and Kilfinan Community Forest as it was mainly through them that we met some lovely friends. Ian and I are retired so the plan was to grow vegetables and plant lots of trees on our 2-acre plot of reed grass and explore the beauty of Scotland.

That fell along the wayside when 2 years ago I decided to volunteer with Argyll and Bute Rape Crisis (ABRC). My understanding of Rape Crisis was that they only dealt with adults who had experienced recent rape and that it was only women.

My own healing journey from childhood sexual abuse, and rape as an adult, has included learning that it wasn't my fault and that the unhealthy choices I made as an adult were attributed to the abuse. I learnt to move from just surviving to thriving. On that basis I thought I had something to offer other people who may have had a similar journey.

ABRC is so much more than I thought and it has been one of the best decisions I made to join them. All the staff are caring, kind and very supportive. If I had designed, the type of organisation I wanted to work with it would be this one. The work can be very hard sometimes as you are with clients who have experienced

very traumatic events in their lives. Thankfully my co-workers are brilliant at bringing humour and light to what can be a very dark part of our humanity.

Since joining, I have learnt that ABRC offers so much more than I thought. All people who have been directly and indirectly affected by sexual violence regardless of age (12 +) and gender are welcome. This could be family and friends as well. Sometimes the childhood sexual violence has been a secret kept for many years and from everybody including their partners.

This can bring up challenges in the relationship. Later I was offered a part-time job and this has included working at Rothesay Academy with teenagers, being mindful of possible exploitation, grooming, self harming, gaslighting and/or sextexting. Social media has opened up an avenue of easy access to vulnerable people. One of the areas covered is prevention work in schools, sometimes known as TESSA. The topics covered are





gender, consent, What is Sexual Violence, Sexualisation, Impacts and Support, Social Media.

Beside support and advocacy, ABRC also offers support to the area through Creative Therapies groups for those with mental health issues. By creating safe and friendly spaces people have been known to disclose previous sexual violence. Social media is used to promote ABRC and to offer snippets of encouragement and education. As with most charities, obtaining funding takes up a large chunk of resources and I am grateful to the funders that we do have, so that we can continue this vital and much needed work given that ABRC is the only organisation to offer support to survivors in this area.

I am learning about the Scottish Judicial System as I support clients. I liaise with the courts and the Procurator Fiscal's office for those that take the incredibly difficult step into seeking justice. Given the convictions rates are so low in the UK and it may take several years before the trial, this a tough choice to make.

ABRC covers the whole of Argyll and Bute including the islands. This brings in several additional challenges that differ from an urban setting because of distances and expenses incurred. During the Covid lockdowns the team have been flexible and resilient and switched to alternative support methods such as zoom, skype, Whatsapp. This way of working highlights the need for good reliable internet service in rural areas. Lockdown has created an environment where the levels of domestic

abuse have increased and survivors have been cut off from their normal support network. This increases mental health issues and possible endangerment to physical safety.

On a brighter note I love travelling to Campbeltown – the Atlantic Ocean rolling in is breathtaking, one of the perks of the job. When face to face restrictions are not in place there are offices in Dunoon, Rothesay, Oban and newly opened one in Helensburgh.

The main approach from the support workers is empowerment. Many survivors experience deep shame, anxiety and lack self-esteem. These emotional issues and negative beliefs can lead to complex mental health issues and so part of the support work includes liaising with other agencies and services to bring a more holistic approach. We may also take on the role of advocacy on behalf of the client for example working with housing for new accommodation where the perpetrator lives in close proximity and thus prevents the survivor from taking back control of their lives. Working for Rape Crisis has empowered me at the same time. As I said perfect place to be.

If this articles touches you and you want to know more about ABRC or if you would like support, then contact can be made either through myself or the organisation.

Heather Muir 07766 800866
ABRC Helpline 0800 121 4685
Email support@ab-rc.org.uk
facebook.com/argyllbuterapecrisis/

Glenan Wood - news update

By Friends of Glenan Woods



Community Orchard

We're pleased to have won funding for a community orchard at Glenan. The mix of fruit trees and shrubs will be planted in autumn, but work on clearing space and erecting fencing for the orchard has already begun thanks to our team of volunteers. The site is an area of non-native conifer plantation next to the Chip Shop. Once the trees start fruiting, juice, jam and cider making events will be open to the community to enjoy. The orchard should also be important to local wildlife.

Scotland's Rainforest

The Alliance for Scotland's Rainforest is a voluntary partnership of more than 20 organisations with a shared interest in 'Saving Scotland's Rainforest'. It has 2 projects ready to go. One of the projects is Argyll's Rainforest, led by the Argyll and the Isles Coast and Countryside Trust (ACT).

Argyll is home to more than half of the remaining rainforest habitat in Scotland and contributes a distinctive element to some of the best scenery in Scotland. The rainforest underpins eco-tourism in Argyll, as well as offering traditional services such as firewood, shelter for livestock and venison products. It is an important resource for access and recreation, providing opportunities for residents and visitors to experience nature for the benefit of their physical and mental wellbeing.

ACT has selected four sites within Argyll in order to pilot an integrated series of interventions aimed at addressing the key threats facing Argyll's rainforest. Glenan Wood is one of the four sites and is of particular interest as it is the only community owned woodland. We are really pleased to be part of their funding application. The project aims to develop and test the delivery of rainforest protection, regeneration and restoration at landscape scale.

Ringbarking

Forest Ranger Rhyddian Knight has been ring barking conifers in Glenan Wood. Ring-barking is the complete removal of the bark from around the entire circumference of a trunk of a tree, resulting in the tree dying above the ring over time. The conifers in Glenan compete with the native trees for light and root space, and threaten to directly shade mature native trees. Ring barking is an effective and cheap way to deal with them.

Planning update

We submitted a planning application last year for a community building and six small shepherd's huts, a site on the ferry road, in order to create a small income stream for the charity. The planning officer advised us that as there was an archaeological tumulus on that site and for various other reasons they would find it difficult to support the application. We met the officer on site early this year, and proposed moving the site to the edge of the Cowal Way, opposite the now disused Wood Chip Shop. This site does form a part of the ancient oak wood. We'll keep you updated!

Spring flowers in Glenan

Spring is one of the best time to see wild flowers in Glenan Wood. Many of them flower early in the season – before the leaf canopy shades out the sunlight. They can also be seen more easily before the bracken grows up. There are over 160 flowering plants listed in the National Biodiversity records for Glenan Wood. Not all are in flower in March, April and May though, but you should be able to find (and photograph not pick) a good selection. Wood anemones, bluebells, wood sorrel, celandines and dog violets are a few of the more obvious ones. And, of course Primroses. If you walk through the woods in the next 3 months please send us your photographs of any flora for our records. No matter if you can't identify it - we will do that for you.

Scything

Last year Glenan's beautiful meadow saw the ancient art of scything resurrected by a small team of volunteers. It was not possible to scythe all the meadow, but this year we hope to invite anyone from the community who would like to try their hand at scything to come along. From an ecological point of view, the slow rhythmic motion of scything allows you to see wildlife, give it time to move away or avoid it. It is also wonderful for keeping fit both physically and mentally, and it's great fun.

If you'd like to receive our regular enewsletter, why not become a member? It's free to join. You can download a membership form from our website www.glenanwood.org.uk under 'documents'. Keep an eye on our Facebook page too: <https://www.facebook.com/glenanwood/>

We are offering remotely supported lone volunteering at the moment, with an emphasis on safety. If you would like to discuss progressing any of these tasks please contact: rhyddian@glenanwood.org.uk.

My lockdown adventures

By Timothy Roper age 13



And Photography

One of the most fun things I've been doing is photography. I borrow mum's camera and then just go on walks and find things that I find interesting to look at, like the photo above.

How I've found it

I've mostly been doing school work online which is alright but it's hard when you need an answer for a question and it doesn't get through to the teacher quickly enough. I have managed to see some of my friends through it all but only once a month, but I've been doing a lot of other things like.



Walking

In winter all the bracken is down so you can see where all the deer have been, and since there are also no ticks, it's great to go on small adventures in the woods and along the shore line. When school is over I go over to the crags which are quite tall and sharp. There are some birds nests and traces of otters. Mum and I have re-discovered Bar Nan Damb, getting great views from the top, it's been regular end of school walk.

Snorkeling

I haven't been snorkeling this year but last lockdown I went quite regularly. We went to the Boys Brigade hut, there is so much life there and it's really peaceful place with all the colours flowing through it. Last year, when lockdown eased a little, Arlo, Leon and me went wild camping there, which was really fun. Anyway back to snorkeling and how much wild life there is, one time I went, I saw a flat fish, loads of hermit crabs and quite a few birds.



ADVERTISEMENT



Clan MacEwen Heritage Centre and Shop

Jocks Lodge, Kilfinan, Tighnabruaich

Arqyll and Bute

PA21 2EP

01700 821 138

WWW.CLANMACEWEN.COM

Are you are a member of Clan MacEwen and in the area, looking for information about the Clan or Just Interested in Local Clan History, come visit the Clan MacEwen Heritage Centre and Shop located at Jocks Lodge in Kilfinan, Tighnabruaich

The Heritage centre is a wealth of information about the Clan MacEwen both past and present. If you are looking for a guided walk out to the Castle Ruins and Cairn, we are here to help.

Wedding packages available tailored to your requirements. Other Clans available upon request.

