

ROGART NEWS

Community Council Jottings

SSEN Powerlines

Community Councillors have attended a public meeting at Brora with SSN, and a separate meeting with Maree Todd MSP and Jamie Stone MP who are to write to Ofgem and Energy Minister Grant Shapps MP respectively. There is no planning application on the table at the moment. SSN were overwhelmed with responses to their consultation and will be carrying out further community engagement in the autumn. Both proposed routes impact the parish of Rogart as Loch Buidhe is the destination.

Acbeilidh Windfarm

The Community Council will be inviting Energie Kontor to our August 21 meeting, as a follow up to their most recent engagement session in the Hall. A planning application is some way off, pending additional survey work.

Place Plan

The community council are invited to put together a local Place Plan by June 2024. "Local Place Plans allow communities to submit ideas and proposals for their area, which can be taken into consideration while the Local Development Plan is being prepared", and it will be a precursor to a refresh of the Community Development Plan of 2016.

Community Benefit Funds- Legacy Project

We have been invited to consider a significant c. £200k project, using funds drawn down from future(2040) Gordonbush windfarm money. We have had two ideas so far- a clock tower for the centre of the village and a all-weather games court. If you have your own thoughts on what the village needs, please contact the Community Council.

Gala

Special thanks to all those who worked so hard to make the 2023 Rogart Gala such a success.

Community Council Elections

And finally, elections will be held for the Community Council in November 2023. Please consider putting yourself forward to ensure that the Council is representative of our community.

Frank Roach- Chair

Church News

The Church of Scotland has announced its intention to close St Callans Church by the end of 2024, along with Golspie. The local church will in future be based in Brora. A meeting will be held in the autumn to enable people from the whole parish to air their views on its future.

Services continue to be held at 1100 on the second and fourth Sundays of the month.



COMANN
EACHDRAIGH
:GIRE RAOIR



ROGART
HERITAGE
SOCIETY



Walk & Talk the "Round Rogart Path"

Meet at the "Rogart Mart"
July 20th for a 10am start.

Part of the Golspie Bothy "Walk & Talk walks"
Everyone welcome.

Walking 4.5m around a circular way marked route at a leisurely pace, expecting to take 2-2.5 hrs. The route alternates between moderate and easy. Plenty of stops along the way. Afterwards there will be a short talk from the Rogart Heritage Society about the mart.

Bring along a drink, waterproofs and wear suitable sturdy footwear (optional -packed lunch to eat back at the mart.)

Amanda Wagstaffe
07833 938938

amanda.wagstaffe@cyclinguk.org



Rogart Development Trust Update 07.07.23

Putting the community at the heart of Rogart

Project Work

Phase 2 of the Mart project leading to its completion. Just to recap, Phase 2 will optimise the outside area with the construction of canopies and generally improve accessibility and safety at the Mart. With planning permission in place and funding approved, work will be starting soon.

With the Public Entertainment Licence now in place the Mart, is fully up and running as you'll see below. The Mart is also available to be hired as a venue.

RDT have been delighted with the events that have been taking place at the Mart so far this year. What a buzz it's been bringing to the village!

We had a market in March; a clothes swish in April; the amazing Budapest Cafe Orchestra in May; an incredible weekend long exhibition: "Letters to the Earth", followed by the second quarterly market of the year in June! We have been delighted with being able to showcase amazing Highland talent, history, local produce and music through all this so far. Our thanks to everyone who has given up their time to help organise these events and to everyone who comes and enjoys them! The positive feedback from the community makes it all worthwhile.

RDT is run entirely by volunteers. If anyone would like to become more involved, you're very welcome to become RDT members. (If you'd like more information, please don't hesitate to speak to any of the Trustees. Membership forms are available in the PO Stores.)

We are only halfway through the year though and have several more events lined up for your diaries!

Tickets for these (where relevant) are for sale on Eventbrite (search Rogart Development trust) and there will be a number available on the door for anyone having difficulty purchasing tickets online.

Upcoming events:

Live Music

Saturday 28/07/2023: doors open 1900 for 1930 start.

A night of music brought to you from incredible musicians from East Sutherland and Easter Ross,

friends- Ruairidh Gollan (fiddle), Megan MacDonald (accordion) and Kaitlin Ross (song and guitar) collaborate for the first time to bring you an evening of their favourite tunes and songs from across Scotland and beyond. There will be everything from traditional Gaelic songs to classic pipe 2/4 marches! Hailing from Lairg and Fearn respectively, Megan and Kaitlin are both members of the band, Eabhal. Ruairidh, brought up and living in Edderton, teaches and gigs across the Highlands and works regularly with Fèis Rois. Refreshments will be available in the interval. BYOB.

Tickets - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/live-music-with-ruairidh-gollan-megan-macdonald-and-kaitlin-ross-tickets-667557992927>

Just confirmed, we have the renowned *Strath Fleet Buttons and Bows* performing on 25th August.

Comedy

Saturday 12/08/2023: doors open 1930 for 2000 start, tickets - <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/comedy-night-at-the-mart-with-rab-mulheron-and-supporting-acts-tickets-648009161847>

Strictly for over 18s and not for the easily offended, Rab Mulheron, the Big Glaswegian, comes to Rogart to bring you a night of adult stand-up comedy! Supported by the amazing James Fraser and his karajoke, you will be delighted by two stand up acts in one evening! Refreshments will be available during the interval by donation. BYOB

Clothes Swish

Saturday 02/09/2023: from 1100 to 1400 - the second of the year due to popular demand!! £5 entry on the door for 10 tokens (each can be traded for one item of clothing or a pair of shoes / bag). Additional tokens can be bought for further items at 50p each. Clean clothing/ shoes/ belts / bags/ hats/ scarves/ jewellery/ bedding etc. - all welcome. Please contact Kat Lee on 07784034659 or drop off swish donations at the Rogart Spar. Raffle and refreshments will also be available.

Market @ The Mart

Saturday 23/09/2023 - 1000-1400 free entry. A brilliant, wide range of stalls including some brand-new sellers this time! Refreshments will be available.

For booking stalls, please contact Kat Lee on 07784034659 or via the Rogart Mart Facebook

page. Weather permitting, we hope to be able to offer outdoor space for plant, vegetable and produce stalls. (0900 stall-holder set up)

Round Rogart Path

This is now being enjoyed by many. Regular maintenance is ongoing. A working group of RDT members has been organised to cut the whins back on the new path down to the vets and the long grass on sections of the path will be mowed shortly.

Amanda Wagstaffe, Project Co-Ordinator from Golspie Bothy, is organising a talk and walk round the Round Rogart Path on 20th July.

RDT Trustees

Kate Roach (Chair) Kat Lee (Treasurer) Mairi Mackay (Membership Secretary) Karen Mackay Jonathan Hedges Liz Allan

East & Central Sutherland Citizens Advice Bureau News

We Need You

CITIZENS Advice first and foremost is a voluntary service of advice and assistance provided by individuals serving their communities in a formal, unpaid capacity. Consequently, we need people from all walks of life and ages to be volunteer advisers, receptionists, admin staff, and to join our management board.

If you would like to know more, email volunteer@ecscab.org.uk and we'll send you a volunteer pack.

Bureau Expands Service

ECSCAB has expanded its service across Sutherland with the return of the daily drop-in service in Golspie and by adding further outreach clinics in Brora, Helmsdale and Lairg.

We are now open 9 - 5 Monday to Friday in Golspie and have drop-in advice clinics:

- Brora Library - Monday 2 - 4
- Helmsdale Community Centre - Tuesday 9.30 - 10.30
- Dornoch Hub - Wednesday 10 - 12
- Lairg Community Centre - Thursday 9.30 - 10.30
- Bonar Bridge Hub - Thursday 11.00 - 1.00.

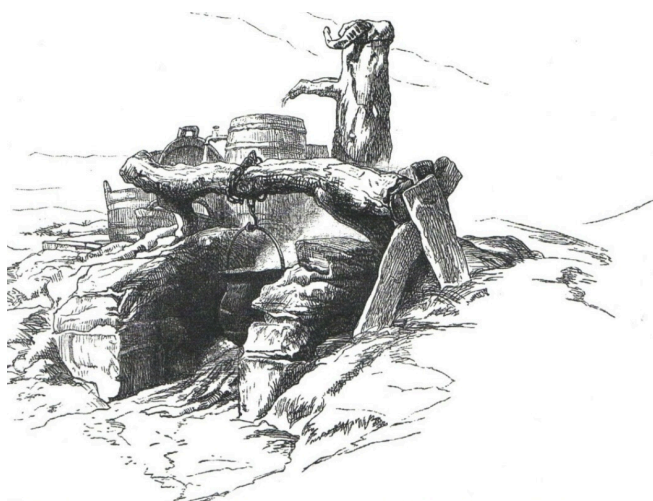
It is our hope that we can add an outreach clinic in Rogart in the near future.

Uisge Beatha — the water of life

In 1955 George Murray, Morness recalled "there was a still at every house and I could show you six old bothies from the door of where I'm standing". He was explaining how Rogart had once been a hotbed of illicit distilling which, in Patrick Sellar's exaggerated assessment was "entirely packed and crammed with whisky smugglers".

Rogart's remoteness and inaccessibility worked in the illicit distillers' favour. Few roads meant that any incursion by the excisemen would be spotted early and the equipment could be hidden or moved elsewhere. Tight kinship and neighbourly loyalties ensured that distillers would be alerted to approaching trouble.

A local story relates that a maiden aunt and her nephew, who lived together, were experts at making the whisky. One day they spied the gauger riding along towards them. There was only one door to the house and they had no time to remove the keg so the good lady lifted up her voluminous skirts, sat on the keg of whisky and draped her skirts around her. The gauger walked in, searching the house for evidence of the illegal trade while ignoring the old lady who was sitting knitting. Not long after his departure the keg was taken a little closer to the peat fire to resume its maturing process.



Whisky still (1827)

One Sabbath, the word went round that the gaugers were coming. Two boys were going up to the bothy where whisky was distilled. The gaugers got one of them, but the other, Tom, put the whisky in the midden, with a few graips of horse manure

over it. The gaugers didn't find it, but Tom was in bed for a fortnight after drinking it.

The crimes being committed were numerous and included smuggling, still ownership, selling without a licence, illegal malting and offences against the excise laws. If caught, the punishments were severe. In 1829 a widow, Ann Macdonald of Torbreck, was sentenced to a fine of £25 or 6 months imprisonment for an excise offence.

Whilst the grain farmers, landlords and distributors profited magnificently from the illegal trade, the men and women who actually produced the illegal hooch benefited less. Rising rents and grasping middlemen ensured that, for the majority of illicit distillers, income remained stubbornly low.

Christina Uduweradge-Perera

Rogart Hall Events

High Life Highland activities - 12th July, 9.45am-12.15pm

Puppy Club - 13th July, 5.30pm-7.00pm

Puppy Club - 19th July, 5.30pm-7.00pm

Coffee & Blether - 20th July, 10.3am-12.30pm

Puppy Club - 2nd August, 5.30pm-7.00pm

Coffee & Blether - 17th August, 10.30am-12.30pm

Hall Committee Soup & Sweet - 9th September, 11.00am-2.00pm

Hall Committee AGM - 12th September, 7.30pm - 9.00pm

Coffee & Blether - 21st September, 10.30am - 12.30pm

Rogart Bowling Club - 28th September, 7.00pm - 9.00pm

Dancing Class - 29th September, 7.30pm-8.30pm

Community Lunch - 29th September, 11.00am - 2.00pm

Rogart Mart Events

Ruairidh Gollan Trio - 28th July, 7.00pm - 11.00pm

Feis Rois Ceilidh Trail - 11th August, 7.00pm - 10.00pm

Rab Mullerton, Comedian - 12th August, 8.00pm - 11.00pm

Strath Fleet Buttons & Bows - 25th August, 7.00pm - 9.00pm

Swish Clothes exchange - 2nd September, 11.00am - 2.00pm

Community Market - 23rd September, 10.00am - 2.00pm

School PTA Events

Rogart PTA AGM - Tuesday 22nd August

Rogart PTA fundraiser - Carwash at the Mart, help raise funds for our school at the community market at the mart - Saturday 23rd September

Local Business Listings

If you have a local business and would like to be included please contact Peter Horsler at morsefields@gmail.com.

Dave Brampton podiatrist/chiroprapist
davebrampton@gmail.com, 01408641478, 07733261163 . Rowan cottage, 10 Acheilidh, Rogart. I have been a podiatrist/chiroprapist over 30 year's and I only charge seniors rate of £20 for Rogart and local visits.

Toes & Soles Footcare, Mobile foot health practitioner. Contact **Amy McHardy** on 07810847948, toesandsolesfootcare@outlook.com

Karen Bell, Into the Wild Therapy, one to one counselling, meditation and nature connection, Little Rogart. www.intothewildtherapy.co.uk , 07849 837835

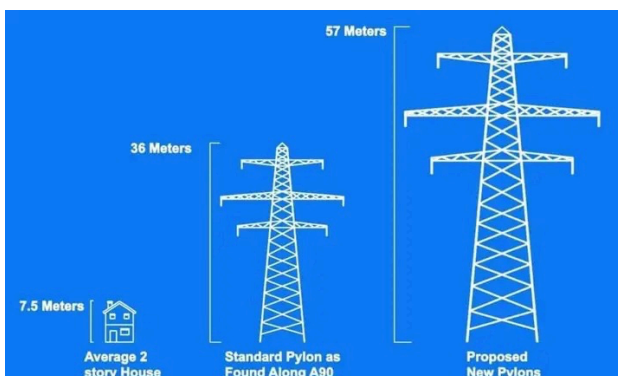
Letter from a Rogart resident

Dear Editor,

Power Problems

I feel it is important to highlight to our community some of the developments that SSEN are planning, not just for Rogart but for rural communities across the Highlands.

There is a proposed plan for a new electricity infrastructure from Spittal in Caithness to Beaully. It is becoming increasingly clear that this is not just to re-enforce the existing structures that supply the Highlands, rather, the aim is that this will be part of a larger development that will involve many new windfarms both onshore and offshore being created, new powerline infrastructure across the Highlands and new undersea cables. This is in order to provide energy further south and for export. Many residents in rural areas across the Highlands and Islands are deeply upset at the prospect of what will amount to the industrialisation of the Highlands, causing widespread damage to areas of environmental and archeological importance. Also impacting our communities and ruining our beautiful scenic landscape as we know it. This could in turn impact tourism which is a major source of income for the Highlands.



Comparative size of the proposed new pylons

The new infrastructure that we have been made aware of that will impact Rogart is the Spittal to Beaully line which will carry 400KVA lines, much heavier duty lines than the ones we are used to seeing with pylons three times the size (around the size of the Scott Monument!) - these pylons will transport energy to a massive substation in Spittal located within the heart of crofting communities there, needless to say residents of these communities and many others are deeply

concerned about the impact this will have. Several residents across rural communities have been threatened with the Compulsory Buy Out of land to house this new infrastructure with ambiguous responses being received when SSEN are questioned about their future plans and considerations of the impact on local communities. Many people have been unaware of how this will impact them and how large the planned developments will be.

Rogart is included in this new infrastructure and the new pylons are proposed to run either to the East or West of Pittentrail, the route is yet to be agreed. Many of the maps used to show the proposed routes are out of date and have not considered residential properties along the route. It has been very difficult to get straight answers about how this will impact our landscape in Rogart, not just visually but environmentally. It is clear however that it will impact our community in a massive way.

Acheildh Windfarm Proposal

As well as the proposed power lines some residents of Rogart may be unaware of new Windfarm proposals from the company Energy Kontor (EK) for Acheildh Estate. A public exhibition was held by EK in Rogart Hall on 16th



Likely view of the turbines looking south

May. It was advertised in the Northern Times but not elsewhere within the local community.

The proposal is for 12 turbines, 6 at 200m high and 6 at 230m high. These will be topped with red lights due to the danger they will cause to passing aircraft. To put this into perspective we are talking about structures that are over 100 meters taller than any other freestanding building in the whole of Scotland and almost as tall as the shard, London's tallest building! They will dominate the skyline of Rogart if allowed to go ahead, imposing on our night sky and will be visible from most places in the community.

The information provided at the public exhibition can be found on the EK website - energiekontor.co.uk

What can we do?

If you are concerned about these developments which are not yet at the planning stage (there are moves within the government and SSEN to speed the normal planning process up so that the government can meet their 2030 target for green energy which could impact our ability to object) then please come along to the next community council meeting on the 21st of August and raise your concerns and have your voice heard. You might also want to write to your local MSP, write to SSEN and voice your objection or write directly to the government or to local or national press to raise awareness.

There are several groups banding together within Caithness and Sutherland, Pylon Pressure to stop SSEN have a facebook page and <https://www.communitiesb4powercompanies.co.uk> have a website and facebook page raising awareness of the impact of these developments will have on our communities.. As small communities we may feel we cannot shout loud enough but together with our fellow crofting communities perhaps we can make our voices heard.

Karen Bell, Little Rogart

Orchestral Manoeuvres in the Mart

The first music event at the Rogart Mart was held on Friday 26 May. A crowd of 75 enjoyed the eclectic music of the renowned Budapest Cafe Orchestra. With a line up of Kelly Cantlon on double bass, Adrian Zolotuhin on guitar/exotic strings, Eddie Hession on accordion, and led by violin virtuoso Christian Garrick, the stylishly-attired, dapper gents waltzed through their set of Eastern European gypsy folk music, taking their instruments to places most of us had never heard of.



Budapest Cafe Orchestra

East met West Highlands with the haunting Maid of the Shieling, while the Kossid Wedding Dances even had their signature standard lamps doing their bit shimmying and reeling in time to the foot-tapping beat. These are serious musicians who have played with the biggest stars, but whose humour was down to earth. Back next year!