

FORT WILLIAM MOUNTAIN FESTIVAL 2009
6 - 14 March
A celebration of mountain culture
<http://www.mountainfestival.co.uk>

News Release - Tuesday 25 November 2008

MASTER OF SCOTLAND'S MOUNTAINS HOLDS NEW ROLE AS FESTIVAL PATRON
Fort William Mountain Festival 2009

The Highland Mountain Culture Association, based in Fort William, have today (25 November 2008) announced that Dave 'Cubby' Cuthbertson, a climber, mountain guide and mountain photographer, who has been inextricably linked to the development of cutting edge climbing in Scotland for the past two and a half decades, will be the new Patron of the Fort William Mountain Festival.

Dave 'Cubby' Cuthbertson comes on board as patron for a festival that has gone from strength to strength since its launch in 2002. As one of Scotland's best ever mountaineers and a dynamic proponent of Scottish mountaineering he brings a huge endorsement of quality, strong mountain roots and an international perspective to the Mountain Festival. The festival will draw on Cubby's background and experience to continue to stage wide ranging and diverse events that celebrate every aspect of mountain culture, from industry to leisure and art.

Mike Pescod, Chairman of the Highland Mountain Culture Association, organisers of the Fort William Mountain Festival, said: 'I am delighted we have Cubby as the new patron of the Fort William Mountain Festival. He has been a great inspiration to me for my climbing and guiding. But more importantly he has a huge amount of experience in bringing people to appreciate the mountains through his guiding, photography and film work. He also has an industrial background and realises the importance of the mountains in providing us with jobs. Cubby is keen to help take the festival forward and he will be a great asset to us. I'm looking forward to working with him to make the festival even better.'

Even in today's highly competitive environment there are few climbers who have excelled in all departments of British climbing to the degree that Dave 'Cubby' Cuthbertson has. During the 1970's and 1980's he undertook many bold climbs that heralded a new level of difficulty hitherto unseen north of the border. He grabbed Scottish climbing by the scruff of the neck and dragged its standards skyward, both in 1979 with his ascent of the route 'Wild Country' on The Cobbler in Argyll, and in 1983, with his ascent of 'Requiem' at Dumbarton Rock, a climb which many informed commentators regarded at the time as the hardest rock climb in the world - not just Scotland. This was followed by some breathtaking winter ascents of routes in the Highlands including 'Stormy Petrel' on Ben Nevis and Guerdon Grooves in Glen Coe.

MORE>

Dave 'Cubby' Cuthbertson said about his appointment: 'There is a great energy and buzz about Fort William, The Outdoor Capital of the UK and, together with The Fort William Mountain Festival, adventure enthusiasts from all over the world are being inspired to visit our fabulous landscape here in the Scottish Highlands. I've climbed and walked in these parts for nearly forty years and at this stage in my outdoor career being patron of such a prestigious event is not only an honour and a recognition of my contribution to Scottish climbing, but also provides me with a great sense of belonging.'

The Fort William Mountain Festival, presented with The Nevis Partnership, is a nine-day celebration of mountains and the culture that surrounds them and runs from 6 - 14 March 2009. During the best winter walking and climbing conditions of the year, audiences will be entertained by a varied and packed programme of mountain sports, films, lectures, guided walks, workshops, exhibitions, literature, photography and music for residents and visitors who want to learn about and celebrate mountain culture. The full programme for the 2009 Fort William Mountain Festival will be announced on Tuesday 2 December 2008 - <http://www.mountainfestival.co.uk>

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If you are keen to attend the Fort William Mountain Festival for a commissioned feature or as part of an adventure travel / activity feature please contact Paddy Cuthbert to discuss a press trip to Fort William and Lochaber.

Notes to Editors:

The Fort William Mountain Festival is part of a worldwide community of Mountain Film and Culture Festivals, the original and most famous being the Banff Mountain Festivals, Canada (www.banffmountainfestivals.ca). Other events in Scotland include the Edinburgh Mountain Film Festival (www.edinburghmountainff.com), Dundee Mountain Film Festival (www.dundeemountainfilm.org.uk) and the Aviemore Mountain Film Festival (www.amff.co.uk)

NEVIS PARTNERSHIP - Presenting Partner

A charitable company formed in 2003 to guide future policies and actions affecting Ben and Glen Nevis and the surrounding area. The Partnership is committed to protecting, managing and maintaining this unique and special environment in a sustainable and balanced way. <http://www.nevispartnership.co.uk>

RIO TINTO ALCAN

Rio Tinto is a leading international mining group headquartered in the UK, combining Rio Tinto plc, a London and NYSE listed company, and Rio Tinto Limited, which is listed on the Australian Securities Exchange. Rio Tinto's business is finding, mining, and processing mineral resources. Major products are aluminium, copper, diamonds, energy (coal and uranium), gold, industrial minerals (borax, titanium dioxide, salt, talc) and iron ore. Activities span the world but are strongly represented in Australia and North America with significant businesses in South America, Asia, Europe and Southern Africa. <http://www.riotinto.com/riotintoalcan>

ELLIS BRIGHAM - The UK's leading Mountain Sports retailer with its heart and soul firmly in the mountains. With over 60 years experience and 16 stores nationwide we cater for the needs of climbers and walkers, skiers and 'boarders, travellers and explorers and all who appreciate being out and about in the great outdoors - <http://www.ellis-brigham.com>

HOTSCOT - HotScot is a leading Scottish web site design agency with an established specialism in tourism and the outdoors. Based in Fort William 'The Outdoor Capital of the UK' they have developed an established pedigree with their reference client portfolio and can deliver a high quality solution backed by real experience - <http://www.hotscot.net>

NEVIS RANGE - Situated on the slopes of Aonach Mor, Scotland's highest ski area, Nevis Range run the UK's only mountain gondola carrying visitors to 2150ft. Winter climbers can also make the most of a ride up on the climber's chair. The downhill mountain bike track has hosted the Mountain Bike World Cup since 2001 - <http://www.nevisrange.co.uk>

THE OUTDOOR CAPITAL OF THE UK

A not-for-profit community company established to promote Fort William and Lochaber as the best place to experience the outdoors in the UK. There are over 65 different activities to choose from in an amazing landscape that encompasses the small isles to Ben Nevis with white water rivers, sea, lochs, beaches, forest, glens, cliffs and mountains in between. <http://www.outdoorcapital.co.uk>

The Highland Mountain Culture Association Limited, is a not for profit organisation, whose aim is to promote the understanding and appreciation of the world's mountain places and people, by creating opportunities for people of all ages to share their mountain experiences, ideas and visions. To showcase these ideals, it stages annually a programme of events within the Lochaber area, called The Fort William Mountain Festival.

Corporate sponsorship is crucial to the future success of The Fort William Mountain Festival and with your help we can maintain this support and the healthy and productive relationships we have with our sponsors by crediting them in print. This makes a real difference to the festival. Mentions are counted and used as an evaluation of sponsored projects. A credit at the foot of an article or a mention as the title sponsorship can make all the difference to us. Please credit our sponsors where you can.

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