

Lochaber
life

Beatha Lochabair

April 2025 – Issue 378

A' Ghiblean

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**John Whyte
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Concert**

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Lochaber

Life

Beatha Lochabair

contents



HAPPY APRIL

Well, April is supposed to be the month of showers, but given the recent weather obviously nature just couldn't wait for this month to roll around. Speaking of rolling, why not mark Easter in an old traditional way by boiling an egg, painting it and rolling it down a hill? Assuming it is dry on Sunday, 20th doing this has several advantages over the usual chocolate variety in that it is getting you out in the fresh air and a real boiled egg is a good healthy eating alternative. However, should the rain keep you indoors you'll find plenty to keep you occupied in the pages of this Lochaber Life and a few things coming up to do and enjoy, from an exclusive art exhibition, concert or even picking the perfect home for feathered friends. Thanks also to everyone who sent in beautiful photographs of their pets. Enjoy April. Meal an Giblean. **Iain**

FRONT PAGE PHOTOGRAPH:

Musician, teacher and band leader John Whyte in action. See page 15 for details of a concert in his memory. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, alba.photos

		
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CARTOONS AND ELEPHANTS IN ROOM 13 MUSEUM DISPLAY



Richard Bracken

West Highland Museum is host to an exhibition of artwork created by several young artists from Caol-based Room 13. Bright, colourful, eclectic and above all unlocking some amazing creativity, the works underline the level of creative talent in Lochaber.

Room 13 is a youth-led art studio in Caol Community Centre, where primary and secondary pupils and young adults have consistent access to a safe, creative space.

The various pieces on display are a great example of what can be achieved, with a glimpse into the vast cartoon world that young artist Ryan has created. There is also Ella's intriguing artworks featuring wartime letters presented in an

imaginative and touching way.

Another work, created by Coll features massive elephants parading through the jungle which shows great imagination and skill, then there is the opportunity to dive into mixed media work from Amy, which is inspired by the water she loves so much.

Room 13 Lead artist, Richard Bracken said: "In this exhibition

young artists, Amy, Coll, Ella and Ryan, share their unique artworks, ideas and perspectives. All have attended Room 13 for many years, using the bright and friendly studio space to work at their own pace gaining new skills, social connections and confidence in the process.

"The artworks they have each chosen to exhibit reflect their diverse interests and abilities and give us insights into the special place that creativity holds in their lives. We look forward to more opportunities for young people to showcase their work to the wider community".

The exhibition will run until the end of April on the upper floor of the museum and is well worth a visit to gain inspiration from these young creatives.





Call out for small-scale local food growers & producers

Food Lochaber is part of the not-for-profit Lochaber Environmental Group charity (LEG). We support and promote local food production by running a collaborative food market where local food producers can easily sell fruit, veg, herbs, bread and cakes, meat, eggs, dairy, preserves etc to local customers through a regular online hub with minimum hassle.

There's no shortage of demand for locally-produced food. People increasingly see the benefit of knowing where their food's come from, that it hasn't

travelled 100s or 1000s of miles, and that more of their money stays circulating within our local economy.

We don't have enough producers to meet demand, so we're asking businesses and individuals to please get in touch if:

- you're **already a food producer** and would like to extend your reach to more Lochaber customers, or:
- you're already growing some food for your own use, and **thinking about upscaling some produce for sale**, or:
- you're already growing some food for your own use, and **just sometimes have a surplus that you could sell** (one advantage of FL's shop is that it works even if you only occasionally have a few courgettes or jars of honey) or:
- you don't yet grow or produce any food but **think you might like to give it a go**, or:
- you **make/bake for sale** using some local produce.

We've no strict criteria other than suppliers are Lochaber-based and we encourage sound sustainable, environmental and ethical practices, particularly minimising carbon emissions and reducing waste.

We've just one customer collection hub at the moment, at LEG's office at An Drochaid in Fort William. We're exploring ideas for satellite hubs, maybe in Acharacle in the first instance, maybe Roy Bridge, Duror and other outlying areas in due course. This will help producers reach more customers, and customers reach more producers while reducing food miles. A win-win! We'd love to hear from you if you'd like a chat about selling regularly or occasionally through us (we'd especially love to hear from any potential egg suppliers).

email:
mandy@lochaberenviron.org.uk



Food Lochaber



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FL is delighted to be supported by Scotland Food & Drink's Regional Food Fund. This fund is dedicated to empowering small-scale regional and collaborative projects across Scotland.

<https://foodanddrink.scot/helping-business/services/growth/grow-regionally/regional-food-fund/>



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**SCOTLAND
FOOD & DRINK**

ANNAT VILLAGE ON THE ROAD AND SOON IN PRINT

 **Ken Johnston**

An exhibition of photographs and written memories of the former Annat Village is going on the road, travelling through the Highlands in an effort to make contact with additional former 'dwellers' or their families who may have moved away from the area.

The small group who held a very successful event in Caol Community Centre last October are also hoping to put their findings into a book so that an easily accessible record will



exist for future generations.

The exhibition will be in Dingwall from 11th March to 1st April, Fortrose from 3rd to 22nd April and Inverness from

25th April until 16th May before heading back to the West Highland Museum, Fort William for all of June and July, and half of August.



A look back to February with Diamond couple John and Margaret MacAskill of Tomonie, Banavie, who celebrated their 60th Wedding Anniversary with a dinner at Inverlochy Castle. Originally from Skye, John married Margaret from Kinlochleven in St Mary's, Fort William on 20th February 1965. Photograph: Iain Ferguson alba.photos

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KIM MACDONALD, GLENCOE

Volunteering in a Citizens Advice Bureau

Becoming a volunteer in a Citizens Advice Bureau offers an interesting and varied experience and an opportunity to make real difference in your community. Volunteers can be advisers or administrators, or get involved in social policy and more.

Nearly 2000 volunteers work in Citizens Advice Bureaux all over Scotland, helping in lots of different ways. The average time given to volunteering each week is around six hours. If we paid all those volunteers the average wage for those six hours, the additional wage bill to CAB across Scotland every year would be just shy of £10 million. This fantastic contribution is the lifeblood of our work.

Why volunteer in a Citizens Advice Bureau?

There are lots of reasons why you might want to volunteer in your local bureau:

It's a really stimulating place to volunteer, with lots of different things to do

You can help in a way that suits the time you can spare and the skills you can offer

You can learn new skills and improve your confidence

Our comprehensive bureau training and supervision programmes mean you'll get lots of support along the way

Lots of people who've been Citizens Advice Bureau volunteers move on to paid work or further education

You'll get a buzz from helping yourself and those around you

You'll meet new and interesting people

If you're looking for a job, working in a bureau won't affect your benefits and can really enhance your CV

Find out more and apply online

Read more about the different volunteer roles you can get involved with below, or contact your local Citizens Advice Bureau to find out about volunteer vacancies they are looking to fill.

Lochaber



Email: admin@lochabercab.org.uk

<https://www.cas.org.uk/about-us/volunteer-citizens-advice-bureau>

<https://www.lochabercab.org.uk/volunteer>

Recipe



EASTER BISCUITS

A simple, traditional recipe which were baked, tied up with ribbon and given as Easter gifts.

• INGREDIENTS •

225g flour
115g butter
115g caster sugar
1/2 teaspoon baking powder
1 egg
60g currants
A little grated lemon rind

• METHOD •

Rub the butter into the flour, add the sugar, lemon rind, baking powder and currants, moisten with the beaten egg. Roll out 1/4 inch thick and cut into biscuits with a round fluted cutter. Cook on a baking tray for 20 minutes at 170 degrees. Sprinkle with caster sugar as soon as removed from the oven.



THE PIZZERIA

No one can deny that Fort William High Street has an international outlook when it comes to eating out and to this list can now be added the taste of Napoli with the opening of a traditional Italian style Pizzeria.

Named quite simply 'The Pizzeria' the new restaurant and takeaway offers only the best in fresh, made to order, hand-crafted pizzas in the unique style found in Naples, capital city of the Campania region in the South of Italy.

Using only the genuine, traditional ingredients, each delicious pizza will be prepared to order either from

the menu or using a mix of toppings chosen by you, with vegetarian and vegan options also available whether you intend to eat in or takeaway.

The all-important pizza base is also expertly prepared from 'chef's special' dough mixed and allowed to reach perfect maturity over 48 hours to produce the texture and taste found in all top quality Italian recipes developed over hundreds of years.

Creating very much the atmosphere of an traditional Italian eatery, there is ample room for 25 diners and space to browse the interesting artwork on the wall. The Pizzeria is also licensed to sell alcohol, with many canned beers on offer alongside a range of wines and soft drinks. Coffee, too, pays homage to true Napoli style with short but strong shots of Espresso.

Fancy a bit of Dolce Vita (Sweet Life) to round off your meal? – then



you won't be disappointed with a choice of dishes such as Italian Tiramisu and Panna cotta for a fulfilling conclusion to an excellent dining experience.

Owned and operated by Black Sheep Hotels, which is renowned for high standards in all areas of hospitality, The Pizzeria brings to Fort William High Street a new touch of Italian flare with a proven track record of quality in catering at great prices to satisfy both local and visiting diners.



THE PIZZERIA - now in your neighbourhood

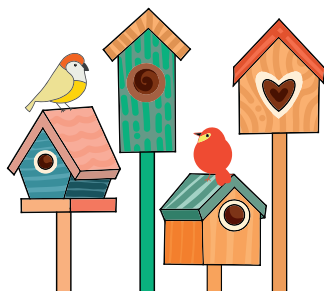
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We serve the traditional "Napoletana" pizza crafted with hand stretched dough that is fermented for a minimum of 48 hours giving it a unique flavour. Our pizzas feature a thin base and a light airy crust, made without any preservatives using only the finest quality ingredients. Our special home-made sauce along with a selection of carefully chosen toppings makes for a perfect balance of tradition and deliciousness.

Open all days for dine - in and take away

Choosing a nest box



*Royal Society for the
Protection of Birds*

Engaging with nature and helping the birds in your garden live healthy lives is an important aspect of our living environment. Introducing a nest box to your garden can significantly improve a bird's quality of life and is just as essential as a feeder or bird bath in your outdoor space.

Nestboxes generally fall into two categories: those with an entrance hole, providing a degree of protection from predators or open-fronted boxes. Look for those with holes if you want to attract smaller birds to your garden, such as the tit family, nuthatches, redstarts, tree and house sparrows.

It is important to choose a box with the appropriate hole size for the birds you want to attract. A 25-28mm hole is ideal for tits and tree sparrows, while a larger 45mm hole is better suited for larger birds such as starlings, doves, jackdaws and blackbirds to make their home in.

Open-fronted boxes, on the other hand, are favoured by birds that prefer nesting in the undergrowth, such as robins, wrens, wagtails and song thrushes.

Look for a nestbox that is made from insulating material



such as wood to combat the unpredictable UK climate, with walls at least 15mm thick and an internal floor space of a minimum of 130 sq cm (or 20 sq ins) to provide ample space for nesting and raising baby birds.

Choose a bird box that has drainage holes in the bottom and a sloped roof which help keep the box dry.

Bird boxes should be mounted high up in your garden or outdoor space, away from predators such as cats, ideally on walls, tree trunks, fences or posts. Boxes with holes are best placed around three metres high in trees, ideally camouflaged by foliage, while open-fronted boxes can be positioned closer to head height on walls or fences.

Avoid placing them in direct sunlight, as the excessive heat can be detrimental to the birds and their young so hang your

nestbox, facing either north or east, offering natural protection from the elements.

Cleaning bird boxes at the end of each nesting season prevents the spread of disease and maintains the health of your local garden birds. October or November is the ideal time to give your nestbox a good clean and refresh for the winter months.

Look for ones with an accessible roof or side hatch so you can easily access and remove the old nesting material from the birds and clean thoroughly. Always wear rubber gloves, use boiling water for cleaning and dispose of your cleaning brush immediately afterwards. Old nesting materials can be composted.

Inspect your bird boxes for any damage and make necessary repairs or replace them if needed.



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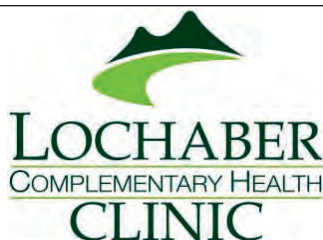
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A CONCERT IN MEMORY OF OUR FRIEND, JOHN WHYTE

Hege Hernæs for Lochaber Community Wind Band

 *Hege Hernæs*

Last year, Lochaber's music scene lost one of its most inspiring educators in John Whyte, and this month more than 80 musicians from all over Scotland and beyond will gather in Fort William to celebrate his impactful life and work.

They will take to the stage in the Nevis Centre on Sunday 6th April at 4pm to give a memorial concert which should appeal to all the community in which John lived and worked.

When John arrived from Glasgow as the area's first brass instructor in 1974, he introduced Lochaber to wind band playing. Over the years, his colourful, energetic and easy-going character made him an inspiring teacher for many, and thanks to his ground-breaking efforts, we now have a thriving local community of brass and woodwind players of all ages.

But John's impact was not confined to Lochaber. Skye, Faslane, Leadhills, Edinburgh, Inverness, Thurso – even Sussex and Seville! – are all represented among the many players who will be joining Lochaber Community Wind Band in Fort William to celebrate the positive influence that John has had on their lives.

The concert will not only cel-



brate John as an educator and conductor, but as a versatile musician who loved good music of any genre. The programme will therefore include specially invited friends and former students as guest performers, including Lochaber Gaelic Choir and the Great Glen Swing Band, with jazz trumpeter Philip Cardwell. Trombone-playing will, of course, feature prominently, for while John was a dedicated teacher and conductor, he was a trombonist at heart.

John formed Lochaber Community Wind Band in 1996 to provide a playing opportunity for his students after leaving Lochaber High School, and to make sure new Lochaber residents with a band-playing past could continue their hobby in this part of the world. April's

concert will be a true testament to the success of his endeavours.

Stepping in to conduct this mass of talent is John's dear friend and fellow trombonist Alan Fernie, an internationally renowned composer for brass and wind bands. We are extremely grateful to Alan for taking on this enormous task. In turn, Alan welcomes being able to play a pivotal part in the memorial event.

In his words: 'We are going to put on a rightly brilliant concert for our friend, John!'

Lochaber Community Wind Band rehearse every Wednesday 7pm at Lochaber High School. New members are always welcome. Get in touch via our Facebook page!



Voscars 2025 Let's celebrate!

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**2nd - 8th
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In Loving Memory



MACKINTOSH – IAN

1931 – 2025

(Corpach)

Peacefully, in the loving care of Abbeyfield care Home, Ballachulish, on Saturday 18th January 2025, Ian Alexander Mackintosh (Tosh),

former proprietor of Corpach Hotel, Fort William. Beloved husband of the late Margaret, a loving dad to Alexander and George and father-in-law to Marta and Lorna, a treasured grandpa to Kyle and Lily, a much-loved brother and uncle, a dear relative and a good friend to many. RIP.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.



GILLIES – DONNIE

1949 – 2025

(Caol)

Sadly, but peacefully, in the compassionate care of Moss Park Care Home, Caol, Fort William, on Friday 17th January 2025, Donald Joseph Gillies (Knockie), aged 75 years, formerly Birch Road, Caol, Fort William. Beloved husband of the late Rose

Mary Gillies, a much-loved dad to Mark and father-in-law to Edyta, a cherished grandpa to Sadie, a dearly loved uncle, relative and a very good friend to many. Sadly missed.



YOUNG – ARCHIBALD

1961 – 2025

(Fort William, formerly Ballachulish)

Sadly and suddenly in the excellent and compassionate care of the Belford Hospital after a lengthy stay in Raigmore Hospital, Inverness, in the early hours of Friday 17th

January 2025. Archibald Donald Young (Archie), aged 66 years, Belhaven Drive, Fort William. Beloved son of the late Archie and Ina Young, a much-loved brother to Charles and the late James and Irene, also a much loved brother-in-law, uncle, great uncle and cousin, a very good neighbour and friend. Sadly missed.



MACINNES – IRENE

1963 – 2025

(Ballachulish)

Very sadly and suddenly at home, under the wonderful care of the local district nurses and Macmillan Nurses after a relatively short but

serious illness on Wednesday 22nd January 2025, Irene Elizabeth MacInnes (née Young), west Laroch, Ballachulish. Adored wife of Dougie and step-mother to Craig, Neil and the late Gary, beloved daughter of the late Archie and Ina Young, a much-loved sister to Charles and the late James and Archie, also a much-loved sister-in-law, aunt, great aunt, cousin and a good friend to many, especially her great friend and neighbour Shelley MacColl. Very sorely missed.

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SWEENEY – GILLIAN

1966 – 2025

(Ballachulish)

Suddenly, but peacefully, surrounded by her loving family, in the care of the Belford hospital, Fort William, Gillian Nicole Sweeney,

aged 58 years, Argyll Cottages, Ballachulish (owner/driver at Glencoe Taxis). A loving partner to Kenny, a treasured mum to Kieran, a proud granny to Meridith, a cherished sister to Caroline, Debbie and Deirdre and sister-in-law to Tommy, John and Vance, a much-loved auntie, a dear relative, neighbour and a very good friend to many. Forever in our hearts.



FEGGANS – JAMES

1935 – 2025

(Fort William)

Peacefully, in the care of Moss Park Care Home, Fort William, on Friday 31st January 2025, James McManus Feggans (Jim), aged 89 years, formerly of Sutherland Avenue, Fort William (retired Divisional Officer of Social Work – Lochaber).

Beloved husband of the late Jenny Feggans, a much-loved dad, grandpa and great grandpa, a dearly loved relative, neighbour and friend. Sadly missed.



KEARNEY – MARY

1922 – 2025

(Claggan)

Sadly, but peacefully in the compassionate care of Moss Park Care Home, Caol, Fort William, on Thursday 30th January 2025, Mary Kathleen Kearney, aged 102

years, formerly of Melantee, Claggan for over 70 years. A loving mum to Frances, Mary and the late John, a dear mother-in-law to Jim, a wonderful nanny to Andrew, Katy, Laura, a much-loved relative, neighbour and a very good friend to many. So greatly loved and missed.



DOWNS – EDWARD

1946 – 2025

(Caol)

Peacefully at home, following a short illness, surrounded by his loving family, on Tuesday 11th February 2025, Edward Downs (Eddie), aged 78 years, St. John's Road, Caol, Fort William (a keen lawn bowler at Fort William Railway Bowling Club). Beloved husband to Morag, a treasured dad to Jackie and William, a much-loved brother and uncle, a dear relative and a very good friend to many. RIP.

Eternal rest grant unto him, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon him. May he rest in peace. Amen.



WHILLANS – ANNE

1935 – 2025

(Ballachulish)

Peacefully, in the care of the Belford Hospital, Fort William, on Friday 14th February 2025, Anne Whillans, aged 90 years, West Laroeh, Ballachulish. A loving

mum to Rod, Lynne, Rhoda and Scott, a treasured nana to all her grandchildren and a wonderful 'Nana Anne' to all her great grandchildren, a caring sister to Mary, a dearly-loved relative, neighbour and a good friend to many. So greatly loved and missed.



BROWN – CATHERINE

1933 – 2025

(Upper Inverroy)

It is with much sadness that Catherine Brown (McNiven) died peacefully at Invernevis House on Friday 14th February. Cathie or Kate was a widow to Terry Simpson Brown, mother to Dougie and

Jean and granny to Terri. A former nursing sister at the Southern General Hospital for many happy years. Though born on the Isle of Ulva, the Isle of Coll was her truly loved home.



KENNEDY – HELEN

1923 – 2025

(Mallaig)

Peacefully at home in her sleep, on Saturday 15th February 2025, Helen Mary Kennedy, aged 101 years, Blair

House, Mallaig. Beloved wife of the late John, a cherished mum to Helen, Shirley and the late Ann, a treasured nana to Virginia, Trevor, Clare, Edward, Karl, Hazel and the late Derek and Colin, a proud great nana to Ryan, Keira and Ava, a dearly-loved relative, neighbour and friend. RIP.

Eternal rest grant unto her, O Lord, and let perpetual light shine upon her. May she rest in peace. Amen.



HARLEY – PATRICIA

1976 – 2025

(Fort William)

Suddenly and unexpectedly at home on Thursday 13th February 2025, Patricia Harley (Wee Trish), aged 48 years, Cameron Terrace, Fort

William. A treasured mum to Raymond and Hannah, a wonderful grandmother to Rowan, a loving daughter to Gina and the late Allan, a cherished sister to Alan and Lindsey, a caring auntie to Ross, Mark, Steven and Alan, a much-loved relative and a very good friend to many. Forever in our hearts.



WILSON – JEANETTE

1941 – 2025

(Caol)

Peacefully, in the care of the Belford Hospital, Fort William, on Tuesday 18th February 2025, Jeanette Wilson, aged 83 years, Glenkingie Terrace, Caol, Fort William. Beloved wife of the late Willie, a cherished mum to Christine, George, Angus and Sharon, and mother-in-law to John, Debbie, Lesley and John, a wonderful 'Granny Caol' to all her grandchildren and great grandchildren, a caring sister, a much-loved aunt, a dear relative, neighbour and a friend to many. So greatly loved and missed.

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- We are Fort William's only locally owned funeral directors. *Our company owners are born and raised in Lochaber and very proud of our company heritage. Being locally owned means we are more invested in our local communities and can offer a much more personal service.*
- We are the only funeral directors in Lochaber that can legally sell Golden Charter Funeral Plans. *When purchasing a funeral plan make sure you do it with a company that is licensed and registered to do so. It is illegal for a funeral director to hold your money out with a trust fund and gives you no security over your investment.*
- No other funeral company in Lochaber are members of Golden Charter. *Golden Charter are the UK's leading funeral plan provider and we at Manson and MacBeath are exclusive and the only members in the Lochaber area. Make sure you get the full benefits of your existing funeral plan by moving it to a funeral director who is a member. This is free to do so and we can help with that!*
- We are the only funeral directors in Lochaber that are registered under SAIF (The Society of Independent Funeral Directors) governing body. *Always use a funeral company that is registered under a governing body. If a funeral company is not registered it normally means that they do not have the correct facilities or professional standards that meet their criteria.*

'The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.'

~ Mahatma Gandhi ~

MANSON & MACBEATH
FUNERAL DIRECTORS

MASONS MOVED BY UKRAINE AID TALK

 **Iain Ferguson**

Aid to Ukraine and the plight of those caught up in the war was the topic of a talk given by John Bryden of the charity Kirsty's Kids to members to Masonic Lodge, of Fort William No 43, who took what he revealed very much to heart, making a substantial donation to help his relief work.

John and wife Jan founded Kirsty's Kids in memory of their daughter whose ambition It was to work with children.

The couple then turned their home into a retreat for children and families facing hardship or suffering from the effects of serious, often terminal illnesses.

Over the years Jan and John have carried out many other acts of kindness and generosity, two of which were travelling



to England after a flood – two instances were helping dry-out homes through his business free of charge – and even delivering Christmas parcels (dressed as Santa) to local children who have had very few or no presents at all.

They have also faced their own hardships in Lochailort when a flash flood swept down the hill behind their home, destroying most of the buildings and special facilities they had created for the good of others. They did not give up and over time, with the help of volunteers, managed to restore most of what was lost.

More recently John and Jan have made collections of food, clothing, toiletries and many other items for the people of Ukraine and delivered them in

person to those in need.

Driving their van from Lochailort to Ukraine, packed with humanitarian supplies, has seen them coming under fire many times from Russian missiles, drones and artillery. Their most recent visit was to the front line city of Kherson, which is under almost constant bombardment by a Russian battery that was deliberately positioned against the wall of a power station so Ukrainian forces would be reluctant to fight back in case they hit the building.

On taking cover in the basement of a wrecked block of flats they found it full of young children, whose only light was provided by torches as electricity had been cut off.

John said: "It was so sad to



see the youngsters huddled together, not even looking afraid but just numb to the explosions and noise which have become part of their everyday lives.

"These children also had nothing to distract them from their horrendous surroundings, so I asked the soldiers who accompanied us if they knew where we could get supplies of such things as colouring in books, pencils, jotters and school books to read."

The soldiers said they knew of a warehouse a few kilometres away but it would be very dangerous to get to them. However, John eventually persuaded them and a semi-armoured military vehicle took them to the store of supplies where they collected as much as they could to take back to the children.

"The children were delighted," said Jan, "and it was amazing to see the smiles on their faces as they looked through what they had been given. The conditions

were still dark and miserable with the sounds of war, but such simple things as books and pencils gave them a real boost and brought so much pleasure. It was both a happy and sad sight."

Being aware that many parts of Ukraine had little or no electricity due to Russian attacks on the power networks, the couple also took a small diesel generator to provide some localised power. They discovered that many people arrived to charge their mobile phones as they desperately tried to stay in touch with friends and relatives in these areas.

Such was the importance of the generator that some people brought along a gazebo to erect over it, protecting it and the users from bad weather. Others brought small amounts of diesel fuel (often all of what they had) to help keep it running and it became a meeting place while phones charged, with everyone patiently waiting their turn.

John had many more stories about the conditions in Ukraine, which so moved the audience that an impromptu collection from those in the hall raised an additional £300 to the £1,000 they had already donated. This will also help the Ukrainian economy as John and Jan also take money to buy products which are available locally, helping to support local businesses in difficult times.

Master of the Lodge, Peter Kelly said: "Everyone was glued to every word John said. It is amazing what they do with very little regard for their own safety in getting directly to the people who need their help. We are honoured to help in some way."

Jan and John are now in the process of raising money and collecting items for their next trip planned for later this year to try and relieve some of the suffering in Ukraine, especially for children. Anyone wishing to help can contact them at kirstyskids.org.



GLENCOE MASSACRE 333RD ANNIVERSARY

 *Iain Ferguson*

The events in Glencoe on February 13th, 1692, when the Clan MacDonald were attacked by British soldiers linked to Clan Campbell, are very well known across the world as an act of murder and infamy.

Recorded in stories, songs and folklore, it is also commemorated each year with a march to the monument built at Carnach near Glencoe Village, which not only involves local people, but members of the clan and clan societies from other parts of Scotland and all over the world.

Every year is special for those who attend and even though this took place a couple of months ago it is worth mentioning that the 2025 ceremony



marks the 333rd anniversary. After a service in the Episcopal church a large group made their way to the Bridge of Coe where they formed into a procession, marching to the monument.

Pipe Major Brian Heriot piped the March to the Massacre Cross from Bridge of Coe, with Reverend Amanda Fairclough carrying out the service.

Niall Archibald recited Psalm 121 in Gaelic, wreaths were laid by Glencoe Heritage Trust, Clan Donald Society of Scotland, NTS Glencoe, and other floral

tributes were laid. Representatives of various MacDonald organisations from across the world then took the opportunity to lay wreaths around the base of the cross, including Scott MacDonald and his young son, Grayson.

They, together with several generations of their family, have been travelling from the Central Belt to take part for the last 40 years, making a visit to the monument in the early morning, at the exact time the attack is thought to have begun.

**Q. Has anyone here ever
seen a ghost?**

A: Yes, me!

**Fantastic, so you've actually
seen a ghost?**

Eh? I thought you said a goat!



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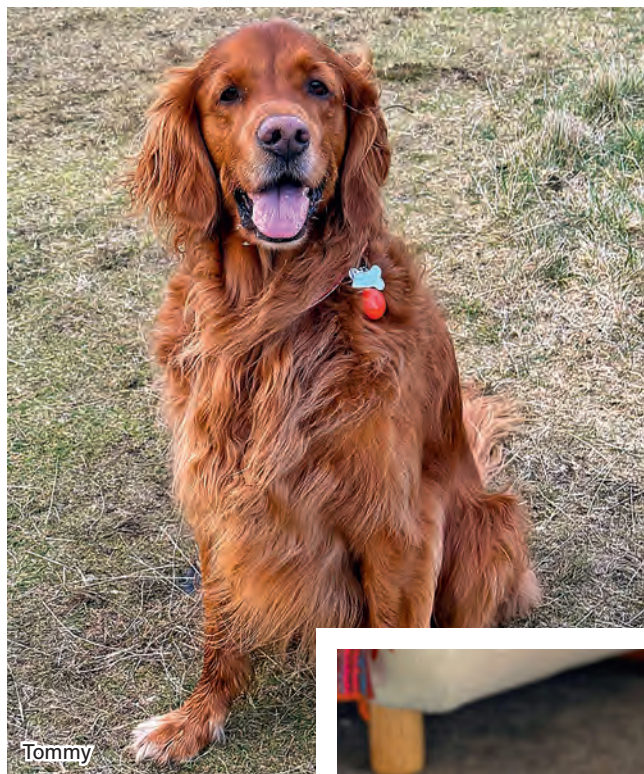


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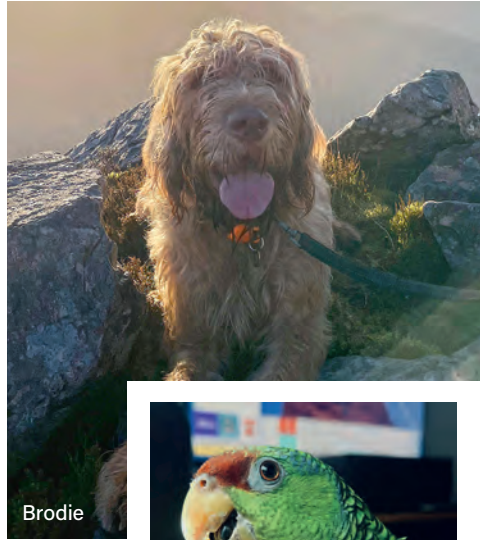
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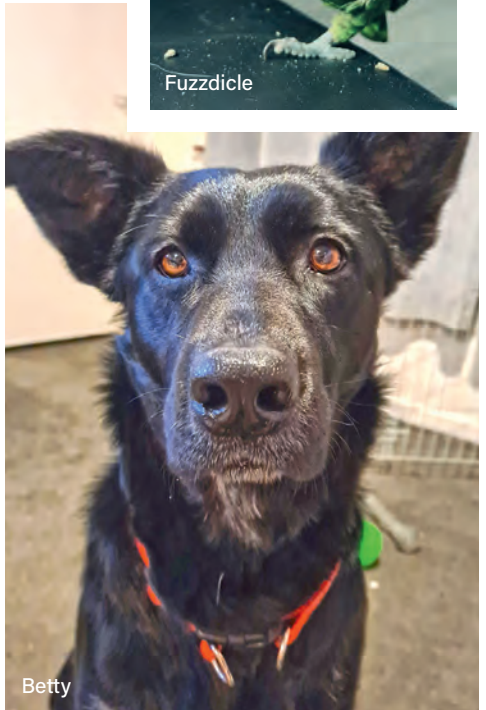
Brodie



Fuzzdicle



Neige



Betty



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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

PHILIPPA DOVE

1944-2025
Acharacle



Philippa's family would like to extend their deepest thanks to friends and neighbours for all their kindness, cards and heartfelt messages after the passing of our Mum, Philippa. Thank you to Rev. Donald McCorkindale for his comforting words at Acharacle Parish Church and all involved with the music in the church.

Special thanks to Jill at Ardshealach Hotel for the refreshments, to all the staff at McLellan Funeral Directors for their care and compassion. The sum of £225 was raised in Philippa's memory and will be shared between Parkinson UK and local charities, so thank you to all who attended on the day and helped us say goodbye.

PEGGY MACRAE

1927-2025
Ballachulish

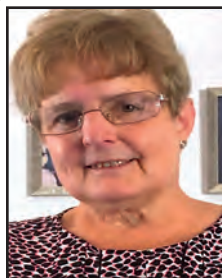


Margaret, Duncan and family wish to express their most sincere thanks to everyone for their kindness shown to them since Peggy's passing. Thank you to all who sent flowers, mass cards and support at this difficult time. We

are extremely grateful to everyone at McLellan Funeral Directors for their care and compassion. Special thanks to Fr. John Paul MacKinnon at St. Mun's in Ballachulish for the comforting Requiem mass, Jimmy for playing the organ so beautifully and to McDonald Bros. florist for the beautiful flowers and to Allan Donald and family for providing the excellent catering at "The Laroach" following the funeral. Our final thanks to all who attended to say farewell to Peggy and donated to Mary's Meals for which the sum raised was £596.60.

MAUREEN MCCLYMONT

1933-2025
Kinlochleven



Robert, Kerry, Michelle and family would like to thank everyone for the love and support we received following the passing of Maureen. Thanks to all our family, friends and neighbours for the cards and lovely flowers that we received. Thank you to Janet McIntyre for her kind and comforting words, to The Leven Centre in Kinlochleven for holding the funeral and attention to detail. Thanks to Natalie, John, Peter and all the staff at McLellan Funeral Directors for their care and professionalism. To Sean Cameron who played the pipes, and Highland Getaway for your lovely hospitality, the beautiful flowers from Enchanted florist of Lochaber, and Paul Hornby at Photon Production for the music. Finally thank

you to everyone who supported us on the day of Mum's funeral. The sum of £552.32 was raised in memory of Maureen and will be donated to MacMillan Nurses in Lochaber.



McLELLAN

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SALLY CAMPBELL

1933-2025

Roy Bridge



Ishbel, Catriona and family would like to express their heartfelt gratitude for all the flowers, mass cards and sympathy after the recent loss of Sally. Many thanks to Fr. Danny at St.

Margaret's, Roy Bridge for his lovely and comforting Requiem Mass. Thank you to Peter Rose for playing the organ, the choir for singing so beautifully, Clare who is the niece of Peter Rose for the beautiful solo singing, and Sean Cameron for playing the pipes. Special thanks to McDonald Bros. florist for the beautiful flowers and to McLellan Funeral Directors for their professionalism and care at this sad time. We would also like to extend special thanks to Moss Park staff for the amazing care and attention given to Sally. Many thanks to Farmstead Fayre for providing the wonderful buffet in Roy Bridge Hall after the interment. Final thanks go to everyone who attended and gave so much support on the day. The sum of £375 was raised in Sally's memory and will be donated between Moss Park Staff Fund and Cille Choirill.

FRANCES MORRISON

1941-2025

Mallaig



Michael, Eilidh and all the family would like to thank most sincerely all family, friends and neighbours for the lovely flowers, cards and messages of condolence on the sad loss of our mum, Frances. Thank you to Fr. Stan at St. Cumin's for his

comforting mass, Niall Blackie for playing the organ and to Alexander MacDonell for playing the pipes. Thanks to all staff at McLellan Funeral Directors for their care, compassion and professionalism at this sad time. Special thanks to McDonald Bros. florist in Inverlochry for the beautiful floral tributes and the West Highland Hotel for the lovely hospitality. Finally, thank you to everyone who paid their last respects at the mass, especially those who travelled to be with the family. The sum of £530 was raised and will be shared between Mallaig RNLI and St. Cumis Church.

ALEXANDER WILSON

1952-2025

Fort William



Ben, George, and family would like to thank most sincerely all family, friends and neighbours for the cards and messages of sympathy on the sad loss of Alexander. Thank you to Bill Skene for the kind and comforting service in The Duncansburgh Church, and to Heather Sim for playing the organ. Many thanks to all the staff at McLellan Funeral Directors for their care and compassion. Finally, thank you to everyone who attended and gave support on the day. The sum of £35.00 was raised in Alexander's memory and will be donated to Greyhound Rescue.

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FORT WILLIAM ACCOMMODATION MARKETING GROUP HELPS LOCAL TOURISM AND CHARITIES

 **Iain Ferguson**

When Fort William Accommodation Marketing Group was founded in 2010 its main purpose was to attract direct bookings for local accommodation providers through their own website, avoiding commissions charged by online travel agencies.

Fifteen years on, the website has evolved and through membership fees and gaining support from local businesses by offering paid advertising, it has developed into a one stop shop for visitors to Lochaber.

This is a definite benefit for

tourists as they can choose from over 30 accommodation providers, along with many local businesses and visitor attractions. An added benefit is the sharing of information with guests, recommending trips, restaurants or accommodation from the website so that visitors know the best places to go, and what to do during their stay, helping to support the local economy.

With the imminent closure of the VisitScotland iCentre in the High Street, the Marketing Group website will come into its own, helping visitors to navigate the Highlands when they are here.

An important part of the group ethos is knowledge sharing, business support and the social side of living in this beautiful part of the world, arranging member get-togethers, ten-pin bowling teams over the winter

and for the past two years a Christmas Party, which has fundraised almost £5,000 for the West Highland Museum and more recently, Lochaber Action on Disability (LAD) with more of the same this year.

At the group's Spring Coffee Morning James Russell and Tootie MacMillan from LAD were invited guests, joining members to be presented with a cheque for £3,100 raised from the Christmas party.

Anyone keen to learn more about the work of the Marketing Group, to join or support its charitable work should get in touch through the website or email secretary@fortwilliam-guesthouse.co.uk

Committee member Karen Dean said: "We are a friendly group looking to find as many ways as possible to raise the profile of FWAMG, Fort William, Lochaber and the Highlands."



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LUNDAVRA PUPILS ASK FOR ACTION AGAINST DOG POO

 Iain Ferguson

Every Thursday Primary 6 pupils from Lundavra School make their way to the Fort William Leisure Centre for swimming lessons. They walk the same route each time down Lundavra Road onto Alma Road and then to the swimming pool.

They are all very excited about their regular outing but have noticed one problem that is only getting worse – dog poo. To avoid getting it on their shoes and clothes they often have to leave the pavement and walk on the road. This in itself is a risky business for 20+ children and staff, but always done very carefully and safely.

However, the children have taken note of a greater danger, the diseases which can be contracted from the poo itself.

The class, under the direction of teacher Mr James Ross have been researching the ill-effects of dog poo and are very concerned by what they have discovered. Salmonella, worms, stomach bugs, even blindness



can be result of infections carried in dog dirt.

Shocked by what they found out, each pupil has written a letter, all of which will be passed to the Local MP, MSP and members of The Highland Council, highlighting the problem and suggesting solutions. These are extracts from a few of them.

Kia aged 10: "Every Thursday my class and I walk to to the swimming pool there is always something very disgusting! When we walk down Alma

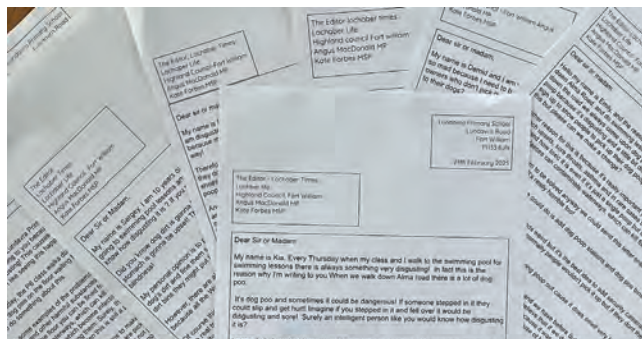
Road there is a lot of dog poo."

Rudi aged 11: "...dog poop can contain Roundworm eggs which can become infectious, particularly for children. If they accidentally swallow them they can hatch in the intestine, go into the bloodstream and cause health problems. You wouldn't want that to happen?"

Sergey aged 10: "Did you know dog dirt is gonna be so hard to take off your clothes and shoes? Your stomach is gonna be upset and can cause sore throats, asthma and in some cases, blindness. Dog dirt is dangerous."

Maiah aged 10: "All we are trying to do is walk to the swimming pool and it is being ruined by lots of dog poop – it makes me sick! There should be signs [telling] people to pick up their dog poop. I am asking you to help us try and stop people leaving it on the pavement".

The children have spoken!





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CONCERNED ABOUT AN ADULT AT RISK?

 *Jo Cowan*

People concerned for the welfare of an adult at risk are often unsure who to speak to about it. Here is some information from the NHS Highland website about reporting an Adult Concern:

In Scotland, the Adult Support and Protection (Scotland) Act 2007 exists to protect adults from harm. This harm may include physical, financial, sexual or psychological abuse, or neglect or discrimination.

If you are unable to protect yourself from being harmed, it is important to tell someone. If you think you know someone who is being harmed, or at risk of being harmed, you must tell someone. Please remember that the person being harmed may not be able to report it themselves.

In the Highland area, the related social work duties and actions are undertaken by NHS Highland's Adult Social Care service.

If someone is in imminent danger, a call to the emergency services may be required:

Emergency police and ambulance services – 999

Non-emergency police – 101 NHS 24 – 111
To Report an Adult Concern in Lochaber

During normal office hours – please use the Adult Social Care Team contacts:

Lochaber: 01397 709832 (nhsh.lochaber-
istrict@nhs.scot)



Outside of normal office hours:

Emergency Social Work Services: 0808 175 3646 (ESWS@highland.gov.uk) – provide a limited service for urgent issues only, overnight, at weekends or on public holidays.

The following information may also be useful:

If you are experiencing abuse, or are concerned about someone who may be, the Hourglass confidential helpline can provide advice and support. You can call them on 0808 808 8141, 24 hours a day, seven days a week. You can also call Age Scotland Helpline on 0800 12 44 222 (Monday to Friday 9am - 5pm) for advice on steps you can take. Age Scotland Information Guides "Worried an Older Person in Being Abused?" and "Staying Safe from Abuse" are available free of charge on Age Scotland website www.agescotland.org.uk or by calling the helpline.

thought for the month

 *Justin Cummings,
The Faith Mission*

Happy Easter? How can we give out chocolate and some folk send Happy Easter cards, what's so happy about Easter, where an innocent man is nailed to a cruel cross, how is it happy He is beaten, whipped, punched, spat on and a crown of thorns put on to make fun of Him? And a sign

says, 'King of the Jews'? And when He dies there's darkness, an earthquake, rocks split and a Roman

soldier says, "surely this man is the Son of God". It's not happy! But here's the happy – He comes alive again and more than 500 eyewitnesses see Him over 40 days. He died for our sins, our wrong, so we can be forgiven, cleaned up from the inside out – that's Good News.

That's why some Christians wear crosses, to remind them

what Jesus did for them. We don't wear wee electric chairs or wee guillotines. Jesus put out His arms and said, 'punish me, forgive them'. It shows us how much Jesus loves us and how valuable we are to God. That's why it's Happy Easter for us all. We should trust Him, believe in Him and thank Him for the cross. You could say a prayer, something like this: 'Thank you Jesus for dying for me, forgive me, help me to follow you'. Happy Easter to you all!



How many Boys Brigaders can you fit into a police car? As many as you have! The junior section of the company left their usual meeting place of Duncansburgh Church Hall for a guided tour around Fort William Police Office. The trip included a spell in the cells, having their fingerprints taken and most popular of all, a chance to climb into the driving seat of a police 4x4 and make as much noise as possible with its siren. Photograph: Iain Ferguson, The Write Image

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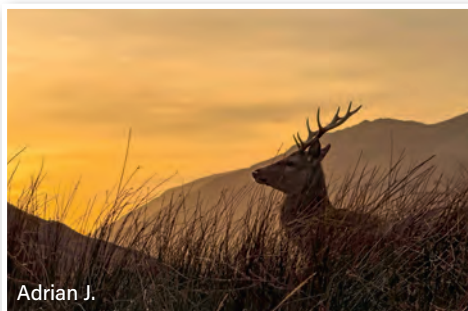


Ali Fish.



Patryk Palicki.

Fort William Photographic Society meets on the first and third Tuesday of every month in the Salvation Army Hall, Fort William from 7.15pm. New members are always welcome and do not have to be experienced photographers or have a 'fancy' camera, just an interest in the subject. More details at www.fwphotosociety.uk



Adrian J.



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ARROWS FLY AS 90+ PLAYERS 'OCHE UP

 **Iain Ferguson**

The recent Duncan Rodger Memorial darts tournament in Fort William saw 38 youngsters of Primary and High School ages step up to the Oche for an exciting afternoon of play in Sunny's Sports Bar – Fort William's version of the darting dream venue Alexandra Palace. This was followed in the evening by 59 adults throwing in the senior competition.

Held in memory of the highly regarded, talented, all-round sportsman and darts player its aim was not only to raise money for charity but also to give young people the opportunity to develop an interest in the sport.

Organiser and Darts enthusiast Martyn Cameron said: "Scoring highest of the lot in the Primary section was the smallest of them all, Brodie Campbell, who has a massive future ahead of him in the game of darts. Runner-up was Fergus

Molde who travelled from England.

In an exciting High School competition that led to what was described as 'a gem of a final', tournament favourite, Campbell Burnett from Fort Augustus took on Donald Campbell from Oban. Both missed doubles in the first leg for a high finish, with Campbell taking first place.

While the Juniors finished in the afternoon, the adults signed in for the Senior competition that evening. This attracted an entry of 59 singles players and ran on until after midnight.

Winner was Martyn Cameron for the third year in succession with a final score of five legs to one against runner-up Evan Atkinson. Other runners-up were Ballachulish man Darren Sutherland, beaten by Martyn four legs to one, and Oban League Champ six seasons in a row, Adam Brook, beaten by Evan four legs to three, with prizes presented to them by

Duncan's Mother, Patti. Adults' entry fees and a raffle raised £860 which will be donated to Motor Neuron Disease Scotland (in support of local shinty player Lachlan Campbell) and £450 was paid out in prizes over three competitions.

However the opportunity to play darts is not limited to an annual competition, as Monday is weekly league at Sunny's. Vault 11.0, which is sanctioned by the Amateur Darts Co-operation, is open to anyone over 14 years old, but only the first 24 online entries made through DartsAtlas, events Vault 11.0@SunnysSportsBat.

On Fridays, Tradewinds in Corpach host Lochaber's only single league, playing each week to gain points in the competition, going to an overall table leading to a finals day split into where you finished in the table. For details on both contact Martyn Cameron through Facebook.



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PAWEL'S RECORD RUN

 **Iain Ferguson**

Mallaig athlete Pawel Cymbalista has just chalked up another record, running the West Highland Way (supported) winter in a time of 19 hours, 30 minutes and 9 seconds. He already holds the supported summer record of 17:57:35, which he set in 2022, also coming fourth in the WHW Race in 2023.

Speaking about his latest challenge Pawel said: "I like to start the year with a big challenge and without a doubt it was that. The West Highland Way is always just that.

"The weather was kind to me most of the time. I had a couple of snow showers and towards the end the wind started to pick up increasing the wind chill. The temperature was around -2°C but the wind was going right through my body making it feel much colder."

Pawel's team consisted of



friends and family brother-in-law Ryan, Scott Brown, wife Ashley, Monty, Ben Miller, Ruairdh Oliver-Jones, Stuart Malcolm, Manny Gorman and Coalín Finn.

"The whole team worked very hard and we had an amazing time on the trail," he said: "Nonetheless it was very tough and I had a five-minute break every time I stopped to refuel, refill and readjust myself.

Anything longer than five minutes resulted in my body temperature dropping and I started to shiver."

His biggest challenge was the cold wind, ice, frozen rocks in random patches and he required constant focus, and on eating and drinking plenty so he had the fuel to create energy to regulate body temperature.

Another challenge was many roots and sharp rocks sticking out of the ground, and an early section when he couldn't find a good rhythm. Darkness also plays a big part in winter long distance running but Pawel is comfortable with that.

However he had many positives on the trail, running many sections of the WHW that in his own record time from Milngavie to Inverarnan, Bridge of Orchy to Glencoe Mountain Resort to Kinlochleven. He said he found



these "absolutely amazing."

Unfortunately he also had a few trips and slips, twisting his right ankle on a rock, putting a lot of pressure on the hamstring and lower back causing discomfort and pain.

He said: "I had 16km (10 miles to go) to Fort William and had to grind it out. I was very focused on my body and trying to keep everything aligned so I would not cause more damage. I was chasing the clock as well. I knew I would grab the record if I just keep pushing it. It was a real fight but I made it! Thanks to my support team who never gave up on me and pushed me to the end.

"I have big dreams and ideas of what I would like to achieve and I will keep at it as long as I can. I am only 37 years old. I am planning to keep going until I'm 60 or more!"

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