

S TAFFIN NEWSLETTER

IRIS AN TAOBH SEAR

AN GEAMHRADH ~ WINTER 2017



Staffin Community Hall Association

GENERAL knowledge will be handy this weekend for the Staffin Community Hall's latest quiz night. Teams are warmly invited to participate in the popular and fun event, which is in aid of hall funds. The quiz is in the hall's restaurant on Saturday, November 25 and starts at 7.30pm. Entry is £4 per person and it is BYOB.

"We have had a busy year", writes the Staffin Hall Committee chairman Martin Perry.

"Automatic doors were fitted to the main entrance and a fantastic new beech floor was fitted to the main hall, *picture opposite*, making it look much brighter and clean.

"We now have the roof repair material ordered and work will commence soon, weather permitting.

"Staffin Stores continues to prosper, and we are currently looking to renew the flooring, whilst

at the same time operate a successful community shop. We would like to thank you for your custom at the shop.

"Staffin Gym continues to be popular as are the classes associated with the gym. We were sad to see Anna MacDonald leave to go to study and wish her well. Sam Crowe continues to deliver enthusiasm and drive to vary the classes to try to suit more people. The gym is open daily from 6am to 10pm. There is a varied range of classes which are open to all."

Gym winter timetable

Saturday: 9am Metafit

Tuesday: 6pm Fatburn Extreme;
6.30pm Abs

Wednesday: 7pm Boxing Skills

Thursday: 7pm DIY fitness;
7.30pm ABs; 8pm Badminton



Badminton action on the new Staffin Hall floor.

Bun-sgoil Stafainn

HARDY Staffin pupils, staff and parents braved inclement weather last Friday to carry out a sponsored walk, in aid of Children in Need. The tremendous total of £935.74 was raised for the annual appeal with the pledge of more to come. Rain, hail and wind did not deter the walkers and thanks to all who supported their efforts.

Mòd

Clann Thròndairnis, children from both Staffin and Kilmuir primary schools, and individual participants,

had a fantastic time in Fort William at the Royal National Mòd. The children had been doing a great deal of work after school in regular rehearsals.

Thanks to Kirsteen Graham, Dinah Rankin, Catherine Budge, Calum Munro and to all of the very supportive parents.



Above: Staffin pupils (with Clann Thronairnis) won the action song and the waulking song where they retained the Harris Tweed trophy. Lexy MacLeod won the sgeulachd (storytelling) competition

“Our recent MacMillan Coffee Afternoon was a terrific success”, writes headteacher Jenny Kiss. “I would like to thank all our families and school community who joined in with great enthusiasm and provided such a wonderful array of cakes for the event. An amazing sum of £523.33 was raised at the event.

“The day itself had been challenging as the water was off. But we were able to stay open as there is a reserve tank in the loft which held enough water to keep us going with toilets and handwashing until just after lunch.

“We were provided with pallets of bottled water so that we could go ahead with the Macmillan event. Congratulations to our bake-off winners, Jacob Lyall, for best decorated cupcake, and Phoebe Whitehead, for best tasting cupcake.

“In best technical challenge tradition, Marion Mortimer and I did the judging and had no idea who the bakers were until the decisions were made. It was a very hard task to taste all the cakes, but somebody had to do it!”

Urras Baile Fhlòdaigearraidh

“We hosted several groups this year, some of whom were Gàidhlig students and others were groups who only required catering provision”, writes Margaret Nicolson.

“Our first group was here in April and were older students who had been studying the history of this area. Basic Gàidhlig classes were taught. One of the group was a direct descendant of Norman Stewart and was delighted to have the opportunity to visit Valtos and the old cemetery in Culnacnoc.

“We catered for a group more than 20 plus in June. This was a group of PHD philosophy post-grad students hailing from various parts of the world and studying at St Andrews university.

“We catered for the Sradagan camp again this July. We were impressed by the children’s ability and willingness to converse in Gàidhlig.

“We held just one of our own courses this year, and this was in August. Our group ranged in age from 19 to 80 plus, and hailed from places as diverse as Seattle to

Ireland. We have two courses scheduled for 2018; July 16 -20 and August 20 – 24 and have bookings already.”

Staffin Community Trust ~ Urras an Taobh Sear

Housing: SCT’s architect, the Skye firm Rural Design, is in continued discussions with Highland Council’s planners about securing full planning permission for the development.

SCT is hopeful this vital step can be achieved before the end of the year, given that the planning application was lodged way back in April.

The Stenscholl township tenants met last month and shareholders provided signed consent of the sale of the land for the development. SCT will share this important document to site owner, “the Department” (the landlord) factor Ewen MacPherson. The next steps are getting the site valued by the District Valuer and the Department applying to the Scottish Land Court for the site’s “resumption” (removing it from crofting land tenure).



The resumption process could take as long as eight months and there is a significant

amount of work ahead, before the site can be officially purchased. SCT is in discussions with legal firms and hopes to appoint a solicitor by December to act for it during this process. SCT’s partners, the Highlands Small Communities Housing Trust and Lochalsh and Skye Housing

Association, are providing close support and agreeing a timetable for the next stage is crucial. SCT is also due to have talks with NHS Highland about the suggested relocation of the current Staffin Surgery to the new business units building.

SCT fully realises this development, which has not been without its challenges, is taking a significant amount of time. However, SCT had been heartened by the support and interest from the community, including the Stenscholl tenants and people who are interested in living in the new homes, and is working hard to push this much needed development forward.

Slipway/fish farms: Organic Sea Harvest, the company proposing to build two organic fish farms at Culnacnoc, has now submitted a full planning application to Highland Council. This comes after a lengthy “pre-planning” application process, which included a drop-in event in the Kilmartin Restaurant back in February.

The local community, and wider public, will have 28 days to comment on the application once it goes “live”. The planning application will be advertised once that happens. SCT is very supportive of this major development because of the creation of jobs and significant economic boost it would give Staffin.

SCT is also investigating how it can source funding to deliver much needed investment at the Slipway and develop marine tourism opportunities and services for local users.

Storr Project: SCT's board of directors held a productive meeting at the end of October with Highland Council officials Stuart Black, the director of development and infrastructure; Pablo Mascarenhas, the community and democratic engagement manager and Willie MacKinnon, the Skye ward manager, to discuss the Storr Project.

SCT had planned to build an urgently needed new car park, public toilets and interpretation at the Storr following a major community consultation and options appraisal work.

SCT submitted an Asset Transfer Request (ATR) to the local authority to purchase the required land in March. That was turned down by the council in September. SCT has now lodged a request for a review of that decision last month (October).

At last month's meeting in Staffin, the council proposed a partnership project.

That could see the local authority and SCT work together on securing the necessary funding for major improvements and agree a "revenue sharing model."

Mr Black and his colleagues agreed that proposals on how any project might operate, including a governance structure, a more detailed outline of responsibilities and roles, and financial modelling, would be presented to SCT later this month (November), ahead of further talks.

This would include more detail on the car park plan and capacity. Highlands and Islands Enterprise and the Community Ownership Support Service have been providing guidance and support to SCT on this key project.

The Skye Ecomuseum: Comunn Eachdraidh an Taobh Sear

"An exciting part of the Ceumannan project got underway in October," writes *Skye Ecomuseum programme manager Angus Murray*.

"A big target of the project is to get people in the Staffin community more involved in local history and SCT was aware that there was a real interest from the community. In order to achieve this, we are committed to forming a Staffin historical society and will be looking at the successes of similar active groups up and down the west coast of Scotland for inspiration.

"To start the ball rolling, we held two meetings last month looking for people who are interested in being involved.

"A really good mix of people attended, including folk who were brought up in the area and some newer residents, with an interest in history on both days.

"What followed was an interesting discussion around the abandoned villages of the east side of Trotternish and included archaeology, placenames and stories of the people who in lived them. At our next meeting, *poster below*, we will be doing some research on these villages and making plans to visit them in the spring."

- 2pm Tuesday, November 21st
- 6.30pm Wednesday, November 22nd

Both meetings will be held at the Columba 1400. Le strùbag & ceic // Tea & cake provided. All welcome.

RECRUITING FOR A VOLUNTEER-LED HISTORICAL SOCIETY. ACTIVITIES
COULD INCLUDE COLLECTING CROFT HISTORIES, GENEALOGIES,
PHOTOGRAPHS, ORAL HISTORIES, ARTIFACTS, ARCHIVES, GAIDHEIL &
LOTS MORE



**Comunn Eachdraidh
An Taobh Sear**

A chance to record and reflect on Staffin's past



All welcome! // Tha fáilte oirbh uile!

2PM TUESDAY 21 NOVEMBER
6.30PM WEDNESDAY 22 NOVEMBER

Columba 1400 // le strúpag + ceic

Coastal Community Fund SSE The National Lottery Charanchar Nàiseanta

EMAIL: SKYEECOMUSEUM@GMAIL.COM

Memorial to the Crofters' Uprisings: The first public events to gather stories about the Staffin Crofters' Uprisings were also held over two half-days at the Columba 1400 in October. A group of pupils from Staffin Primary School came along and got to try some fun new technology and learn more about the project. Some very interested locals also called in and contributed excellent stories connected to the struggle for land rights in Staffin. This event was held by Lateral North and in partnership with local arts group Atlas. BBC Alba came to film the event and it was shown on its news programme An Là that evening and featured on Radio nan Gàidheal.

Sculptor Henry Castle also visited Staffin in November.

Both parties will present their proposals to Atlas and SCT early in 2018.

The community will have the final say on the memorial and we are looking forward to seeing their ideas.



Health Walks in Staffin

Starting 12 Midday
Wednesday 29th November
from Columba 1400

Our walks will allow you to take in some local scenery whilst walking with a friendly group. The first walk will take about 30 minutes. A great way to help you get more active whilst still being gentle exercise.

Health Walks are:

- Suitable for everybody!
 - Are FREE! (Jacket and proper footwear advised)
 - And are a great way to meet new people in a safe environment!
- For more information or to register an interest contact Angus Murray, Staffin Community Trust 01470 562 464



Health Walks in Staffin: There are now four trained walk leaders in Staffin ready and willing to deliver Health Walks as part of Step It Up Highlands. These walks will be aimed at those who are currently not very active and will begin with low-level walks of about 30 minutes. Health walks are short, sociable and free. All you need is a comfortable pair of shoes, a waterproof jacket and some change for a cup of tea!

- 11.45am meet for 12 noon start Wednesday 29th of November. Starting from the Columba 1400, before the Senior Citizens lunch. Open to all

Ecomuseum capital works: SCT's development officer Hugh Ross is co-ordinating the capital works, with the support of the project's steering group, including SCT director Dugald Ross and Highland Council's Skye access officer Donald Kennedy.

The works include a viewing platform and new car park at Lealt Gorge, footpaths in Grealin and

Flodigarry and new interpretation at all the ecomuseum sites.

Important preliminary works for the viewing platform's construction at Lealt are now underway.

SCT has asked BT to remove a derelict telegraph pole at the site and it also needs to be cleared of vegetation by an excavator beforehand. This will be happening soon, and the platform engineer Geoff Freedman is travelling to Staffin on November 27th for an on-site meeting to agree sight lines and assess the rock for the platform's construction. Geoff will project manage the platform's construction phase. It is hoped to invite contractors to tender for the work before the end of the year. A separate tender will also be issued for the construction of the car parking area. SCT is working on a timetable to start construction in the first quarter of 2018 and will provide regular updates.

Rabbie's: Staff from Rabbie's, the coach tours firm - which has worked in partnership with SCT on path repairs at the Quiraing last spring and autumn – have volunteered to return to Staffin. SCT, with the support of access officer Donald Kennedy, hope to work with Rabbie's in carrying out repairs to the Brogaig path in early December.

Staffin online directory: 13 local businesses – Skye Light Candles, The Wee Quilter, the Ellishadder Art Café, Staffin Stores, MacKenzie Stores, Quiraing View B&B, Staffin Museum, Achtealean B&B, Skye Pie Café, the Staffin Gym, The Kilmartin Restaurant, Staffin Groundworks, Columba 1400 Café and the Staffin Campsite - are now featured on [http://staffin-](http://staffin-trust.co.uk/staffin-directory)

[trust.co.uk/staffin-directory](http://staffin-trust.co.uk/staffin-directory) All are promoted via the online Staffin business directory and in the run up to Christmas there will be an update soon about their hours of trading, special offers, etc. If your business wants to be included, please contact SCT.

100 members: SCT is Ton-Up

ONE HUNDRED people are now members of Staffin Community Trust - almost 1 in 5 of the resident population.

The milestone was reached last month and is testament to the support and encouragement from the community and our diaspora. SCT was set up in 1994 to represent everybody who lives within Staffin and develop projects which improve the social and economic welfare of the district. To get funding support for SCT's various projects it must have a membership drawn from the community. A member requires to support the work of the SCT in principle but does not require to attend monthly meetings unless they serve as a director on the board. SCT chairman Sandy Ogilvie said he and the board of directors were absolutely delighted to have a growing membership of all ages from across the community.

Columba 1400

Columba 1400 is looking to recruit a new housekeeper.

This post will be all-year round, 22.5 hours per week, 8am-12.30 pm.

If you are interested, please phone 01478 611400 or email - recruitment@columba1400.com