

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

Champion of 'the land, the language and the people' suspends publication



The *West Highland Free Press* announced last Wednesday that it was suspending publication until June.

In a letter to subscribers, managing director, Paul Wood said: 'It is regrettable we feel forced into making this decision at a time when local, informed news should be essential, but the economic realities of producing a newspaper during lockdown and the almost total lack of financial support for small business other than the HMRC furlough scheme have made our temporary closure an inevitability.'

The Times reported at the weekend: 'Since the lockdown began, hundreds of newspaper employees have been furloughed and about 50 newspapers have been forced to suspend publication. They include the *West Highland Free Press*, Britain's only employee-owned paper, which told its readers: "The headwinds that blew against us have strengthened to storm force". Northern Ireland's 116-year-old *County Down Spectator* lamented: "Through huge cataclysmic events such as two world wars, the Spanish flu and the bombings of the Troubles the paper has never missed an edition — until now."

Aonghas Pàdruig Campbell, in his regular Gaelic column in the *West Highland*, lamented the decision: "... here we are now because of the coronavirus. This is the last edition in newsprint for a while (just for a while we hope) as no small business (or indeed large) can keep going without a brown penny of income. As the English pages in the paper explain, because people are not permitted to visit shops as before, the paper is not bought, and, on top of that, the adverts that funded the livelihood of ten people, have dried up completely". (see more of our translation of Aonghas Pàdruig's column on page 2)

The temporary loss of the *Free Press* is a blow to its many followers in the West Highlands and beyond and all of us look forward to seeing it back on the news-stands soon.

Three Cheers for our Volunteers

Here in Ness and on the West Side, we have been fortunate to have so many volunteers offering their assistance, with no job being too big or too small. This edition, we give thanks to two of them - Jon Freck and Micheil Russell-Smith.

Micheil has kindly been collecting prescriptions from Langabhat Medical Practice during the lockdown and delivering these to the correct recipients, all whilst practising social distancing in line with government guidelines. The Group Practice, Habost, have also been receiving this service by volunteers. Spearheaded by Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, this service is a great help to the community, ensuring those who require medication can receive it safely and promptly to their own front door. Staff at the medical practices have expressed how helpful the deliverers' assistance has been, describing them as "always having a smile on their faces" and being a great help in keeping deliveries running smoothly. We are so grateful for Micheil's help in providing this vital service.

Jon has been the face behind our Lewis Crofters delivery service. Travelling to Stornoway three days a week, Jon is bringing back essential supplies for our crofting communities. These materials are always important, but particularly at this time of year, when lambing is well underway. The service, also led by Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, has been well received, with orders regularly being collected and brought

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40th anniversary of Ness FC Social Club

The Covid-19 lockdown ensured there were no celebrations at the Club to mark the 40th year since it opened on 14 April 1980.

Twenty years ago *fios* reported on the 20th anniversary:

"The idea to build a social club within Ness was first mooted in 1977. In some respects, the time was possibly right for what was being proposed: the bothans had lost much of their lustre as drinking habits slowly changed and consumer tastes became more sophisticated. However, it was still considered a bold and ambitious move to build a licensed establishment in a rural Lewis community at that time. Only a few years earlier a referendum had been held in the village hall which led to the Ness district being designated a 'wet' area - which enabled Tom Paterson to apply for a table licence for the tearoom he operated at that time. This business later evolved into Cross Inn.

The first formal moves to develop the social club idea were made when the Ness Football Club arranged a public meeting in December 1977. The meeting, which was attended by about thirty people, elected a working group, which was chaired by Donald A MacKenzie".

(see full report from *fios* 21 April 2000 on page 6)

🎵 Fryderyck Chopin sailing by 🎵

As conditions go for sailing along the coast of our island, around the Butt of Lewis and onwards to Stornoway, Tuesday (21 April 2020) could not have been much better.

The Polish-based tall ship *Fryderyck Chopin* with her distinctive double mast was sighted as she approached the Butt of Lewis, cruising steadily on calm, blue seas before rounding the point and travelling on to Stornoway.

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By Port of Ness on Tuesday

Aonghas Pàdraig Campbell laments the furlough of the *Free Press* after 48 years in print

[Our translation of his Gaelic Column in WHFP issue No.2503 of 17 April 2020]

This newspaper has played a large part in the history of the Gael and the Gaelic language for nearly fifty years, and a change that no one looked for confronts us this week as we are forced into furlough in order to keep the publication alive in some form.

I would say that the entire Gaidhealtachd is proud of the paper and thankful for it; be it the land struggle, people's rights, the place of Gaelic, or the shinty world, the Pàipear Beag has given a voice and a place to them for many years.

From the first day that these young heroes – Brian Wilson, James Innes, James Wilkie and David Scott – established the paper in Kyleakin in 1972 it has supported the Gaelic language. It is not without good reason that the banner heralds 'The land, the language and the people'. I don't think one week out of the 2503 editions has been published without Gaelic.

I first started with the Pàipear Beag in 1975, after being interviewed by Brian in Lochmaddy Hotel and I have many happy memories in connection with the years I worked with them on a full-time basis. I enjoyed the first shinty match I reported on, where I met for the first time the late Catriona Maclean, Somhairle's daughter. And I am thankful to people like Noel Gordon from Balmacara who kept me informed about the games played by Kinlochshiel. 'Who scored the goals?', I would ask him on the phone. 'Who but Grant Michael!', he would reply. Who else, indeed!

The land question, and the shameful fact that the large proportion of the Gaidhealtachd is in hands of a few people (7:84), has always been a cause for action by this paper. We can be proud that the paper and founder, Brian Wilson, have been at the forefront of that action and that today a good proportion of the land from Assynt to Uist is in community ownership. Recall the days when the likes of Johannes Hellinga, Keith Schellenberg, Sir Hereward the Wake and others were strutting the Gaidhealtachd like crowing cockerels!

I remember one day phoning a Land Agent on behalf of the paper (Strutt and Parker if I remember correctly). I asked the man on the other end of the line (in English) 'How many estates are on the market in the Highlands just now?' He was quiet for a second and then said: 'Listen

son – they are all for sale – at the right price.' And no doubt he was right.

Many have championed the rights of the Gaelic language in the paper over the years, between employees like Iagan and Torcuil who had the language, and columnists like the late Martin Macdonald who gave immense support to the paper for many years. How elegant was Martin's Gaelic and how rich his voice on the radio!

But here we are now because of the coronavirus. This is the last edition in newsprint for a while (just for a while we hope) as no small business (or indeed large) can keep going without a brown penny of income. As the English pages in the paper explain, because people are not permitted to visit shops as before, the paper is not bought, and, on top of that, the adverts that funded the livelihood of ten people have dried up completely.

As a result, the paper has concluded that it will keep going only as a digital version for six weeks anyway, with one person paid full time and the rest on furlough. Personally, I am thankful and proud that the paper (thanks to Paul Wood, managing director) wants this Gaelic column to continue in the internet edition. In addition, they have removed the paywall to enable readers to obtain the paper in that form for the coming weeks.

After that we will see, and we live in hope. Even on the other side of the plague, matters will still be uncertain, for who can say if there will be money for the adverts which pay the wages of the employees? I personally support a campaign to raise funds from the public to keep the publication going, and the precious jobs it supports.

I don't think it is just because of the history itself that we should offer our support, but for the present and future generations. I know that a day and night come to all, and that every business in the world needs to change because of the existing situation, and I have no doubt that the Pàipear Beag will do that too. The employees, me included, are willing enough to embrace every electronic and other opportunity to raise the voice of the Gaidhealtachd and the Gaelic in any way we can.

Support this paper if you are able to, along with the land and the people it serves.

DELIVERY SERVICE FROM LEWIS CROFTERS TO GALSON ESTATE DURING COVID-19



Please note we will only be able to take relatively small /essential orders across in a transit van. We ask for your patience while we trial this service which is in an effort to support the crofting community during this time of crisis. We expect to run the service on a Monday, Wednesday and Friday each week and we will review on an ongoing basis. If you can get items on the estate then please do so. This service is for items that need to be brought from town and is primarily to support those who aren't going to drive to town for just a few items.

DELIVERIES WILL BE:

MONDAY

WEDNESDAY

FRIDAY

YOU MUST LET US KNOW YOU WANT A COLLECTION BY CALLING US BETWEEN 10AM AND 1PM ON ONE OF THESE DAYS. WE HAVE TO BE ABLE TO COLLECT ON THE SAME DAY.

1



2



3



4



5

PLACE TELEPHONE ORDER WITH LEWIS CROFTERS, PAY, ADVISE IT'S A COMMUNAL ORDER TO BE COLLECTED BY UOG AND RECEIVE YOUR ORDER NUMBER

CALL US BETWEEN 10AM AND 1PM ON DELIVERY DAYS ONLY. CALL 07469189449 PROVIDE US WITH YOUR ORDER NUMBER AND PREFERRED DROP OFF POINT

YOU WILL BE ADVISED OF A TIME TO BE AT YOUR DROP OFF POINT AND SHOULD BE PREPARED TO COLLECT YOUR ITEMS.

OUR DRIVER WILL COLLECT YOUR ORDER AND BE AT ONE OF THE THREE OUTDOOR DROP OFF POINTS AT THE SPECIFIED DROP OFF TIME SLOT.

YOU SHOULD ADHERE TO SOCIAL DISTANCING GUIDELINES AT ALL TIMES. OUR DRIVER WON'T BE ABLE TO LOAD ORDERS INTO VEHICLES. GLOVES WILL BE PROVIDED TO ALLOW YOU TO COLLECT YOUR OWN ORDER.

DROP OFF POINTS

**BARVAS COMMUNITY CENTRE
CLAN MACQUARRIE COMMUNITY CENTRE
SPORSNIS**

**PLEASE DO NOT OVER ORDER!
IF AN ORDER IS TOO LARGE FOR THE RUN WE WE WON'T BE ABLE TO TAKE IT TO A DROP OFF POINT.**

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn
A Company Registered in Scotland No: 273903
A Registered Scottish Charity: SC036903

seo a-Nis

Shona Nic a' Mhaoilein



Cumhachd na Grèine

Fhad 's a tha mi a' sgrìobhadh seo, tha mi a-muigh aig ceann an taigh a' gabhail na grèine 's mo laptop air bòrd air mo bheulaibh. Tha mi a' deàrrsadh le còmhach a chumas mo chraiceann bho bhith a' losgadh agus tha pinnt bùrn agam ri mo thaobh a chumas a' dol mi. Chan eil e idir cho dona a bhith aig ag obair bhon taigh nuair a bhios an t-side cho math seo. A' dùnadh mo shùilean, cluinnidh mi ceilearadh nan eòin, mèilich nan uain ùra air lot mo nàbaidh agus coin a' comhartaich anns gach ceàrnaidh den bhaile. Bidh seillein a' nochdadh an-dràsta 's a-rithist, sròinean anns gach lus a' chrom chinn a tha nam ghàrradh. Tha nighdearachd agam air an loidhne a dh'fhuiricheas an sin gu deireadh an latha leis gum faigh e a' ghrian gus an tèid i fodha. Air làithean mar seo tha Tolastadh a' Chaolais buileach brèagha, Loch a' Bhaile cho ciùin 's a' deàrrsadh, ultach de thunnagan agus de gheòidh a' snàmh, agus am-bliadhna tha dà eala bhàn air an dachaigh a dhèanamh an seo san eadar-ama. Abair gu bheil mi taingeil gur ann an seo a tha mi san latha a th' ann.

Beatha sa bhaile bheag

An-raoir shaoil mi gun dèidhinn a-mach air chuairt, agus mar as àbhaist bidh trì roghainnean agam air dè an slighe a ghabhas mi. Chuir mi romham gun dèidhinn sìos chun chladh agus air ais leis gun robh agam ri bhith air ais aig an taigh airson mo bhiadh a dhèanamh mus coinnicheadh còisir. Dh'fhàg mi an taigh goirid an-dèidh còig uairean agus choinnich mi ris an dàrna leth den bhaile, a' stad 's a' cabadaich, agus mun àm a fhuair mi dhachaigh bha e cairteal an-dèidh sia. A bhith onarach, bidh mi nise a' feuchainn ri cuairt a ghabhail nuair a bhios daoine a-muigh 's gum faigh mi cothrom bruidhinn ri cuideigin, leis an Sgitheanach a-nis air falbh fad chola-deug aig na h-uain. 'S math gun dh'fhalbh e nuair dh'fhalbh – an ceann sia uair a thide, bha a' chiad uan air ceann a thogail agus cha do stad iad bhon uairsin!

Làithean grianaich

Bidh an t-side seo a' cur nam chuimhne nuair a bha mi òg agus na bhiodh sinn a' dèanamh mar theaghlach nuair bhiodh a' ghrian a' deàrrsadh. Thigeadh plaide mhòr a-mach air an staran agus shuidheadh sinn air le measan, ceapairean agus crispas, agus bhiodh sinn a' falbh a chèilidh air na h-uain a bha air ùr nochdadh air an lot. Tha cuimhn' a'm gum biodh sìthein bheaga phurpaidh a' fàs air feadh an àite agus bha mise a' smaoinichadh gun robh iad uabhasach brèagha. A' fuireach ann an Càrlabhagh, cha robh àite na b' fheàrr a bhith sa ghrèin ach Dail Mòr, agus bhiodh sinn a' lìonadh a' chàr leis gach rud a dh'fheumadh sinn agus a' fuireach ann gus am fàsadh i fuar. Chuireadh tu geall gum biodh iomadach teaghlach eile shìos cuideachd agus gum biodh mire agus spòrs gu lèir a' dol, agus gum biodh leisg oirnn uile nuair bhiodh againn ri dhol dhachaigh le falt bog fliuch agus gainmheach eadar ar n-òrdagan. Aig an taigh a-rithist, bhiodh sinn a' feitheamh gus am biodh am fras saor agus mun àm a thigeadh e chun tè mu dheireadh bhiodh am bùrn reòhte ach cha chreid mi gun robh cus dragh oirnn ma bha air craiceann car pinc!

Air Latha Buidhe Bealltainn aon bhliadhna o chionn fhad 'n t-saoghail, dh'èirich mi-fhìn 's mo phiuthair aig còig uairean sa mhadainn oir 's iongantach mura robh sinn dìreach air cluinntinn mun bhòidhchead a thigeadh thugad le bhith a' nighe d' aodann san dealt aig àm èirigh na grèine. Leis gun robh sinn air ar cois co-dhiù, chaidh sinn sìos gu Loch an Dùin agus chuir sinn ar casan dhan bhùrn. Dh'fhuirich sinn an sin greiseag agus bha sinn air ais san leabaidh mus do dh'èirich Mam agus Dad – bidh iad tric a' trod rinn a-nis mun chùis ach b'e sin cho sàbhailte 's a bha sinn ann an Dùn Chàrlabhaigh, agus bidh an cuimhne a' toirt gàire air m' aodann nuair thig e thugam a-rithist. Saoil am bi an fheadhainn bheag agam fhìn ris an aon seòrsa rud nuair bhios iadsan cho òg sin?

Leis a' ghrian a' deàrrsadh, tha e a' leigeil leinn dìochuimhneachadh greiseag mun staing anns a bheil sinn uile. Gheibh sinn air toileachas a ghabhail ann a bhith a-muigh sa ghàrradh, a' biadhadh bheathaichean, a' cluinntinn na h-eòin agus a' faicinn a' bheatha ùr mun cuairt oirnn. Tha an t-saoghal a' tionndadh fhathast, strimmers a h-uile duine a' dol agus 's dòcha gum faic thu ceò bho thaigh chuideigin a tha a' cumail BBQ!

Three Cheers for our Volunteers

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by Jon to the three collection points in the Ness and West Side areas, for those who are in need of supplies.

In recognition of all their hard work, we thought it fitting to get to know Jon and Micheil a bit better. Why did they volunteer their assistance, and what are they looking forward to most of all when the lockdown restrictions are loosened?

Jon

"I have been living in Fivepenny for two years now and love life here. It's been great to be able to help out the community and give something back after being made so welcome here. I enjoy driving around and getting to know different people and places. We are so lucky to be living in such a place, especially during this strange situation. At least we have the space to go for a walk but still adhere to social distancing guidelines.

When we do get back to normal, I'm looking forward to meeting up with friends and family and sharing a bottle of wine... or two! But in the meantime, I hope everybody stays safe and healthy."



Micheil

"I live in Aird Dell. My dogs are very happy at the moment with having people around the house more often and all the extra attention they are getting!

The volunteer work is important as it makes sure people who need medication are still getting everything they need, whilst being able to stay safe at home and avoid having any contact with people. This is making it easier for people in the local community to follow the guidelines within the 'lockdown'. It also gives me an opportunity to get out of the house, which I'm enjoying!

I'm definitely most looking forward to playing football with my teammates and watching football on the TV again once things can go back to normal!"



Jon and Micheil are just two of our many wonderful volunteers helping to keep these services running. Everyone's hard work is truly appreciated and helps to make life that little bit easier in a difficult situation. We are sure that those benefiting from the extra support provided by our many volunteers across the community will echo this sentiment. Is there someone in the community you would like to give recognition to? Please send us an email at jasmine@uogtld.com

Ceud mile tairg

All our essential workers deserve our thanks and we are glad to offer them recognition here.

To teachers, nurses, carers, doctors, BT engineers, post and delivery drivers, post office and shop staff and indeed all who are dealing face to face with lots of people, many of whom have families and are finishing their shifts to go home and scrub themselves raw before they can cuddle their kids and loved ones, **thank you.**

LOCAL MEDICAL PRACTICES

Delivery of Prescriptions for Langabhat Medical Practice, Borve & Habost Surgery

Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn (UOG) are assisting Langabhat Medical Practice, Borve and Habost Surgery by delivering prescriptions to the residents of the Galson Estate.

Kind volunteers will be collecting the prescriptions from the clinic at 2pm daily and delivering them throughout the estate. The volunteers will place the prescriptions at your door, knock at your door and then move two metres back before the door is opened. The volunteers will be adhering to strict hygiene practices to protect the safety of those receiving the medication.

Habost Surgery: Due to current circumstances, it would be helpful if patients could order their prescriptions by telephone. From 1st April, if you order your prescription, we will be issuing a two months' supply.

Tom's Titbits



I have not been worked as hard for a long long time as I have since this lockdown carry on came into our lives. There isn't much around here that hasn't been ploughed, planted, dug up, scraped, painted, welded, broken, drained, weeded, hung out to dry or whatever. The wonderful weather has helped a lot and we have so much going for us living where we live, although being confined to the village it's difficult to find stuff to write about.

The X Skigersta Road Peat Baron phoned me one day and when I enquired as to what he was doing that morning he informed me that he was washing a gate. Yes, you heard it right, washing a gate. Why? Because he was going to paint it and he was awaiting the Crofters' order to be delivered. I have been around a while but I have never ever heard of anybody washing a gate, and I think this guy needs locking up and not locking down.

My own good lady is now working from home and it's causing problems. We have transformed a bedroom into her office and she had taken to shouting demands to me from there, to bring her coffee and glasses of water as I slave away at the housework. I don't know who does this for her at work but it ain't going to happen here. She's very good to me though, so I compromised and gave her a thermos flask and a big bottle of Still.

As far as Covid-19 is concerned we have been fortunate in the Islands so far and it looks as if self-isolation and social distancing have worked well up until now. Although some people have tested positive, as far as I'm aware we haven't had any fatalities and in a population of around twenty five thousand people that's very encouraging. In fact it has worked so well that some smart guy who doesn't live here has suggested that the islands may be a good place to experiment with and relax the restrictions a bit and see how it goes. We have already seen what happens in the places where the restrictions are relaxed, cove, whoever you are. People die in their hundreds. That's the reality. Leave us alone and go and experiment on someone else.

I know that for someone like me who's reached the stage in life where I don't need to work, it's easy to stay at home. I don't have a business to run, or people depending on me for their livelihoods but surely giving this "stay at home" suggestion a chance for a wee while longer is a small price to pay in order to save lives. It would be easy to say that it's up to the individual but one infected individual on the loose out there could be very costly.

I must compliment the locally-based businesses and their staff who have persevered and continued to serve the public through all this and I would like to think that it will be remembered when things eventually settle down and I include my own household in that.

The cuckoo was out and about on Saturday night and I don't know how this particular warbler is going to get on with the stay at home suggestion or the social distancing, because it usually shacks up in some other bird's nest. It's a sign that spring has finally sprung and as I sit on the bench in front of our home watching the sunset (*a' ghrian a dol sìos air Taobh Siar Eilean Leodhais*), it would be easy to imagine that there's nothing wrong in the world - but we all know that there is. I will leave you with the buzz phrase of the time we live in, Stay Safe.

Mo bheannachd agaibh

Tom.

Tune in to Tom's Quiz Night

One of the events in Comhairle nan Eilean Siar's activities programme on social media is a family quiz hosted by Tom and live-streamed on Thursday evenings at 7.30 pm from his home in Borve. Four thousand people tuned in to the first quiz night on 9 April.

Last Thursday, 16 April, Tom had five categories: Films & TV, Scottish Sport, Local Knowledge, General Knowledge and Music. Your guest editor of this issue of the freesheet managed a mediocre score of 27 from a possible total of 48. Delighted with 100% though for Local Knowledge, but obviously a dismal performance in the rest of the categories.

Thanks to Tom for keeping us entertained. Looking forward to the next session, and an improved tally, here in this lockdown sitting room a long way from Borve.

Full sun gentle breeze just right for the peats

The sun is shining over the moorland and the Scottish Government has confirmed that peat cutting is allowed during the lockdown period – as long as guidance on social distancing and hygiene is followed.

According to a report in 'The Shetland Times' on 16 April Environment Secretary Roseanna Cunningham said that peats were an "essential fuel". Responding to a request for clarification from Shetland MSP

Beatrice Wishart, she said: "I recognise the importance of peat as a domestic winter fuel source in parts of Scotland, and of the need to begin to cast peat now to ensure adequate personal supplies for next winter."

"As long as the published guidance on social distancing is followed, this collection of an essential fuel supply should be permissible. However, it is also essential that those undertaking this activity follow precautions such as not sharing tools and cleaning them thoroughly after use."

Cunningham also confirmed that workers could be hired for the role if, again, social distancing advice was adhered to.

Photos:

Top: BBC Weather App

Below: Simon's drone over St Ronans and Stiapabhat on Monday 20 April



... sailing by

from page 1

The vessel was built in 1992 in the Dora shipyard, Gdansk. Her home port is Szczecin in Poland where her primary role is as a training vessel for young Polish sailors. With a crew of 47, most of them are 14-year-old cadets.

At 182 feet in length, the tall ship has, 'a long bowsprit which means she can set five headsails and take advantage of light winds. There are as many as 6 yards in every mast which is extremely rare. The rigging surface is 1200 m2.'

Back in 2010, whilst 100 miles off the coast of the Scilly Islands, the *Fryderyk Chopin* was battered in severe gale force winds which broke both her masts. She was eventually towed to safety in Falmouth and thankfully nobody was injured.

The vessel spent a night moored near Arnish and is now (23 April) sailing north off the coast of the Orkneys.

Funeral services during Covid-19 emergency

The staggering statistics presented to us every afternoon include the latest daily toll of deaths from the coronavirus. But the tally of those who are left to mourn the loss of their loved ones is not in the grim figures. Thousands of families up and down the land are faced with the reality of dealing with bereavement in a time of extraordinary constraints on our everyday lives.

On Wednesday afternoon it was announced by the National Records of Scotland that the first person to die in the Western Isles Health Board area from coronavirus was added to the national toll, but this was later corrected by NHS Western Isles.

"NHS Western Isles would like to correct the unfortunate misinformation that is currently being reported with regard to a death related to COVID-19 in the Western Isles.

This information was not clarified with NHS Western Isles prior to publication. One COVID-19 related death was reported for the Western Isles today by National Records of Scotland.

NHS Western Isles can confirm that this relates to an individual who was admitted to hospital with COVID-19 symptoms. The individual was tested for COVID-19 whilst in hospital, but tragically passed away before the test result was received back.

Prior to receiving the results of the test, COVID-19 was recorded on the death certificate. The test result has however since come back negative."

But sadly another family is suffering bereavement. In normal times our compassionate community and neighbourhoods would seek to share the grief in a tangible way by visiting the home and offering support, extending comfort with family worship, attending the funeral service and sharing the burden of duties at the interment.

But like much else in our lives all that changed with the Covid-19 emergency and the 'stay at home' guidelines issued by the Government. On Monday 23 March, the Prime Minister addressed the nation with a grave warning not to gather together in public but to stay at home. When the First Minister made the sombre announcement that the nation was in 'lockdown' we realised that life as we knew it had changed. Many restrictions were imposed upon us, backed by the full power of the law.

We were advised in a notice by Alasdair Macrae of Archibald Macrae, Undertaker, of the restrictions in connection with funerals:

"Due to the ongoing concerns around coronavirus (COVID-19) and our commitment to protect our unique community, I have taken the following decisions regarding funerals. There will be no funeral procession or lift, coffins will not be placed within the church/home. Instead, we shall meet the mourners at the cemetery for the interment.

This decision was not easy to take as I am aware of the impact on our traditions and the role that a funeral has in allowing our community to show respect at a time of bereavement.

I reiterate earlier Government advice re coughing, sneezing, handshaking and social distancing.

Should you feel unwell or are showing any signs or symptoms consistent with Coronavirus, then please do not attend the funeral. These changes are only temporary but are necessary in order to protect one and other, including my dedicated staff, in these extraordinary times."

With churches closed and no community mourners allowed, the funeral service is now held at the cemetery with just the immediate family, the minister, cemetery attendant and the undertakers present. The minister provides support to the family as appropriate.

At a recent burial in Habost, Rev. Ewen Matheson, Cross Free Church, told us what had happened: "I made some brief points: the privilege of being there, the funeral being significant, and how the Bible mentions only two men being present at the most significant burial of all; that only

Joseph and Nicodemus are mentioned at the graveside of the Lord, and that was the burial God had for His Son. I mentioned how Joseph and Nicodemus undertook their duty, in love, loyalty, respect, tenderness and grief, but that the burial was in anticipation of the Resurrection, that God raised His Son from the grave. And I just concluded by saying that as we laid Ceatag's remains we are reminded that those who fall asleep in the Lord are precious to the Lord and lack nothing. That is as much as I can remember of what I said. In conclusion I prayed. The family then placed some handfuls of earth on the grave, to return in the afternoon with flowers in order to give DK the time to fill the grave himself.

Both myself and the undertakers were struck by the intimacy of the funeral. We were helped by it being such a bright and pleasant morning in Ness."

Dòmhnall Ceanaidh (DK) the cemetery caretaker, like many others in our community, is providing an essential service during the Covid-19 emergency. DK has been engaged in this work for the past ten years and we are thankful for his dignified support for bereaved families and for maintaining the grounds in excellent order.

We extend condolences to all families who are mourning in our villages at this time.

"... the Bible mentions only two men being present at the most significant burial of all; that only Joseph and Nicodemus are mentioned at the graveside of the Lord, and that was the burial God had for His Son. I mentioned how Joseph and Nicodemus undertook their duty, in love, loyalty, respect, tenderness and grief. . ."

Rev. Ewen Matheson

Donation to NHS from wind farm charity's pandemic fund

Community wind farm charity Point and Sandwick Trust this week made the biggest one-off donation in its history – and it went to NHS Western Isles, in recognition of the heroism of frontline staff and to support islanders suffering during the coronavirus pandemic.

The charity, which owns the largest community-owned wind farm in the UK in terms of output and reinvests all its income back in the local community, made a donation of £40,000. It is the first grant awarded from Point and Sandwick Trust's newly set up pandemic community fund, announced last month, and NHS Western Isles is now looking at best ways to spend it.

NHS Western Isles chief executive Gordon Jamieson said: "The donation from the Point and Sandwick Trust was completely unexpected but so incredibly generous. I would like to thank the Trust on behalf of our staff and the health board. . ."

Struggling with lockdown?

It is now coming up to five weeks since the Prime Minister's and the First Minister's broadcasts announcing the coronavirus lockdown. Life has changed for all of us.

We are especially mindful of those living on their own, the many who have lost their jobs, businesses and self-employed people whose income has fallen off a cliff, and many others who are struggling.

On page 8 Neil explains the government schemes and other Covid-19 support for businesses, the self-employed and community organisations.

We are thankful to all the businesses, organisations and volunteers who seek to help vulnerable people. Thanks to the Comhairle for the community engagement activities through social media, Radio nan Gaidheal, BBC Alba, Isles FM, and to all who use electronic communications for our edification, entertainment and spiritual encouragement

20 years ago *fios* Friday 21 April 2000

Island club celebrates 20th year

"If all other licensed premises were run in the way that the Ness Football Club Social Club is, there would be no need for a licensing board."

THE Ness FC Social Club hosted its own 20th anniversary last Friday when a large gathering of members and guests celebrated the occasion with an evening that featured an informal introduction and presentation ceremony followed by a light buffet meal and dance.

The completion of the Ness FC Social Club in 1980 was considered a major landmark project. It was the culmination of two years of frenetic activity by a small but highly motivated committee and the fruit of a 'job creation' project that enabled genuine community development through local employment.

Addressing those who attended last week's event, the MC for the evening, Calum Iain MacLeod, said: "The work undertaken by that small group of individuals doesn't bear thinking about today. There was no similar facility to replicate and the idea had to be thought through from the initial drawings, to the plans, to the commencement of the building work and onward to the completion."

Mr MacLeod went on to praise the "exemplary manner" in which Club Steward Iain MacLean had carried out the administrative and financial management functions of the organisation over the intervening years.

He continued, "Over and above the finances of the Club, Iain also looks after the smooth running of the place. The level of service, cleanliness and discipline in the Club is the envy of many establishments in the Western Isles."

Further commendation of the Club's management and staff was received in a written message from Donald MacLean, Chairman of the Western Isles Licensing Board, which was read out: "The Ness Football Club is run the way all licensed establishments should be run. If all other licensed premises were run in the way that the Ness Football Club Social Club is, there would be no need for a licensing board. I have the highest regard for the Club and wish them every success in the future."

Also forwarding a congratulatory message was former Ness FC player, Alasdair Morrison MSP, who wrote: "A chairdean, tha mi uamhasach duilich nach urrainn dhomh a bhi comhla ri bh a-nochd, 's ioma oidhche dhoigheil a bh' agam san dearbh aite!" He added, "I congratulate everybody associated with the Football Club Social Club for their foresight and imagination 20 years ago and applaud them for their tireless work since then in continuing to provide the community with the best facilities on the island."

Apart from the amenity value of the facility, the Ness FC Social Club has also been an important source of employment over the years – presently providing two full-time and several part-time jobs.

Another feature that the Club should be justifiably proud of is the fact that it has, over the past two decades, donated nearly £50,000 to local charitable causes.

Six of the eight Chairmen who have presided over the Social Club's management committee were present for the anniversary event. They were: Donald A MacKenzie, Donald Campbell, Murdo MacRitchie, James MacLeod, Iain G MacDonald, and current Chairman Iain MacLeod. The other two former Chairmen, Alistair Dunlop and Eric Bruce, were unable to attend.

Dolina Campbell, who was a member of the bar staff when the premises first opened for business in Easter 1980, also attended the function and presented commemorative framed souvenirs to the Chairmen to mark the occasion. Mr MacLean, the Steward, also received a silver tankard for his service to the Club over the years.

The idea to build a social club within Ness was first mooted in 1977. In some respects, the time was possibly right for what was being proposed: the bothans had lost much of their lustre as drinking habits slowly changed and consumer tastes became more sophisticated. However, it was still considered a bold and ambitious move to build a licensed establishment in a rural Lewis community at that time. Only a few years earlier a referendum had been held in the village hall which led to the Ness district being designated a 'wet' area – which enabled Tom Paterson to apply for a



April 2000: Six of the eight Chairmen who have presided over the Ness FC Social Club over the past two decades. L to R: Donald Campbell, Murdo MacRitchie, Donald MacKenzie, James MacLeod, Iain MacLeod and Iain G MacDonald

table licence for the tearoom he operated at that time. This business later evolved into Cross Inn.

The first formal moves to develop the social club idea were made when the Ness Football Club arranged a public meeting in December 1977. The meeting, which was attended by about thirty people, elected a working group, which was chaired by Donald A MacKenzie. Over the proceeding months the group – essentially, a Ness FC sub-committee – regularly met at the home of committee member Murdo MacRitchie to bring the project forward.

Work on the building started in March 1978 under a Manpower Services Commission project. This was a central government initiative that offered paid work and training to local unemployed. The sale of two hundred £10 memberships also enabled the project to attract additional MSC assistance to cover the cost of building materials and other capital items. Furnishings and start-up stock was later purchased following a successful grant and loan application to Scottish Brewers.

Since the premises were officially opened on 17 April 1980 it has undergone a number of transformations, including a substantial extension to the building and the addition of a sizeable tarred parking area.

Even after twenty years, the football and social club complex that has evolved adjacent to the Fivepenny machair remains a focal point for numerous sporting and social events in northern Lewis and the envy of larger communities throughout Scotland.

Pay rise for social care staff

Immediate wage increase and sick pay provision

Social care staff are to receive an immediate 3.3% pay increase backdated from 1 April. It is part of a package of measures to support social care workers in recognition of the vital role they are playing during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic.

Social care support workers providing direct adult support will have their pay increased to at least the Real Living Wage rate of £9.30 an hour for all hours worked, including sleep-overs and hours worked by personal assistants.

The Scottish Government will also provide funding to third sector and independent providers specifically to ensure staff receive sick pay if they are off work ill or because they are self-isolating.

In addition, the agreed funding increase to these providers will give them the financial flexibility to increase wages across their organisations, and not just to frontline staff.

Clan Morrison Gathering

We had an email from Jennifer Wolcott, who has been organizing a Gathering of Clan Morrison (worldwide) on Lewis and North Uist for this June, advising the event was being postponed. Jennifer, whose grandmother was a Morrison, said: "Unfortunately, we had to cancel in March, but we have rescheduled with a large dollop of hope for next June 21-25, 2021.

"Many of you are aware that Clan Morrison was planning to come to Lewis for a Gathering of the Clan at the end of June. Unfortunately that has had to be cancelled in the circumstances. Hoping for better times to come, the Clan has rescheduled their Gathering for 2021, June 21-25.

"The Clan considers the Ness area their homeland, and indeed many trace their origins back to our fair isle. The Clan chief is Dr. J. Ruairidh Morrison of Ruchdi, grandson of Dr. John Morrison, brother of Shakes Morrison, former Speaker, and Ru maintains a home on N. Uist. Clan Morrison is very diverse, representing Morrisons, Gillmores, Brieves and many others. Most of the organisation today comes from Clan Morrison Society of North America, but at various times there have been other organizations as well, including in Scotland. All have been invited to participate in the Gathering. An invitation to those more local was about to be put forward when the virus arrived and changed the plans. As it was, over 60 people from three continents were scheduled to come to Lewis.

"The activities planned—and these will probably be used next year—included a focus on the Ness area, including Dùn Èistean, Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn, and the Bragar area. A grand ceilidh was planned for one night, and visits to Callanish and other sites were on the schedule, as well as nature rambles. One day was dedicated to a visit to N. Uist, and lastly a day in Stornoway for the Harris Tweed Association, the Castle, and of course the Lewis Chessmen. A decision to proceed next year will be made in January when we have a much better idea of the issues involved, but all are very eager to come."



Seiseanan Bookbug Air-Loidhne Online Bookbug Sessions

Diluain, Diciadain & Dihaoine
Monday, Wednesday & Friday

10.30am Gàidhlig le Shona

11.15am English with Lindy

Find us on Youtube Live by searching
Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn!

Thig còmhla rinn airson seinn. sgeulachd agus spòrs!
Come along for singing, stories and fun!

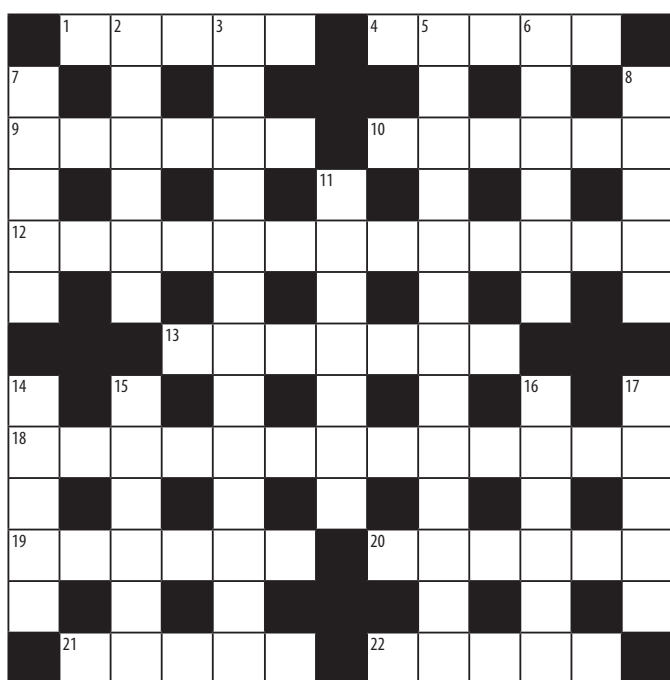
Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn is a company registered in Scotland No.273903 and a charity registered in Scotland No. SC036903

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

Simon Amos, Lisa Maclean, Jasmine Wilkie, Shona Macmillan, Samantha Hawkins, Tom Maciver, Alastair Dunlop, Neil Mackinnon, Hugh MacInnes, Donald A Morrison, David Green.

If you are languishing in lockdown at home with time on your hands, do try and solve the puzzle and text or email your solution or attach a photo of the completed grid. It will encourage our compiler to keep pedalling her loom to produce more hand-woven puzzles and you may even get your name in the next issue of the freesheet! email: jasmine@uoglt.com mobile text: 07460 853 728

Ness - Barvas No.2 crossword 24 April 2020



ACROSS

- 1 Can't stand it, stay with me (5)
- 4 Trousers are singular and loose (5)
- 9 Three times re chit (6, anag)
- 10 American state (6)
- 12 Two fuels for island band (4,3,6)
- 13 UOG care about bravery (7, anag)
- 18 Done as a last resort (2,11)
- 19 Two relations equals bird (6)
- 20 le. dirt is neater (6, anag)
- 21 Hesitate - re pets' limbs? (5)
- 22 Sacred song (5)

DOWN

- 2 Westside township (6)
- 3 States of absolute rulers (13)
- 5 Female filmstars of old (7,6)
- 6 For reclining on longways in France (6)
- 7 Halts reverse of markings (5)
- 8 I slag the Uig village (5, anag)
- 11 Dear Don was ornamental (7, anag)
- 14 Original university qualification? (5)
- 15 Ukrainian file made into a film (6)

- 16 Of son or daughter (6)
- 17 Guard loses head at point of coming in (5)

Ness-Barvas 1 Crossword 10 April 2020 solution



Beannaich an Tighearna, O m'anam! A Thighearna mo Dhia, tha thusa ro-mhòr; le urram agus mòralachd tha thusa air do sgeadachadh.

Tha thu a' cur solais umad mar thrusgan, a' sìneadh a-mach nan nèamh mar chùirtean.

Tha e a' leagadh sailthean a sheòmraichean anns na h-uisgeachan, a' dèanamh nan neul nan carbad dha fhèin, a' siubhal air sgiathan na gaoithe;

[ABG 1992]

Salm 104: 1-3

The slave does not remain in the house forever; the son remains forever. So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.

John 8: 35-36 [ESV]

STICKY WICKET

If there is one positive thing that the Coronavirus managed to do during the current crisis, it was getting Boris Johnson out of Number 10 – something that the Labour Party failed miserably at following the last General Election. Unfortunately, we have become accustomed to not entirely trusting our elected politicians when they appear on our TV screens making unachievable pledges or seeking to reassure us on key issues. Therefore, when Boris addressed the nation last month via a video link from Downing Street reassuring us that he was merely suffering from “mild” Covid-19 symptoms, you just knew he must be on a ‘sticky wicket’, health-wise, and so it turned out.

The following day the nation was informed that the PM was being admitted to St Thomas’ hospital ‘as a precaution’. The Number 10 Press Office subsequently revealed that he was being transferred to Intensive Care and that Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab was now temporarily running the country, courtesy of him being the designated First Secretary of State – an honorary title that confers seniority over his fellow Cabinet members. The interim arrangements ensured further fudge and obfuscation on urgent issues relating to the pandemic, such as Britain’s lack of preparedness and poor response to the urgent need for Personal Protection Equipment (PPE) for those in the health and care professions.

Hopefully, when Boris’ health improves and he is ready to return from rehab at Chequers, a few heads will be flattened along with the curve?

GROWING SEASON

With Boris in lockup at St Thomas’ and me in lockdown in Lionel, I thought I might have another go at letting the facial hair take its natural course. Anyone who read my column in the last issue of the community newsletter (not many, I admit), will be aware that I was forced to abandon my first attempt at letting my beard grow after being corralled into a Zoom video conference call. This caused me to shave just before I was informed the Zoom meeting had been cancelled. Therefore, any future invite to a Zoom or Facetime session during my current growing season will be politely but firmly declined.

At this early stage of my beard-growing initiative, I have certainly been at my most vulnerable, like a hermit crab that’s just abandoned its old shell and not quite moved into the new one. Though my engagement with the general public has been, by any standards, extremely limited at this time, I would have been mortified if Joanne the postwoman or Adrian the paper man had chanced upon me at the door before I had achieved the full Karl Marx ensemble. I am still far from having the more modest Captain Birdseye beard, although I might just have

managed to claim the ‘Cadet Birdseye’ look, which I believe he had before the frosty one received his first sea-going commission.

Whether the beard remains, post-lockdown, is something I’m in regular discussion about with the mirror. Maybe, as my doctor suggests, I still need to have a few more sessions with my counsellor(!)

BARBER

Still on the hair theme, I got a call last week from Murdo the Barber who, as the name implies, is charged with keeping my dome in regular trim. As anticipated, my follicles are at the mercy of the Coronavirus and, like the pandemic, are threatening to grow out of control. Unfortunately, there is no hair follicle curve that I can do my bit to flatten, with my bald patch slowly being surrounded by a wall of hair. I fear that anyone flying a drone overhead might think for a moment they are hovering over a quarry.

I’ve read in the newspapers of some real horror stories where wives and partners have stapled their menfolk to a kitchen chair and set about ‘tidying up’ their hair using electric clippers and guided by an upturned pudding bowl. Personally, I am some way yet from the ‘haircut bobhla’ (pudding bowl haircut), but *mo Chreach ‘sa thainig*, what has the world come to when Jamie Oliver or Gordon Ramsay dictates the shape of our barnets and are responsible for the hair styles of a generation of British men living through the current Coronavirus crisis?

Scots singing star Amy Macdonald appeared on social media recently as she went about home-dyeing footballer husband Richard Foster’s hair in their kitchen, a week after she had successfully carried out a similar procedure on her own mane. When Richard next takes to the field for his team, Ross County, he might not scare the opposition defence with his play, but he might well terrify them with his haircut!

Amy had taken courage from the fact that First Minister Nicola Sturgeon earlier revealed that she had cut her own hubby’s dome after cutting and dying her own hair under the video guidance of her hairdresser. Though Nicola is understandably a big fan of the Scottish Saltire, she will probably be less than willing to admit that her hair treatment included a blue rinse.

THE BIG YIN

I was taking in a little bit of sun while reading the back pages, or football pages, of the Daily Record on Wednesday, which people like me and Boris tend to do before we move on to the financial section of the newspaper. The two featured headlines on the back page were, “Big Bill by the men who knew him best,” referring to the late Celtic legend and former captain Billy McNeill. Just below that was, “Wee Jim’s Final say on booze,” which revealed how Jim Maclean, Dundee United’s famously strict disciplinarian manager, was uncharacteristically relaxed about his players having a few drinks following their 2-1 UEFA Cup Final defeat against Gothenburg in 1987,

provided they followed the order, “Don’t be late for the bus in the morning”.

Interesting though the two articles were, what struck me was how footballers bordering either extreme of height are invariably known as ‘Big’ or ‘Wee’ something or other, such as ‘Big Billy McNeill’, or ‘Wee Willie Henderson’. There was never an ‘Intermediate Johnstone’ or a ‘Normal Henderson’? I guess it was, at least in part, a Glasgow thing. Comedian Billy Connolly is famously known as ‘The Big Yin’, while small children in that great city are affectionately called ‘weans’, or ‘wee ones’ if you want to say it in a cultured brogue.

You will find a ‘Fatty’ or a ‘Titch’ in just about every large school and in many cases you will hear even less flattering monikers as their unfortunate owners are being battered behind the bike shed. Although Ness FC is currently blessed with a superb player known as ‘Titch’, we could also do with a few Wee Jimmys and Big Billies to help the team mount a decent league and cup run once the season finally kicks off. A ‘Wee Messi’ would be just the ticket for Ness. If he did sign for Ness, I for one would be more than happy to tidy up after him.

SPIDERMAN

My greenhouse, this year, is pretty devoid of anything other than a few perennial plants salvaged from last year and an army of spiders that have taken up residence in every nook and cranny within the place. Though I do not find all these cobwebs particularly endearing, I am somewhat loath to get the big brush out and sweep them away. Apart from the fact that I would probably kill a lot of arthropods in the process, there is the serious risk of bringing down a deluge, if the old superstition is anything to go by. Here we are enjoying a sustained spell of beautiful sunshine in Ness and, when the rain inevitably arrives, word gets around that I killed all the spiders in my greenhouse, it is safe to say that my life wouldn’t be worth living!

There are, of course, some folk who are phobic about spiders, and they have my sympathy. However, I’m not one of them, as long as the spiders stay on their side of the bedroom and I stay on mine. I began letting them do their thing in the greenhouse some years ago believing that they would help control the greenfly. However, the greenfly have been running riot at times as a brigade of spiders look on with complete indifference. Possibly a wee greenfly isn’t as succulent and inviting as a big moth or fly, but I am, after all, providing free accommodation. Some kind of effort by the spiders would be appreciated, even if it was only a march past the flowering Gardenia or a menacing glance in the direction of the besieged Hydrangea.

Maybe if I got the car Hoover out and waved it about the greenhouse for a while it might elicit the right response and get them spiders doing what they’re meant to be doing. As Corporal Jones of Dad’s Army fame spoke of the effect his bayonet had on the Fuzzy-Wuzzies, “They don’t like it up ‘em!”.

Congratulations!

Birthday Greetings

A happy birthday to **Katie Macinnes** 139 Cross-Skigersta who is 14 today, 24 April; to **Claire Macaulay**, 8 Lionel on 26 April; and to **Janet Thomson**, 144 Cross-Skigersta on 28 April.

Happy 18th birthday to **Daniel MacDonald** 20 Cross-Skigersta from Dad, Kaitlin and all the family xx.

Happy 18th Birthday **Daniel**. Lots of love, Fiona, Del and Lewis xx (see photo).

Happy birthday to **Alexander**, 27 Eoropie, who turned 1 on the 16th April. Also, birthday wishes to his Granny in Cross (Christine Macdonald) whose birthday was on the 17th April. Love from all the family xx.

Wedding anniversaries

Congratulations to **Dolanna and Angus MacDonald**, 47 Lower Shader, who celebrated their Golden Wedding last week. They were married in Greyfriars Free Church, Inverness, by Rev. Donald MacDonald (Cross) on the 15th April 1970.

Congratulations to **Jackie and Chrissy Anne**, Barvas (formerly 5 Fivpenney) who celebrated their Golden Wedding on the 22nd April.

Iain & Ina MacRitchie at 11 Fivpenney, Ness, celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary earlier in the month. They enjoyed 3 weeks in New Zealand in March to celebrate. Congratulations and love from all of the family and we hope to be able to get together again soon.



Alexander

Jackie and Chrissy Anne



Angus and Dolanna



Daniel



Sporting Viewpoint

by **Alastair Dunlop**



In the last issue I wrote about what the SPFL should do assuming the remaining fixtures will not be played. Football fans will know all about the recent developments centred round the 'missing' vote. On the plus side the story was a boost to all football journalists to help fill sports pages in the absence of live action. I was nearly correct. Partick Thistle have been relegated and Raith Rovers promoted, which is certainly hard on Thistle, who were only one point behind Queen of the South (only team mentioned in the Bible) with a game in hand, and to Falkirk, who were only a point behind Raith. Brechin City are fortunate to escape relegation, especially when they were miles behind. Of course it may not be finished as league reconstruction may change everything. Whatever happens Celtic must be declared champions again, sadly.

Still no sign of easing this lockdown. I was pleased to hear Professor Pennington from Aberdeen University suggest the Scottish government should start with the Islands where there were few patients and progress could be more easily monitored. I am certainly in favour of this. We are also fortunate with plenty of space for isolation outdoors along with our current spell of great weather. So compared to the mainland, we should not complain. Like many others I suspect I have never studied so many graphs waiting for 'the flattening of the curve'. I do look at comments on Twitter where so often the comments are negative especially towards the London government. To borrow a phrase from sport it is always easier watching a game than playing it. That said now I must add my daily annoyance when watching the tea time updates from those at the podiums and the questioners. To the latter, please ask one straightforward question and please, please could someone answer the questions. Every answer is along the lines of 'Well, let me assure you we are all working hard behind the scenes etc, etc'. Meaningless drivel! I can imagine someone asking, 'what is today's date?' Answer, same as above!

I do hope to watch some local football this summer. Ness FC are pleased to have taken delivery of a new mower, so what more incentive do we need. If we are really stuck we can get the pitch cut and lined and with our new sound system we can also broadcast 'live' famous victories from the past. Or maybe have 1 v 1 games where you have to stay in your own half (stop now, this is getting far too silly, as Graham Chapman would say, OK).

Like most of the country we have endless sunshine at present. I am out and about cycling, running (slowly) and walking. It is good to see many others doing the same. When all this over it will be interesting to see if the nation's health has improved or deteriorated.

The family of the late Johanna Macleod, 7 Eoropie, wish to extend our sincere thanks for all calls, messages, cards and support that we have received. We also send our gratitude and appreciation to Rev. Nicolson, community nurses and to all the carers who supported and cared for her so well over the last few years. An extra special thanks to Mairi for being such a loyal friend.

Ceud mile taing dhuibh uile.



We continue to adapt to our challenging situation as a community and sincerely hope some of the work being undertaken is helpful. We have received some kind feedback regarding the prescription deliveries and are grateful that so many seem to find this a useful service at this time.

Our prescriptions are being delivered by volunteers and staff. We will only complete delivery of a prescription if we are able to hand it over to someone. There has been some conflicting advice around this, but we are working with the managers of both surgeries and will not be able to leave prescriptions on doorsteps. We will knock and step back, ensuring the delivery is safely left with an adult at the household.

Thank you for all the kind comments received following the first issue of the Ness – Barvas newsletter. The volunteer team supported by Jasmine from UOG did a great job in getting the newsletter out. Thank you to Jasmine and all the volunteers for the hard work they have put into the newsletters, which we know you all appreciate at a time when it might prove a little more difficult to share information.

The collection from Lewis Crofters continues to be carried out three times per week and many are making good use of this service. Can I please ask that everyone is mindful of each other when placing orders. Don't over-order and if you find yourself using it for every single collection when you could probably make one journey yourself, then please do so and leave the van collection for those who really would struggle to make it over to town right now.

I'm aware deer are causing quite a bit of trouble at the current time and I have sought further advice on the issue as well as engaging with other members of the Lewis and Harris Deer Management Group. We have called upon our volunteer shooters who have already attempted to shift the deer along, but since we are out of season no further measures can currently be taken. We will continue to seek advice on how we can manage the population outwith the season and also without putting volunteers at risk during the coronavirus crisis.

We would remind all that fly-tipping is illegal at all times. We have had a few incidents during the past couple of weeks. We realise it is more awkward since our household waste and recycling centre is shut but would ask that items are not fly-tipped outside the site or anywhere on the estate. We do hope to be able to accommodate when the site re-opens, but until then please store items at your own property.

I have received reports of vehicles on the machair at Eoropie and Swainbost making quite a mess of the ground by doing circles and generally cutting up the ground. Please call the office telephone number to report anything you see as we wish to discourage and end this as it is quite damaging to the ground.

A lot of work has been undertaken by the staff team to consider the various support schemes for business and community organisations as a result of Covid-19. Information on the schemes are available in this newsletter, but if you need any further assistance please don't hesitate to get in touch.

The UOG board and staff team will continue to assess the gaps and try to do what we can to ensure the community are supported during this challenging period.

If you wish to discuss anything relating to the Covid-19 response from UOG or indeed any usual UOG business then please contact: office@uogltd.com or call 01851 850393. You can also visit the website at www.galsontrust.com for further information or to read our official response.



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A massive 'thank you' to local communities from NHS Western Isles

NHS Western Isles has been inundated with incredibly kind donations from across our communities of various items, including monetary donations, hand sanitizers and creams, personal protective equipment, offers of accommodation, vehicles, snacks, and offers of assistance.

We are incredibly grateful for all these donations and are thankful to our local communities for their kindness and thoughtfulness at this difficult time. Each donation means a lot to our staff, who remain at work so you can stay at home.

Our intention as an organisation is to ensure that your kind donations reach the right individuals within NHS Western Isles, including our community staff and support staff such as domestics, porters, catering staff and pharmacy. For this reason, we would ask that any future donations are made through a central point by emailing Colin Gilmour who is coordinating donations: colin.gilmour@nhs.net and we will ensure they are fairly distributed.

Should you wish to specify where you would like your donation to go within the organisation, we will of course ensure that your wish is honoured.

Whilst donations are hugely appreciated at this time, NHS Western Isles would also remind members of our community that the main thing our frontline staff need above all else from you is for you to stay at home and follow social distancing rules. This is the one thing you can do to help that will help keep our frontline staff safe and will ultimately protect the local NHS and will save lives.

NHS Western Isles Chief Executive Gordon Jamieson said: "I am lost for words in terms of how generous individuals, businesses and groups have been. Our community has pulled together in an incredible way, and has helped demonstrate to our key workers that we are all in this together and that we are here for one another.

"I would thank each and every organisation and individual who has offered help, assistance and goods to our staff."

He added: "Clearly, the greatest gift you can give our frontline workers at this time is the gift of health, and we continue to ask you to do this by following government rules, in particular staying at home. By staying at home, you are helping to reduce and slow down the spread of this awful virus and you are protecting our NHS staff and our local healthcare services and without a doubt saving lives. On behalf of our staff, I continue to ask you to stay at home. The safest place for you to be is in your own home. To keep our staff safe, please stay at home. To protect our local community, please stay at home. Thank you."

Covid-19 Business and Community Support

Are you wondering what support is available for your business or organisation during the coronavirus crisis? There has been a raft of support measures announced by the UK and Scottish Governments and it can be very confusing to understand how they might apply to individual circumstances.

Let's start with the most straightforward option. If your business or organisation operates from a property with a non-domestic rateable value, then it may be eligible for the Scottish Government **Business Support Fund**. It is administered by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar (CnES) through the non-domestic rates system. Depending on the rateable value of the property, ratepayers may be eligible for a £10,000 grant if they normally qualify for Small Business Support (check your last rates bill). Self-catering operators are now eligible if more than a third of their taxable income comes from that source, their property was let out for more than 140 days in 2019/20 and was available for letting in 2020/21. An application form which explains the criteria involved is accessible from the CnES website <https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/social-care-and-health/coronavirus/coronavirus-business-support-fund/#NotOpen>

Secondly, for anyone who is self-employed, the **Self-Employed Income Support Scheme** offers 80% of profits for self-employed business owners up to a maximum of £2,500 per month. This scheme is operated by HMRC which will use the average profits from tax returns in 2016-17, 2017-18 and 2018-19 to calculate the size of the grant. The scheme will be open to those where over 50% of their income comes from self-employment and who have annual profits of less than £50,000. HMRC is still developing the claims process but expects that claims can be dealt with from early June. If you submit tax returns each year, it is understood that HMRC will contact you directly to start the claim process.

Any self-employed business operators who are needing support before the Scheme is available, can apply for Universal Credit. The UK Government is providing fast-tracked online claims for business owners with no income, more details are available at <https://www.gov.uk/how-to-claim-universal-credit>

If you employ staff through Pay As You Earn, the **Job Retention Scheme** offers a grant worth 80% of an employee's usual wage cost, up to £2,500 per month, plus the associated Employer National Insurance contributions and minimum automatic enrolment employer pension contributions on that subsidised wage (limited to 3%). This is to 'furlough' or safeguard people in employment from being made redundant. The initial period covered starts from 1st March and has just been extended until

30th June. The online application process is now available at <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/claim-for-wages-through-the-coronavirus-job-retention-scheme>. Unfortunately, it appears that non-PAYE company directors cannot currently be included.

Creative Scotland has announced the following support packages :

- **Freelance artists and freelance creative practitioners** who derive a significant proportion of their income from working in the not-for-profit sector in Scotland can apply to the **Bridging Bursary Fund (Arts & Creative)** for bursaries of between £500 and £2,500 to help support immediate needs if they have experienced a loss of earnings as a result of COVID-19.
- **Freelance and self-employed artists and creative practitioners in Scotland** can apply for Open Fund grants between £1,000 and £50,000 for projects supporting the development of their practice - they may apply for funding to work with others if their practice is collaborative.

Further information is available at <https://www.creativescotland.com/funding/funding-programmes>.

Other **national level support** includes :

- Bank borrowing at zero interest for a year
- Rates relief of 1.6% and 100% relief for retail, hospitality and leisure operators
- Deferral of VAT payments up to 30th June
- Deferral of self-assessment income tax payments due in July and opportunities to restructure tax liabilities.

The Scottish Government recently announced **additional funds for small businesses and self-employed individuals** - details are still being drawn up. The main announcement can be read at <https://www.gov.scot/news/additional-support-for-business/>

Specifically for **community organisations**, the **Third Sector Resilience Fund** is a £20 million emergency scheme that provides grants of up to £100,000 maximum. There is an additional £5 million available in fully flexible, 0% interest loans starting at £50,000. The fund is complemented by specialist business advice from Just Enterprise to help grant recipients maximise the impact of the financial support. To be eligible, organisations must be

- a charity, social enterprise or voluntary organisation based in Scotland and/or primarily delivering services/activities in Scottish communities

- already delivering those products or services prior to March 2020
 - needing funding to stabilise cashflows directly as a result of the impact of COVID-19, as opposed to pre-existing financial difficulties.
- Further information is available at <https://scvo.org.uk/support/coronavirus/funding-for-organisations/third-sector-resilience-fund/>

Finally, CnES is also offering a £5,000 **Local Business Support Scheme** grant for any businesses or organisations that fall outside of the criteria for these national schemes. Further information is available from <https://www.cne-siar.gov.uk/media/15300/c-blss-local-business-support-scheme-leaflet.pdf>

Be aware that these grants are generally taxable and it may be prudent to seek further advice on the implications for your business or organisation from your independent financial adviser/accountant.

Applications and claims for these schemes need to be submitted online which, unfortunately, will be a disadvantage for those who are not connected to the internet.

Get in touch with Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn if you need any further information or assistance at: office@uogltd.com or 01851 850393. Please note that all staff are currently working from home.

Inpatients in Western Isles Hospital

NHS Western Isles is reminding patients that they must bring their own regular/repeat medication with them when they come into hospital.

The hospital can supply medication, but it is patients' own responsibility to supply regular repeat medications.

It is essential that patients manage their repeat prescriptions effectively, ordering from their GP/ Community Pharmacy and not running out.

The lockdown freesheet football memories (2)

fios 1999

It certainly doesn't seem that twenty years have passed since Iain Buchanan was writing for *fios* during his student holidays. He was playing in this match he reported on back in August 1999,

Cup Glory for Ness Welfare

Ness 4-1 Rangers Club

Last Saturday, the Ness Social Club won the Welfare Cup for the first time, the first silverware won by any Ness side for two years.

Although the eventual margin of victory was comfortable, the Rangers Club acquitted themselves well and had their chances, particularly in the opening half.

Ness started the game brightly and created a couple of early chances, Domhnall Gillies shooting just wide from the best of these after ten minutes. However, the Rangers Club came more into it as the game went on and Andy 'Gress' in the Ness goal was called into action to stop a long range effort from Donal Macdonald. In the twenty-fifth minute, George MacLeod came within inches of putting the Rangers Club into the lead, his right foot shot shaving the top of the crossbar with the Ness keeper beaten.

It was slightly against the run of play, then, that Ness took the lead half an hour in but it was a goal of exquisite quality from Iain 'Todd' MacKenzie. Collecting the ball some twenty-five yards from goal, he evaded a challenge before placing the ball perfectly into the top right hand corner of the net, leaving the keeper utterly helpless.

This goal gave Ness a boost but they could not hold onto their lead until half time. There was an enormous element of luck about the Rangers Club equaliser, which came shortly before the interval. An innocuous looking ball into the box was missed by Andy 'Gress' after taking a slight deflection off the head of Donald John 'Prune' MacRitchie. It found its way to Iain Donald Macdonald at the back post and he could only watch in despair as the ball broke off him and into the net. Certainly a case of the sublime to the ridiculous.

The second half was an altogether different affair with Ness completely dominant. The half was only five minutes old when they regained the lead. Stuart Morrison made the goal, giving Murdo Murray a free run at the keeper with a perfect slide rule pass. The Ness striker made no mistake, firing low into the corner. Ness were buoyant now and came close on a number of occasions after this, striking the woodwork twice. The third goal eventually came and this time it was Iain Murray who got on the scoresheet. Ness were awarded a free kick wide on the left and Murray swung it in left footed. The goalkeeper misjudged badly and the ball ended up in the back of the net. By this point, a comeback from the Rangers Club looked unlikely.

Indeed, it was Ness who completed the scoring and the best was arguably saved for last. Murdo Murray picked up a loose ball a few yards outside the area and turned inside before unleashing a curling left foot shot, which flashed past the hopeless lunge of the goalkeeper and into the top corner. An outstanding strike. The final whistle sounded a few minutes later and Ness could celebrate victory, which was richly deserved on the balance of play.

Four days later, on Wednesday, Ness notched up another three points when the Clachan were unable to raise a team for that night's scheduled league encounter.

The league trophy is now also all but won. Only one game remains to be played, against Tolsta. A win there will seal a 100% record in both league and cup for Ness to cap a tremendous season.

Iain Buchanan



Welfare team 1999

BACK ROW: John Norman Kelman (Skigersta); Iain Buchanan (Lionel); John 'Bunny' Murray (South Dell); James Thomson (Stornoway/Cross Skigersta); Iain D MacDonald (Eorodale); 'Andy from Gress' (the goalie); Stuart Morrison (Habost); Allan MacLeod (Cross); Angus Morrison (South Dell); Donald Gillies (St Ronans, Lionel); Angus 'Tanky' MacDonald, assistant coach (Swainbost).

FRONT ROW: Iain MacLeod (Lionel); Murdo Murray (Cross Skigersta); Iain 'Todd' MacKenzie (Swainbost); Iain Smith (North Dell); Iain Murray (Cross Skigersta); Donald J 'Prune' MacRitchie (Swainbost).

Missing from photograph are: Glen MacLean (Swainbost), Angus 'Froggo' Campbell (North Dell), David Nicols (Port), and Murdo 'Dodds' MacFarlane, team manager (South Dell).

HELP & SUPPORT

CORONAVIRUS UPDATE - BENEFIT REVIEWS AND REASSESSMENTS SUSPENDED

Reviews and reassessments for disability benefits are being suspended for the next three months. [Updated 25 March 2020]

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

~~

ELDERLY

Age Scotland

0800 470 8090

~~

FAMILIES

Parentline Scotland

0800 028 2233

~~

FINANCIAL AND DEBT ADVICE

Money Advice Scotland

0141 572 0237

~~

BUSINESS

Business Helpline

0300 303 0660

~~

MND Scotland

0141 332 3903

~~

SAMARITANS

116123

TAKEAWAY MEALS

Cross Inn TEL: 810152

Takeaways available Wed & Thurs 4-7pm, Fri & Sat 4-8pm, collect or deliver, both hot and cold food. Drinks are available with food orders and will also be available for takeaways only, 7-10pm.

Cross Inn is now closed Sun, Mon, Tues. However, for those 'at risk' or in vulnerable categories, an exception can be made and cold food can be made available on these days. Can phone in all orders on TEL: 810152 and payment can be made on the phone. Further details available on Facebook.

The Decca TEL: 810571

Fresh artisan bread made to order. Please phone to place an order by 10am that day. We can offer loaves, rolls and bagels. Loaves (about 600g) are £2.50, rolls - 50p each, bagels - 60p each.

Bread orders can be collected from The Decca (usually ready about lunchtime) or non-contact delivered (50p extra). You can pay over the phone by card.

We can also provide prepared food for same day or for the freezer - can be collected or delivered.

Porkies

In future the Porkies takeaway kiosk will be at Spòrsnis on Thursdays between 4.30-6.30pm.

The move away from the Ness Hall is due to the lack of a signal required for the card payment machine.

Borve House Hotel TEL: 850 223

Borve House Hotel is open Thursday, Friday, Saturday for takeaways from 4-7pm. Orders and card payments can be taken by phone. The hotel will then supply all customers with a pick-up time so as to control any waiting time on collection.

The Breakwater TEL: 811 001

The Breakwater is open for takeaways: Wednesday 3-6pm

Thursday, Friday, Saturday 12pm (midday) – 9pm

Place your order and make payment over the phone. If customers wish to limit their social contact, restaurant staff will bring orders out to the car. Deliveries also available within Ness for those unable to visit The Breakwater.

Wobbly Dog TEL: 810838

Cheese scones, cake, coffee and brownies will be available for take away from 12.00 - 2.00pm Thursday, Friday and Saturday. Come to the front door of the Wobbly Dog and your cakes will be brought out to you.

Message on FB or call us on 01851 810838 to order! Or we can deliver your order in the Ness area for just £1 extra.

NESS FC SOCIAL CLUB

MONTHLY DRAW

Our next draw will be on Thursday 30th April at 7:30pm LIVE on our facebook page. If anyone would like to join our superdraw please feel free to contact the club for details! £5 monthly entry (via direct debit)
1st prize - £100
2nd prize - £50
3rd prize - £25
and a bonus £5 live on the night!

WEEKLY DRAW

We are intending to set up a weekly draw also. £2 weekly entry (via direct debit) Again, contact the club for details and we'll get it going as soon as we have enough people!

Contact us on :

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

COVID-19: Guidance for Household Waste disposal

If you have symptoms that may be caused by COVID-19 or you live with someone that has symptoms, you can securely store personal waste (such as used tissues) and disposable cleaning cloths within disposable rubbish bags.

These should then be:

- placed into another bag
- tied securely
- kept separate from other waste in your room
- put aside for at least 72 hours before being putting in your usual external household waste bin

By following this advice, you will help to control the spread of the virus to friends, the wider community and the most vulnerable. Other household wastes (including recycled waste) can be disposed of as normal.

Media release by Comhairle nan Eilean Siar
3 April 2020

Spòrsnis roof appeal

<https://localgiving.org/appeal/Sporsnis-roof/>

We invite readers to keep in mind the spòrsnis roof appeal (details in Simon's article in the last issue of the Ness-Barvas Newsletter) and to consider making a donation. Any amount will make a difference and all the funds raised will be used for the purchase of materials to fix the roof. Ceud taing

Thanks from fios

To Clan Morrison: '£250 to assist in your extraordinary costs associated with the crisis.'

To Cathy Kennedy from Lochearnhead for her kind donation

Kids' Activities

with Jasmine

International Dawn Chorus Day - Sunday 3rd May

On Sunday 3rd of May, we will celebrate International Dawn Chorus Day. This is a day dedicated to the wonderful birdsong we can hear outside our homes and from our gardens, wherever we are in the world. Although we can hear birdsong all year round, at this time of year, it seems louder and starts earlier in the morning. What will you hear on Sunday 3rd May? This page has lots of activities to help you attract, interact with and create things for garden birds.

MY DAWN CHORUS LOG BOOK

My name is _____.

To hear the Dawn Chorus, we got up very early, at _____ a.m. on Sunday 3rd May.

In my garden, I saw _____

and I also saw _____ (which birds did you see?)

Their feathers were _____ (what colours were their feathers?)

They sounded: loud / quiet / high / low / melodic / soft / screechy (circle however many you want to)

It made me feel _____.



Make a bird feeder to attract feathered friends to your garden!

You will need : a clean, empty milk carton, permanent markers, scissors, a pencil, string, a few stones, bird seed.

1. Thoroughly wash an empty milk carton.
2. Draw a church window shape at the base of each side of the milk carton.
3. With the help of a grown-up, cut out the holes as shown. Try to cut them smoothly with no jaggy bits.
4. At the top of the milk bottle, pierce two holes on either side of the carton.
5. Loop some string through both holes, and tie in a knot at the top.
6. Put a few stones into the base to give it weight.
7. Fill the base of the milk carton with bird seed.
8. Tie your feeder securely on to a high branch of a tree.

Tip – you can decorate your milk bottle with **waterproof** pens. Draw lots of different shapes all over it and be creative! Ordinary felt tips will not work, though, as the ink will run if it rains.

SOLVE

L	D	T	T	A	T	T	I	H	N	R	G	W	S
O	A	A	T	E	T	O	C	W	I	N	G	S	R
I	I	A	E	T	S	A	E	R	B	T	T	L	S
N	W	T	S	H	E	N	T	T	E	T	S	G	K
E	C	L	A	W	S	L	S	K	L	B	F	A	B
L	T	B	R	T	A	C	R	A	L	E	L	T	N
A	T	A	E	E	T	W	E	E	A	B	A	E	E
A	Y	O	I	S	E	R	H	B	A	A	T	A	A
A	R	T	A	L	T	T	T	A	O	R	H	T	
H	S	R	C	H	R	O	A	T	C	H	B	T	S
E	A	E	O	Y	O	G	E	S	E	G	G	H	T
Y	A	B	L	E	G	S	F	K	O	A	S	O	E
E	S	I	O	E	S	T	A	A	R	N	E	A	A
S	E	G	S	E	T	R	T	S	E	O	G	I	N

Can you find all the words below in this word search? Words can go back-wards, forwards, side to side or up and down!

BEAK
EYES
LEGS
THROAT

BREAST
FEATHERS
SONG

CLAWS
HEAD
TAIL
WINGS

SOLVE

Below are some common birds that you might find in your garden, but their names have been scrambled! Can you solve them? Answers at the bottom of this box!

1. dabclirbk
2. raspwor
3. elbu itt
4. ghinflocd
5. nibor

Answers: blackbird, sparrow, blue tit, goldfinch, robin

JOKES

What do you give to a sick bird?

Tweetment!

What did the duck say to his funny friend?

You qwack me up!

South Dell Common Grazings

Formal intimation under the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993

Notice is hereby given that Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn has applied to the Scottish Land Court for an order authorising resumption of approximately 0.036 hectares of the common grazings of the township of South Dell. The purpose of resumption is to sell the said area to Mrs Anne MacKay for use as a car park, garden and amenity ground.

On 19 March 2020 the Court appointed this intimation by newspaper advertisement and ordered the applicant to send to the Clerk to the Grazings Committee copies of the application, associated productions and the Court's Practice Note No.4 (which emphasises the need for crofters to protect their own rights). The court ordered any shareholder or other person having a legal interest who opposes the application or who wishes to claim compensation or a share in value of the land to be resumed, to lodge answers, including details of any such claim, with the Principal Clerk, George House, 126 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4HH within fifteen days from the date of the final advertisement. Copies of the application, productions and Practice Note have been sent to Mr Evander Stewart, Gleann Dail, South Dell, Ness, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0SP and these documents may be inspected either there, at the Courts offices in Edinburgh, or at the offices of the Agents. Copies of the Practice Note may also be obtained from the Principal Clerk (Tel: 0131 271 4360). It should be noted that any further orders of the Court, including the final order, will be intimated to those persons who have lodged answers to this advertisement and to the Clerk to the Common Grazings Committee. Copies of any further orders may be obtained from the Principal Clerk upon request.

Messrs Anderson MacArthur Solicitors
Old Bank of Scotland Buildings
South Beach Street
Stornoway
Isle of Lewis
HS1 2BG
(Agents for Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn)
Of which intimation is hereby made.

South Dell Common Grazings

Formal intimation under the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993

Notice is hereby given that Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn has applied to the Scottish Land Court for an order authorising resumption of approximately 0.018 hectares of the common grazings of the township of South Dell. The purpose of resumption is to regularise the position whereby the said area has been occupied by Mr Helmut Keifer and Mrs Barbel Christa Schaufele-Keifer for some time as additional garden or amenity ground for their property at 30 South Dell.

On 19 March 2020 the Court appointed this intimation by newspaper advertisement and ordered the applicant to send to the Clerk to the Grazings Committee copies of the application, associated productions and the Court's Practice Note No.4 (which emphasises the need for crofters to protect their own rights). The Court ordered any shareholder or other person having a legal interest who opposed the application or who wishes to claim compensation or a share in value of the land to be resumed, to lodge answers, including details of any such claim, with the Principal Clerk, George House, 126 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4HH within fifteen days from the date of the final advertisement. Copies of the application, productions and Practice Note have been sent to Mr Evander Stewart, Gleann Dail, South Dell, Ness, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0SP and these documents may be inspected either there, at the Court's offices in Edinburgh, or at the offices of the Agents. Copies of the Practice Note may also be obtained from the Principal Clerk (Tel: 0131 271 4360). It should be noted that any further orders of the Court, including the final order, will be intimated to those persons who have lodged answers to this advertisement and to the Clerk to the Common Grazings Committee. Copies of any further orders may be obtained from the Principal Clerk upon request.

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Of which intimation is hereby made.

South Dell Common Grazings

Formal intimation under the Crofters (Scotland) Act 1993

Notice is hereby given that Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn has applied to the Scottish Land Court for an Order authorising resumption of approximately 0.016 hectares of the common grazings of the township of South Dell. The purpose of resumption is to sell the same to Mr Calum Murray MacDonald and Mrs Christine Ann MacDonald to rectify their existing title and regularise the position whereby the said area is already used as additional garden or amenity ground for the dwellinghouse at 31A South Dell, Ness, Isle of Lewis.

On 19 March 2020 the Court appointed this intimation by newspaper advertisement and ordered the applicant to send to the Clerk to the Grazings Committee copies of the application, associated productions and the Court's Practice Note No. 4 (which emphasises the need for crofters to protect their own rights). The Court ordered any shareholder or other persons having a legal interest who opposes the application or who wishes to claim compensation or a share in value of the land to be resumed, to lodge answers, including details of any such claim, with the Principal Clerk, George House, 126 George Street, Edinburgh, EH2 4HH within fifteen days from the date of the final advertisement. Copies of the application, productions and Practice Note have been sent to Mr Evander Stewart, Gleann Dail, South Dell, Ness, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0SP and these documents may be inspected either there, at the Court's offices in Edinburgh, or at the offices of the Agents. Copies of the Practice Note may also be obtained from the Principal Clerk (Tel: 0131 271 4360). It should be noted that any further orders of the Court, including the Final Order, will be intimated to those persons who have lodged answers to this advertisement and to the Clerk to the Common Grazings Committee. Copies of any further orders may be obtained from the Principal Clerk upon request.

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South Beach Street
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Isle of Lewis HS1 2BG
(Agents for Urras Oighreachd Ghabhsainn)
Of which intimation is hereby made.

Proposed Let of a Croft

URRAS OIGHREACHD GHABHSAINN is applying to let the tenancy of the croft at 22 Eoropie, Parish of Barvas, to MALCOLM JOHN MACLEOD GILLIES of 22 Eoropie, Ness, Isle of Lewis.

Written comments from those with a relevant interest (which may be made public) to:
Crofting Commission,
Leachkin Road, Inverness IV3 8NW, info@crofting.gov.scot within 28 days from the date of the advert.

Village WhatsApp Groups

A WhatsApp group has been set up for each village on the estate to allow residents to stay in touch, offer support, seek support and generally stay connected.

If you have not yet been contacted about joining a WhatsApp group, but would like to be added to the group for your village, please message 07469189449 and specify your name and village. The group is for many people, so please be mindful of not posting lots of details. Just ask for help and someone in the group will get in touch for the specifics of your request. It is not a service to replace emergency services or other support services. As a community we want you to know that someone will be around to help with some of the smaller things.

**FOUND**

A black Vision Express case containing a pair of black rimmed spectacles was found by Gary on 20th April on the Skigersta peat road. Please call Gary or Pam on 810881 or 07748 377 456 or 0777 1991 361, or call at 63 Cross Skigersta Road.

If you have any birthdays, anniversaries, or special occasions for mentioning in the freesheet please email:

jasmine@uogltd.com



TALKING NATURALLY by Samantha Hawkins



It has been a fortnight of comings and goings as spring gets into its stride and birds, not planes, fill the skies as migration gets well and truly underway.

White-fronted Geese are on their way back to nesting sites in Greenland using Iceland as a stepping stone en route; these birds have overwintered in the UK and Ireland. One at least was on flooded croft land in Port of Ness, picked up by my camera trap on 12 April in amongst our local Greylag Geese. Maybe it was the only one and it had lost its family group, or maybe there were others, more camera shy. Our overwintering flock of **Barnacle Geese** were seen, and heard, to leave on 16th April. They too are heading to Greenland via Iceland and while in Iceland may spend a few weeks feeding and waiting for a favourable tailwind to aid their onward journey.

Not to be left out of the party, the migration of **Pink-footed Geese** began in earnest. As the weather has improved over the last few days, the higher up their flight path has become and I can barely hear them, hardly see them. I'd seen small flocks of about 100 birds at a time flying over in recent days, but on Friday 17th April, a large flock made up of c.300 birds flew over Port of Ness, and what a sight it was to witness. The readily recognisable V-shaped formation that they fly in has been shown by scientists to help conserve energy on these long flights back to the Arctic Circle. Each bird flies slightly higher up than the one in front which reduces wind resistance. It figures then that the 'lead goose' at the front of the formation expends the most energy as it is the first to break up the flow of air that provides the additional lift for the ones following behind. Because this level of energy expenditure cannot be maintained by just one bird being at the front this is the reason that leadership of the formation is rotated, and lead geese eventually drop to the back where air resistance is lightest – thanks to all the birds ahead of it. Teamwork at its finest!

Due to current restrictions I am no longer able to visit the bird hide at Loch Stiapabhat, so no doubt I will be missing a few birds that are passing through. The flooded machair (or rather not-so-flooded machair given the recent spell of long, sunny dry days) at Fivepenny is also a good draw for bird life though, both visiting and local. I am fortunate that my friend John Burgis, also a keen birdwatcher, lives opposite and has a 'ring-side seat' to observe the comings and goings, and I look forward to his updates via text. So, thanks to John, I can tell you that last Sunday, Easter Sunday, three **Pintail** arrived – two males and one female. They were there on and off through the week but haven't been seen for the last few days. It is an elegant looking duck, roughly the same size as a Mallard and, as is often the case, the male has the best plumage with a chocolate brown head with a white stripe running down the sides of the head. The tail

feathers are long, and the central ones can measure up to four inches in length, hence the name. A dabbling duck, it feeds at the surface of the water as opposed to diving for its food.

A few days after that 37 **Black-tailed Godwit** used this area for a brief, overnight stopover before heading on to Iceland. Other sightings locally that have been shared with me over the last fortnight include: – **Blackcap** (Fivepenny), **Warbler** (Habost) and **Goldcrest** (Eoropie). I can also tell you, thanks to the power of social media, **Corncrake** have arrived on Tiree (15th April), and a **Cuckoo** has been heard on the Westside – so neither can be that far away from Ness.

Like many hobbies and pastimes birdwatching is what you make of it. It lends itself as a solitary pursuit or indeed a way to spend time with a few friends; but not the latter just now, for obvious reasons. It's also something you can enjoy from your own window if, for whatever reason, you cannot venture far.

As I have mentioned before, I get a great deal of pleasure from watching the birds that come to my garden bird feeders, and those too, that forage round about on the ground on the croft. There's plenty to see including **House Sparrows**, **Starlings**, **Greenfinch**, **Rock Dove**, **Skylarks**, **Wheatear** and **Pipits**. I introduced Sunflower hearts and Niger seed to the bird feeder last week, and a few days later a pair of beautiful **Goldfinch** started feeding alongside the other regular visitors. The smallest so far of the species that come to the feeder, they are holding their own, and gaining confidence daily it would seem, no longer taking to the rooftop when the noisier more bullish Starlings appear. As I write this (21 April) their number has now increased to five.

Without fail, for the last twenty years, a **Collared Dove**, just the one, arrives on the croft in mid-April, and this year is no exception. Collared Doves are very much associated with being 'suburban' birds and frequenters of parks, gardens and woodland. Stornoway has a healthy population of them, but each spring, a few make their way up to Ness for the summer season.

A light buff-brown, grey colour, they have a distinctive black half-collar around their necks and an even more distinctive (some might say incessant) 'coo – coo-COO' call; I think you either love it or loathe it, I am the former. The Collared Dove has a reputation for being a species of bird that has managed to successfully colonise many parts of the globe, and at a rapid rate.

Once it was only found in the Balkans, but in the 1930s it rapidly spread across Europe, moving northwards and westwards, covering an estimated 2.5 million square kilometres in just forty years. Its success was thought to be due in part to its ability to breed quickly – eggs are incubated in 14 days and young fledged at 17



PHOTOS

Top left

Greenland White-Fronted Goose Port of Ness

Above:

Pink-footed Geese, formation flying over Habost

Pintail, Fivepenny, 12 April 2020

Collared Dove, an annual visitor to Ness

days – plus the Collared Dove can breed in every month of the year.

In the mid-1950s a pair arrived in a garden on the North Norfolk coast, stayed and bred. It caused quite a stir among birders, as prior to this the bird was virtually unknown in Britain and visitors to the garden hoping to catch a glimpse of the doves included a young Bill Oddie. No such excitement now though as breeding pairs in the UK are estimated at almost 1,000,000.

If you want to keep up with other local bird sightings, or indeed, share your own, please go to my Facebook page, 'Ness Nature'.