

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn Winter Newsletter 2020



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**SUMMARY OF UOG ANNUAL
GENERAL MEETING**

Facal bhon NOTE FROM THE CHAIR Chathraich



Agnes Rennie

Fàilte chun chiad chuairt-litir ann an 2020. Tha mi 'n dòchas gun còrd an measgachadh naidheachdan agus dealbhan ribh fiùs ged 's dòcha gu bheil sibh air cuid dhiubh fhaicinn mu thràth. Tha an colbh aig Lisa NicIlleathain ann am Fios a' toirt cunntas air gnothaichean gach cola-deug. Na biodh leisg oirbh tadhal no fios a chur tro na meadhanan thugainn uair sam bith ma tha ceist agaibh no beachd math.

Welcome to this first newsletter in 2020. I hope you find the articles and photographs interesting and that they give a flavour of the wide range of activities the Urras is involved in. The task of managing the crofting estate efficiently remains central to everything we do and we encourage crofters to get in touch if you have any questions or ideas to discuss. Lisa Maclean, our manager, contributes a regular column to *fios* and this together with regular social media posts, should give everyone a chance to see what's going on.

WELCOME TO THE TEAM!

We are pleased to welcome a new member of staff to the UOG team - Christopher Smail. Christopher will be joining the Trust as Development Officer, as Mairi Graham begins her maternity leave in March.

Christopher is originally from Peebles and will be working with the Trust on a variety of conservation and land management projects. *Fios* asked Christopher how he came to join us here in the north of Lewis, and he explained that he has family connections in Ness. He has spent "innumerable holidays in this stunning part of the world." Christopher previously worked in environmental education and community gardening, and holds degrees from the Universities of Edinburgh and Glasgow. He is an enthusiastic gardener and long distance runner. Be sure to give Christopher a warm welcome when you see him out and about in the community.



AN UPDATE FROM LISA

Winter is never great for anyone; the shorter days and harsh weather can make things seem quite flat. It's even more important during these seasons to find things you enjoy that give you some time out and a bit of a break from the routine of life. Our Sunnd wellbeing programme, aimed at doing just this, kicked off in November with a new series of activities and events and it's been excellent to see new faces appearing at sessions. This initiative is critical in our work alongside the health and social care partnership, to ensure that the right services are meeting the needs of the community. Wellbeing is important for many reasons - to the community, the services we access, our families and to each one of us. We all want to be well, retain our independence and stay in our own homes for as long

as possible. So, if you haven't given something a try yet from the Sunnd programme, or from any of the fantastic activities across the estate, then it's not too late to try something out.

We welcomed Jasmine to our team recently through the ScotGrad Graduate Placement Programme. Jasmine is working with UOG and *fios* and has very much hit the ground running, getting straight to work on press releases and articles for *fios* and other media. We are delighted to have Jasmine join the team and hope she will enjoy her time living and working on the estate.

We reached our 13th anniversary of the buyout in January this year. Another milestone, and it was celebrated mostly with the news that we have been granted

planning permission on the rebuild of the offices at Galson. We are set to commence works on the site in the Spring and look forward to this very much. See page 9 in this newsletter for more information.

We spent one of our first days back after the holidays planning the year ahead and scheduling in the various activities. We will host our Dùthchas heritage festival in September 2020, which in 2019 won the award for Best Event at the Scottish Gaelic Awards. Beginning this year, we also hope to launch a mini spring festival. We're keen to work with other organisations/businesses on the estate, so please get in touch with the office if you have ideas or want to get involved in either or both events.

Our LED project comes to an end in March and we are pleased to say that we have reached the ambitious targets set for the project. Louise, our Project Officer, will finish up in March. Whilst we are so sorry to see her go, we wish her all the best. Louise has been a real asset to the team and has carried out many visits across the estate, but her gifts truly shone when working with a group of young people on a short film, *An Dràsta!* (Now!). Not only has the film been recognised nationally (and quite rightly so), it has also won an award in the 'Dùthchas' category for the FilmG awards. One fantastic legacy from the project, amongst many. Please visit our website for details on the project and the outcomes, and see page 8 for details.

Our Gaelic Development Officer, Shona, attended the Highlands and Islands Press Ball Media Awards 2020. Her regular contribution to *fios*, Seo a-Nis, has won in the category of Best Use of Gaelic. She attended the event in Inverness on the 7th of February for the awards ceremony, along with Jasmine, who represented *fios* who were shortlisted in the Community Newspaper of the Year category.

And lastly, our Development Officer Mairi will soon go off on maternity leave. We send all our best wishes to her, Scott and Donnie as they prepare for their precious arrival. We are pleased to welcome Christopher to the team as her maternity cover.



Lisa Maclean

Arts in the community

BÒIDHCHEAD AR SGÌRE & AN-DRÀSTA! FILM INVOLVEMENT WITH LOCAL YOUNG PEOPLE

In 2019, we were involved in the creation of two informative films, led and presented by young people.

As part of the Community LED by Energy Champions project, a 12-week filmmaking workshop ran for 14-24 year olds. The aim of the project was to create a climate change film that would be submitted to the FilmG awards 2020. Funding was received through the Climate Challenge Fund, Bòrd na Gàidhlig and Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the project was led by Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn.

'An-Dràsta!' was the outcome of this. A film highlighting the climate concerns of people living and working in the Outer Hebrides, it also permitted the young people a platform to express their views and concerns on the subject. It

has gone on to be screened at many local and national events, most recently being picked up by the Scottish Environmental Protection Agency (SEPA) and shared on to their social media platforms. It has now received two nominations in the FilmG shortlist – 'Best Dùthchas Film', reserved for films pertaining to heritage, culture and the ways people interact with their environment, and 'Best Performance' for Méabh, one of the young people involved. We are so pleased to announce that An-Dràsta was awarded in the 'Film Dùthchais' category (Best Heritage Film) at the FilmG Awards 2020 on the 14th February in Glasgow.

The second film was 'Bòidhchead ar Sgìre', 'Our Area's Beauty'. Showcasing local businesses and attractions in the Ness area, a group of local young people

present the entire film in Gaelic with English subtitles. Scripted, arranged and directed by Donna from Comunn Eachdraidh Nis with Gaelic support from Shona from the Urras and from Katy Graham from Comunn na Gàidhlig, it will be used as a resource by the Comunn Eachdraidh Nis Museum for the thousands of tourists who stop here in the summer months. Keith Morrison of WeeStudio recorded and edited the content, and Conal Ferguson of HebDrone provided the spectacular aerial footage. The film was made possible by the Calmac Community Fund and the Aspiring Communities Fund.

We are delighted with the results of these efforts, and are particularly proud of our young people, who have shown great passion, determination and strong civic engagement.

SCOTTISH GAELIC AWARD FOR *DÙTHCHAS*



We were delighted to receive the award for Best Event for our annual heritage week, Dùthchas, at the Scottish Gaelic Awards on the 19th of November 2019. Launched in 2018, Dùthchas is a week-long event that focuses on the heritage of our community here in Galson. It celebrates the food, drink, traditional skills, music and genealogy of the area via a wide and encompassing programme, which includes activities and demonstrations from local people and businesses.

Both Fiona and Shona were present at the event in Glasgow and were thrilled to collect the trophy. It now has pride of place on our reception desk in the South Dell office.

Dùthchas will run again in 2020, from the 31st August until the 7th of September. If you are interested in participating, download an event submission form from www.duthchas.com.



URRAS OIGHREACHD GHABHSAINN
DÙTHCHAS
Galson Estate Heritage Week

WHAT'S ON IN THE GALSON ESTATE

Keep an eye on
our website and
Social media
platforms for up-to-
date information on
all our events.

WALK LEADER TRAINING

Get in touch if you'd be
interested in this training.



For more information
contact the UOG office



SUNND WINTER PROGRAMME 2019/20



The Sunnd winter health and wellbeing programme has been well received this winter. To date, one hundred and twenty people have attended events and the majority of our six-week classes have been fully booked. Participants have enjoyed a wide variety of free classes including Ballet Barre and Release Method in partnership with Louise of Stress Monkey Solutions, Line Dancing with David and Arts and Crafts sessions with artist Elaine Murray. There has also been a plethora

of informative sessions, ranging from technology-centred help to occupational therapy with the NHS Western Isles. All these activities help us to keep well, both physically and mentally, over the winter months. We are grateful to our activity organisers for leading them and to the community halls and facilities for hosting them. In March, we can look forward to further sessions aimed at keeping you safe and well on the Estate. See the programme below for future events and booking information.

- ▶ **Mental Health Workshop** - an informative session to inform and raise awareness of current mental health issues affecting people within our community.
Mon 17 Feb @ 7.00pm, Spòrsnis
Mon 24 Feb @ 7.00pm, Clan MacQuarrie
- ▶ **Release Method** - a full body workout focusing on the correction of existing conditions and injury prevention. All fitness levels welcome!
Tues 25th Feb - Tues 31st Mar @ 7.00pm, Clan MacQuarrie (6 week block)
- ▶ **Spòrsnis Gym** - Join Spòrsnis gym for an open consultation with a fitness instructor to help increase fitness levels, ensure you're using the equipment properly, and create a fitness plan to suit your specific needs.
Fri 21st Feb - Fri 27th Mar @ 2.30pm, Spòrsnis (6 week block)
- ▶ **Fire Service** - A useful information session about fire prevention at home.
Mon 9th Mar @ 7.00pm, Spòrsnis
Mon 16th Mar @ 7.00pm, Clan MacQuarrie
- ▶ **Empower Session** - IT support, focusing on voice activated smart speakers, such as Alexa or Google Assistant
Mon 23rd Mar @ 7.00pm, Spòrsnis
Mon 30th Mar @ 7.00pm, Clan MacQuarrie
- ▶ **CPR & AED** - Learn lifesaving skills, such as CPR & defibrillator use.
Mon 23rd Mar @ 7.00pm, Spòrsnis
Mon 30th Mar @ 7.00pm, Clan MacQuarrie

To book a session, call 01851 850393 or email: office@uogltd.com

www.galsontrust.com



URRAS OIGHREACHD GHABHSAINN'S DRYSTONE WALLING COURSE

.....
**FRIDAY 15TH & SATURDAY 16TH
MAY 2020**

@ SPORSNIS, NESS

.....
£80 PER PERSON

Contact us at office@uogltd.com or
01851 850 393 to book your place

COMMUNITY LED BY CHAMPIONS PROJECT DRAWS TO A CLOSE



Our Community LED by Energy Champions project will conclude in March. The project, funded by the Climate Challenge Fund, aimed to increase carbon literacy and reduce carbon emissions across the Galson and Carloway Estate areas.

A few highlights from the past two years include:

- Over 350 referrals for home energy advice visits;
- LED bulbs delivered to over 225 homes;
- Two-day carbon literacy training delivered in both Carloway and Galson;
- Energy saving workshops planned for February;
- An-Dràsta! film produced by young volunteers and screened at venues across the islands.



We're delighted with the support that we've received from the community in helping us achieve all of this – thank you!



ECO SCHOOLS - LINDY'S UPDATE

UOG is working in partnership with Sgoil an Taobh Siar and Sgoil Lionail to support them to achieve their Eco Schools Green Flag Award. To date, the schools' Eco Committees have devised a whole school environmental review and a draft action plan to be submitted to Eco Schools. Once approved and implemented, both schools will be well on their way to achieving their award.

PROGRESS WITH NEW BUSINESS CENTRE

Good progress has been achieved with replacing the business centre at South Galson over recent months. Planning permission and a building warrant have been secured which has enabled UOG to progress with tendering. Tenders have been issued to contractors and are due to be returned in late February. Once construction costs have been established, negotiations will be undertaken with the insurance company to finalise financing arrangements and, if all these steps proceed favourably, UOG hopes that construction can be underway in late Spring or early Summer. The proposed building is similar in size to the previous premises but the layout has been remodelled to create more flexible and open-plan accommodation.



LAUNCHING OF NEW SPRING MARITIME FESTIVAL FOR THE GALSON ESTATE

Planning is underway for a brand new mini-festival, Fèis na Fairge, complementing our annual autumn heritage festival 'Dùthchas'. Dùthchas is our award-winning heritage festival which celebrates all aspects of our culture including the Gaelic language, music and traditional skills. The success of Dùthchas has inspired us to introduce a mini festival at the beginning of the Spring to encourage visitors to engage with the local community. The launch of Fèis na Fairge will align with the Scottish Government's themed 'Year of Coasts and Waters 2020'.

The focus on coasts and waters builds upon some of the ground-breaking work the Trust has undertaken to return control of the foreshore and seabed to the local community. In mid-2019 Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn entered in a joint bid with Comhairle nan Eilean Siar to Crown Estate Scotland to seek the management powers to a local level. The joint bid was accepted on a pilot basis.

A programme of events for Fèis na Fairge is being planned. We aim to showcase our coast, its wildlife and the many skills, talents and heritage from our

marine and coastal environment. We hope it will also enable the community to further consider how to sustainably manage and conserve the marine environment, as well as enjoy and learn about their coastal home. The programme of events is currently being finalised, but we encourage anyone who is interested to keep an eye on the Galson Estate Trust website.





Shona Macmillan

FACAL BHON OIFIGEAR GÀIDHLIG

Tha sinn air plana Gàidhlig airson ceann a tuath Leòdhais ùrachadh còmhla ri Comunn Eachdraidh Nis agus bidh sinn ag obair air na builean a choileanadh anns na mìosan a tha ri thighinn. Tha sinn ag obair air goireasan Gàidhlig a chruthachadh airson gnìomhachasan agus bidh iad seo deiseil againn a dh'aithghearr! Bidh sinn fhathast a' ruith seiseanan Bookbug dà-chànanach air an oighreachd agus bidh sinn a' cuideachadh le pìosan a' Mhòid an ceann mìos no dhà. Ma tha sibh airson barrachd Gàidhlig a chleachdadh nur gnothachas, feuch gun cuir sibh fios thuginn gus am faic sinn dè ghabhas a dhèanamh dhuibh.



We have updated our Gaelic plan for the North of Lewis alongside Comunn Eachdraidh Nis and will be working towards achieving our outcomes over the coming months. We are producing Gaelic resources for businesses which will be ready very soon. We continue to run bilingual Bookbug sessions across the estate and Shona will be running Mòd support sessions in the next couple of months. If you would like advice on how to incorporate Gaelic into your business e.g. leaflets, website, signage, social media, please get in touch to see what we can help you with!



HIGHLANDS & ISLANDS MEDIA AWARDS

Our Gaelic Development Officer, Shona Macmillan, recently won an award at the Highlands and Islands Media Awards 2020 in the category of 'Best Use of Gaelic'. Shona contributes a regular Gaelic column, Seo a-Nis, to our local community newspaper, fios. fios itself was also shortlisted, under the category of 'Best Community Newspaper', a title it had won previously. Shona accompanied Jasmine, Community Media Coordinator for both Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn and fios, to the awards ceremony in Inverness on Friday, 7th February. Well done to both parties for their successes!

TOURISM WEBSITE UPDATE

We are launching a new tourism website in mid-March. The aim of the website is to encourage tourists who are already visiting the estate, to eat in our local restaurants, spend money in our shops and stay in one of our many accommodation options. There will also be details of the various attractions they can visit. Advice for campervan visitors, responsible tourism and respecting our local culture will also be included in the website. If you would like for your business to be included in the website and have not yet provided UOG with information, please contact christineamos@uogltd.com.

UOG AGM SUMMARY

Our Annual General Meeting took place on the 7th November, with Chairperson Agnes Rennie opening proceedings. We reported on highs of 2019; £300,000 thus far injected into local organisations via the Trust's Community Investment Fund, and 91 projects aligned with our strategic priorities receiving assistance. This income has been generated by the Estate's wind turbines in Ballantrushal, a substantial contribution to our community. Discussion also surrounded the Energy Efficiency Project (see page 8 for full article), which was delivered in conjunction with Urras Oighreachd Charlabhaigh, the Carloway Estate Trust.

There was, of course, a significant low in 2019, with the Business Centre razed to the ground in February. Whilst this presented a great challenge, staff have continued to operate from the temporary premises in South Dell. Planning permission has been granted for the new building, with works hoping to commence in the Spring (see column on page 9).

Our Chairperson closed by giving thanks to our Chief Executive, Lisa Maclean, and to the remainder of the core staff, for their hard work over the year. Board members were also acknowledged for their ongoing community support.



WINTER OPENING HOURS for Habost Household Waste and Recycling Centre

Bulky Household Waste Disposal and Recycling Point for the disposal of Household Waste Only

**PLEASE NOTE THE WINTER TIMETABLE WILL TAKE EFFECT FROM
MONDAY 28th OCTOBER 2019**

Winter Timetable: 28 October 2019 – 28 March 2020

	Open from	Open to	Open from	Open to
Monday	10am	12 noon	2pm	4pm
Tuesday	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed
Wednesday	10am	12 noon	2pm	4pm
Thursday	10am	12 noon	2pm	4pm
Friday	10am	12 noon	2pm	4pm
Saturday	9am	12 noon	1pm	4pm
Sunday	Closed	Closed	Closed	Closed

Operatives will be onsite during the opening times to assist you with your disposal.

Please refrain from disposing of items outwith these times as this will be treated as fly tipping.

Contact Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn – 01851 850393

OUT OF HOURS

Zero Waste Western Isles (CNES): 01851 709900 SEPA: 01851 706477
SEPA 24 hour pollution report line: 0800 80 70 60 UOG: 01851 810544 / 01851 810661
Site Licence Number: WML / N / 0220269



URRAS OIGHREACHD GHABHSAINN
GALSON ESTATE TRUST

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