

S TAFFIN NEWSLETTER

IRIS AN TAOBH SEAR
SAMHRADH/SUMMER 2015



Staffin Bay from Digg.

Staffin Community Hall

THE tendering process for a new gym in Staffin is underway, it has been confirmed. The Staffin Hall Association began discussing the potential uses of an empty space in the attic above the foyer last year and there was healthy community backing for a new gym after a consultation exercise.

Martin Perry, the association chairman, said: "We're awaiting Highland Council building control to approve our plans, but with the gym being upstairs, it has been much more difficult to comply with building control than we originally thought.

"The process should take about six weeks, and once this is done we can start the building works. In the meantime, quotes are being sought for the work. We have put together a steering group to manage the project and are planning for recruitment. The People's Health Trust, our main funder, along with the council, and the committee are aware of the delays and are fully behind the project."

It was also confirmed by Martin that the shop has made another major contribution to the Hall Association, which brings the total donated to a tremendous £83,000 since the community took over the shop in 2006.

Martin added: "The shop continues to grow from strength to strength and we would like to thank all our customers for their continued valued support and custom."

Fèis Thròndairnis

A POPULAR Gaelic festival for young people will be held in Staffin in July. The annual five-day Fèis Thròndairnis features traditional music, Gaelic song, drama, shinty and step-dance for youngsters aged between 8 and 18-years-old in the Trotternish area. Participants will be encouraged to learn Gaelic during the week.



Young clàrsach players at a previous Fèis Thròndairnis.

Classes are offered in accordion, chanter, bagpipes, clàrsach, drumming, fiddle, Gaelic song, Gaelic drama, guitar, keyboard, tin whistle, shinty and step dance. *Session class:* group work will be offered each day, between 3.05pm to 4.05pm, for participants at intermediate level or above. A choice of arts and crafts, shinty, pipe band or step dance will also be provided during this slot.



27-31 an t-luchar, 2015 An Fhèis Chàirdeil, Bun Sgoil Stafainn. July 27 – 31, 9.30am – 4.05pm, in Staffin Primary School. Family, friends and members of the community are very welcome to attend the Tutors' Cèilidh at 7pm on Tuesday, July 28 at Staffin Hall and the Fèis Participants' Cèilidh at 2pm on Friday, July

31, at the same venue. For further information contact Christine Nicolson on 01470 552260

Columba 1400 Centre

COLUMBA celebrated its 15th birthday in June and welcomed back graduates to help celebrate its success. The centre opened its doors in 2000 and in that time has worked with more than 6,000 young people. Columba 1400 alumni, staff and supporters enjoyed the anniversary celebrations.



Tug o' war during Columba's 15th birthday celebrations.

Columba 1400 manager Jackie Gillies said: "The second half of 2015 is going to be very busy for the centre. We will be working with a wide variety of people from all over Scotland including the Highlands following on from the success of our Portree High School programme."

Staffin Sheepdog Trials

THE judge presiding over the handlers and dogs at the forthcoming Staffin Sheepdog Trials has an impressive pedigree himself. Stuart Davidson, who will be casting an expert eye over a stellar field of competitors, is no stranger to silverware. Handlers from all over Europe, Wales, England, Ireland, and of course Scotland, will be competing at Elishadder. Stuart has been the Supreme Champion twice and Scottish National Champion five times.



Watching on: John MacDiarmid and Duncan MacIntyre.

The trials start at 9am on Friday, July 17, with the usual food and various stalls. All proceeds from the event will go to Skye Cancer Care. The money raised also goes to care in the community for people who are terminally ill.

Beinn Edra Commemoration

A PLAQUE marking the tragic loss of nine men in an air disaster during the Second World War now adjoins the Staffin War Memorial.

The American B-17 Flying Fortress crashed in mist at Beinn Edra in March 1945. A commemoration event was held at the Columba Centre in March marking 70 years since the crash, with the plaque unveiled on the day by John Angus MacDonald, of Glasphein, and Lachie Gillies, Stenscholl, who both recall the crash.

Around 70 people attended the commemoration including the Royal British Legion's north Skye branch who paraded from the memorial in horrendous weather conditions led by young Kilmuir piper Eoghainn Beaton. Former Army padre and Skye minister Rev Rory MacLeod presided over the commemoration. Poor weather had delayed the plaque's installation to the memorial, by the Kilmartin River, until early June. It was inscribed and fitted by Jon Hearach. The granite plaque is in

keeping with the character of the memorial and is on the side facing north towards Staffin Bay. The local men from the Boer War, WWI and II are listed on the south and west of the memorial. It is a fitting spot: as you stand at the memorial directly facing the plaque, on your right shoulder you look across to Beinn Edra.



Jon Hearach and the newly-fitted memorial plaque.

Staffin Community Council and SCT reiterate their thanks to a number of individuals and organisations for contributing to the event and plaque: Jackie Gillies and staff at Columba 1400 Centre; Rev Rory MacLeod, Rev John Murray, the Royal British Legion, Lachie Gillies, John Angus MacDonald, Eoghainn Beaton, Anna Nicolson, Kim Marti, Pastor Charles Jeanblanc, Jennifer Shanks, Sine Gillespie, Ian MacDonald, Digg; Donald MacDonald, Sleat; Sylvia Porter, John MacLaren, Lindesay Wood, Portree; John Philip, David Hudson, Billy Harley, Robin Pope and Mark Crowe at Highland Council, Alister Mackinnon, Jon Hearach Memorials, Allan MacLeod, Mickey MacLeod, Tormod MacLeod, Dougie Ross, Dr Terence Christian, Dr Amanda Charland and Dr Tom Horne.

The Flodigarry Trust

Urras Fhlòdaigearraidh will be again running its popular Gaelic courses in the community, in collaboration with Sabhal Mòr Ostaig. Urras chairwoman Margaret Nicolson said: "This summer we will also be supporting Bun-sgoil Ghàidhlig Inbhirnis who were here in early June, Campa Shradagan and a teachers' Gàidhlig group.

Urras Fhlòdaigearraidh would wish to thank Dun Flodigarry Hostel for providing a base and facilities to use during course weeks.

"Our first of these community summer courses was held at the beginning of June with a selection of new attendees and returners. The farthest travelled participant on our first course hails from Nova Scotia."

In May, Urras Fhlòdaigearraidh held two public drop-in sessions, in Kilmuir and Staffin community halls. Margaret said:

"At these sessions we shared information on our development plans and answered questions from those who called in. If you didn't manage to stop by this time there will be further opportunities for you to do so, in the near future."

Urras Fhlòdaigearraidh congratulated all the children who participated in the Skye Mòd competitions. The Urras Baile Fhlòdaigearraidh trophy, for Oran Luadh, has this year again been won by Bun-sgoil Stafainn. 'S math a' rinn sibh uile a-rithist!

Staffin Community Trust



MEMBERSHIP of the Staffin Community Trust (SCT) has doubled in a year with more than 60 people living in Staffin, or with strong ties to the district, having signed up. SCT has set a target of 100 members by Christmas. Being a member does not require attendance at the board's monthly meetings or involve heavy commitments; it means a member is supportive of SCT's efforts and projects on behalf of the community. It is a great help to SCT when submitting funding

applications or lobbying for progress on projects as it demonstrates community support. If anybody is interested in joining then please ask local development officer Hugh Ross for a form at the SCT portacabin or e-mail staffin.ldo@gmail.com

Staffin Slipway: The initial feasibility studies into the development – including the marine engineer, road access and environmental reports - have now been published on www.staffin-trust.co.uk A summary of the economic impact report is also provided.



Artist's impression of the two breakwaters at the Slipway.

The marine report provides the engineer's drawing of the preferred construction option which includes two breakwaters for shelter, dredging and an enhanced Slipway for berthing.

SCT has been meeting regularly with Highland Council, Highlands and Islands Enterprise and other public agencies to investigate the requirements of the planning process, potential for sourcing rock from Lealt Quarry, environmental issues and the potential funding of the development's construction.

Housing: SCT has now proposed four different sites to the new West Highland and Islands Local Plan and is working closely with the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust and Lochalsh and Skye Housing Association to progress a site(s). SCT's preferred location – although it is keen for Staffin to have as many sites for affordable housing as

possible – is on the Stenscholl Common Grazing, just past the school playing field and cattle grid.



Housing problem has attracted national media interest.

SCT believes the location is ideal as it is close to Staffin Primary School, services, shops, cafes, churches, the bus stop, etc. It also has the potential for elderly accommodation and could provide much-needed affordable housing in the district, after an absence of 16 years. New housing could help retain our young people, attract new families and arrest the school roll decline. Staffin's population has fallen by more than 7% in the last decade and housing is an urgent SCT priority.

Ceumannan II: Hugh Ross is currently consulting with townships in Staffin about the proposed new footpath routes and it is planned to have a community consultation event following that process. The routes would add to the paths created in 2008. The footpaths are not just for visitors though, SCT is keen for crofters and residents to get the benefit all-year round. To that end Hugh Ross has been in touch with a group called Step it Up Highland, which has been running walking groups in Skye, including Dunvegan, Portree, Waternish and Broadford for some time. The idea is that there is a weekly meeting time and everybody, of all ages, goes out together on the walk. Hugh, who visited the Dunvegan group, said: "The exercise was important to the walkers I met but I found the social aspect of meeting folk in the community was just as important, especially in the winter months. We want

local people to use the existing footpaths in Staffin and come to enjoy them as a recreational asset, with the health benefits associated with that.”

To run a Staffin Walking Group through Step it Up Highland one or two volunteers are required to lead the walks.

Would there be interest in a) setting up a Staffin Walking Group b) volunteering as a guide?

Please let Hugh know by phoning 01470 562 464, calling in at the SCT office or e-mailing staffin.ido@gmail.com

SCT website: The website has been used to promote Staffin, update the community about projects and promote local businesses. Since its September 2014 launch it has had a local, national and international impact, Google Analytical figures have confirmed.

In the last four weeks, 1,071 people visited www.staffin-trust.co.uk with 2,500 page views. Almost 80% of those people had *never* been on the SCT website before - indicating that it is being used as a source of information by tourists interested in coming to Staffin. The UK is unsurprisingly the most popular country of residence for SCT website visitors and America is second with 17%. Major countries like Germany, Japan, South Korea, Canada, Australia and China are all in the top 10 of SCT website visitors, which is proof of the international market Staffin operates in. *Meanwhile, there are now seven Staffin businesses, including B&Bs, contractors, cafes and small businesses, which feature on the website for an annual £20 fee.*

SCT is keen to add as many businesses as possible so if there is anybody interested get in touch.

Arainneachd, Cànan is Dualchas: Bha deichnear oileannach againn am bliadhna airson Pàirt I de chùrsa Ruairidh Mhicilleathain. Gu lèir, tha deich là an luib ‘Àrainneachd, Cànan is Dualchas’ a chaidh a chruthachadh le Ruairidh. Is ann

air ‘Croit, Coille, Monadh is Boglach’ a bha oileannaich Phàirt I a’ greimeachadh. Chumar na h-òraidean aig Columba 1400 le cuairtean làitheil gu na h-àrainnean eadar-dhealaichte.

Dh’fhuirich na h-oileannaich ann an ionadan leabaidh is bracaist far a bheil Gàidhlig na sgìre ga bruidhinn. Is e àrd-amas chùrsa Ruairidh gum bi luchd na Gàidhlig a’ togail bhriathrachas airson an àrainneachd Albannach a mhìneachadh do chàich.



Course participants in Staffin.

Bha e na thlachd gu robh aoigheachd mhath agus biadh math ann air ar starsaich fhìn. Bidh ‘Àrainneachd, Cànan is Dualchas’ a’ tarraing thidsearan, mhaoidhùthcha, luchd saidheans, luchd iùil, luchd ealain, muinntir na turasachd agus oifigearan Ghàidhlig. Thàinig daoine à Dùn Èideann, Srath Pheofhair, Inbhir Nis, Obar Pheallaidh, Asainte agus A’ Chuimrigh. Bha e snog gu robh dithis às An Eilean Sgitheanach an làthair cuideachd ann. Bidh Sgitheanaich eòlach gu leòr air Ruairidh a tha air a bhith sgrìobhadh colbh sa Phaipear Bheag thar ghrunna bhlìadhnachan. Is iomadh sgeulachd ìntinneach a thog daoine às an litir aige do luchd-ionnsachaidh. Is e seo an treas bliadhna a tha sinn air cùrsa ACD a chur air dòigh san Taobh Sear. Thathar taingeil do Bhòrd na Gàidhlig airson taic-airgid. Cumar Pàirt II de ACD bho 3.8.15 gu 7.8.15.

SCT has been hosting the 10-day Gaelic in the Environment course with respected broadcaster Roddy MacLean, which is being run over two parts this year, during June and August.

ADVERT

WEST HIGHLAND COLLEGE

Did you know that you can study Crofting & Countryside Skills for three days a week, over 35 weeks at the West Highland College in Broadford? This course is designed to equip students with a wide range of practical skills and environmental knowledge, to enable them to develop opportunities on their own land, to progress to further study or into employment.



WHC students on the Crofting and Countryside course.

The course covers various disciplines, including crofting, forestry, horticulture, estate management and animal husbandry, and leads to a National Certificate in Crofting & Countryside Skills, and a significant set of Industry Training Awards in Chainsaw operation, ATVs, Wood chippers, Pesticide spraying, Dry stone Walling, Tree Surveying and First Aid.

This year's students come from all over Skye and Lochalsh, attracting a wide age range and levels of previous experience, and in addition to being very enjoyable, they agree it has been well worthwhile, improving their skills and confidence to work their own land, or enabling them to successfully secure new employment. For more information call the college at Broadford on 01397 874530.

West Highland College UHI

Crofting & Countryside Skills

SEPTEMBER START – APPLY NOW!

3 days per week for 35 weeks
Broadford College Centre

Email admissions.whc@uhi.ac.uk
Call Broadford on 01397 874530




www.whc.uhi.ac.uk

West Highland College UHI is a company limited by guarantee (211071) with registered office (02/04/19)

Skye Abattoir

PLANS for a new £2million Skye abattoir are progressing. The Skye and Lochalsh Meat Supply Group has a preferred site in Portree and is confident of securing the funding required.

The minimum throughput of animals - with the new slaughterhouse open three days a week - would be 100 cattle, 800 sheep and 130 pigs. (At maximum output it would be 200 cattle, 4,000 sheep and 130 pigs).

"The minimum throughput numbers are based on what is *already* finished and sent for slaughter on the island each year," said project officer Rachael Jackson. "The maximum throughput is a projection from what producers said they *could* finish and produce."

With most Staffin crofters selling store lambs and calves, getting a steady supply of livestock could be challenging but the supply group is confident there is significant interest from producers and potential customers. Good prices and having a local abattoir could be a major asset for Staffin crofters. Rachael said one of the meat group members would be happy to come to Staffin in the autumn, possibly September, to provide more information.

Would there be interest in a meeting or "croft visit style" event in Staffin where all your questions could be answered?

Please let Hugh Ross at the Staffin Trust know if you are interested on 562 464.

