

Ness - Barvas

FREE Community Newsletter

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Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn is a company registered in Scotland No.273903 and a charity registered in Scotland No. SC036903

Annie recognised with honorary Presidency of Comunn Eachdraidh Nis

Comunn Eachdraidh Nis moved with the times and held their 2020 Annual General Meeting via the medium of Zoom. Resigning from her role as Chairperson, Annie Macsween was made an Honorary President of the organisation. Jasmine Wilkie reports:

The Comunn Eachdraidh Nis AGM took place via Zoom on the evening of the 23rd July, having been postponed in March owing to the coronavirus restrictions. The AGM of 23rd July touched on the successes and challenges of the previous financial year for the Comunn Eachdraidh, as well as the announcement of several key resignations and appointments made to the Board.

Opening the proceedings, Annie Macsween gave thanks to the Board, staff and volunteers for the help and skills they offered during a period of major upheaval for Comunn Eachdraidh Nis, with reference made to the significant building work that took place over the course of the year. A lengthy list of the very many projects the Comunn Eachdraidh offered over the last financial year was then acknowledged, from community engagement work with both young people and senior citizens, to museum exhibitions, fundraising events, the Ladies Christian Conference and writing workshops. Visits with the Day Club,



after school activities and participation in commemorative events were all also mentioned, and staff members and volunteers were again thanked for their hard work in all, without whom Annie said "the work would not be possible".

The guidance and knowledge of the CEN was requested by a variety of organisations over the year, from Urras an Taobh Sear/Staffin Community Trust on the Isle of Skye, to Historic Environment Scotland and the Western Isles Heritage Network. The Queen's Award for Voluntary

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Guga hunt cancelled

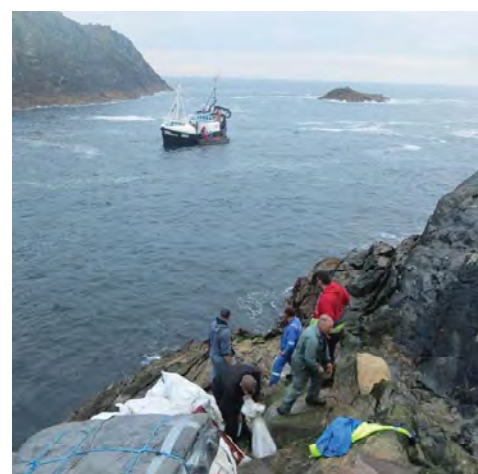


Photo: John Murdo Macfarlane

The annual guga expedition to Sulasgeir has been cancelled this year due to concerns about COVID-19.

Despite the current staged relaxation of lockdown by the Scottish Government, the crew that visit the rock each year for the annual cull of young gannets believes there remains a significant enough threat posed by coronavirus to potentially compromise the health and safety of the team, as well as boat crews and the emergency services that might be called upon in the event of illness affecting the men while they are on the rock.

In a statement, Sulasgeir team leader, Tam Murray, said: "After careful consideration with the current situation with COVID-19, the team that would normally be heading north to Sulasgeir in August have decided, in the best interests of the health of the team, boat crews and emergency services, that the annual hunt will not go ahead this year. Although the licence has been applied for as usual, SNH have indicated that they leave the decision of Health and Safety to be dealt with by the team themselves.

"It is felt that not going to Sulasgeir is the safest option in the current situation. We are sure that the community of Ness will support this decision and we will be in a much better position this time next year."

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First Minister announces the reopening of schools

THE FIRST MINISTER ANNOUNCED YESTERDAY AFTERNOON (THURSDAY) THAT SCHOOLS IN SCOTLAND would be permitted to fully reopen from 11 August with local education authorities allowed to delay the return till 18 August if necessary. A 49-page guidance note from the Scottish Government published yesterday afternoon confirmed the announcement, noting that 'The Scottish Government welcomes local

authority decisions which enable children and young people to return to school full-time as quickly and safely as possible, and expects all pupils to be in school full-time by 18 August at the very latest'.

Responding to the announcement, Comhairle na Eilean Siar's Director of Education, Bernard Chisholm, commented

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Annie recognised with honorary Presidency of Comunn Eachdraidh Nis

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Services was also given in June 2019 owing to the significant voluntary contribution of the CEN to the community, and two staff members attended the award ceremony to collect this significant accolade. Thanks too were offered to Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, in particular to Lisa Maclean and Neil Mackinnon.

Finances were then discussed. CEN membership saw an increase of 35% on last year's figures, as well as an increase in tearoom takings owing to its opening in the last season. Donald Mackenzie stated that thanks to the "generosity of funders and the hard work of the staff, Board and volunteers", the CEN were financially "still in a fairly strong position". He acknowledged, too, the fantastic amount of work that went into applying for grants for the organisation.

Lastly, Annie Macsween announced her resignation from the role of Chair. Donald Mackenzie also followed suit, as did Murdo Macleod, Donald Macdonald and Donald John Campbell, although the latter was willing to be re-appointed. Joan Macinnes was appointed as Chairperson, with Iain Gordon Macdonald Vice-Chairperson and Mary Campbell as Secretary. In thanking Annie for her years of service, Joan announced Annie as Honorary President of the CEN. Annie was presented with an engraved plaque and flowers and said that she was "very touched" to receive the gift.



Artists' opportunity

THREE CREATIVE OPPORTUNITIES, ENTITLED COLLECTIVELY AS "ARTISTS AND COMMUNITY LANDOWNERS", HAVE ARISEN AS PART OF THE STOVE NETWORK, AN ARTS AND COMMUNITY ORGANISATION BASED IN DUMFRIES. Artists are invited by either Community Land Scotland or two community landowners, to work collaboratively and create an art installation alongside communities and their landowners. The first opportunity, co-ordinated by Community Land Scotland, is entitled "Stories of Radical Landownership" and will focus on the journeys of four communities. The other two commissions will work directly with two community landowners - Abriachan Forest near Inverness being one, and the other with Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, here in North Lewis.

The overall aim of "Artists and Community Landowners / Luchd-ealain agus Luchd-seilbh Fearann Coimhearsnachd" is to tell the wider stories of community ownership - the stories of Scotland's land in the hands of local people. All three commissions will attempt to get to the root of "what inspired communities to act, how they got to where they are now, what challenges and surprises they have faced, and the effect that land ownership has had on their place, people and environment", raising awareness of community landownership both for communities and for Scotland through new approaches.

If you are interested, you can visit the Stove Network website to download the project brief and for more information. The deadline is Monday 3rd August at 12 noon. Visit:

https://thestove.org/artist-community-landowners-commission-opportunities/?fbclid=IwAR2EaFQaT6l9xmzmWo0b5Hc2dZJPxY0240BW1ykyDkF3lYXuK_uZUn3u0M

Voters with disabilities invited to comment on suitability of polling premises

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is inviting comments from electors with any type of disability and registered within the constituency to review the suitability of polling premises in the area.

Any comments from the general public will be considered alongside input from community councils, elected members, political parties, MP/MSPs, disability groups and the third sector.

Comments and representations may be made in writing to Derek Mackay, Governance and Elections Manager, Chief Executive's Department, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, Council Offices, Sandwick Road, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2BW or via email to elections@cne-siar.gov.uk.

All responses should be made by 5.00pm on Friday 14 August 2020. The draft proposals and Returning Officer's comments will be published on 21 August 2020 and there will be a further opportunity to make representations.

Further information is available via the Comhairle nan Eilean Siar website:

<https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/news/2020/july/review-of-polling-districts-and-polling-places/>

LAUNDRETTE OPEN 9AM - 7PM MONDAY TO SATURDAY

- MASKS must be worn in the Laundrette at all times
- Only TWO people allowed in Laundrette at a time
- Hands must be sanitised on ENTRY
- Spray and wipe machine handles and programme controls BEFORE use
- HANDS should touch only places needed to operate and load/unload the machines
- While clothes are being laundered please LEAVE the building.
- You must return BEFORE the cycle is finished to avoid handling other users' clothes
- Sanitise hands BEFORE leaving



Barvas

Foodbank

(Dalbeg - Port of Ness)



The foodbank was set up to help you!

We all need a little help now and again, if you or someone you know needs this service, please get in touch!

To receive food parcel please contact any of the following numbers -

Sarah - 07927236450

Murdo - 07770824552/840 284

Louis - 07870362449

or message us via our Facebook page.

Please advise of any specific requirements you may have. We will tailor your box to suit your family's needs as much as we can.

ALL request will be dealt with discreetly and in confidence

**GALSON**

MANY CONGRATULATIONS TO THIS POPULAR LOCAL COUPLE M.I. AND CALUM who celebrate their Ruby Wedding Anniversary this weekend. Married 40 years ago in the Galson Free Church Mission House by the Reverend Angus Smith. *Faire Faire.*

NORTH DELL

WISHING BENJY a happy 8th birthday, love from Dad, Mum, Lizzy, William and Catherine

CROSS SKIGERSTA

HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO HEATHER (No. 122) who celebrated her fiftieth on 30 July.

PORT

A VERY HAPPY 40TH BIRTHDAY CATRIONA with lots of love from, Ali, Ryan, Beth, Jamie and all your friends and family xxx



Benjy, see North Dell



Catriona, see Port



Calum and M.I. see Galson

Thanks

I WOULD LIKE TO SINCERELY THANK everyone for cards, monetary gifts, flowers, texts and all other expressions of sympathy received on the recent sad loss of Murdina and family, 39 Swainbost.

Condolences

We were sorry to hear that Jerry Werner, husband of Anne Smith, formerly of 22 Fivepenny, had passed away at their home in Texas last weekend after a long illness. We extend condolences to Anne and the family, Cameron and Kate, and remember all the relatives, including Anne's father, Allan, her brother Norman and sister Janice and their loved ones.

Thanks

Hazel and John Hebditch and the wider family, wish to sincerely thank all friends, neighbours and relatives for the many expressions of sympathy and kindness shown to us all since Dorothy's passing. The cards, flowers, gifts, phone calls and texts have been truly overwhelming and very humbling. Thanks also to Rev John Murdo Nicholson for spiritual support and also Church members, and to A MacRae, funeral directors for their sensitive help. God bless you all. With many thanks.
Hazel Hebditch, 132 Cross Skigersta Road.

Thanks

THE FAMILY OF THE LATE NORMANA BUCHANAN would like to thank the many people who sent cards and condolences following their recent bereavement, all monetary gifts will be donated to Alzheimer Scotland and Crossroads. We would also like to thank Rev Greg Macdonald, Archibald Macrae Funeral Services, and the Ness Cemetery Attendant, for their sympathetic support and services. Normana was cared for at home during a long period of illness and Alasdair in particular would like to mention and thank the following people and organisations for their support, respite provision and care services throughout this time: Crossroads (Angela and Kath), Alzheimer Scotland (Chrissie), Langabhat Medical Practice and the Community Nursing Team (Peggy Mairi), CNES Health and Social Care, and Harris Voluntary Services. Also, her good friends Dollag, who spent many afternoons with Normana, and Donald, Johanna and Paddy (Cross Stores).

Finally, and in particular, we would like to thank Normana's carers - Mary, Marion, Catriona and Kath. Their tremendously kind, respectful and warm treatment of Normana, and their friendship and support to Alasdair, has been a great source of comfort to the family over the years.

If you have any notices, greetings, birthdays or well-wishes you would like to include in the newsletter, please email:

jasmine@uoglt.com

Tom's Titbits

They arrived in all their splendour at my house at eight o'clock, which impressed me greatly because that kind of timekeeping is a rare event in the building trade around these parts. So, we were off to a good start. The senior one announced he would climb up to the scaffolding to sort out the gear and his colleague replied, "Ok, I will Follow, Follow." My suspicions should have been aroused when the senior's reply was, "We must get Ready, Aye Ready, and I think this window needs a new Sash," but I left them to begin their work and went inside to continue my impersonation of someone trying to finish painting the Forth Road Bridge. Yes, the interior decorating project is still ongoing.

I had barely dipped my brush in the gloss when a delivery van arrived on my driveway. We weren't expecting any parcels that day from Amazon, so I surmised that the driver was just checking to see if we were OK, and I went out to say, "Hello," as you do. Out of the cab erupted the Graceland Gourmet himself, Mr. Jack, a bandit without a mask, who gleefully whipped out his mobile and began to take photographs of my workers up on the roof. I guessed that he was on some advertising campaign for them until I saw the blue Rangers flag fluttering in the High Borve breeze high above my house on a wooden baton attached to the scaffolding, which our "Elvis" had spotted from the main road. He is definitely one of 'them'. Not being of the blue footballing side of the Glasgow football scene myself I chased this manure manipulator off my premises, whereby he scuttled off and proceeded to splatter the photographs all over Facebook. Foolishly, I mentioned the escapade on a live radio interview I was taking part in that morning, which increased my incoming social media posts greatly that day with wind-up merchants from all over the country having a pop. The neighbours and everyone who saw this display enjoyed it and it caused great hilarity, which is not a bad thing because we all need to laugh right now.

The banter with the builders continued as the week progressed and I have to say that for a couple of Blue Noses the quality of the workmanship is far above what can be said about the performances of their team in recent seasons. The one thing I did



by Tom Maciver

notice was that in every row of slates replaced, the ninth one had an asterisk marked on it. I can name these guys, if required, and highly recommend them. If the football season goes ahead as planned, one team will be victorious and will win the league. If it is my team and I am alive and well enough to see it, I will find Elvis and the joiners and I will fly my own flag.

I have a cousin down in Lincolnshire who regularly posts photographs of her garden on Facebook, and it is beautifully laid out and displays every flower, plant, fruit and vegetable I can think of. It's driving me nuts. I have tried my best this year and I reckon that if fifty percent of what I planted comes to fruition I will be happy. That target may be achieved, but I'm very disappointed with some of the results so far. The spuds I planted in bags certainly sport a healthy plumage above ground, but when I donned a surgical glove and rummaged about down below the surface, I realised we have a bit to go before we hit full growth. I made the mistake of comparing my own products with that of some friends and came away from these visits totally traumatised as my sister-in-law's leeks are as thick as my wrist and the Skigersta Peat Baron's onions are the size of cricket balls, for which he assures me full credit must go to the Midwife Retired. The same category of crops in my collection compare like roll up fags and maybe prunes. The Brussel Sprouts thing I planted in March has taken over the plot and now resembles an out of control trunkless palm tree and I'll be pleasantly surprised if anything it produces ever adorns my Xmas dinner plate come December. To crown it all the blone down south posted a photo of her husband last Saturday holding a quaint cane basket with a selection of about six different home-grown vegetables they were going to have with their Sunday dinner, whilst I had to make do with plundering the freezer. Although all is not lost, I think we've had about all the really warm sunshine that we're going to get this year. So, I'll have to carefully nurture things along in order to have the very necessary culinary requirement available to accompany the guga....very good potatoes.

Mar sin leibh an drasda

Tom

BANK HOLIDAY - HABOST SURGERY

Habost Surgery will be closed on Monday 3 August for the Bank Holiday.

Please call NHS24 (telephone 111) if you require urgent medical attention.

Prescription deliveries - can you help?

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn aim to continue to assist The Group Practice, Habost and the Langabhat Practice, Borve with prescription deliveries throughout August.

A fantastic team of volunteers are giving up their afternoons to do the deliveries. For this service to continue daily, another volunteer is required.

If you would like to help and are free on a Thursday afternoon from 2.30pm, please email christineamos@uogld.com or phone 07469189449.





Seiseanan Bookbug Air-Loidhne

Online Bookbug Sessions

Chan eil seiseanan beò a' ruith an-dràsta ach gheibh sibh gach seisean air-loidhne.

We are not running live sessions at the moment but you will find all our past sessions online.

Find us on Youtube by searching Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn!

Thig còmhla rinn airson seinn, sgeulachd agus spòrs!

Come along for singing, stories and fun!

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BEAGAN TAIC FUND



THERE IS NO SHAME IN REACHING OUT TO YOUR COMMUNITY FOR A LITTLE HELP IN YOUR TIME OF NEED.

We understand that sometimes a little help is required to help you through a difficult financial period. Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn is working in partnership with a local church to launch the "Beagan Taic" Fund. The fund will be available to any resident of the Galson Estate facing severe financial hardship.

There is no application form. If you are struggling financially please call 01851 850393 to discuss your situation in confidence. Just ask to speak to someone about the new support fund.

We understand that it is not easy to make this enquiry and we will do all we can to assist individuals and families in their time of need. Some personal details will be required along with information on current sources of income.

A decision will be made quickly and if assistance is appropriate it will be offered as shop vouchers, cash or a bank transfer. Advice on other possible sources of help will be offered to everyone who calls.

Tel: 01851 850393
WWW.GALSONTRUST.COM



A company registered in Scotland: 273903
A registered Scottish Charity SC036903

ADVICE FOR FUNERALS

The Scottish Government has updated its advice for funerals which is available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-for-funeral-services/pages/overview/>

Those attending a funeral, or advising others on attendance, should review and follow the below:

- in-person attendance at funeral services should be limited to 20 people. This is not including the funeral director, venue staff or celebrant. Numbers of attendees will also be based on the size of the venue and its ability to maintain strict physical distancing measures, so the number able to attend may be less than this
- all attendees must maintain at least a 2 metre distance from each other at all times (except where they are from the same household, or a carer and the person is assisted by the carer)
- if available, those who cannot attend in person should consider joining remotely via electronic means or viewing a recording of the service
- all attendees should maintain good hand and cough hygiene, both before and after attending a service e.g. such as regular hand washing, disposing of tissues etc, safely, and ideally taking home
- attendees should seriously consider the use of a face covering, particularly if in an enclosed space
- if a person is symptomatic (showing symptoms of COVID-19 infection) or has tested positive with COVID-19 they must not attend a funeral service in person, during the period they are required to self-isolate
- if a person is not symptomatic or a confirmed COVID-19 case, but is self-isolating due to another member of their household either showing symptoms of COVID-19 or their household member has tested positive with COVID-19, that person must seriously consider not attending a funeral service in person. They should instead continue to follow household self-isolation advice
- if a person is not symptomatic or a confirmed COVID-19 case, but is self-isolating as a result of other contact (identified through contact tracing), they must seriously consider not attending a funeral service in person. This person should instead follow all contact tracing and self-isolation advice provided to them
- provide contact details for Test and Protect purposes. Doing so is very important to help stop the spread of the coronavirus (COVID-19).

Found

A child's purse has been found in Ness Post Office.
Please contact Rose Anne for more details.
T: 810209

seo a-Nis

Shona Nic a' Mhaoilein



Còmhla

'S mi a tha ag ionndrainn a h-uile càil a bhios a' dol mar as àbhaist aig an t-àm sa den bhliadhna, gu h-àraidh na Fèisean agus an deireadh-sheachdain mhòr a bha sinn ag ullachadh airson fichead bliadhna de Thaigh Dhonnchaidh a chomharrachadh. Bha sinn an dùil gum biodh 'Ceòl Nis' againn le BBQ teaghlach, bùithtean-obrach le Maighread Stiùbhart agus Murchadh 'Wasp' Dòmhnallach agus oidhche mhòr ann am Borgh le taisbeanadh den tàlant a thàinig tro dhorsan Thaigh Dhonnchaidh thar na bliadhnaichean eadar luchd-ciùil, seinneadairean agus luchd-pàirteachaidh a tha fhathast ag ionnsachadh fo stiùir luchd-teagaisg an ionaid. Ge-tà, cha do leig sinn leis a' bhioras a' chùis a dhèanamh oirnn agus air oidhche 'Haoine gheibh sibh deagh bhlas de Cheòl Nis air e-cèilidh air duilleag Facebook Taigh Dhonnchaidh. Tha sinn air a bhith trang a' cruinneachadh bhideothan bhon fheadhainn a bhiodh air a bhith aig a' chèilidh mhòr agus gan cur chun eòlaiche teicneòlais again airson an toirt còmhla ann an sreath a bhios siùbhlach. Gu ruige seo chan eil mi cinnteach dè as dorra – a bhith a' feuchainn ris na bhideothan a chruinneachadh ann an ùine gu leòr no nam bithinn a' feuchainn ris an luchd-pàirteachaidh a chumail ann an òrdugh air an oidhche fhèin! Dha-rìreabh tha mi a' coimhead air adhart ris.

Caraidean Còir

Chaidh innse dhomh Disathairne a bhith deiseil airson mo thogail goirid an-dèidh uair feasgar agus cha deach càil eile a ràdh rium – dè chuirinn orm, dè bheirinn leam, dè cho fada 's a bhithinn air falbh bhon taigh! B' e là-breith mo charaid a bh' ann agus mar sin bha mi an dùil gun robh sinn a' dèanamh rudeigin airson sin a chomharrachadh còmhla ach bha làn fhios aice dè bha dol. Ceò air a' bheinn, smaoinich mi rium fhèin. Ràinig sinn am baile mòr an uairsin agus an-dèidh dhuinn stad airson rudeigin a thogail thog sinn oirnn agus rinn sinn air taigh mo charaid. Nach ann a choisich sinn a-steach agus bha bailiùnaichean phinc agus ghorm a' sgeadachadh an àite, bòrd làn biadh air ar beulaibh agus copain beag china airson teatha a ghabhail. Thug iad dhomh prèasantan airson a' bhèibidh agus bha dithis bheag mo charaid eile còmhla rinn cuideachd, aois 2 agus 3, 's iad nan leadaidhean bheaga nar cois. Abair thusa gu bheil caraidean còir agam!

Teaghlach

Diluain bha mi air uair a thide no dhà a chur dhan leabhar-latha feasgar mar uairean TOIL agus sinn gu bhith a' cruinneachadh aig taigh mo phàrantan gu cò-là-breith dithis dha mo pheathraichean a chomharrachadh còmhla. Sin a chaidh innse dhòmhsa co-dhiù. Choisich mi dhan taigh agus cha robh guth ri chluinntinn... dh'fhosgail mi doras an seòmar-suidhe agus bha fòn a h-uile duine orm agus cha chuala mi càil ach èigh mòr 'SURPRISE!' 'S ann a bha iad fhèin air an dearbh rud a dhèanamh a-rithist le prèasantan dhan a' bhèibidh agus geama no dhà a dh'fhàg sinn lag a' gaireachdainn. Bha againn uile ri cairt a lionadh, a' tomhais ainm a' bhèibidh, cuideam, dath fuilte, dath shùilean agus cuin a rugadh e/i. Cha do leig mi-fhìn orm gu bheil ainm air a bhith againn fad mhiosan ach abair gun do rinn iad deagh oidhirp, ged nach robh iad uabhasach misneachail agus iad uile den bheachd gum biodh am bèibidh còr is 9 punnd. Bha feasgar àlainn againn, clann-nighean an teaghlach, ged a ch' m' athair fhalt 's e fhèin ag iarraidh a bhith anns na deilbh cuideachd!

Tha oidhche mhòr romhainn Dihaoine agus an teaghlach air fad – Mam, Dad, a' chlann agus na h-oghaichean – gu bhith cruinn còmhla air an Dùn. Feumaidh am bèibidh fàs cleachdte ri onghail agus cha b' urrainn na b' fheàrr na seo airson ullachadh! Tha trì bliadhna deug air a bhith ann on chaidh an dealbh mu dheireadh dhuinn uile còmhla a thogail, mus do rugadh ogha sam bith, agus abair gu bheil sinn air bhioran mu dheidhinn. Chan eil càil nas fheàrr na bhith cruinn còmhla, gu h-àraidh an-dràsta agus cùisean a' fàs nas fheàrr beag air bheag. Cho fad 's gum fuirich am bèibidh far a bheil e/i!

Comhairle Representatives Meet Paul Wheelhouse MSP, Minister for Islands

On Thursday 16 July 2020, Comhairle Leader Roddie Mackay, Councillor Uisdean Robertson and Chief Executive Malcolm Burr met with Paul Wheelhouse, MSP, Minister for Energy, Connectivity and the Islands. The aim of the meeting was to discuss issues relating to broadband connectivity and ferry service arrangements.

On the topic of broadband connectivity, the Comhairle raised concerns over whether current Scottish Government proposals would provide all residents of the Western Isles with superfast broadband. Mr Wheelhouse confirmed that residents in the Western Isles would not be at a disadvantage, as Cllr Roddie Mackay stated subsequently: "The Minister was quick to reassure us that the Scottish Government's R100 project, which guarantees superfast broadband for everyone in Scotland, will not leave anyone in the Western Isles behind. As we move towards the new normal, and as home working becomes a reality for many, it is vital that the broadband connections of individuals in the Western Isles do not fall behind the rest of Scotland." However despite this reassurance, Cllr Mackay did confirm there are still some issues with the R100 project, adding: "While the Comhairle welcomes Mr Wheelhouse's commitment, it must be noted that the R100 project is already running far behind schedule and there are many questions still to be asked around the proposed voucher scheme, to compensate those with low broadband speeds."

With regards to ferries, Comhairle representatives sought an update on Transport Scotland's future plans for repairs to vessels and ports. Plans for much-needed new vessels were also discussed, to add to the aging fleet. Transport Scotland confirmed that in future, a careful process of consultation and financial consideration would be taken before the procurement and undertaking of new vessels and large-scale harbour projects. They also confirmed that they would engage with island communities before embarking on any new service change, and stated that a new booking system must capture unmet demand.

The Comhairle also discussed the pertinent issue of campervans, which have an impact on the capacity for cars and freight on our ferry capacity, already reduced by social distancing measures. The need for a new focus on training and recruitment in the islands to provide more locally based ferry crews was also stressed, which should ensure the resilience and sustainability of the service, and lead towards the decentralisation of CalMac jobs to the islands which they serve.

Cllr Uisdean Robertson, Chairman of Transportation and Infrastructure, said: "Discussions such as these allow the Comhairle a platform to represent and lobby for the people of the Western Isles. Connectivity has never been more important than it is today, it is vital that physical and technological connections between the Western Isles and mainland Scotland are preserved, maintained and where possible enhanced."

Through strong broadband connections and well-run transport links the residents of the Western Isles can have the freedom and equality of opportunity to communicate, innovate and help our islands thrive. The Comhairle welcomes discussions such as these and looks forward to continuing our close working relationship on these crucial connectivity issues."

CLEANER WANTED

Looking for self-catering change over cleaner to start as soon as possible in Ness area.

Please call: 07766007542

Guga hunt cancelled

(Continued from front page)

In the last issue of the newsletter, we reported that Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the agency that authorises the annual expedition to Sulasgeir, confirmed that it would not include coronavirus-related factors in its assessment when considering a licence for this year's guga hunt, and that any decision on visiting the rock this year would be left to the guga hunters themselves. The Ness crew have consequently opted not to make the visit this year in light of COVID-19 concerns; a decision that will be fully supported by the community.

This will be the first occasion that the annual visit to Sulasgeir has been cancelled since 1948 which, according to records, was a consequence of no suitable boats being available that year. According to the book, *The Guga Hunters*, by Donald S. Murray, the men of Ness made their first visit to the rock since WW2 in 1947, with three sgoth Nisich (Ness-type skiffs) being used on that occasion: the Commando, Peaceful and Jubilee, the latter of which is managed by the local charity Falmadair and still regularly sails from Stornoway Harbour. There was also no trip in 1946 due to weather conditions, and none were made throughout the war years, between 1940 and 1945.

With the guga hunt traditionally taking place in the month of August, the 1939 trip went ahead using the sgoth, Peaceful, with one member of the Sulasgeir crew, Donald Morrison (Dòmhnall Alasdair Iain Ruaidh) of 15 Skigersta, being called up for National Service while on the rock and having to set off for Portsmouth the day after his return, with war subsequently declared on Germany on 3 September 1939.

COVID-19: Route Map for Western Isles Public Transport

FROM MONDAY 3RD AUGUST 2020, DAYTIME BUS SERVICES IN LEWIS AND HARRIS will revert to normal timetables with no requirement to book seats, with the exception of the bookable services on the regular timetable. Please note that fares will also be reintroduced from Monday.

Timetables will be available on the Comhairle website from Thursday 30th July 2020.

<https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/roads-travel-and-parking/public-transport/>

Face coverings are compulsory on any form of public transport and this includes all public bus services. Passengers will only be permitted to travel on public transport if they are wearing an appropriate face covering. Exceptions will apply, such as children under five or for those with health conditions for whom a face covering would be inappropriate. Passengers will be expected to provide their own face coverings. Where a screen has been provided, the driver will not be required to wear a mask or face covering. Medical exemptions will also apply to some drivers.

A spokesperson for Comhairle nan Eilean Siar advised: "Good hygiene regimes remain important to protect against COVID-19. Face-coverings protect against inadvertent transmission of the disease and wearing a face covering will help to protect other travellers which will in turn help everyone.

"It is vital that passengers do not see face coverings as an alternative, but as an addition to other measures such as social distancing, hand washing and disinfection of surfaces frequently touched by other people.

"All passengers should ensure that they wash their hands as soon as possible before and after travelling on public transport.

"We would like to thank all bus passengers for their patience during the COVID-19 pandemic."

First Minister announces the reopening of schools

(continued from front page)

in a video interview with Nigel Scott CNES Press Officer on Thursday evening: "The current position in the Western Isles is that the



10th and 11th [August] are in-service days for our teachers with most students returning on the 12th. Head teachers will have been in contact with parents and we will do a bit of phasing over the first week. That has been decided to allow children who have been in P7 or at a transition point to come back to school in a planned way. We want to settle young people into the school environment and reinforce measures for being safe ... so parents can plan to get back to work knowing children will be in school."

Donald Macleod, Senior Education Officer, in the same video blog, said: "We are doing everything we can to ensure that it is safe for the pupils to return from the 12th of August." Commenting on the 2020 SQA exam results due to be published on Tuesday 4 August, he said: "We want to reassure parents and learners that we will be here to support ... anyone seeking advice on their qualifications." He added that the telephone support service offered in previous years would also be in operation using the same number, 0808 100 8000.

The video blog, with information about transport of pupils and health procedures in schools, runs for around 30 minutes and is available on the Comhairle's Facebook page. A comprehensive bulletin for learners, parents and staff will be issued early next week.

The Scottish Government's expectation is that all thirty-two councils will introduce a full attendance timetable for all primary and secondary pupils and staff by 18 August. It is clear from the Scottish Government Guidance that key public health measures must be in place in schools before local authorities make the final decision on opening. It states that 'dialogue with trade unions, staff, parents/carers and children and young people on the reopening of schools will be required, to ensure confidence in the revised arrangements across all school users. Clarity on what and how the revised arrangements will work in practice and what is expected of all parties will be key to ensuring a smooth return'.

The guidance is available at:

<https://www.gov.scot/publications/coronavirus-covid-19-guidance-preparing-start-new-school-term-august-2020/>

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ON THE EDGE

AVIANICS

About a month ago I started hearing this dull thud on occasion, sometimes several times a day, usually during daylight hours. With age, the corona virus crisis, the mid-life crisis and, indeed, the afterlife crisis when you reach my age, all playing on my mind, I began to think that I was possibly beginning to lose my marbles. Fortunately for me, all was revealed one day as I sat at the kitchen table when, once again, I heard that now all-too-familiar soft thud, as if a damp cloth had dropped on the laminate floor from a great height. Looking up towards the window, I spotted a rather startled-looking sparrow on the wing, trying desperately to recover its composure after flying into the double glazing. It had that kind of look you have when you leave the pub after a few jars and forget about the step outside the entrance door – a 'who put that step there' kind of moment when you pray there's no one looking.

Over the following weeks I would hear that unfortunate, but by now recognizable, cushioned thud of our fine feathered friends impacting on Nessglaze's finest. It is a puzzle as to why my home has become an

avian blackhole, sucking in any small birds that seem to encroach on the property's 'event horizon'. I only mention all this in case anyone happens to be passing my house in Lionel and spots an apparent madman behind the window, jumping up and down, madly waving his arms as if he's OD'd on the magic mushrooms. In reality, this would be me in full 'scarecrow mode', trying frantically to ward off an unfortunate 'sparra' that's about to get his beak reshaped.

In most cases, the birds that end up bouncing off my windows have not yet hit full cruising speed, having taken off moments before from the garden bird feeder. My own personal theory as to why the Lionel sparrow population are fatally attracted to my double-glazing is that the glass is reflecting the willow bush growing beside my garden wall. I have a number of bird feeders

on this stout bush, offering assorted bird seed and peanuts to any small feathered creatures that are kind enough to pay me a visit. Once their hunger is satisfied, and with a well-stocked crop, they take-off from said bush and, it would appear, opt to resettle on a quieter bush at the other side of the garden where they can digest their meal unmolested by rival birds wrestling with each other at the feeding station. Unfortunately, the 'bush' they're flying towards is an illusion; a mere reflection of what's behind them, which only becomes apparent to the bird on impact with the glass as it tries to figure out why its head is suddenly buried in its tail feathers!

As reported elsewhere in this illustrious publication, the boys will not be heading off to Sulasgeir this year for the annual expedition. Therefore, any fatalities among the kamikaze sparrows in my garden might present an opportunity to produce mini gugas, provided that my neighbour Angus Murdo (Emeritus Dispatcher of Gugas) is up to the task. As a seasoned veteran of Sulasgeir, plucking, gutting and salting a sparra should be well within his skill-set; it's only a matter of scale. It is unlikely, however, that even the juiciest of sparrows will ever match the delicate taste of a properly prepared and marinated gannet. Gnawing on a sparra *spòg* is hardly going to keep you busy for very long. After all, we are effectively talking about a toothpick with a bit of meat on it.

However, these are lean times when the Niseach immune system might well be compromised if not supplemented by the annual prescription of guga? There is a hard winter ahead of us and any deficiencies in our diet could be costly. With a vaccine not yet available, maybe the government should despatch the Army to Sulasgeir to recover this year's quota, with the Ness boys waiting at Port harbour on their return to finish the birds and ensure that quality is maintained?

Fortunately, I have a few vacuum-packed *ceathramhan* from last year tucked away in the freezer for 'a rainy day', as they say, and you can't get much rainier, metaphorically speaking, than when the guga hunters decide to prematurely hang up their clubs for the season!

That reminds me: I'll need to beef up security around the abode. Desperate people can do desperate things in a crisis.

DOGGED CLIMBER

The Wasdale Mountain Rescue Team thought their call centre had gone barking mad when they were instructed to come to the assistance of a distressed pooch. Hoping that it might be something manageable like a chihuahua that you could tuck in your trouser pockets, they were further advised that they were charged with bringing a 55-kilogram St Bernard down from England's highest peak, Scafell Pike. This particular breed, as many will know, is traditionally associated with being a rescue dog, normally operating on the Italian-Swiss border, with quaint pictures adorning many a biscuit tin of them with a life-saving brandy barrel hanging off their collar to help warm a distressed climber.

Daisy, as the mutt is called, was feeling ruff after collapsing with exhaustion during the descent. Refusing to budge for its owners, in a classic example of 'the tail wagging the dog', the guy at the wrong end of the lead had to dial the emergency services. If only they had stopped to paws for thought before setting off on their trek, they might not have had to call out the local Mountain Rescue team, who ironically were acting as retrievers on this occasion. Following advice from a veterinarian's clinic, the rescue team administered pain relief and adjusted their stretcher to accommodate the giant St Bernard, which remained surprisingly dogged despite the difficult circumstances it found itself in.

Sixteen volunteer rescuers spent nearly five hours carrying the dog-tired pooch off the 978-metre high Scafell Pike, presumably following the path of leashed resistance? Unfortunately, for the dog and its hapless owners, the pup-arazzi were waiting at the bottom to hound them for news about their eventful day. Grrrrr.



Sporting Viewpoint

by Alastair Dunlop

First the very positive news. Our twice weekly training sessions for 5-14 year olds at the pitch are averaging about forty youngsters per session. Micheil R Smith is Head Coach assisted by Hector Barrowman, Hugh and Murray Macdonald, Sam Nicolson and Calum MacLeod. Unfortunately, the weather conditions have not been easy but with a high tide of enthusiasm on both sides no one is complaining. We have several visitors, mostly to their grandparents and it is good to see the number of talented players with Ness connections from all over.

There was a discussion this week regarding the senior league and there is a more detailed report elsewhere. If possible, I would like to see us starting the league in October. Yes, some pitches may be a problem but we have the Astro turf in town with floodlights so the games do not have to be on Saturdays. I have spoken with a few Ness players and they are keen, but it was only a small sample. Would supporters go to town on a Wednesday evening to watch Ness or Westside playing? Yes, I think they would. However, the matter may be out of our hands and so be it.

It is good to hear about ex-Ness players doing well. Micheal Brady played for Ness in 2010 when he was a probationary PE teacher at the Nicolson. He was featured in an online article in the Herald last week about him managing Dubai United in the United Arab Emirates in his spare time while teaching in an international school. We hear a lot about riches in that country but it does not apply in this case. I was in touch with Michael and he wanted me to say how much he enjoyed his year in Lewis and playing for Ness.

The Scottish Premiership begins this weekend. One of the current big stories concerns Rangers striker Alfredo Morelos possibly going to France. I hope he goes somewhere if only because I am so tired reading these stories. I suspect most Rangers fans would be happy to take the money and maybe buy a decent striker who they can rely on. I just hope we have a competitive league and it would be great if we had more than two teams involved but sadly this is as likely as President Trump telling the truth.

All football so far, sorry but it is a change from running. I do note Scottish Athletics will license some events from August so I and many others will look forward to actually competing against others who are in the same place rather than 'virtual'. Locally we will have to decide about the Tolsta - Ness bog slog which, if it were to go ahead after a wet summer, will certainly live up to its name.

I have just returned from a walk up the Clisham. There were twelve of us including seven grandchildren aged from five to ten years old. If anyone is planning the same trip soon please be aware it is very wet on the approach at present. Also be aware it is not the ascent which is the main problem but the descent due to the slippery conditions and increasingly tired limbs. Regarding the grandchildren of five boys and two girls it was the latter who reached the top first, something the boys will be frequently reminded about when I wish to annoy them. They all did well, and Granny deserves a special mention. I mentioned in my last column about the absence of midgies this year. I now wish to retract this statement.



Island football in limbo due to coronavirus

THE LEWIS & HARRIS FOOTBALL ASSOCIATION (LHFA) held a meeting via Zoom on Monday (27 July) to discuss the impact of COVID-19 on island football, and if there was any realistic opportunity of salvaging something for this season. Six of the nine island clubs were represented at the meeting.

In the wake of the coronavirus pandemic, both professional and amateur football has been seriously impacted, with the Scottish Amateur Football Association (SAFA) ruling that no amateur football can take place before the 1st October, which effectively rules out the 2020 summer football season in the Western Isles.

Various options were discussed at the LHFA meeting on Monday, including the option to play over the winter months. Three of the club representatives favoured this approach, while another rep was totally opposed, with others undecided on the matter.

Clearly, there is much for island clubs to discuss before any decision can be made. A number of the island pitches, such as Goathill Park in Stornoway, would be unplayable during the winter months. There is also the issue of whether there would be sufficient referees available at that time of year, given the taxing weather conditions that might be faced on a regular basis. One option might be to play matches at the 'All Weather' facility in Stornoway, with games staggered throughout the week to accommodate all the teams. It is also unclear at this stage if regular testing for COVID might be mandatory for players and, if so, how often and would testing incur financial charges for clubs.

No decision was made at the meeting regarding the remainder of the 2020 season. Representatives will now consult further with their respective clubs with a view to reconvening in a fortnight to establish whether a winter league, played from October until the New Year or beyond, might be a realistic option for senior football in the isles this year.

STORNOWAY ABATTOIR RE-OPENS

The Stornoway Abattoir opens for the 2020 season on Monday 3rd August 2020.

Bookings can now be made by calling the Abattoir on: 01851 70 6733

FOOD BANK DONATIONS

Ness Fire Service have a collection point for Western Isles Food Bank outside the station in Dell.

Any donations of food or (non-alcoholic) drinks will be made available to families in need.



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Volunteers and contributors who supported this issue of the Ness-Barvas Community Newsletter:

Donald A. Morrison, Jasmine M. Wilkie, Hugh MacInnes, Samantha Hawkins, Lisa Maclean, Shona Macmillan, Tom MacIver, Alastair Dunlop, Peter Moger, Christine Amos, Simon Amos, David Green.



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The players from the summer of 2005

Inter-village hat trick for North Dell

Last Saturday, North Dell won the Ness Inter-village competition for the third consecutive year. Six teams entered this year and the format was a round-robin with the top two villages competing in the final. The round-robin was closely fought and it went down to the wire as Skigersta would have made the final had they got a draw against North Dell but they lost 2-0 in the final game.

The Ladies team put up a good show as well, beating Fivepenny and drawing with Lionel, although they did have some generous refereeing decisions in some of the other games!

The final was a Dell derby as North faced South to see who would take home the trophy. Murdo Macsween scored the only goal of a game that was marred by an injury to Chris Knowles, who chipped a bone in his leg when his studs caught the turf.

Nevertheless, a good day was had by all and the sum of £131 was raised for Ness Football Club. The Football Club would like to thank A & R Morrison (Cross Stores) for supplying burgers and Chris & Jackie for the use of their barbeque.



Pictured above are the winning North Dell team.

From left to right - back Donald 'Sweeny' Macsween, Innes Macsween, Angus 'Froggo' Campbell, Murdo Macsween, Iain 'Cheocaidh' Smith, Alasdair Morrison, Iain A. Macritchie and Scott Campbell. Front - Donald John Macdonald, Chris Knowles, J.M. 'Dods' Macfarlane, John Fraser, Lee Johnson and Jake Johnson.

RESULTS

South Dell 4 - 0 Ladies	Fivepenny 0 - 1 Ladies
Lionel 0 - 3 Skigersta	South Dell 1 - 3 North Dell
North Dell 3 - 0 Fivepenny	Lionel 2 - 1 Fivepenny
South Dell 1 - 0 Lionel	Ladies 1 - 2 Skigersta
Skigersta 2 - 0 Fivepenny	North Dell 2 - 0 Skigersta
North Dell 3 - 1 Ladies	South Dell 3 - 3 Fivepenny
South Dell 2 - 1 Skigersta	Ladies 1 - 1 Lionel
North Dell 2 - 2 Lionel	

Final:
North Dell 1 - 0 South Dell

	W	D	L	F	A	GD	PTS
North Dell	4	1	0	13	4	+9	13
South Dell	3	1	1	11	7	+4	10
Skigersta	3	0	2	8	5	+3	9
Lionel	1	2	2	5	8	-3	5
Ladies	1	1	3	4	10	-6	4
Fivepenny	0	1	4	4	11	-7	1

New strips for the Ness Ladies team

PICTURED RIGHT are the Ness Ladies in their new strips, generously sponsored by A & R Morrison of Cross Stores.

The new kit certainly seems to have lifted the team's spirits, inspiring them to a record run of unbeaten games.



Back row, L-R: Susan Macleod, Mairi Finlayson, Mary Duff, Donna Morrison. Donna Macneill
Front row, L-R: Fiona Smith, Alison Nichols, James Morrison (mascot and lone supporter!!!) and Karyn Morrison.

reflections

The Revd Canon Peter Moger
St Moluag's, Eoropaidh

How can I keep from singing?

As I write this, there are signs all around us that lockdown is easing. Shops have opened, ferry timetables are back to normal, and visitors have begun to venture to the island once again. We're not out of the woods yet, but there's been a gear change in recent weeks. Looking back and reflecting over the past four months of lockdown, I've been aware of some pluses and minuses. Some introverts have enjoyed working from home, but extravert colleagues have sorely missed the company of colleagues at work. There's no doubt that we've enjoyed quieter roads (and therefore less pollution), though our businesses have undoubtedly suffered.

But there's one negative of lockdown which has impacted on many of us, and that's that we have had to do without live singing. My wife, Heather, runs a weekly music class at Taigh Dhonnchaidh for pre-schoolers under the umbrella of An Lanntair's Full Circle programme. One of her mums wrote this week to say how much her son was missing the singing, and that he mentions it every time they pass Taigh Dhonnchaidh. Whether our type of singing is Gaelic Psalms or hymns in church, or being a member of a choir, or going to live gigs, we have had to do without it, and our lives have been diminished.

But what's so special about singing?

Doctors tell us that singing is good for us. It improves our lung capacity and increases the flow of oxygen to the brain. When we sing, endorphins—the 'feel-good hormones'—are released, which boosts our well-being. Although in lockdown many choirs have met virtually to rehearse and even to perform, any singer will say that this is no substitute for singing in the same space with other people. Singing binds us together socially and helps form our communities. Scientists have discovered that singing literally joins people's hearts: when we sing together, our heart rates become synchronised, speeding up and slowing down at the same rate.

Singing is a basic human instinct and it's good for us: emotionally, physically, mentally and socially. As a Christian minister, I believe

that singing is also good for us spiritually. The Bible contains no fewer than 166 uses of the verb to sing, 48 references to singers and 35 to the act of singing. Singing is used to draw attention to key events in the story of God's people: as the Israelites escape from Egypt across the Red Sea, Moses and Miriam sing to God (Exodus 15.1-18); at the birth of Jesus, it's through the song of angels that shepherds are alerted to the news (Luke 2.14).

St Augustine wrote that a person who sings, prays twice. In a way, he was right, because when we sing, words are transformed. They keep their meaning, but something extra is added: they're given new depth, and they're lifted onto another plane. Many of us will have discovered this: that in singing, we can be transported beyond ourselves, and caught up in a deeper experience of the presence of God.

But when we sing as an expression of faith, something else is at work. While the Psalms are the songbook of God's people on earth, the book of Revelation paints a picture of singing in heaven. When we sing here on earth, we tune in to that heavenly worship. A friend of mine once described it as 'logging on to the heavenly broadband'. As, in worship, we lift the concerns of earth to heaven, so heaven is brought down to earth, and we catch a glimpse of God's glory among us. The vision of that glory is, I believe, accessible to us through our singing. Few other things give such a direct window onto heaven.

Our churches on the island are beginning to re-open for worship, but it will be some time before we can sing together. The science suggests that singing can increase the risk of spreading the Covid-19 virus. And so it will be a long wait - but worth waiting for. And when we are allowed to sing again, we will experience afresh the joining of our hearts, and a share in heaven on earth.

A prayer by the Congregational minister and hymnwriter, Erik Routley.

*God of glory, around whose eternal throne all the heavenly powers
offer you ceaseless songs of praise:
Grant that we may overhear these songs,
and with our own lips and lives interpret them
to all in whose presence we sing;
That we may see with mortal eyes the land that is afar off,
where all your promises are celebrated,
and where all your love in every sight and sound
is the theme of eternal rejoicing;
through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.*



Taigh Dhonnchaidh @ 20 e-cèilidh

Thig còmhla rinn airson oidhche làn ciùil, seinn agus dannsa, 's sinn a' comharrachadh 20 bliadhna on dh'fhosgail Taigh Dhonnchaidh le cuid den luchd-teagaisg, luchd-ciùil agus luchd-pàrteachaidh thar nam bliadhnaichean!

Join tutors, guest musicians and participants of past and present to celebrate 20 years of Taigh Dhonnchaidh in our special e-cèilidh!

Taigh Dhonnchaidh Facebook @ 7.30pm

Dihaoine 31 Iuchar

Friday 31st July



Galson Estate Trust Calendar 2021 Photography Competition

ENTRIES NOW OPEN!

The theme for 2021 is: **Connections | Buntaineas**
with a focus on lockdown perspectives

Open to all ages. Prizes for best over 16 & under 16 entries.
Maximum of 3 photographs per entry.

Please send high quality jpegs/Tiff (5mb+) if possible to:
office@uogltld.com

Connections to people, to community, to nature, to wildlife

Daoine to sea, Coimhearsnachd to land, to wildlife

Happy snapping!

Closing date for submissions: Friday 14th August 2020

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Community Land Scotland and Stove Network – Call out!

Please see the short article within this newsletter regarding this exciting opportunity, a call out for an artist in residence. We applied to be part of this process and were delighted to be selected to have an artist in residence to tell the story of community ownership. This is a wonderful opportunity to share our story and showcase the many unique assets of the community. We will be holding interviews in mid-August and are pleased to be working with Community Land Scotland and the Stove Network.

Underground cable works

Almost all consents are now in place for the underground cable works across the estate. The contractors will conduct a walkover either on 29th/30th of July to have a general look and part of this work will also involve a drive to key locations as part of the familiarisation process ahead of works commencing. It is likely that they will look to reinstall the pegs over the route and adjust what they placed in the ground previously. This repegging is likely to commence on 3rd August and a pre-record of condition will also be carried out. Drone footage will be taken of the cable route around 10th August over two to three days.

Covid-19 response

Over the past couple of weeks, we have reassessed all of the various services that were put in place in response to Covid-19. The demand for the collections from Lewis Crofters had fallen away, so we have stopped this service. We thank Car Hire Hebrides for the use of a van during the past four months. We will continue with

prescription deliveries from both surgeries for now and review this again, alongside practice managers in mid-late August. We continue to monitor the Habost household recycling site and are working towards increased opening hours, but this is driven by the availability of skips and getting them to site and collected again. The Beagean Taic fund remains available for anyone who requires this support. We will continue, alongside volunteers, to create and print the newsletter until the end of August.

Staff

We welcomed Alex John Morrison to the team this week. Alex John will cover maternity leave for the Gaelic Development Officer post. We wish Shona, our Gaelic Development Officer, all the very best as she prepares for the arrival of her baby in August. We hope she manages to get her feet up for a little while before baby puts in an appearance.

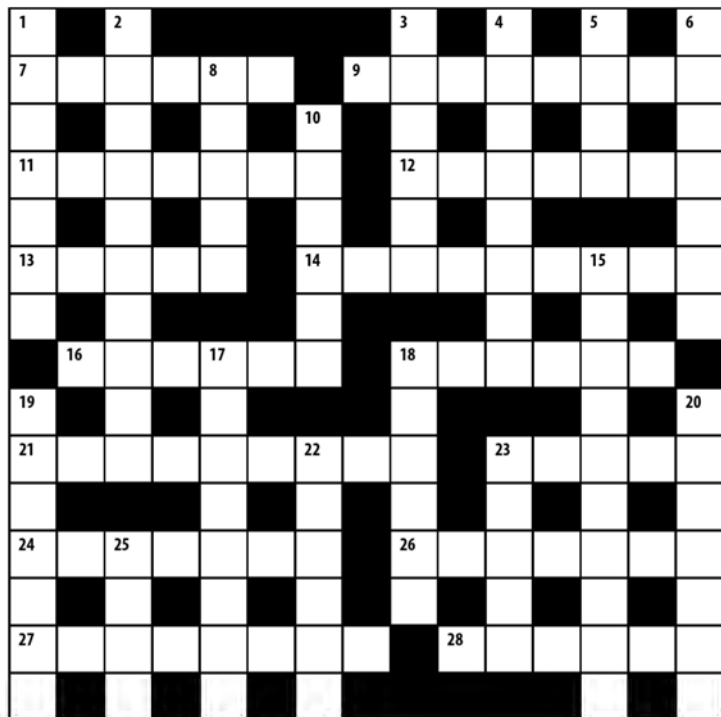
Community Investment Fund

Please remember our Community Investment Fund remains open. As restrictions ease, we realise organisations may be considering their plans and how they operate into the future. If you wish to discuss any plans for growth or development, then please do not hesitate to get in touch to discuss ideas. Applications are available on the website, but we are keen to discuss in advance of an application if that would be helpful to support development of an idea.

Please remember our own staff are working from home. If you wish to discuss anything relating to the COVID-19 response from UOG or indeed any usual UOG business then please contact: office@uogtld.com or call 01851 850393 (this number diverts to a mobile). You can also visit the website at www.galsontrust.com for further information or to read our official response and an update on current activities in relation to Covid-19.

If you solve the puzzle send a text or email to Jasmine with your solution or attach a photo of the completed grid. It will encourage our compilers to produce more puzzles and you may even get your name in the next issue of the freesheet!
email: jasmine@uogtld.com mobile text: 07460 853 728

Ness-Barvas No.9 Crossword 31 July 2020



ACROSS

- 7 Referee (6)
- 9 I mend cap, or the virus (8, anag)
- 11 Cavities or blank spaces (7)
- 12 Big Gaelic cows in Lochs village? (7)
- 13 Do really well with computer programme (5)
- 14 Child slept in Stevenson novel (9)
- 16 Ably be Point village (6, anag)
- 18 Coquettish cereal or wild dog? (6)
- 21 Shy person (9)
- 23 Chickens come home to do this (5)
- 24 Claret's added to molasses (7, anag)
- 26 About fashion again (7)
- 27 New compulsory fashion accessory? (8)
- 28 Heraldic winter coat (6)

- 8 Learn about kidneys (5, anag)
- 10 Edinburgh's Auld name (6)
- 15 Try coin map to get paternal name (10, anag)
- 17 Tough form of training (4,4)
- 18 Prepares food for (6)
- 19 Fads fit female side of family (7, anag)
- 20 Soaked (7)
- 22 Always as ... very much (4,2)
- 23 Vertical pipe is an early one? (5)
- 25 Carve into metal or glass (4)

No. 8 Crossword 17 July 2020 solution



DOWN

- 1 Mountain and (ex) ferry (7)
- 2 Rocket for example (10)
- 3 Ran CID which was off (6)
- 4 Standing up for – the law? (8)
- 5 Condensed ammunition (4)
- 6 Loads and loads of cement (7)

Beannaichte gu robh an Tighearna Dia, Dia Israeil, an tì a-mhàin a nì nithean iongantach!

Agus beannaichte gu robh a ainm glòrmhor-san gu siorraidh, agus lionar an talamh uile le a ghloir! Amen agus Amen!

Salm 72: 18-19 [ABG1992]

Therefore, as you received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in him, rooted and built up in him and established in the faith, just as you were taught, abounding in thanksgiving.

Colossians 2: 6-7[ESV]

NHS Western Isles guidance on face coverings

Face coverings are an additional measure to help keep us all safe in the current coronavirus pandemic. They help by trapping the droplets you breathe out and reducing the risk of you passing any infection on to people around you.

NHS Western Isles is highlighting some important information about the use of face coverings and some general advice about how to ensure they should be used effectively.

1. Face coverings do NOT replace:

Keeping 2m apart (physical distancing);
Washing your hands with soap and warm water;
Catching coughs and sneezes in a tissue and binning the tissue, or into your sleeve.

2. To wear a face covering correctly, you must:

Wash your hands before putting it on;
Do not touch the front of the face covering;
Ensure it covers your nostrils and mouth;

Tie the ties behind your head or loop the elastic round your ears for a firm hold.

3. When wearing a face covering, do not:

Touch the front of the covering;
Put it under your chin or on top of your head and then back on your face;
Take it off and on again.

4. When you are home, or you have finished wearing the face covering:

Take it off by undoing the ties or loops and folding it from the outside edges in;
Place in a plastic bag until you can take it home to wash it;
Wash your hands with soap and warm water, or use hand sanitiser if you cannot access water and your hands are not visibly dirty;
The face covering can be washed in a domestic machine with other domestic items.

5. Use a fresh face covering if you need to go out again.

Where can I buy a face covering locally?

The Welcome Inn Garage (Jackie's)
Sardar & Sons, Stornoway
MacGregors, Stornoway - £2.70 each
Aladdin's Cave, Stornoway - £2 each

Borve Mini Market
Cross Stores

Harriet McNaughton - via UK PPE Masks Ltd
Email: harriet.mcnaughton@ukppemasks.co.uk

Nikki Crabtree - choice of sizes and fasteners, custom-made to order. Fabric masks £5, Harris Tweed masks £9.50
Visit: www.etsy.com/uk/shop/TheCraftyWeaverStore

Karen Macdonald - via Enjo
Search Facebook for: 'ENJO UK with Karen Macdonald' or call 810 764

Edna Macleod, Fivepenny -
3 layer, 100% cotton face masks. Various sizes and fabric prints available. £7 each. Call / text 07442000049

Eilidh's Trust -
£7.99 each (inc P&P) or 2 for £15. Preorder at
<https://www.paypal.me/Eilidhstrust>

Paulette Brough - Non-woven masks. £6.50 for a pack of 5.
Purchase at www.rarebirddesign.co.uk/face-mask/

HELP & SUPPORT

NHS SCOTLAND CORONAVIRUS ADVICE

<https://www.nhsinform.scot/illnesses-and-conditions/infections-and-poisoning/coronavirus-covid-19>

HMRC SCOTLAND CORONAVIRUS ADVICE

<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/coronavirus-covid-19-information-for-individuals-and-businesses-in-scotland>

DWP SCOTLAND

Coronavirus support for employees, benefit claimants and businesses

<https://www.gov.uk/government/news/coronavirus-support-for-employees-benefit-claimants-and-businesses>

CITIZENS' ADVICE SCOTLAND

Coronavirus – What it means for you

<https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/scotland/health/coronavirus-what-it-means-for-you-s/>

ASSOCIATION OF BRITISH INSURERS

ABI Coronavirus Information Hub

<https://www.abi.org.uk/products-and-issues/topics-and-issues/coronavirus-hub/>

PARENT CLUB

Information for parents on what to do if you have to stay at home with kids and some useful advice on coronavirus and how it might affect you and your family

<https://www.parentclub.scot/topics/health/coronavirus?age=0>

PHONE ADVICE

Coronavirus: if you feel the symptoms

NHS 111

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NO Coronavirus symptoms advice

NHS Scotland

0800 028 2816

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ELDERLY

Age Scotland

0800 470 8090

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FAMILIES

Parentline Scotland

0800 028 2233

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FINANCIAL AND DEBT ADVICE

Money Advice Scotland

0141 572 0237

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BUSINESS

Business Helpline

0300 303 0660

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MND Scotland

0141 332 3903

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SAMARITANS

116123

WANTED - PROPERTY FOR RENT

Looking for a 3 - 4 bedroom house to rent in Ness.

Zena Scott: 07788103103



NESS FC SOCIAL CLUB

CLUB UPDATES

Opening Hours

Thursday 5pm – 8pm

Friday 5pm – 8pm

Saturday 4pm – 10pm (Minibus available)

We will be operating with a strict ONE METRE distancing rule and a one-way system, entering the club by the main entrance and exit by the green lounge. We ask that everyone uses the sanitising stations on entering and exiting the club.

You will be seated as you arrive and social distancing rules will apply at all times.

We will be providing full table service and we will require your contact details, in line with the government track and trace requirements.

Payment by card is preferable.

The bus will be available as usual on Saturday night. Face masks will be necessary on the bus.

Please note that pool and darts are not available at this time.

The weekly bingo will not be starting yet but we hope to get this up and running when we are able to do so.

SUPERDRAW AND OPEN THE BOX

The superdraw and open the box will be back on Saturday night at 9PM. We will also be LIVE on our facebook page.

We look forward to seeing you all again!

CASH PAYMENTS:

If you would like to pay by cash for our draws, we can now take payments via Cross Stores.

Please leave an envelope with your:

Name –

Contact number –

What the money is intended for (e.g. £20 for four months).

Contact us on:

nesssocialclub@yahoo.com or private message via our Facebook page.

LOCAL BUSINESS UPDATES

Cross Inn TEL: 810152

Cross Inn Beer Garden is open:

Monday - Friday from 4pm.

Saturdays Beer Garden is open from 1pm.

Weather dependent.

Takeaways are available:

Thurs 4-7pm, Fri & Sat 4-8pm.

Drinks are available with food orders and will also be available for takeaways, 7-10pm.

Orders taken from noon. Can phone all orders on 810 152 and payment can be made on the phone. Further details available on Facebook.

The Decca TEL: 810571

The Decca is now open again for B&B. We continue to offer our homemade bread and rolls for sale and can now also offer evening meals to our guests and non-residents. We have undertaken a risk assessment will be working in a way to comply with the COVID19 regulations for keeping ourselves and our guests safe.

Porkies

Continuing to visit Barvas.

BorveHouseHotel TEL: 850223

Borve House Hotel can be called between 12-8pm Monday – Saturday for takeaway. Orders and card payments can be taken over the phone. The hotel will then supply all customers with a pick-up time so as to control any waiting time on collection. As of this weekend (18th July), customers can sit-in but **booking is essential**.

The Breakwater TEL: 811 001

As of 15th July there will be 2 indoor tables, and 4 outdoor tables for when the weather is kind. We have new procedures in place as per the latest guidelines to keep us all safe and would ask everyone to bear with us as we all get used these new ways of working. We would encourage any households (or extended households) wishing to visit to give us a call in advance on **811001** to book a table to avoid disappointment and also to enable us to stagger arrivals. We will be returning to our previous opening hours which are:

Monday to Wednesday 12pm to 6pm

Thursday to Saturday 12pm to 9pm

and takeaway will still be available as usual.

Wobbly Dog TEL: 810838

Now open Monday - Saturday 10.00-17.00

Serving soup and bacon rolls in addition to our usual cake, scones and coffee.

Parking Charges Reinstated

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar is reinstating the parking charges in Stornoway Town Centre from Monday 20th July.

The Comhairle had suspended charging for parking in the Stornoway Town Centre in April due to the COVID-19 restrictions which were in place.

As restrictions are now being relaxed, and there is a noticeably increased demand for parking in the Town Centre, the reinstatement of parking charges will ensure that there is short term parking available for those who need it.



TALKING NATURALLY by Samantha Hawkins

As I attempt to put proverbial pen to paper (28th July 2020) the day feels positively autumnal, or maybe that is a



Meadow Pipit

bit optimistic— let's call it wintry. Gusty winds coming from a WNW direction, temperatures set at about 12 degrees Celsius and frequent squally showers. I do believe though a 'heatwave' is forecast at the end of the week; seeing is believing.

You may have already noticed the Greylag Geese flying in from the moor bringing this year's offspring with them. They quickly settle onto the crofts, particularly those that have been recently cut for silage, and any available water body. The sight of them coming back always reminds me that the year is moving rapidly on into another cycle. Visual and anecdotal evidence leads me to believe that in general it has been a good year here for breeding birds. Doubtless the fine spell of weather in spring did much to help. I have seen a good number of juvenile Wheatear and Oystercatcher, both of which I have mentioned previously. These could readily be seen on the cliffs near to the Lighthouse up until a couple of weeks ago. The humdrum of visitor activity and the associated footfall has returned, and now, sadly, the birds are not so easy to spot.

Meadow Pipits too seem to have been prolific this year and can frequently be seen perched on telephone wires and fences. It is one of a number of birds which I think can be easily overlooked or underrated. Brown above, buff below with streaking on its chest. On closer inspection the brown and buff hues give way to shades of buff, ochre and olive. A fragile, nervy, almost anxious-seeming creature, it always seems to be on the move. An insipid 'seep, seep' call, they fly up into the air with a jerky flight, then slowly parachute back down to the ground. A common nesting bird of moorland, heathland and rough grassland there an estimated 2 million Meadow Pipit breeding territories in the UK. This is probably just as well as it is often the poor Meadow Pipit that is one of the common victims of the parasitic behaviour of the Cuckoo. The female Cuckoo, having more than likely 'weighed up' the potential nest, will, in the briefest of visits lay just one egg in amongst the clutch, an egg that closely resembles the Pipit's own. When the imposter's egg eventually hatches the Cuckoo chick will manoeuvre the remaining eggs and/or chicks onto its back and turf them out of the nest to their certain death. The chick, which

will become at least six times the size of its unwitting host parents, will be lovingly and loyally raised as their own until it fledges and is ready begin its journey back to Central Africa where it will spend the winter months.

In my own garden too, things are looking rosy in the avian breeding department this year. The juvenile Starlings are now holding their own at the bird feeders, no longer looking to mum or dad for a little guidance or reassurance. So too are starting to develop the first iridescent spots which will become a badge of identity. Boisterous, noisy greedy things that boss every other bird around. I was really pleased to notice too young Goldfinch returning, yet to gain all their splendid markings and colouration, but already with a hint of what is to come showing on their wings. Perhaps the most prolific of the lot thought has been the humble House Sparrow, another bird that too is often overlooked as being 'just a Sparrow'.

I have been trying to count their numbers, which you may remember a few weeks ago I estimated as just over 100, but it is not easy. On Monday (27 July 2020) they seemed more prolific, and luckily for me a large flock of them, mixed ages, settled on the fence and I counted over 200. I also managed to get a photo of some of them which is reproduced on this page. I also posted that same photo on Facebook and Twitter and was astounded at the response – over 4000 'likes' numerous 'retweets' and 'shares' and plenty of comments. A simple photo of a simple bird on a rickety fence on an overcast, Hebridean day. What the comments revealed though was that this not so humble little bird is for many folks now, across the length and breadth of the country a rarity, if they see a House Sparrow



House Sparrows

at all. And there was no rhyme or reason as to where they were present – people reported a few in their garden but a mile away in another garden, not one to be seen, and for years in some cases. None in some rural areas, plenty in certain areas of big cities and the suburbs. It was an interesting exercise and when I have time, I would like to investigate further the topic of House Sparrow distribution. It was also interesting to hear the names that people knew them by – Spuggy, Sprog, Sporra, Sparky and of course – Sparrag.

I am slowly working my way through the videos that have been recorded on the trail cameras which I have dotted about. Since I have last been able to check them the grass and other vegetation has grown very long, so more often than not it is just a tantalising glimpse of the Otter as he leaves the stream to 'scent mark' his favourite spot before dropping back into the water to continue his journey. A bird that is not missed due to its size and distinctive appearance, and which features regularly on the footage is the Heron, or Grey Heron to give it its correct title. The Heron, the largest predatory bird in the UK, is one of the bird world's success stories, having adapted well and colonised both rural and urban areas – as familiar a sight in remote areas of Scotland as it is in city centre parks. Stealthy, patient hunters, they patrol the fringes of Loch Stiapabhat and the stream running down into Port looking and waiting for the next meal. They have a varied diet which includes fish, eels, frogs and even waterfowl chicks such as Mallard and Moorhen. They also have an excellent weapon – a dagger-like bill. In Mediaeval times the Heron itself was once a roasted delicacy, a regular course on banqueting tables. Thankfully now it enjoys full legal protection from being hunted or its eggs taken. There appear to be three that frequent Loch Stiapabhat and which make frequent forays down to Port of Ness Harbour. Unless breeding, they tend to be loners and on occasion I have captured brief clips of them 'picking a fight' with the trail camera.



Grey Heron