

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

More organisations and local services released from lockdown

As the Covid-19 restrictions ease, local shops and organisations that have been closed since March are starting to get back to business. Bùth Lisa in Habost opened last week and the Carthannas Nis laundrette opened on Monday. Skigersta Post Office is also resuming service.

From Wednesday this week cafes, bars and restaurants were permitted to serve food and drink indoors - subject to physical distancing - and places of worship could re-open for congregational services with limited numbers. [See pages 2 and 15 for further information on local businesses and church services]

LAUNDRETTE OPEN 9AM - 9PM 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



Mary Ann Matheson of Galson was the first customer at the Carthannas Nis Laundrette when it re-opened on Monday

Re-opening of places of worship from 15th July

On 10th July, it was announced that places of worship could re-open from the 15th July for congregational services, communal prayer and contemplation, **with physical distancing and limited numbers**. With places of worship having been closed for the last four months, this news will surely bring comfort to many in our community.

Na h-Eileanan an Iar SNP MSP Alasdair Allan only further re-iterated this, stating: "The place of faith in the life of many people in the Western Isles is of deep importance. It has been a strange and completely unprecedented situation to have churches and other places of worship closed for four months. I know that today's announcement that public worship will be possible again after 15 July will be a very welcome one, not least to many people who have contacted me about this issue. I have raised the issue with government, as I know have many of my colleagues."

He continued: "Obviously there will have to be continuing rules about social distancing, including the taking of names at the door of places of worship. There are good reasons for this, which people will appreciate, as everyone wants to be able to trace quickly the contacts of anyone in future who shows symptoms of Covid 19."

Of further encouragement, July 15th also saw an easing of some restrictions on attendance at funerals, marriage ceremonies and civil partnership registrations. Numbers will still be limited, and physical distancing will still be in place, but with more households now able to meet, this easing of restrictions should be of some support to those in attendance at these events.

(continues on page 2)

Catherine hits the trail for WISCK and spòrsnis

11-year-old Catherine Donner from North Dell has set herself a challenge - to run 100 miles in 50 days, to raise money for the spòrsnis roof appeal and for the Western Isles Support for Cats and Kittens (WISCK). Catherine has already smashed her original goal of £500, having raised £618 thus far (last checked 15th July). Running in all weathers, Catherine keeps her dedicated Facebook page 'Catherine's 100' updated, where she relays all the anecdotes from that day's run. She has run barefoot, over crofts, in the playpark - she has even run in a onesie! Members of her family have also been accompanying her, with mum Gemma, dad Kevin, and siblings Elizabeth, William and Benjy all running. Even Cuilean the dog has been getting involved!

Catherine has shown great dedication in her bid to achieve her goal and, now that she is
(continues on page 9)



Catherine with dog Cuilean

SNH will not impose COVID restrictions on annual guga harvest

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH), the agency that authorises the annual expedition to Sulasgeir, has confirmed that it will not include coronavirus-related factors in its assessment when considering a licence for this year's guga hunt.

Earlier this week, SNH advised this newsletter that it would be up to the Sulasgeir crew to consider any additional risks to the annual harvest that might be posed by COVID-19. A spokesperson for the Scottish Government agency with responsibility for our natural heritage said: "Every year, we receive a licence application from the men of Ness for the annual guga harvest. We assess the application against the latest scientific information about the gannet population on Sulasgeir. This year will be no different.

"Compliance with the latest SG Covid-19 rules will be a matter for the men of Ness to consider, but it will not be a factor that we will take into account in our assessment of the licence application."

It is understood that a licence application by the Sulasgeir team has been submitted to SNH for their consideration, with a view to making the annual trip to the rock as usual.



PHOTO courtesy Dods Macfarlane: Splitting the gugas on Sulasgeir r/l Donald Murray Port (An Gashan) Angus Macleod Port (Aonghas Chalps) and Alex Murray Skigersta (Eve)

Crofting Commission creates four new jobs in the Western Isles

The Scottish Government is to invest £325,000 of additional funding to create four new jobs within the Crofting Commission's Rural Payments and Inspection Offices in Stornoway and Benbecula.

Making the announcement on 8 July, Fergus Ewing, the Cabinet Secretary for Rural Economy and Tourism, said: "This is an unprecedented and challenging time as we continue to respond in the best way we can to coronavirus and protect our rural communities.

"Being on the front foot is crucial and that is why we need to respond now to the economic challenges that lie ahead. Now more than ever it is vital that we support our rural and island communities and ensure crofters can continue to contribute to the long-term sustainability of crofting."

He added, "This idea was raised at a meeting with crofters in Barvas, Isle of Lewis, last November and it was clear we need to work to create new job opportunities in the Western Isles and take action to support the community."

In response, Councillor Donald Crichton, Chair of the Comhairle's Joint Consultative Committee on Crofting, said: "This is great news for the Western Isles and something that we have been proposing for some time. Crofting is a vital part of our local economy and it is pleasing to see the Crofting Commission recognise this by funding four new jobs in the Western Isles. These jobs will help to ensure crofting remains an integral part of island life by allowing for more support and development in the industry."

There has been considerable disquiet over the years that, despite the Western Isles having the highest concentration of crofts in the country, Crofting Commission-related employment was not well-represented in the Outer Hebrides. There are now hopes that other public-sector agencies may also decentralize jobs to the islands.

Re-opening of places of worship from 15th July

The Scottish Government's Phase 3 guidance for the safe use of places of worship includes the following rules about safe-distancing and the number of people permitted to be present in churches:

Individual and congregational worship

In addition to activity permitted within places of worship during phases 1 and 2 of the route map, from 15 July individuals or household/extended household groups are allowed to enter a place of worship to take part in the following individual or congregational activities:

- pre-arranged or scheduled acts of worship, such as regular congregational services led by a minister of religion or lay person
- communal prayers, devotions or contemplation led by a minister of religion or lay person

Individuals must continue to be physically distanced from others not in their household/extended household group when carrying out these activities. Large public gatherings are still restricted. Places of worship should not admit more than 50 people in total, regardless of their size and usual capacity.

Local congregations are starting to make plans to resume public worship and welcome people back into the churches.

Rev. John Murdo Nicolson of Ness Church of Scotland said: "We are awaiting latest guidelines from the Church office in Edinburgh so that Presbytery can meet to discuss opening the churches across the Presbytery of Lewis. Then our Kirk Session can continue our preparations for welcoming people back into church again."

Other congregations in the area are expected to make early arrangements to return to their places of worship.

We have been advised that the Free Church in Cross is expected to resume worship in the church at 12 noon on Sunday 26 July. There will be no service at 6pm.

At its meeting at the end of June the Free Church Presbytery suspended communion services in all its congregations for the remainder of the year.



Barvas

Foodbank

(Dalbeg - Port of Ness)

HERE TO
HELP YOU!

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

**EORODALE**

Happy 4th Birthday to Ella Maclean (2 Eorodale) on the 20th July. With lots of love from all the family

SWAINBOST

Happy 18th Birthday to Cameron Baird on the 29th July

NORTH DELL

Happy 11th Birthday to Catherine Donner, from Dad, Mum, Lizzy, William and Benjy

LOWER SHADER/HOLM

Happy 40th Birthday (14th July) to Rebecca Robson of Lower Shader and Holm. Love Murdanie and Magnus.



Ella Maclean (see Eorodale)



Cameron Baird (see Swainbost)

Condolences

Some more of our families are mourning loved ones who have passed away during these weeks of lockdown. Although our normal expressions of practical support for the bereaved have not been possible for the past four months, we can assure the loved ones of those who have passed away of our sympathy.

We remember:

Normanna Buchanan of 37a Lionel, who was laid to rest at Habost Cemetery on Friday 10 July, wife of Alasdair and mother of Iain and Gordon. Sister of Mary Ann, Cross, and of the late Alasdair and Dolina.

Annie Morrison, widow of the late Roderick, formerly of 27 Cross, and mother of Mary Ann, Rhoda and Donald.

Dorothy Wray, mother of Hazel Hebditch 132 Cross Skigersta.



Left, Rebecca Robson (see Lower Shader)
Right, Catherine Donner (see North Dell)

Thanks

Ella Corrick and Tom Mallinson are sad to say they are moving to the mainland at the end of the month.

We have felt so welcomed to the island, and especially to the community of Ness, and will really miss being a part of it. Because of lockdown, it's been harder to let everyone know or to see people as we would have liked to. We will definitely be back but for now thank you to everyone who helped us make our home here for the last three years.

Thanks

132 Cross Skigersta Road

Dorothy Wray passed away peacefully on 7/7/2020 at the home of her daughter Hazel Hebditch, where she latterly lived. John and Hazel wish to express their heartfelt thanks to all who helped enrich Dorothy's life over the last 3 years (Church friends and Alzheimers Scotland), latterly Crossroads Carers, the Home Carers and Private Carers.

Special thanks to all at Habost Surgery who have provided exemplary care to Dorothy, and most especially to Peigi Mairi Murray who has been a true professional and friend throughout, to us all as a family.

God Bless you all.

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

jasmine@uog ltd.com

Tom's Titbits

On Saturday the 11th of July I reached my 69th birthday. I won't say I celebrated it because I didn't, although I did feel gratitude and thankfulness that I had reached this landmark as there were times in the past when I didn't think I would make it through the night. I didn't feel the need to party this weekend though and even if I did, there is nowhere to go in the current circumstances as the takeaways seems to be the only dining "out" options available. We were gifted a barbecue thing recently but it seems to have rained every weekend since we got it, so soggy burgers were out of the question. The beer gardens are open locally but at my age given the temperature and the rain and the fact that summer seems to have moved on I would be taking the risk of contacting pneumonia as well as maybe the virus. It's a strange situation when I can join 50 to 100 people in a beer garden but I cannot lay back in the dentist's recliner to get my tooth fixed or sit in the optician's chair to get my eyes tested. To get back to the age theme, someone pointed out to me on Facebook that I was in my 70th year and that put a different perspective on things. I was fine with the figure 69 but 70 spooked me for some reason and I suddenly began to feel older. It's all in the mind, you see. The birthday cards didn't help either as they were full of smart remarks about age and being over the hill and such like, just like the ones I used to send to people my age whom I thought were ancient, but my thanks go to those who took the time to send them. The evening of the big day was spent at home with family and I sincerely hope we can all do it again next year.

I had a surprise visit from the Cross Skigersta Peat Baron the other day "on his way back from the studio" as he so humbly and modestly put it, where he was busy, and I quote, "recording another classic," unquote. He announced with a tone that seemed suspiciously like glee that his spouse, the midwife retired, was heading away to visit family in a southern isle for a few days and the remark reeked of a man who was relieved to have the house to himself for a wee while. She's taking the dog but not the cat. There was a suggestion that she needed a rest as she had been very busy in the peats and doing the gardening and the interior decorating and the grass cutting and the housework and the peat stack whilst he potted about with his painting and recording his radio programmes. I'm not talking



by Tom Maciver

Rembrandt type painting here by the way, just outside walls and gates and anything that doesn't move and white is the dominant colour so shades would be advisable if you visit on a bright sunny day? His parting remark was that he felt that since her retirement his good lady was more at home with a spade or a tarasgeir in her hand than a spatula. Spatula? He phoned five minutes after he reached home to say that he meant stethoscope much to my relief as a midwife with a spatula sounds a bit iffy.

As many of the menfolk will realise a small interior decorating project can often grow arms and legs and that is the case in this household at the moment. My last project went really well in the end and as I mentioned previously it looks, as Para Handy would say, "Chust sublime." On reflection I wish I had messed it up which might have caused her to tell me to clear off out to my garage and finish my Massey Ferguson 4 Cylinder project but no such luck. I got my kit together on Friday, mask, latex gloves, hand sanitiser, bottle of water, mobile, card wallet, anti mist cloth for my specs and headed off to the Stornoway shops to procure a list of paints and accessories she had listed that will probably keep me going for weeks if I'm spared. On the positive side, I'm sleeping a lot better and I couldn't figure out what the reason for this could be at first particularly with the stress involved in the decorating projects but I reckon it's the paint fumes. Now I'm not suggesting that if you suffer from restless nights that you sit at the table before you go to bed at night with a large turps and tonic whilst sniffing a litre of Dulux but there's something in it, either that or I'm physically failing. It seems to be a sign of the times that all I can find to write about recently is retirement, old age, an occasional trip to town, the pandemic and interior decorating so I definitely need to get out more and when I mentioned this to the good lady she informed me that this was all going to change soon. Apparently a companion of the canine variety is in the pipeline as a belated birthday present so I'd better get on my bike and get myself fit for the long walks. Watch this space.

*Mar sin leibh an dràsta,
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?

As restrictions ease and some of our volunteers begin to return to work etc., Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn are keen to continue our prescription deliveries for a little longer. We want to support those who don't wish to or aren't in a position to leave their homes yet.

We are looking for a volunteer/volunteers to undertake prescription deliveries on Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Please contact Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn on (01851) 850 393 or office@uoglt.com if you can help.





Seiseanan Bookbug Air-lòidhne

Online Bookbug Sessions

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

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



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Guest columnist *Dòmhnall Ruadh Smith*

MASKS

So, at last, the wearing of masks, or as the Prime Minister prefers, "face coverings", is to be mandatory fashion wear for us all throughout the UK. It took a while to catch up with the rest of the world. A world that has already changed quite profoundly. A friend alerted me to the fact that from this Sunday, churchgoers will be presented with a new challenge - perfecting a method for the act (hitherto a relatively surreptitious one, and one deftly performed on the fly) of getting the next boiled sweet into the mouth without causing undue distraction.

In Scotland, of course, they already are mandatory, whereas in England the government have decided - possibly as a result of some mutated interpretation of fair play incubated on the playing fields of Eton - to haud their wheest and give the Covid-19 virus an additional 10 days breathing space to wreak its invisible havoc before finally making it law to wear a facemask from the 24th of July. Maybe it's rooted in all that chivalric stuff?

But it can't be easy for the PM. Going by his previous "like letter-boxes" and "bank-robbers" tilts at innocent hijab-wearers, we suspect that he probably had deep-seated issues with the concept of "face covering" in the first place. Add to that a strong cohort of his fellow Conservative MPs who can howl - as one with the moniker Sir Desmond Swayne did in the Commons on Tuesday - that the requirement to wear PPE was nothing but "a monstrous imposition". (In his defence, you will have noticed that not only does his name sound quite entirely fictional, it also rhymes perfectly with another word. That'll be "insane" then).

If getting Britain "shopping again", back to "normal", really was our collective all-consuming chief end and duty, then Swayne's crowd and their chants could, arguably, be classed as reasonable and sane, but if saving millions of human lives is more important, which sounds pretty sane to me, there really must be something wrong with them, something missing from the toolbox. As for getting back to "normal", well, that's wishful thinking. Ever.

The WHO says we are still in the early stages of what is a swiftly-growing global pandemic, and we are reminded of that fact daily, as new facts and discoveries about how Covid-19 behaves, in its transmission and effects, both short and longer term. We know little or nothing about the longer term effects - for obvious reasons. But we know already that amongst those who recover, it's not necessarily the end of the story.

We don't, it turns out, even know where the Covid-19 story itself begins. Though a certain Donald John (that's the one who succeeds in making the majority of US citizens cover their face daily - but with their hands) has insisted on calling it the Wuhan Virus and the Kung Flu, the facts are somewhat more bewildering. Waste water samples from as far back as March 2019 in Spain, and November 2019 in Italy confirm its presence in Europe well before the Wuhan outbreak in December and January. Bewildering, perhaps, but fact nevertheless.

So the precautionary principle rules. Just be sane. Wear your mask, or face covering. And in church on Sunday, there's an upside to all this - you won't have to offer your sweets to anybody. You won't even feel guilty with your own large economy bag of Maltesers, even. Smaoinich.

seo a-Nis Shona Nic a' Mhaoilein



Cor na Gàidhlig

Anns a' chola-deug a dh'fhalbh tha rud no dhà air nochdadh anns na naidheachdan agus anns na pàipearan a thaobh cor na Gàidhlig agus cha mhòr gu bheil dòchas idir ann an càil a chaidh fhoillseachadh no a sgrìobhadh. Nise bidh sibh glè eòlach orm ma tha sibh air a bhith a' leughadh Seo a-Nis greiseag, agus bidh fios agaibh gu bheil mise buailteach a bhith gu math dòchasach mu shuidheachaidhean far a bheil càch a' coimhead orra gu dubhach. Chaidh rannsachadh fhoillseachadh mu Ghàidhlig sa choimhearsnachd (Gaelic Crisis in the Vernacular Community – gheibh sibh seo air làrach-lìn Oilthigh na Gàidhealtachd 's nan Eilean) far an deach deich bliadhna a thoirt dhuinn, aig a' char as miosa, mus bàsaich ar cànan mar chànan làitheil. Tha seo eagalach agus tha mi ag aontachadh gu bheil tòrr ri dhèanamh aig a h-uile ìre (foghlam, coimhearsnachd, san dachaigh, ùghdarrasan, riaghaltas) gus dèanamh cinnteach nach tachair seo. Coimheadaidh cuid againn air na toraidhean mar bhreab san tòin, ach gu mì-fhortanach tha daoine ann a tha ga fhacinn mar adhbhar ar oidhirp a leigeil seachad agus a bharrachd air a sin, slaic a thoirt dhan Ghàidhlig (a-rithist!)

Gàidheil òg

Nochd airtigeal anns a' Ghuadian no anns na Times, cha chuimhnich mi dè am fear (bhiodh agam ri airgead a phàigheadh dhaibh airson a leughadh – shàbhail mi sgilling no dhà leis gun robh daoine air an airtigeal air fad a chur air-loidhne) agus fear eile sa National o chionn ghoirid far an robh an 'luchd-naidheachd' a' cur sìos air a' Ghàidhlig, Michael Fry ag ràdh gum biodh cuid de dhaoine aig an robh Gàidhlig ann an cunntas-sluaigh 2011 marbh mus tigeadh 2031. Duilich, a Mhicheil, ach tha mi-fhìn gu mòr an dùil a bhith beò fhathast agus a' strì airson mo chànan ann an 2031 agus nas fhaide, agus tha ginealaich de Ghàidheil òg fhathast ri thighinn a bhios a' dèanamh an aon rud! Carson a dh'fhuiricheadh balaich òg aig an taigh ag obair air an lot nuair a tha solais a' bhaile mhòir a' pìobrachadh orra, tha e a' faighneachd. Ag ràdh gu bheil e duilich cuideigin a tha fileanta sa chànan a lorg gus còmhraidh ceart fhaighinn leotha. Abair treallaich! Nam bithinn a' ceannachd pàipearan, bhiodh e air an t-sitig.

Meadhanan Sòisealta

On a nochd seo anns na naidheachdan, tha mi air diofar fhacinn ann am faicsinneachd na Gàidhlig am measg òigridh, gu h-àraidh air na meadhanan sòisealta. 'S e deagh thoiseach-toiseachaidh a tha seo agus fear a thogas ceann ann an iomadh diofar dòigh fhad 's a dh'fhàsas e. Chuir Seonaidh Mac an t-Saoir, neach-ciùil à Uibhist a Deas, iomairt air dòigh ag iarraidh air daoine ainmean atharrachadh chun Ghàidhlig air Facebook, agus fhuair seo deagh fhreagairt. Tha cunntasan a' nochdadh air Instagram a tha sa Ghàidhlig a-mhàin, agus daoine leithid Sweeny a' dèanamh bhideothan gu tur sa Ghàidhlig dhan luchd-leantainn le fo-thiotalan sa Bheurla, rud a bhios na leadaidhean Ciorstaid NicFhionghuin agus Lauren NicFheargais a' dèanamh le maise-gnùis cuideachd. Tha e na thogail seo fhacinn. Bhithinn fhìn a' cleachdadh Gàidhlig air na meadhanan sòisealta roimhe, gu h-àraidh air Twitter far am bi deasbadan tric a' dol mun chànan, ach tha mi air oidhirp a dhèanamh a-nis a chur air thoiseach air a' Bheurla anns gach rud a chuireas mi air na duilleagan agam fhìn. Thuit mo mhàthair fhìn e fada na b' fheàrr na b' urrainn dhòmhsa a chaoidh – 's iad luchd-labhairt na Gàidhlig nach bruidhinn i an nàmhaid as motha a th' aig a' Ghàidhlig. An ath thuras a chì thu cuideigin a tha làn fhios agad a tha fileanta, bruidhinn riutha sa Ghàidhlig. Dhòmhsa tha e tàmailteach nuair a thogas mi còmhraidh le cuideigin a dh'fhaodadh a bhith beagan teagmhach mun fhileantas aca fhèin agus gun tèid iad dhan Bheurla seach a bhith a' cumail orra sa Ghàidhlig – biodh fios agaibh nach eil mise gabhail notaichean mu ghràmar no mu fhacail, 's ann a tha mise dìreach air mo dhòigh leis chas cothrom a gheibh mi a bhith a' bruidhinn na Ghàidhlig nam bheatha làitheil ge bith an ann ri mo bhean-glùine san ospadal, ri mo nàbaidh a thig le sgonachan, ris an duine a tha a' càradh mo chàr, ri mo phàrantan 's ris a' chat, agus ri mo charaidean. Meal is caith i, mar a chanas iad!

Tobar an Dualchais name sourcing project - update



As you will remember, the newsletter recently ran a series of names in editions 6 and 7, on behalf of Tobar an Dualchais, the Kist o Riches. The project had sought to gain copyright permissions for the release of archived audio recordings, either from the named themselves, or from their next of kin. The newsletter recently approached the Kist o Riches for an update on the project, and were pleased to hear that contact has been made regarding several recordings. Friseal MacRaibeirt, Copyright Officer for the Kist o Riches, gave us this update:

"I would just like to thank the members of the Ness community who have been in touch with me over the past couple of weeks. The recordings that we have from BBC Radio nan Gàidheal are a precious record of local people and their stories, and to have them online means that they will be accessible to anyone at any time anywhere in the world. The new recordings will be made available at the launch of our new website in late 2020/early 2021. If you have any details or information for anyone on the list, then please do not hesitate to get in touch with me [Fraser McRobert] by email at fm.smo@uhi.ac.uk or by phone on 01471 888 603 (Mon - Fri, 9-5)."

Eàirdsidh MacIllEasbuig - Dealan-dè

Didòmhnaich 19mh dhen t-luchair aig 09:30m air Radio nan Gàidheal, bidh cothrom ann èisdeachd ri agallamh le Eàirdsidh MacIllEasbuig, seanair Jasmine a tha ag obair airson cuair-litir Nis-Barabhas. Tha gearr chunntas am program le Eàirdsidh - ann an comhradh le Aonghas Dubh MacNeacail - air a thoirt bho làrach linn Radio Nan Gàidheal:

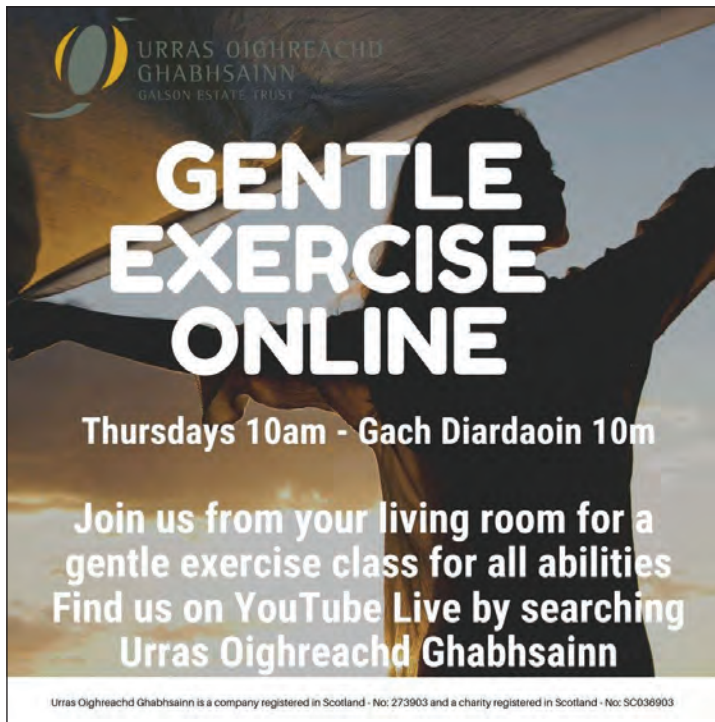
"Mar fhear a thogadh air eilean far nach robh croit no lot, mar a thuigeas eile iad, chosnadh Eàirdsidh MacIllEasbuig cliù àraid mar fhear a chuireadh seachad cuid mhath dhe bheatha a' brosnachadh chroitearan anns na h-eileanan eile gu bhith deònach leasachaidhean a dhèanamh air am fearann agus an dòighean-obrach.

An dèidh a thogail ann an Ìle, agus sgoil fhaighinn, coltach ri iomadh eileanach eile air falbh bhon taigh, ann an Dùn Omhainn, chuir Eàirdsidh MacIllEasbuig còig bliadhna dhen Dàrna Cogadh anns a' Chabhlaich Mharsanta, ach b' e obair fearainn a bha na dheòin agus chuir e seachad bliadhnaichean anns an West of Scotland Agricultural College mus deach e dh'obair air tuathanachasan ann an Siorrachdan Àir, Rinn Friù agus Earra-Ghàidheal.

Fhuair e an uair sin cosnadh mar fhear-oideachaidh sa Cholaiste Fearainn ann an Cataibh, far an do rinn e eòlas air croitearachd àbhaisteach airson a' chiad uair, le cothrom leasachaidhean a mholadh do mhuinntir an àite. Ach b' ann nuair a ghluais e dha na h-Eileanan Siar a rinn e an obair a dhearbhadh cliù dha, chan ann a mhàin anns na sgilean a bha e a' moladh ach ann a bhith a' dùsgadh misneachd an t-sluaigh gus iad fhèin a dhol a' sàs ann an leasachadh fearainn. Chosnadh e an MBE airson cho soirbheachail 's a bha na h-amasan seo.

Nuair a chaochail Eàirdsidh ann an 1990, fhuair e an luaidh seo bho Brian Wilson; 'the crofting communities of the Highlands and Islands have lost one of their great champions of the 20th century', beachd ris an aontaicheadh a h-uile croitear a rinn eòlas air.

A seo cluinidh sibh Eàirdsidh MacIllEasbuig ann an comhradh ri Aonghas Dubh MacNeacail ann a 1987."



URRAS OIGHREACHD GHABHSAINN
GALSON ESTATE TRUST

GENTLE EXERCISE ONLINE

Thursdays 10am - Gach Diardaoin 10m

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Find us on YouTube Live by searching Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn

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

Castleview Dental Practice update

In keeping with Scottish Government changes, Castleview Dental Practice, located at 77 Cromwell Street, Stornoway, is now able to offer appointments again.

Mr Sridhar Kalvakuntla, the practice owner, said: "This has been a very difficult time for our patients. The need to protect public health has meant dentists all across Scotland closed in March. We will now be able to offer urgent care to our patients, and start catching up on regular treatment in the coming weeks. I would like to thank all of our valued patients for their perseverance, and my team is keen to welcome them back. We have taken advice on all aspects of making the practice safe to reopen. As a result, regular patients will see some changes. We have reduced seating in our waiting areas, hand sanitiser will be available at the door, and there will be no handling of paper forms.

"We'll also be putting regular updates on our Facebook page as we respond to Scottish Government guidance."

As of 6th July 2020, the practice will prioritise patients with outstanding Urgent and Emergency care.

Patients should call the practice on its usual number,
01851 704400.

The reception staff will ask some simple questions about Coronavirus, to ensure all patients are seen safely.

Those callers with dental emergencies will be invited to attend the practice by appointment only.

Castleview is working in co-operation with the NHS Western Isles dental service, and some patients with more complex care may be referred to the Western Isles Dental Centre.

To help maintain safe social distancing, patients are asked to come as close to their appointment times as they can, and alone if possible, as seating in the waiting areas has been reduced.

From Monday 13th July 2020, the practice will also offer some additional services, and the dental staff will be able to offer personalised advice on what is available.

There will be further improvements in service as restrictions are lifted, and Castleview will offer updates on these changes as they happen.

Mr Kalvakuntla said: "We expect the next few weeks to be very busy, but want to reassure all our patients we are working towards a full service as quickly as Health Protection guidance allows. We will post regular updates through Facebook to keep patients up to date."

Hebridean Community Gardening Project gets cash boost from Lottery Fund



The Hebridean Community Gardening project, a joint venture between Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn and the Clan Macquarrie Community Centre, has had a welcome funding injection from the National Lottery Community Fund. £10,000 was awarded via the 'Awards for All' funding stream, which will enable the purchase and repair of necessary equipment to really get the horticultural venture going.

Explaining the circumstances surrounding the project, Donald 'Ba' Macdonald of the Clan Macquarrie Community Centre said: "For some years, we've had ambitions to develop a community growing project on a part of the Clan Macquarrie Community Centre land. Severe storm damage to an earlier polytunnel a number of years ago was a disappointing setback and, together with the usual challenge of fully funding a project, had delayed us getting the polytunnel properly off the ground again.

"The local demand for a project of this nature was emphasised by the success of a specific and very well-attended 'grow your own' workshop in February this year. Against that background, we are delighted with the positive outcome of our application to Awards for All, and with the help provided by the Urras with the application process."

It is envisaged that the Hebridean Community Gardening Project will assist in developing the skills and knowledge of interested community members, thus creating a valuable and long-lasting community venture. 'Ba' continued: "The funding award will allow us to move forward with what we hope will be the first key stage of a sustainable community project."

The 'Awards for All Scotland' funding grants are supplied by the National Lottery Community Fund. Suitable for voluntary, community or public sector organisations in Scotland, between £300 and £10,000 can be applied for, to help bring to life projects building links in communities, improving spaces, and developing people's potential.

Christopher Smail, from Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, also expressed his happiness at the news of the award, stating: "We are delighted with this news and very grateful to the National Lottery Community Fund for believing in the project. This funding is the result of many people's hard work at the Urras and Clan Macquarrie Community Centre, and we believe that The Hebridean Community Garden will deliver great things for the Galson Estate."

If anyone is interested in finding out more about the project please contact UOG:

office@uogltd.com
01851 850393

FIRST REGISTRATION OF A CROFT

Mrs Margaret Maciver has registered their croft 19 Swainbost, Swainbost, Barvas, on the Crofting Register held by Registers of Scotland.

Any person who wishes to challenge the registration may apply to the Scottish Land Court by 24 February 2021.

Details of the registration can be found at www.crofts.ros.gov.uk/register/home. The croft registration number is C6995.

LOOKING COOL

I read recently that low-brow comedian Jimmy Carr has followed a host of other well-heeled celebrities by having a hair transplant. The 47-year-old, famously acerbic, comic said of his recent thatching, "My hair was socially distancing from my forehead and I'd had enough of it".

He went on to explain, "I shaved my head and what they do is take hairs from the back and put them in the front. Basically, I had enough hair, but it was in the wrong place."

With my own hair beginning to look as if it is in all the wrong places, I might well have benefited myself from a similar intervention in the scalp department. However, for all that a

new 'Barnet' would do for me, I'm not desperate enough to pawn the furniture to achieve that particular goal.

The procedure apparently involves taking individual hair follicles from the back of your head and relocating them nearer the front. This would certainly give my *falt* (hair) a healthy-looking *dosan* (forelock), but I would worry about the high neckline that might appear at the back, above the collar. However, this could be the very thing to make the polo neck jumper come right back into fashion. During my teenage years, I had a much-treasured white woollen polo neck that my granny had knitted for me. Any excuse and I'd be wearing it, whether complemented by my flared jeans and trainers, or a pair of turned-down Bulldog wellies. I recall the late, great Scots comic Chic Murray describing a particular genetic trait in the Murray ancestral line, "noses run in our family". Well, I guess, the turned-down Wellington boot was a bit of a trait in ours!

Among the important things I remember from my childhood was that the menfolk in our family tended to favour that turned-down wellie look, where the top half of the Wellington boot is folded down when you're not up to your knees in water, manure, or are unfortunate enough to have inherited boggy peats. This innovation helped make your wellies less cumbersome, and walking was that bit easier, as long as you remembered to put the sides back up again when required.

I will admit that polo neck jumpers and turned-down wellies never really caught on or became particularly fashionable around the island. Certainly, while I was attending the Nicolson Institute back in the 1970s, spending my weekdays in the Gibson Hostel in Stornoway, I never felt confident enough with my country attire to wear that particular polo neck and wellie ensemble down the town after evening studies. For all I know, the town girls, unfamiliar with such a dress combo, might well have found the look extremely fetching? Reluctantly accepting the 'townie' dress code of the time, I would instead find myself standing in the doorway of Murdo Maclean's shop on Cromwell Street (the place to be seen) clad in my denim jeans and jacket and wearing a decidedly cool pair of tan leather boots, complete with Cuban heels.

I believe some of these items of clothing may well still be in a box somewhere in the attic,

waiting for the day when they come back into fashion. Well, you never know(!).

FITBA

The 2019/20 English Premier League season is finally coming to a conclusion with only a handful of games still to be played. The league was halted back in mid-March due to the coronavirus pandemic, only restarting a few weeks ago with very handsomely rewarded professional footballers playing in empty stadiums. However, with Liverpool FC having totted up a very healthy lead in the league before the enforced break, they went on to wrap up the Premiership at a canter following the restart, with several games still remaining to be played.

I've tuned in to watch a few matches broadcast on Sky and BT Sports and, in all honesty, I can't say that I've been thrilled or entertained by what I've seen. I suspect it's largely down to the absence of fans in the grounds, who bring that unique atmosphere to televised matches that make the game so fascinating and magical for millions of fans around the world. Maybe the clubs and footballing authorities might appreciate that, despite paying shedloads of money to top players to kick a leather ball around a patch of grass, without the presence of the fans the game somehow loses its lustre.

Although the 2019/20 season is yet to conclude in England, the new 2020/21 Scottish professional league season will kick-off on Saturday 1 August. In Scotland, the various divisions ended prematurely due to COVID-19, with the footballing authorities subsequently determining promotion and relegation based on the relative positions of teams at the time of the enforced break. Consequently, Edinburgh giants Hearts of Midlothian (bottom of the league at the time of the break) were relegated to the Championship, while Celtic were declared Premier League winners and will start the 2020/21 season aiming for the much-vaunted 'nine and a half in a row' league titles.

Unfortunately for the other half of the 'Old Firm', namely Rangers, they spent a good part of those nine and a half seasons in the bowels of the lower leagues after an unfortunate misunderstanding with HM Revenue & Customs (HMRC) that left the club financially challenged and relegated in 2012 to the bottom tier of professional football. At that time, money was so tight that the Rangers board were reportedly envious of the contents of their city rivals' famous 'biscuit tin'. Fortunately, following four years of league promotions, Rangers finally regained their place in the Scottish Premiership in 2016, although past success has so far alluded the club.

The club's difficulties sprang from its use of an Employee Benefit Trust (EBT) scheme through which the club paid wages and bonuses to players, which were described as 'loans' in the accounts. Although a number of other professional clubs in the UK followed similar schemes, HMRC weren't happy about the arrangement and decided to put Rangers in its cross hairs, which resulted in a series of ugly court cases.

Apparently, the senior accountants at HMRC

spend their time coming up with incredibly complex tax systems for football clubs that only they can possibly understand. Then, when these accountants have served their time and have got their triple-locked pensions safely in the bag, they are head-hunted by global accountancy firms like Deloitte and KPMG in order to come up with tax avoidance schemes for the very systems that they designed and only they can understand.

"There's money in them there bills," as they say.

TRUMP THAT!

The wheels appear to be falling off President Trump's election campaign as he stumbles from one mishap to another, making enemies all around the world and increasingly alienating himself from some of his most ardent Republican supporters. The Democratic Party candidate, Joe Biden, can afford to do nothing, other than watch his rival create problems for himself. Having said that, Trump probably remains favourite to continue his tenure at 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, Washington DC. I am, grudgingly, prepared to admit that I sometimes find Dòmhnall Iain Trump inspirational: if an idiot like him can rise to be President of the United States, there is hope for us all!

His endorsement of certain medications to combat Coronavirus has certainly caused a bit of a stir among the medical profession, especially his promotion of hydroxychloroquine, a widely used antimalarial drug. For anyone who might have actually taken this medicine, a study in the medical journal, *The Lancet*, advised that not only did this drug not offer any real benefit for Covid infected patients, it can actually increase the risk of heart problems or even death.

Unfortunately, there are many American supporters of Donald Trump who are equally blessed with double-digit IQs who will take their President at his word and self-administer this drug believing it will prevent coronavirus infection. Not that long ago, Anthony Fauci, US director of the National Institute on Allergy and Infectious Disease, was shown on TV shuffling uncomfortably in his chair behind the President's podium as Dòmhnall Iain told the nation to inject themselves with bleach to clear the virus from their system. The bleach idea went quickly down the toilet as his advisers hurriedly distanced the administration from the claim. The only advantage with this treatment is that you didn't need much of a hose-down when you later arrived in the mortuary. In saying that, if I thought for a second that Trump would actually listen to me, I would strongly suggest he tried doubling the dose.

With reports elsewhere in the newsletter suggesting the boys will be heading off to Sulasgeir again this year, opting to lockdown for a few weeks on a draughty rock somewhere out in the North Atlantic, guga will remain the only non-prescribed drug I'll allow to pass these lips. If the boys wish to promote it as a potential cure for COVID-19 on their return, I will be more than happy to participate in those particular trials.

Sporting Viewpoint

by Alastair Dunlop



I have returned from a week's hill walking on the mainland. Of course I had plenty time at my disposal in the evenings so I watched many televised football games. I wrote in my last column about how boring Man City are and then they thumped Liverpool four nil. I also said Chelsea looked good so there you are - wrong on both counts. I enjoyed most of the games but like millions of others I must mention VAR again. How was it possible Man Utd got that penalty against Villa? And similarly how was it not a penalty for Spurs when Harry Kane was pushed? Was there really a sane person with good eyesight reviewing the action? Hard to believe! Overall I believe VAR is good for the game and I would expect the situation to improve. If I could make a small point without sounding controversial, I think the taking the knee at the start of each game made a point but it should be stopped now as its potency has gone and now looks like a tick box exercise. A couple more points, Southampton look like a team and the club I support, Everton, do not, despite all the praise Mr Ancelotti has been getting. The way they are playing I think Villa will do well at Goodison this week.

It was good to see the resumption of youth training this week (see picture) but it appears there will be no adult games until at least October. I see no reason why the local season could not start then and be played over the winter. It happens every year just across the water and apart from maybe being windier our winters are certainly not worse than the mainland. The same goes for our youth teams: better in winter than not at all although school games may play havoc with fixtures.

The resumption of hill walking (being allowed to travel more than five miles for recreation) was brought forward from the 15th to the 3rd of July. Reading social media I was aware there were many like me desperate to return to the hills. I was in Glenshee, Glen Strathfarrar, Glen Affric and in the Ben Alder area and I was surprised to see so few on the hills. I only met two walkers on the hill in Glen Affric and I knew them. I met Katy, daughter of Alasdair Morrison (our former MSP, mac Alex Shàm - Rev. Alexander Morrison) and her mum Erica. It was raining heavily. I had full waterproofs on and these two were bounding up the hill not noticing the rain. There is a body of evidence to show that the female species is tougher when it comes to endurance and they might be right. I have two comments on micro wildlife. The good news was there were very few midges and the bad news was I got another tick in my leg. In the summertime it is preferable to walk in shorts but unless it is all on paths it is more sensible to wear trousers.

I note the running track is partly open in town and I look forward to being on a track for the first time in about eighteen months. I expect to be disappointed with my times but I can run without pain so no complaints there.

I have already mentioned the positive news of youth football training resuming but even that is surpassed by the reopening of our wonderful playpark. Since it opened it has almost immediately assumed its pride of place as the central meeting point for young families (and the occasional grandparent). All we need now is a spell of good weather and a wee breeze to keep the flies at bay.

Youth training resumes



The Government gave permission for full football training for young players to resume from Monday 13th July. Ness FC organised their first session the next day and it was great to see so many happy faces playing and meeting up with all their friends. There were thirty seven keen young players from the ages of 5-14 who were organised by Head Coach Micheil R Smith and his assistants Hugh and Murray Macdonald, Hector Barrowman and Calum MacLeod. Training continues **every Tuesday and Thursday at the pitch 2-4pm.**

Alastair Dunlop

Catherine hits the trail for WISCK and spòrsnis

(continued from front page)

two weeks into her challenge, we at the newsletter were keen to find out how she is getting on.

First of all, how does running make her feel, and what have been the most exciting and most challenging parts of this fundraiser? "I feel tired when I run, but I feel good after doing it. The most challenging thing so far in the 100-mile challenge is making myself go out when I don't feel like going out", said Catherine. The most exciting thing so far? "The most exciting thing was when I got to do the family run on my birthday" – how's that for determination!

Why has she chosen to support WISCK and the spòrsnis roof appeal? "I love cats, and I know that they [WISCK] don't get money from Cats Protection anymore. So I wanted to help WISCK. I chose spòrsnis because Simon is nice, and he's doing good work for a place that I like to hang out with my friends." With the newsletter/Fios headquarters also based at spòrsnis, we too are very grateful to Catherine for choosing to support the roof appeal.

And, when she is finished, what does she plan to do to celebrate afterwards? "I will take a rest, and then maybe get a pizza and ice-cream from the Breakwater." It will definitely be well-deserved, Catherine! Well done – we are proud of you.

If you would like to donate to Catherine's fundraiser, you can visit:

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/catherine-donner>

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, Alistair Dunlop, Murdo Campbell, Dòmhnall Ruadh, Christine Amos, Simon Amos, David Green.



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20 years ago – Taigh Dhonnchaidh opening ceremony

TWENTY YEARS AGO THIS MONTH the new millennium was commemorated in Ness with many events. *Ceilidh san Iar Thuath* was a grand affair with a large marquee at Fivepenny and activities throughout the district. One of the notable events of the time, as recorded in the *fios* edition of 28 July 2000, was the opening of Taigh Dhonnchaidh in Habost in the presence of the leading politicians of the day.

During a ceremony at Comunn Eachdraidh Nis (then in Habost) the speakers included Calum Macdonald MP. He said, "I am sure Taigh Dhonnchaidh will be a marvellous facility for the community and is a tribute to all those who have worked so hard on the project. It's an asset that will serve the people of Ness and is something that will be of significance throughout the Gaidhealtachd."

Brian Wilson MP was then invited to address the audience. Speaking about the Iomairt Chòlm Cille project he said there was everything to be gained by communicating with other people and this was what the initiative had intended to encourage. "Its aim is being manifested here in Ness with this marvellous connection with Connemara."

The guests then moved the short distance up the road led by three local pipers: Norman Macleod, Hector Maclean and Donna Mackenzie, playing the tune *Duncan Morison MBE*.

At Taigh Dhonnchaidh a battery of TV cameras and local video cameras awaited the party. Mr Roderick Morrison, formerly of Cross and retired Head Teacher of Laxdale School, made a prayer in dedication of the new centre. Brian Wilson MP then once again addressed the crowd gathered round the door, in the garden and out on the road before handing the key to Donna Macritchie. Donna then officially opened the front door "on behalf of all the young people of Ness", as she said in her short bi-lingual speech.

It was then the time for the visiting Irish Minister of State at the Department of Arts, Heritage, Gaeltacht and the Islands Eamon Ó Cuív, T.D. to address the party. Speaking in both Irish and English he commented about the common heritage of the people of the Gaeltacht in Ireland and Scotland and welcomed the opportunity to strengthen the communities through the links being established between Ness and Connemara. Katie Mackenzie then invited them into Taigh Dhonnchaidh before making a closing address and inviting Murdo John Mackenzie and Kathleen Macdonald to sing two of Duncan's favourite songs.

The property at 44 Habost was gifted to Comunn Eachdraidh Nis by Duncan Matheson Morison, shortly before his death in 1998 at the age of 92. The house is the oldest 'white' house in the district and was in need of extensive renovation. A small committee from the Comunn Eachdraidh was tasked with deciding what to do with it and John Maciver came to lead the project with Katie Mackenzie.

Speaking to *fios* earlier in the week Mr MacIver said: "First there was the question of what to do with the house. Some people thought it should be knocked down but we decided to try and restore it to its original condition outside. There were a number of people in the district who wanted a place dedicated to the arts, especially to enable the young people to participate in drama and other cultural activities. The Comhairle provided the labour under the Community Employment Programme and with help from WIE and many others we have now brought the project to the stage where it is ready for the purpose we had in mind."

From the outside the house has been restored to the way it was originally but with the addition of an integrated toilet block. Inside, it is quite different from its original layout, although some of the features have been retained.



TOP: Procession from CEN (Habost) to Taigh Dhonnchaidh on Thursday 27 July 2000 led by pipers Norman Macleod, Donna Mackenzie and Hector Maclean.

ABOVE: Donna Macritchie, Brian Wilson and Roderick Morrison outside Taigh Dhonnchaidh
BELOW: Chrissie Mackenzie, Norman 'Gagan' Macleod and Peigi Mackenzie (Swainbost Farm) in Taigh Dhonnchaidh around the time the centre was first opened.





Living in Lockdown

Living in Lockdown for over the past three months has been helpful for some, but hard for others. For, in a very short space of time, the kitchen table was transformed into a desk or a classroom; the living room, where we would normally relax and unwind, became a playroom; and the four walls of our house almost became a prison, with only a daily visit from the postman.

As a pastor, it's a very strange experience not being able to see the congregation, to visit homes within the community or go to the hospital; but it has certainly made me appreciate and, in a small measure, sympathize with many of the elderly and infirm in our communities who are Living in Lockdown all-year-round. Needless to say, we're all aware that these drastic measures were necessary in order to protect our hard-working NHS staff and preserve as many lives as possible in our congregations, communities and country.

Of course, there have been many negatives of Living in Lockdown, whether socially, by not being able to see family and friends; mentally, by being confined to our homes; or financially, by simply not working or losing our job. These are very painful and personal problems which many have had to come to terms with.

However, there have been some positives from Living in Lockdown; one is that it gave back to many of us something we were all lacking and struggling to find – time. Prior to Lockdown, we were living in a fast-paced, up-to-the-minute, 24/7 society, that didn't want to slow down. Yet, for many us, Living in Lockdown has given us time to do the things we never had time to do before; but it has also given us time to reflect upon what really matters in life: Family, Friendships and Fellowship. I believe that Living in Lockdown has made us all aware that we're not as strong as we once thought we were; we're not in control of our lives as much as we would like to be; but more so, we're more conscious that time is a precious gift which we need to use wisely, because life is short and we just don't know when our time in this world will come to an end. For that reason, I hope and pray that there are many in our communities who have used the time wisely to reflect upon eternal matters and consider the state of their soul.

For, with Lockdown now beginning to lift, restrictions starting to ease and life going back to a level of normality, the things of the soul and of eternity will very quickly depart from our heart and mind. Moreover, although we're being given a level of physical freedom from Living in Lockdown, there is a real sense in which there are many in our communities who still don't have that Spiritual Freedom from Living in Lockdown. Our Government may be slowly granting to us an element of liberation, but unless we enter the Kingdom of God, we will never experience the true

liberty and freedom that we receive through faith in Jesus Christ. Our Bible assures us that without Jesus Christ as our Lord and Saviour, our spiritual state is that we're still Living in Lockdown. In fact, the Bible describes our Spiritual Lockdown like imprisonment, bondage and slavery; where, we're enslaved to sin, held captive by our sinful desires and in bondage to the will and wants of our heart (Romans 6). Even though we may not think we're Living in Lockdown, the Bible assures us that we will never know true freedom until we come to embrace the life-giving liberty offered in the Gospel. The irony, however, is that many people view Christianity as Lockdown rather than Liberty; because, they think that being a Christian, is all about Rules and Regulations, Do's and Don'ts, Boundaries and Barriers. They believe that if you were to submit your life to Jesus Christ and become a Christian, then you'll miss out on happiness and your life will be miserable, but nothing could be further from the truth! For, on the Cross Jesus Christ delivered us from the Penalty, Prison and Punishment of sin; and as the Bible promises us: 'For freedom Christ has set us free; stand

firm therefore, and do not submit again to a yoke of slavery' (Galatians 5:1).

Therefore, as we emerge from physically Living in Lockdown, I hope and pray that you don't continue spiritually Living in Lockdown, committing your life to Jesus Christ.

The 18th century preacher, Charles Wesley, wrote a hymn describing the joy he experienced when he came to know Liberty and Freedom in Christ, after many years of Living in Lockdown:

*And can it be that I should gain
An interest in the Saviour's blood?
Died He for me, who caused His pain?
For me, who Him to death pursued?
Amazing love! how can it be
That Thou, my God, shouldst die for me?*

*Long my imprisoned spirit lay
Fast bound in sin and nature's night;
Thine eye diffused a quickening ray,
I woke, the dungeon flamed with light;
My chains fell off, my heart was free,
I rose, went forth, and followed Thee.*

Harbour road remains closed to vehicular traffic



The damaged section of road near Anthony Barber's Gallery

The access road to Port of Ness harbour has remained closed to vehicular traffic since February following subsidence to a section of banking on the side nearest the adjacent burn. The road is widely used by visitors to the beach and boat owners using the inner harbour.

The landslide occurred on 18 February following a spell of heavy rain over the preceding days. A structural engineer from the local authority, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, attended a site meeting later that day to assess the situation, with representatives from both the Port of Ness Harbour Committee and the community landlord, Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, in attendance. Following a second visit by the engineer the following day, a decision was made to close the road to vehicular traffic until the necessary repairs could be carried out by the landowner.

The Urras advised the newsletter earlier this week that they are currently in the process of appointing an engineer to carry out an appraisal of the damaged section of road and

to determine the best way to proceed. The landlord indicated that it has also applied for funding to help with the initial works required to bring the road fully back into use.

The tarmac track leading down to the harbour is officially classed as 'unadopted' and, consequently, the responsibility for repairs does not ultimately lie with the local authority. At present, vehicular access is restricted to boat owners.



The burn adjacent to the harbour access road



Covid-19 - July Updates from Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn

Prescription Deliveries

We will continue to deliver prescriptions across the estate until at least the end of August.

Crofters Collections

Due to the decreased demand we have now ceased the collection service from Lewis Crofters. The last collection will be **Friday 17th July**.

UOG Newsletter

We will continue to work with volunteers and staff to create a newsletter every fortnight. This will be reviewed in August.

Habost Household Waste & Recycling Centre

The site is open two days per week and we will continue to monitor and work with the local authority to increase this service in phases.

Office Staff

Our staff continue to work from home. Preparations are underway to move back to the estate, adopting a blended working arrangement. Please contact us in all the usual ways. Details below.

Nature Observatory at Loch Stiapabhat

We have implemented a three step process to safely open the nature observatory. Please read the signage at the site and follow the steps.

Office phone number: (01851) 850 393

Email: office@uogtld.com

Comunn Eachdraidh Nis

AGM

Thursday 23rd July 2020

7:30pm

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, Comunn Eachdraidh Nis will hold its Annual General Meeting digitally using the Zoom conference platform.

Please email

office@cenonline.org

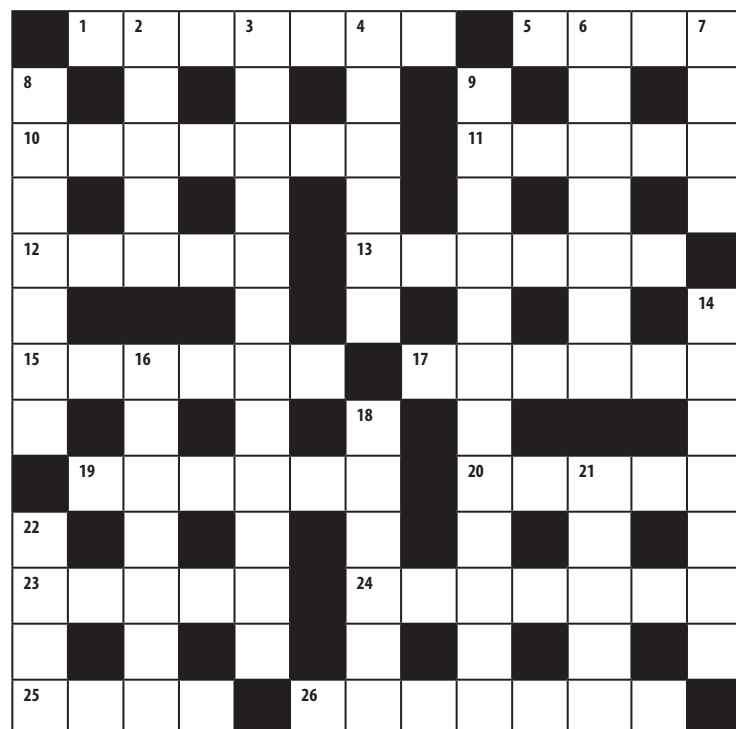
before Monday 20th July to register

attendance and to receive the online meeting link and supporting documents.

Fàilte oirbh uile

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.8 Crossword 17 July 2020



ACROSS

- 1 Puts together paving stones (7)
- 5 Island girl (4)
- 10 Wood sticks, causing traffic delays (7)
- 11 Ox aim is to say an obvious truth (5, anag)
- 12 Dolled up to here (5)
- 13 Early stage of insects (6)
- 15 Ben sat but not here (anag, 6)
- 17 Ancient Celtic priests (6)
- 19 Tossed - into royal chair? (6)
- 20 Edible palace (5)
- 23 and 8 Down - Scene of unsolved lighthouse mystery (7,5)
- 24 If you're in yours, you're pleased (7)
- 25 Conservative (4)
- 26 Keep on step sir! (7, anag)
- 8 See 23 Across (7)
- 9 We're all desperate to go to these! (12)
- 14 Says with conviction (7)
- 16 One who is educated (9)
- 18 See Zen cold symptom (anag, 6)
- 21 Admits major golf tournaments (5)
- 22 Sounds like fog didn't hit its mark (4)

DOWN

- 2 Plays a vital part (5)
- 3 Boats on a nest? Quick snack (anag. 5,2,5)
- 4 Simply (6)
- 6 Japanese paper-folding (7)
- 7 Mace is the peak (anag, 4)

No. 7 Crossword 3 July 2020 solution



Agus thugamaid an aire da chèile a-chum ar brosnachadh gu gràdh, agus gu deagh obraichean: Eabhraidhich 10: 24 [ABG1992]

On the evening of that day, the first day of the week, the doors being locked where the disciples were for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said to them, "Peace be with you."

John 20: 19 [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

Anticipated Re-opening Date: Thursday 30th July

At Ness FC Social Club we have been keenly reading the government guidance on the reopening of pubs and clubs and putting measures in place to ensure the Club can open as a safe environment for staff, members and guests. There are challenges but we are sure that with cooperation we can open our doors and welcome you all back.

Perhaps the main income stream for the Club is its functions. These are also often the best nights and we look forward to being able to enjoy a ceilidh or bingo together soon. The current government guidance allows pubs and clubs to open, but functions will not be permissible as yet. Therefore, the absence of ceilidhs or other events makes the economics of opening the Club even more of a challenge. After careful consideration, we have concluded that the Club should be open - not least because we have all missed it! However, we wanted to issue this statement to explain that it will be a challenge, that we have not taken this decision lightly and we will need members' backing. It is your Club and we are grateful for your continued patience and support as we proceed to this next phase.

We hope to see you from 5pm on Thursday 30th July. More details to follow!

CLUB MONTHLY DRAW

Our next draw will be Saturday 1st August LIVE on our Facebook page. This will be our JULY draw but hopefully we'll be back in club and will return to doing the draw on the nearest Saturday to the end of the month. More info to follow.

If anyone would like to join our Super-draw please feel free to contact the club for details.

£5 monthly entry

June results

1st prize: £100. Alasdair Beaton, Bearsden

2nd prize: £50. Coinneach Roddy MacLean, Habost

3rd prize: £25. Catriona Morrison, Cross

£5 bonus: Agnes Morrison, Habost

Congratulations to our winners.

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 for guests and will soon be able to offer evening meals as well. Contact phone details above.

Porkies

Continuing to visit Barvas.

Borve House Hotel TEL: 850 223

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

As of Monday 20th July, the café and shop is open **Monday - Saturday, 10:00 - 17:00**.

Skigersta Post Office

Re - opened: Wednesday 15th July

Hours:

MON, TUES, WED, FRI – 9:00 – 13:00, 14:00 – 17:30

THURS – 09:00 - 13:00, **SAT** – 09:00 – 12:30

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

It seems hard to believe that it is mid-July already and we are almost halfway through another year. On the face of it, July can be a quiet month in the natural world. Many young birds have fledged and are becoming less reliant on exhausted parents. The wild flowers that carpet the district, particularly the machair, are just about at their peak, but in a couple of weeks will be past their best.

It has been a particularly quiet month for me as unfortunately I have not been able to do the things that I like to do, mainly walking. The reason for this – I was bitten by a goose. At this point I would like to conjure up an image of the intrepid 'wannabe' naturalist scouring the fringes of Loch Stiapabhat and being wrestled to the ground by a ferocious Greylag. Sorry, nothing so glamorous or involving any such 'derring-do.' This was my own Goose, one of two, a goose and a gander, which recently celebrated their twentieth birthday.

They are Emden geese, a popular breed of domestic geese, which can reach up to 3 feet in height and weigh up to 34lbs; small, they are not. Ganders can be quite aggressive and are very territorial, particularly in the breeding season. I got nipped on the back of my calf by the gander a few weeks back when I turned away to go back down the croft after feeding them. It was, at the time, painful, and I uttered a few words which I would not usually use in polite company, but like most nips and knocks soon forgotten. Until that is a few weeks later when I developed a pain in the back of my calf. The incident causing the pain originally had really been so inconsequential I had totally forgotten about it. Anyway, long stories short, a nasty little infection had been festering away for several weeks and had now reared its ugly head. Moral of the story, if there is any – do not turn your back on a goose, at least not unless you are more than a necks length away from the beak. By the way, if you are wondering, the gander is fine and showing no side effects and will no doubt be celebrating a 21st birthday in the New Year.

The Outer Hebrides and Ness in particular, featured well in the welcome invasion of **Rose-coloured Starlings**. Numbers peaked to five between 3rd and 5th July and were reported as follows by Birdguides Review of the Week, 1-7th July 2020: "Rosy Starlings dominated the week in the Outer Hebrides, with reports from



13 different sites. Three remained at Cross, Lewis, throughout the week, with two at Port Skigersta; other sightings on Lewis came from Mangursthadh, South Dell, Breanais and Port Nis. Singles were on Vatersay and at Carinish and Balemore, North Uist, as well as Rubha Ardvule, South Uist."

Inevitably the run had to come to an end, but I am pleased to report that at the time of writing (15 July 2020) one is still in Cross, making frequent visits to a bird feeder in the garden where it was first 'found'.

I was greatly relieved to first hear then see that the second brood of my 'Chimney Pot Starlings' had fledged – that's both pots. I say relieved in the sense it was a relief not to hear the alarm call of an anxious parent whose offspring's very existence was threatened by an overhead gull or a perched crow peering, beady eyed, into the abyss looking for a potential snack. In fact, just a few days before a Herring Gull got lucky, but we will leave it at that.

Early last Saturday morning, through a half-open window near the feeder, I heard that all too familiar 'churring' noise that had previously 'spoken' to me from the pots. Now as big as their parents although lacking their magnificent



luminescent spots, they sat beaks agape screaming for food. The actual gape of the bird is the interior of the open mouth and the gape flange is the region where the two mandibles join at the base of the beak. In the **Starling**, as in many other young birds, the gape is bright yellow for a reason – to direct the delivery of food from parents when in the nest and for a while after fledging. Such is the instinct to feed, on occasion adult birds will deposit food into the gape of a different species. Before long they gain confidence at the feeder and work out a better meal can be had by 'getting it yourself'. In time they gain confidence on the wing and begin to congregate in large flocks with adult birds scouring the crofts and machair for seeds and invertebrates.

Without it sounding too obvious, one of the charms of the trail cameras that I have set up in various locations, is being able to 'drop in' on animals and birds' life without intruding on them. Even though we may not see them so much now in the daytime, the camera reveals that **Deer** remain regular travellers at night time,

following the stream from Port and wending their way along to Loch Stiapabhat. The **Mute Swan** pair whose attempt at breeding sadly failed this year also feature. Occasional sightings of Otters too, again passing through on their way



Mute Swan pair Loch Stiapabhat 29 June 2020

to the Loch. Largely nocturnal these semi-aquatic mammals are very well-adapted to the water (both sea and loch) with dense fur and webbed feet. They can also close their nostrils and ears when submerged to prevent the ingress of water. Coastal water by its very nature is salty and the ingress that the Otter makes up through the freshwater stream and into Loch Stiapabhat is an opportunity to wash salt from its fur, salt which would otherwise remove the valuable insulation properties.

For those that might like to put a few minutes, fifteen to be precise, into gathering valuable data the 'Big Butterfly Count' begins today (17 July 2020) and runs to 9 August 2020. This annual citizen science survey is organised by Butterfly Conservation. It is the world's biggest survey of butterflies. The reason the survey is carried out is that, 'Butterflies respond very quickly to changes in the environment and, as such, are useful biodiversity indicators. They can also provide an early warning system for environmental factors that may go on to impact other wildlife. Since the 1970s, numbers of butterflies and moths in the UK have decreased significantly. Monitoring this decline and any future change is an important step in studying the effect of the climate crisis on our wildlife.'

You do not need to be a butterfly expert as there are plenty of resources available to assist you online. Probably the hardest part will be finding one sunny day to carry out the count – but hopefully not!

All the information you need to take part can be found here: <https://bigbutterflycount.butterfly-conservation.org/>



Antlers Skigersta 23 June 2020