A tartan for Raasay

BY LILLIAN MACLEOD

You may be aware by now that there is a Community Art Project underway which is producing a large wall hanging, to be displayed in the stairwell of the hall. A spin-off from that is the idea of designing a tartan for Raasay. There are various ways in which a Raasay tartan could be used. Making craft items is the obvious one. Many people on Raasay have surnames which don’t belong to any of the established Scottish clans and therefore they don’t have a tartan of their own. Visitors coming to the island may not want to buy anything made in or displaying a Clan tartan, but would perhaps be happy to do so with a Raasay tartan. It may be possible to have ribbon made in our tartan; it could be printed on greetings cards, postcards and display or gift boxes; it would be possible to have the tartan professionally woven – a kilt length say or fabric for skirts and waistcoats and so on. It might be incorporated into uniforms for the workplace perhaps (Raasay House or the new distillery?). Surely more ideas will come to mind.

Some work has gone into designing a choice of tartans patterns, using colours which the people involved in the Community Art Project have been discussing and using. These are now offered for the community to consider and vote on.

Small pictures of the four patterns are reproduced here, but bigger print-outs and little coils of the six yarns are on display in the shop. Voting papers are in the shop too and we hope that as many people as possible will vote for one of the patterns.
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Community of Raasay Retail Association
2762RS
Springtime on Raasay, taken by Davie Carslaw
Sonas ann an Suidhisnis / Happiness in Suisnish

BY LE NIALL GÒR DAN

Some years have passed since those heady days when I camped in many wonderful locations: but the memories remain. This song was composed in the strophic style – bàirdne – at a time when I was completely obsessed with this ancient metre. The conversation and actual event are somewhat exaggerated – as is the norm for poets, perhaps – but the song was written with good intentions at heart. Perhaps I’ll come over to sing it for you some day! In the meantime, let me lay a hint regarding a similar composition, made more recently, but making good use of a known Gaelic style whereupon “s” is replaced with “d”, when “sonas” could become replaced with “donas”!

I will say no more but leave you in suspense – air bhioran! Incidentally, the song is one of many to be found in my first humble publication – “Eadar Baile is Beann” – currently occupying some cosy shelf space in Raasay’s fine shop! Mòran taing.

Sonas ann an Suidhisnis / Happiness in Suisnish

‘S math is cuimhne leam là
‘S mi gu seasgair ‘s gu blàth
Am poca-cadail ‘s mi a’ rànail nam shuain...

I well recall a day
Warm and cosy
In a sleeping-bag roaring and snoring...

Am bothan-aodaich air blàr
Bha ‘g èirigh suas bhon a’ rathad
Ann an eilean tha ri Clàraich is cuan

In a cloth-bothy in a field
Rising up from the road
In an isle beside a Clàrach and ocean

‘S gann gun cuininnn mo shrann
Ri linn an ùpraid a bh’ ann
Duine ‘s caoraich na cheann ‘s iad a’ siubhal

I could barely hear my snores
Due to a racket outdoors
A man leading sheep and shifting

‘S ann a phùt mi mo shròin
Ge bu chul dhomh mo theòin
A chur aghaidh ris an t-seòid a bha muigh ud

I poked out my nose
With my bahookie behind
To face the hero out there

‘S air dhomh cantail, “Cò sibh
A rinn mo thogail às ùr
Air madainn mhaiseach cho ciùin is a chunnaic?”

On my saying, “Who’s you
Who’s made me rise up anew
On a morning as bonny and calm as I’ve seen?”

Thuirt am bodach, ‘s e càir,
"Is mise Calum MacLeòid
Calum Bàin mar is eòl do gach duine!

The old chap then said,
“I am Calum MacLeod,
Calum Bàin as everyone knows me!

"Ciod as dachaigh dhut fhèin
Le do Ghàidhlig cho réidh
’S gun dèan e àgh na mo chlèibh bhith ga cluinneil?That makes me joyous just listening to it?

“ ‘n ann à Èirinn thu thall
No badag eil’ air an fhonn
Far nach bruidhnear i ann ‘s i gun uidheam?“

“Are you from yonder Ireland
Or some other plot on the planet
Where it’s unspoken and old-fashioned as well?”

Ged bu duilich a ràdh
’S ann a thuirt mi, “ ‘S e ‘m Blàr

Though it was hard to relate,
I said, ”Muir of Ord,
Far nach clùinear aca à tìcheadh is aithchach!

Where all one hears is criticism and madness!

“Ged bha uair b’i ar cainnt
An-diugh gur gann i ga seinn
Mu nà cumhic ‘s mun a’ Bheinn ‘s i gun chumhachd”

“Though once our tongue
Today it is rarely sung
Around the hills and Ben Wyvis with power

“Ach tha mi subhach a ràdh”

“Gum bi deagh chuimhn’ a’m gu bràth
’S mi nist air fuireach tri là na ur dùthaich:”

“But I am happy to say
That I will remember forever
Having now stayed for three days in your land:

“Oir ’s ann ann an Ràtharsair bheag chòir
A bhios a’ Ghàidhlig mar cheòl
Cho fad ’s is làidir ’s is beò i na ur cuideachd.”

“Because in lovely wee Raasay
Gaelic will resound as a music
As long as it lives strong in your folk.”

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was the highlight of their week. Chan eil a’ bheath orra!!”
- Susanne Dhòmhnallach, Sabhal Mòr Ostaig, Skye.

A community lunchtime treat

Guests at the April Community Lunch thought they were in for a treat when they spotted one of the
volunteer helpers arrive with the usual grocery supplies and a bottle of Baileys under her arm.
After the usual kitchen banter – “What are we celebrating?” etc, there was the sudden realisation ...
phone call to Raasay Stores – “David can I add bay leaves to the order?” had been translated to
“a bottle of Baileys”!
Raasay Remains

BY VAL COREY

The Isle of Raasay is fortunate in that, unlike other places in the UK, agriculture has not destroyed all visible traces of our history. The island is rich in archaeological remains which are in many places in plain view.

At Eyre in the south of the island there is a great example of a Neolithic burial site, a striking dolmen. The mound of earth which would have covered it has been completely eroded during the last 5,000 years leaving the massive stones wholly exposed. The enclosed green field in front of the dolmen contains rounded burial cairns of a later date, making the area one of considerable archaeological interest.

In what were the Orchard Woods before felling can be found a Neolithic chambered cairn and a rare example of a Viking grave. It is possible that the felling may have exposed more interesting sites in this area but unfortunately at present access is very poor owing to the amount of brash left after the felling. Hopefully the Forestry will restore some access soon.

The climate 5,000 years ago was quite pleasant. It was relatively warm and dry with summer temperatures four to five degrees warmer than today. This encouraged settled farming and there are several recognisable round house farmsteads to be found on Raasay. One particularly exciting example in Balachuirn glen has remnants of the enclosing wall around the farm still clearly visible, quite a rare occurrence. Balmeanach has remains of a farmstead where a stone quern was discovered. Another farm may be found at Eyre well above the road upon the hill.

Prehistoric walls abound and at Doire Domhain there are traces of Neolithic field patterns. Nearby are the remains of small round houses fairly close together suggesting community living.

Two Bronze Age axes have been found by folk digging their gardens and a fine Iron Age sword was excavated near Eyre. This is now in Edinburgh Museum. Perhaps we may retrieve it when the Heritage Centre opens.

Glimpses into the lives of our ancestors are all around us and there is still a wealth of archaeology yet to be uncovered.

Here is a picture of our Marie Curie Field of Hope at our play park. About seven years ago the school children and members of the public got together to create a Marie Curie Field of Hope - collecting money to sponsor the planting of these daffodils which this year were especially beautiful and heartwarming. Unless you have young children you may not know about these beautiful spring flowers and their reason for being there. There are benches in the park and it is a lovely spot to simply sit and enjoy the outdoors! Ann O
THE ISLE OF RAASAY DISTILLERY’S FIRST 100 CASKS

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A childhood on Fladda

JEN BURNET writes about KATY MACLEOD’S childhood on Fladda, an island accessible from Raasay at low tide, where a crofting community flourished until the mid-1900s. The last families left Fladda in 1965.

Katy MacLeod (née Gillies) lived on the island of Fladda with her family from approximately 1909-1924. She remembered well what a very happy place Fladda was during those years. If one of the neighbours finished planting potatoes, cutting the oats or the peats, or any other of the numerous tasks that needed to be done, first, that crofter would automatically and gladly help his neighbour whose task was as yet unfinished. Work was shared and Katy grew up in a caring and sharing community. As the nearest school at that time was at Torran, Katy did not attend school until she was seven years of age, as the distance from Fladda to the school was too great for a toddler to walk. There were 26 other scholars when Katy attended school and the teacher was Seumas MacKinnon of Glendale, Skye.

She loved school and when the time came for her to leave she cried. When the school day finished, Katy and the other children would return to Fladda to find a list of tasks to be done. Butter, cream, crowdie and rennet were made from the milk of the two or three cows each household possessed – a hard cheese with rennet added being made which lasted for a few months.

Oats and potatoes were planted in the fields whilst each house had its own garden where they would grow such vegetables as carrots, turnips and cabbage and fruits – rhubarb, gooseberries, blackcurrants. Nobody ever went hungry on Fladda! Livestock would be slaughtered when meat was wanted and drovers would come over from Skye to purchase their cattle and lambs, driving them to the south end of the island where they would be loaded onto a boat and taken across to Skye. A great deal of fish, which abounded in the waters around Fladda, would be an important part of their diet and fish like lythe would be boned and put to dry in the sun and later salted ready for the winter months. Herring nets were set and when caught would be taken over to Portree to be sold there.

Wool from the sheep would be used for knitting or weaving.

Katy recalled that sometimes they would go over to the old lady, Anna Ruaridh MacLeod, at Arnish who had a loom and would weave cloth for them. They would dye their own wool, using crottle for a brown dye, feusaig nan creag (sea ivory) to produce an orange/brown, bark of the alder for black or brown. Heather and meadowsweet were also used, the colour depending on the time of year the plant was picked.

Some dyes were also bought in Portree, but mainly plants native to the island were used. A large black pot was put to boil and the plant to be used for the dyeing placed in the boiling water. The wool, once dyed, would then be washed with fresh water.

The springs on Fladda supplied fresh water but when the time came for the blankets to be washed, the women would go down to the nearest loch and wash and dry them there.

On the Sabbath the Fladda inhabitants would go to the Mission House in Torran where they would listen to a sermon by Andrew Tallach, grandfather of the minister on Raasay for many years, Dr James Tallach, or to a visiting preacher.

In 1913-14, Katy and her family moved temporarily to 13 Inverarish Terrace, where she remembered being rather frightened by the rowdy miners’ children who were playing boisterously on the washing greens between the two rows of houses. She was greatly relieved at last to see known faces, those of the aunt and uncle of Calum MacLeod (late of number 16), her cousin, who were living at 12 Inverarish Terrace.

Raasay Fuel Wood

The stock of fire wood at the Pit has just about run out. Forestry Commission Scotland has agreed to supply 1,000 tonnes of additional wood over the next few years for us to process into fuel. The first 300 tonnes will arrive in the Pit very soon. From May 1st RDT will be running the fuelwood supply, taking over from RHCC. Anyone wanting to order fire wood should call the office (660 358 - leave a message if Lloyd is not there) or send an email (lloydraasay@gmail.com). We expect to be able to make deliveries from early June.

Initially, processing will be done by volunteers, as before. However, RDT hope to establish the wood fuel supply as a business that employs someone. There will still be a role for volunteers, but the business will grow and become more professional. To start with, there will be one product – a delivery of a trailer load of cut and split fire wood, at a cost of £50. Payment will be on ordering or on delivery – unfortunately we can not offer credit. We will continually monitor the cost of processing and delivering the firewood, and we intend to extract no profit from the business, so the price will reflect that. In future, it may be possible to buy firewood in bulk (1 tonne at a time) at a lower price.

The wood in the Pit will not be available for people to take away, neither processed nor as lengths. If you wish to process your own fire wood, please contact the Forestry Commission to discuss a delivery of uncut logs to you or a gleaning licence.
Renovating The Silver Grasshopper

The last few weeks have been a very busy and exciting time at The Silver Grasshopper. As you may have seen we have been undergoing some major renovations which, I am happy to say, are nearly complete.

We have moved the entrance to a new position at the side and installed a new door and a new, larger window at the end. The old porch entrance has been incorporated into the shop as the sales desk. This means a much bigger, brighter, cleaner - and warmer(!) environment. Currently we are in the process of having power installed before the final fit and finish inside.

Unfortunately this has meant that we have been closed for some of the time but I hope that, by the end of May, we should be completely up and running. I would like to thank all my customers and the community for their patience and support while this has been going on.

Please feel free to pop in anytime you see my sign out or email or phone if you would like me to open up for you. Once the renovations are complete I look forward to being open on a regular basis throughout the summer.

Here is a photo of the shop - looking smart in its new paintwork.
Mapping the geology of Raasay

BY GREGORY PRICE

The original geological map of Raasay was surveyed by H.B. Woodward in 1893 with further additions by G.W. Lee in 1920 and the current British Geological Survey map is still based on these early works.

They show the complexity of Raasay geology with extensive exposures of Lewisian Gneiss in the far north of the island, the Torridonian Sandstone principally found in north-western parts and much younger Triassic sediments seen in small areas in the south of the island, for example at Rhuba na' Leac. Fossiliferous Jurassic sands and shales are mostly exposed in the south and east. These Jurassic rocks include the Raasay Ironstone, which was mined briefly around the First World War. An extensive granitic intrusion covers a wide area in the south of the island, whilst Dun Caan is composed of basalt, part of the Skye lava field.

Even though the original mapping was carried out over 100 years ago, you may wonder why university students still come to map the geology of island every year. It is the complexity and variety of rocks, the good exposure, as well as a warm welcome that attracts students from all over the UK (for example from the universities of Aberdeen, Leeds, Plymouth, Leicester and Portsmouth) to study on the island.

Geological fieldwork is an essential aspect of University teaching as it teaches students spatial awareness, 3D problem solving and an appreciation of the complexity and variability of geology as shown in Raasay. Personal development and team-building are also greatly enhanced through teaching and learning in the field.

Raasay is one of the most beautiful islands in the Inner Hebrides and although the weather can be challenging, I’m sure university students will be mapping the geology for many years to come.

Gregory Price is Professor of Earth Sciences at Plymouth University.

Community shop plans granted with conditions

BY DELLA CHEREH

On April 1 The Highland Council granted planning permission for the shop’s new stepped access and canopy, and also for the new storage shed.

The permission is granted subject to two conditions: that the colour of the shed roof, and details of external lighting, be submitted for approval.
St. Moluag’s Chapel Raasay

BY MARGARET MOODIE

St. Moluag (or Lugaidh) was born in Bangor in Ireland about 596. He and St. Columba were said to be rivals in their wishes to be the first to bring Christianity to the islands.

There are several chapels dedicated to St. Moluag throughout the islands – north Skye, Tiree, Mull, Pabbay and Raasay with the mother church being on the island of Lismore near Oban where St. Moluag became bishop. It is said that his ancient staff (Bachul Mor – great staff) is in the possession of the Duke of Argyll at Inverary. St. Moluag died about five years before St. Columba.

The first written mention of the chapel on Raasay is by Donald Munro in 1526 when he became an appointee to the vicarage there. By the time that Samuel Johnson and James Boswell visited the island in 1773 the building was “unroofed and ruinous”.

The chapel is 52’ x 24’ with 3’ thick walls and was altered and enlarged during its early years. The east window is 13th century and the west window 14th century when it appears that alterations took place. The walls of the chapel were stabilised in 1992 by two Skye archaeologists, Martin Wildegoose and Steven Birch, because of fears that gales might take down the structure. (This had happened to the top window a number of years previously.) They thought that there might have been a gallery possibly reached by an outside stair. The lowest window is now below ground level because of burials inside the chapel. The original entrance is in the south east wall which also has a recess (possibly medieval).

Recently three slabs that were against the wall of the churchyard were moved into the building. These are possibly three of the sanctuary stones that were in a semi-circle around the area.

South of the chapel is the private chapel of the MacLeods of Raasay, mentioned by Johnson and Boswell in 1773. This chapel was rebuilt in the 1800s. Tradition says that the graves of a number of MacLeods are under the present floor. (Note the carved head on the gable end opposite the door).

To the west of the chapel is a small building said to be an 11th century priest’s cell. The graveyard was enclosed in the late 19th century so a number of graves lie outside the walls.
In the third of a series of articles on Raasay’s flora, botanist STEPHEN BUNGARD takes a closer look at worts.

There are dozens of plants to be found on Raasay whose names end in wort (pronounced wert, not wart) derived from the Old English word wyrt which just meant plant. Many of these plants were used in primitive medicine, the first part of the word denoting the complaint against which it was supposed to be effective or the part of the body to be treated. The “doctrine of signatures” suggested that herbs resembling various parts of the body can be used to treat ailments of those parts of the body. There is no evidence that morphological plant signatures ever led to the discovery of medicinal properties. Some plants that bear “signatures” are efficacious, as are many that do not. It seems likely that the doctrine of signatures acted as a memory aid, and in oral traditions plants that are both efficacious and easy to remember are more likely to be maintained in the pharmacopoeia.

Liverwort, pilewort, spleenwort, stitchwort, woundwort and less obviously, figwort (figs = piles) and pearlwort (pearl = an eye disease) fit this bill.

Some wort names, however, result from other beliefs such as milkwort stimulating milk production, sneezewort (when dried and pulverized) provoking sneezing, and sheep feeding on lousewort being prone to lice.

Others appear to relate solely to the appearance of the plant such as bladderwort, pennywort, spearwort, moonwort, quillwort, ragwort, stonewort and water-starwort.

Here are three of our commonest worts:

On the moors, Heath Milkwort (Polygala serpyllifolia), Slender (or Beautiful) St John’s-wort (Hypericum pulchrum) and Lousewort (Pedicularis sylvatica) are widespread. Heath Milkwort flowers are most commonly bright blue but can also be light blue, white or pink/purple. Lousewort comes in two subspecies with the less common form (Pedicularis sylvatica subsp. hibernica) having a hairy calyx – the bladder-like structure below the petals. This subspecies is restricted to Ireland, Western Scotland, Western Wales and a couple of outlying sites in the Pennines. On Raasay it accounts for an estimated 3-5% of the species in total but it is absent in some areas whilst, very locally, the sole representative in others.

Stephen (pronounced Steven not Stefan) is Vice-county Recorder for the Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland for Skye, Raasay and the Small Isles. His website, including Flora of Raasay, can be found at tinyurl.com/Raasayflora OR bit.ly/Raasay, and his botanical blog can be found at skyeraasayplants.wordpress.com.
Raasay War Memorial – The journey continues

BY SALLY WALKINSHAW

Firstly, an apology, correction and update regarding Private Alex Graham.

My article last month stated that Private Graham was commemorated on the Chatby Memorial in Alexandria.

Further research has shown this to be incorrect, for which I sincerely apologise.

Private Alex Graham does have a grave and is buried in the cemetery at Chatby and is ‘our’ Private Graham from Rona.

The details I have found are:


His grave can be located in Plot F. No.113.
There are 2259 First World War burials in the cemetery and 503 from the Second World War.

The Chatby Military & War Memorial Cemetery (originally the Garrison Cemetery) was used for WW1 burials until April 1916.

Many of the other names on the Raasay War Memorial were in the Cameron Highlanders and Seaforth Highlanders. They were known as the Seaforth & Cameron Brigade up to May 1915. This then became the 152nd (1st Highland) Brigade.

However tracing our individual Cameronians and Seaforths is not easy as some of the Cameron and Seaforth battalions joined the 154th (3rd Highland) Brigade in 1916.

The 154th’s also contained battalions from the Argyll & Sutherland Highlanders, Black Watch, Royal Scots and also battalions from Lancashire and Durham (a brigade generally comprised four battalions).

Overall the Raasay Cameron and Seaforth lads were part of the 51st (Highland) Division.

The Highland Division (generally 3 brigades) was a formation of the Territorial Force and all units were mobilized on 5th August 1914 and ordered to concentrate at Bedford. Several units left between November 1914 and March 1915 to reinforce the British Expeditionary Force (BEF). In April 1915 the remainder of the division crossed to France and was then sent to Belgium for the First Battle of Ypres.

As would be expected of the Scots, they soon built a reputation as a hard fighting formation. As they were involved in many of the battles throughout WW1 and along the Western Front, I feel it would be appropriate to highlight their major action during the Battle of the Somme in recognition of this year’s 100th Anniversary.

Although the Battle of the Somme is generally seen as being fought between July 1st 1916 and November 1st 1916, this particular timespan was really the major offensive on the Somme.

The First World War arrived on the Somme in September 1914 with fighting in the Somme and Picardy regions when the German forces arrived in Peronne and St Quentin and were engaged by the French army. The German forces captured the ground north of the Somme river covering Fricourt, Mametz, Montauban and Maricourt.

By the end of 1914 the German forces held a defensive line incorporating Gommecourt, Serre, Beaumont Hamel, Thiepval, La Boiselle, Fricourt, Mametz and Montauban.

During 1915 the German forces effectively ‘dug in’ constructing front line and second line...
In 1916 an offensive on the Somme battlefront was proposed. It was intended to be a joint French/British operation but the battles raging further south at Verdun reduced the French participation.

Seven days prior to 1st July the Allies commenced a heavy bombardment of the German lines which continued until the early hours of July 1st.

The whistles blew and thus started one of the bloodiest military battles in history.

And what of the 51st (Highland) Division?

They were part of the fighting forces attempting to capture an area known as High Wood (described by veterans after the war as ‘ghastly by day and ghostly by night!’).

On 14th July 1916 a dawn attack was launched on Longueval and other objectives. This was known as the Battle of Bazentin Ridge. Towards the evening High Wood came into the reckoning.

Infantry advanced through the wood but met increasing opposition. There was intense fighting which lasted for many days involving many different units. It is recorded that “an attack on High Wood on the 20th July was undertaken by, amongst other units, the 1st Camerons, 5th Scottish Rifles and the 20th Royal Fusiliers”.

There is also mention of the 2nd Gordon Highlanders and the 8th Devons.

After the 20th July attacks reached their unsuccessful conclusion the Germans reoccupied most of High Wood. However efforts continued and on the night of the 22nd/23rd July the 4th Gordon Highlanders attacked the eastern corner of the wood, whilst the 1st Royal West Kents attacked the south eastern part with the 14th Royal Warwickshires.

The following is a short extract from a book titled “The Hell They Called High Wood” by Terry Norman:

"Opposite Wood Lane, 5th Division’s 13th Brigade was relieved the same night as Stewart’s 154th Brigade was ordered to extend 51st Division’s frontage eastwards by taking over the 1st Royal West Kent’s positions. The 154th Brigade now had a frontage of some 2,500 yards to hold and Stewart’s troops were growing weary by the hour. But there was more fighting to do. Horne had sent orders to divisional headquarters that he wanted the eastern and western corners of High Wood captured and secured at the earliest moment.

Division passed the orders on to 154th Brigade. Realising that his 9th Royal Scots and 4th Gordon Highlanders were all but crippled from the last attack Stewart detailed the 4th Seaforth Highlanders. The battalion’s first objective was the machine-gun redoubt in the eastern corner.

The 4th Seaforth Highlanders had the misfortune to have taken over the 1st Royal West Kent’s frontage. They commenced their attack in the dark at 9pm but were promptly enfiladed by such punishing machine-gun fire on leaving their trench that the attack had to be called off. Half the battalion had fallen victim, but the misery was not over. The Germans were roused and shelled the forward area throughout the night, mainly with gas.

Midst a bout of further gas shelling, Stewart’s brigade was itself relieved by 51st Division’s 153 Brigade on 26th July. His war-torn battalions wended their way to bivouac in the reserve area, leaving High Wood to a triumphant if not equally weary enemy”.

Units from the 51st Division fought at High Wood until 26th July and later a wooden cross was erected to commemorate those of the 51st Division who had fallen. This cross still stands on the Somme today, but was moved to be near the 51st Division’s imposing memorial near Beaumont Hamel which is located within the Newfoundland Memorial Park.

After the war High Wood was never fully cleared and it is estimated that the remains of around 8,000 soldiers, British and German still lie today in High Wood.

The significance of Beaumont Hamel and the why the 51st Division Memorial is located there will (hopefully) be covered in a future article. If you have any further information regarding WWI and Raasay residents past and present, Sally would love to hear from you. Her email address is walkinshawsally@gmail.com.
A date for your diary: on Saturday 28th May the first of three Craft Fairs to be held this year will take place in the village hall. Those of you who attended our Craft Fairs last year will know that these are a showcase for the abundant crafting talent which we have on this island.

The crafters have been busy over the dark winter days producing items to sell or display and the hall will be full of interesting things to see and buy. The Fair will be open from 11.00am to 3.00pm with admission £1 and I hope that many of you will come along and support your local Crafters.

If anyone on the island would like to join us this year to display or sell craft items made on the island you would be very welcome. Anybody wanting to sell is asked to contribute £5 and profits from the fair (if we make any!) will go to the Hall Landscape Fund. If you want to sell your wares at the fair please let me know by the 14th May so that I can work out a table plan.

It would be very helpful to have a few more of what I am calling ‘occasional helpers’ – people who can come along for an hour or so during the day and stand in for those of us who will be there all day, to allow us to have a short break and grab a coffee. We also need help with the admissions table and running the café. I’m also sending out a plea for people to donate a little home baking to serve to our visitors with coffee/tea.

If you are prepared to help in any of these ways please get in touch.

Lillian  660328  lilmac@macace.net

Want your own copy of *Am Bratach: Raasay’s Community Newsletter*?

If you would like to receive *Am Bratach* electronically as a PDF each month, for free, please contact Lloyd Gudgeon (lloydraasay@gmail.com). We currently have around 250 subscribers. However if you think there’s nothing like the feel of real paper with real ink, hot off the photocopier, then copies are now available to buy in the shop for 50p. How will you read yours?

**Creative in your Community**

Are you aged 12-25 with an exciting creative project idea? If so, why not apply to The Highland Youth Arts Hub?

They will contribute up to £500 for an individual’s project idea, and up to £1,000 for an idea from a group of two or more.

The next deadline for applications is May 27.

For more information, see http://feisrois.org.uk/downloads/ciyc_information.pdf or call Stacey Toner, Highland Youth Arts Hub Manager, on 01349 862600.

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Two bedroom croft house available to rent. Sleeps up to 4 people.

Garden & fantastic views across the Sound of Raasay.

Prices from £300 to £500 per week, shorter stays available.

For more information or to book please contact:

Katherine Gillies 01478 660233

or email: raasayrentals@gmail.com
Project Updates from RDT

Forestry
A well-attended meeting on 27th April heard from Forestry Commission staff about the progress and plans with harvesting. There was also an opportunity for people to ask questions. The meeting lasted two hours; some of the topics covered were: harvesting is almost finished for now, and shipping will start from Suisnish in May; there will be additional surveys to look for more phytophthora infection over the summer, which may lead to further felling at the end of the year; Forestry Commission will reinstate the footpaths that they have blocked during the harvesting, aiming to complete that work in six weeks, and will repair the Orchard road; newly exposed steep slopes will be inspected to check stability, especially rocky and scree slopes; a small amount of replanting will be done this year in important amenity areas such as around the loch to reduce the visual impact. On the options for restocking, it was explained that high-volume output tends to require plantation species and management, which leads to periodic gluts of timber followed by long periods of no harvesting (the traditional approach), while more broadleaved and mixed planting will lend itself to harvesting "little and often" and will be more secure from disease. It will also look better most of the time. A show of hands clearly demonstrated a desire for replanting to be based on mixed broadleaves and native woodland.

As before, please be very careful around the forest while felling is going on. Please do not use paths that have been temporarily closed, and keep children and dogs under control near machinery!

Hydro Scheme
Slow, steady progress here. We are talking to potential customers for our electricity and defining the work that we will need to be done designing the power distribution networks (wires, trenches and poles). We also need some legal advice on the obligations and responsibilities of an electricity retailer, as compared to an electricity generator. We hope to get that work done in the next six weeks or so.

Community Artwork
People have been meeting fairly regularly, developing the idea for a large wall-hanging that will illustrate what Raasay is about. The overall design is becoming clear – it will be based on the geographical outline of the island. Unlike a regular map though, it will be filled with drawings, needlework, painting, and any other craft or art work that together builds up a complex picture of Raasay and its community. Please join in and add your own ideas and work.

Pontoon
We now have an email from the Harbour Authorities saying that they do not have any reason, in principle, to object to our proposal for a pontoon at the new pier. This means we can apply for planning permission. If any volunteers would like to help with getting the planning application ready, please contact Lloyd.
News from Raasay Primary School

Polytunnel: Since the Easter Holidays we have been very busy clearing away the old polytunnel and preparing the site for the new one. The new polytunnel has now been delivered and we are looking forward to having it on site in the next few weeks, ready for the growing season. As part of our application to the Climate Change Fund we proposed setting up our own all-weather compost scheme which would offer a weekly doorstep collection every Wednesday – this would involve the pupils collecting kitchen waste from houses in the school park area to be composted at the school. Pupils have created colourful flyers to be sent out to households in the immediate school area detailing how to take part in the scheme. We hope to find a way of extending the scheme further afield if successful but we have to ensure that it is only transported to the school in an environmentally-friendly way. We’ll keep you posted about this exciting new venture!

Parent Open Day: Parent Open Days will be a regular feature of school life at the end of each term. Pictured are some of the pupils sharing with their parents what they have been learning.

Rocket Seeds: Raasay Primary School is very excited to be part of the Rocket Science Experiment. On 2nd September 2015 two kilograms of rocket seed travelled to the International Space Station where they were stored in microgravity by Tim Peake (the first British ESA astronaut) before their return to earth in Spring 2016. Raasay Primary pupils have received their packets of seeds which they have carefully sown under the conditions detailed in the information pack. As this is a scientific experiment, pupils must adhere to the instructions and record similarities or differences between the two sets of seeds they have been given. At the end of the experiment their results will be entered into a national database where the findings will be analysed and published for everyone to see. Pupils will be invited to make a prediction based on the evidence you have gathered as to which packet contains the space seeds, red or blue. Pictured are the pupils along with Kate and Katherine from the Gardening Club after planting the seeds.
Cross Country: On Friday 6th May, pupils in P6/7 will be taking part in the annual Skye Schools Cross Country Championships. In the run-up to the event the children have been participating in after school practice over a similar length course. This helps them to develop their endurance and stamina skills and we wish them all the best for the event.

KNEX: On Friday 22nd April pupils from the Nursery to P3 attended the Knex Science workshop which this year took place in the hall due to the nature of the activities. Pupils had to create a remote control buggy to transport their ‘bear’ around a course. The pupils worked in pairs and the focus was to develop fine motor skills and dexterity while problem solving. From the evaluations completed by the children at the end of the session, they all enjoyed the workshop. The pupils from P4-7 then had a workshop on juggling skills. The process of learning to juggle was taught beginning with one ball and developing through to three. It was emphasised that nobody can learn to juggle in an hour but that she was teaching the process which could then be practised. It was a fun activity with most pupils getting the hang of at least two balls – keeps practising!

Food Topic: All the children will be developing knowledge and understanding of what makes a healthy diet and how to make informed decisions regarding diet in order to improve all aspects of wellbeing. They will also be learning about food practices and choices and how they depend on many factors including availability, sustainability, season, cost, religious beliefs, culture, peer pressure and advertising. Pupils will also be learning about understanding the role of food within social and cultural contexts and developing their skills through a mini project involving teams designing and creating a healthy smoothie. We will be looking closely at fair trade and the journey foods make to our plate. Later on we will be growing some produce in our school garden and, through science, finding out about food chains.

Eilean Donan: On Thursday 28th April pupils in P2-7 went on an outing to Eilean Donan Castle and Plockton Boat Trips. Pupils enjoyed a very informative and engaging tour of the castle and visitor centre. The guide very kindly raised the portcullis especially for us which was a highlight for the children. Many of the exhibits within the castle were relevant to their learning about the Jacobites last term and a lot of Raasay connections to the MacLeods were explained. The castle staff very kindly provided an indoor area for us to eat our lunch which was much appreciated. We then headed to Plockton for a boat trip to see the...
seals. Calum, the Skipper, had warm blankets at the ready to keep us all cosy and there was hot chocolate on board for sharing. All the children had the opportunity to drive the boat and at one point the tour microphone was brought out for us all to sing a Happy Birthday to Tabby as we sailed round the loch! The weather was cold but we were well prepared and we had plenty of layers and school waterproofs. The day was thoroughly enjoyed by all – pizzas from Café Sia were much appreciated on the way home! Yet again, the pupils represented the school in an excellent manner and it was noted by some members of the public what a well-behaved, interested, polite group of children we have at Raasay Primary School – well done all! We would like to thank the Raasay Community once again as these opportunities are only possible due to the fantastic fundraising done each year by the community and the school.

BY DELLA CHESHIRE

Another month, another name change! An eagle-eyed reader of last month’s issue spotted that our new Gaelic title was not as accurate as it could be. Although The Raasay Banner works in English, translated into Gaelic The/Am would be implicit, making Bratach Ratharsair. We could say Am Bratach Rathairseach, by turning Raasay into an adjective.

However we have decided, and we hope you will agree, that such a long title followed by our English tagline would be unwieldy. So our new title is Am Bratach: Raasay’s Community Newsletter; Am Bratach translating accurately as The Banner.

Sales of paper copies in the shop have been going well, with three print runs over the course of the month. Next month we will be using a new A3 printer, which should make reading the paper copy a good deal easier.

We are really grateful for all the positive feedback we’ve received this month, from Sussex to Skye, London to Lancashire. Please keep it, and any constructive criticism, coming!

Many thanks for all your contributions to this month’s newsletter, our longest issue yet. In fact we’ve had to keep several articles aside for the future, but do still keep contributing!

The deadline for the June newsletter is Friday May 27.

Please send any newsletter correspondence, including feedback, to Della Cheshire at Creachan Cottage, Isle of Raasay IV40 8NT, tel 01478 660380 / 07952 806176 or email dellatfcheshire@gmail.com.

Am Bratach advertising rates, per year:
15% discount for 12 issues paid upfront, i.e. 12 issues for the price of 10!
Did you know that you can report potholes online?

I have recently reported all major potholes on the route between Inverarish Cottages and the old youth hostel. These should be “assessed and dealt with within 21 working days”. There are many others though – have you got a spare few minutes to submit a report? If so please visit www.highland.gov.uk/info/20005/roads_and_pavements/96/road_faults.

I understand that if the pothole has been reported and a vehicle is subsequently damaged by that pothole, a claim can be made against The Highland Council rather than your insurer.
Kung Fu Panda 3
Thu 19 at 5.30pm (PG) 95 mins Directors: Jennifer Yuh Nelson, Alessandro Carloni Voices: Jack Black, Angelina Jolie, Dustin Hoffman, Jackie Chan, Seth Rogen Po’s ‘legendary adventures of awesomeness’ continue in this third, and some have said the best, instalment of the Dreamworks Kung Fu adventures. When a supernatural villain sweeps across China defeating all the Kung Fu masters, it’s up to Po to train a village full of his fun-loving chums to become the ultimate band of Kung Fu pandas.
“(n)oodles of charm and good humour” Daily Express

Eddie the Eagle
Thu 19 at 8.30pm (PG) 106 mins Director: Dexter Fletcher Cast: Taron Egerton, Hugh Jackman, Christopher Walken The story of Eddie ‘The Eagle’ Edwards - a plumber from Cheltenham who represented Great Britain at the 1988 Winter Olympics - has been turned into a feel-good bio-pic by Dexter Fletcher, the director who brought us Sunshine on Leith. Taron Egerton gives a great performance as Eddie - all thick glasses and jutting chin - while Hugh Jackman brings some A-list glamour as Eddie’s fictional coach with a score to settle. “... a crowd-pleasing story of inspiration. It's a solid gold winner.” Empire

Thursday 19 May
Raasay, Community Hall

Book at www.screenmachine.co.uk
Tickets also at Screen Machine 30 mins before each screening (cash only).
Adults £7.50 Seniors, Students & 16-and-under £5.50
We are not able to accept bookings by telephone until further notice.
All 14-and-unders must be accompanied by a parent or 21+ guardian at 8.00/8.30pm screenings.
Raasay Community Association

Events at Raasay Community Hall

Friday 1st April
The first dance of the season, with regulars The Kyle Ceilidh Band, was well attended and enjoyed by all.
Thank you very much to those who volunteered to help on the night, these events can't happen without you!

Thursday 19th May
The Screen Machine are back on Raasay, showing Kung Fu Panda 3 at 5.30pm, and Eddie the Eagle at 8.30pm at the front of the Community Hall.
Both films are PG and as usual the Screen Machine state that all under 14's must be accompanied by a parent or 21+ guardian at the 8:30pm screening.
Tickets can be bought on the door (cash only) or at www.screenmachine.co.uk

Friday 20th May
It's Bingo night again! Games start at 6.30pm and there will be a bar and hot / cold snacks served during the evening.
£1 for a sheet of 6 cards and 20p for a bingo marker pen.
Come along and see if you get a full house. All ages welcome.

Friday 17th June
Fingers crossed for good weather for the first licensed family BBQ at the hall this summer. Food will be served from 6pm, please bring your own music!
As usual, if you are able to help at this event please get in touch and let us know, thank you!
Further events are planned for July onwards, more details will be published as they are confirmed, BUT we will need volunteers please otherwise they cannot go ahead. Please let us know if you can help.
If you have any ideas or suggestions for events in the future please get in touch.

Other Dates:

Hairdresser Visit:
The hairdresser will be on Raasay on Thursdays 12th and 26th May, then due to holidays she will not be back again until Thursday 30th June.

Lunch Club:
May's lunch club will be on Wednesday 18th May. We will also be looking at arranging an outing in the summer so please have a think and let us have any suggestions for where you would like to go this year!

Thursday 5th May and Thursday 23rd June
As you will be aware these are the dates of the Scottish Parliament Election and the EU referendum, so as usual the hall will be the polling station and unfortunately we can't take any other bookings on those days. Thank you for your understanding.

Hall Hire:
Please note that the £10 monthly sports deal has now ended, however the hall is still available to hire from as little £5 per hour for one off, short notice bookings for families or groups of 4 or less people.
The board of Raasay Community Association have recently reviewed the hall hire rates to bring a few anomalies in line with the standard hall hire rates, however the majority of the rates remain unchanged.
There is also now an opportunity to rent a desk in the office for half or full days, inclusive of internet access, for £5 for half a day, £10 for a full day.
The hall hire rates are published overleaf and if you have any queries or to make a booking for the hall please contact Katherine Gillies on 01478 660233 or Ann Oliphant on 01478 660388.
Raasay Community Association

Hall Hire Charges

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Room</th>
<th>Residents Standard</th>
<th>Block Booking</th>
<th>Non Residents / Commercial</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Whole Building</td>
<td>£140 / day</td>
<td>£250 / day</td>
<td></td>
<td>Includes exclusive use of kitchen, changing rooms &amp; RCA owned games</td>
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<tr>
<td>Max 120 people seated, 180 standing</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main Hall</td>
<td>£10 / hour</td>
<td>£8 / hour</td>
<td>£20 / day</td>
<td>Includes (possibly shared) use of kitchen, changing rooms &amp; RCA owned</td>
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<tr>
<td>Max 20 people</td>
<td>Max £100 / day</td>
<td>Max £200 / day</td>
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<td>games</td>
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<tr>
<td>Upstairs Meeting Room / Lobby</td>
<td>£10 / hour</td>
<td>£8 / hour</td>
<td>£20 / day</td>
<td>Includes (possibly shared) use of kitchen and changing rooms</td>
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<tr>
<td>Max 20 people</td>
<td>Max £40 / day</td>
<td>Max £80 / day</td>
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<tr>
<td>Main Hall (One off “on the day” booking for a family or max 4 people for sports etc)</td>
<td>£5 / hour</td>
<td>£10 / hour</td>
<td></td>
<td>Includes (possibly shared) use of kitchen and changing rooms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Monthly Sports Promotion (Runs October to March)</td>
<td>£10 / month</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Unlimited number of bookings of the hall in a month for a family or group of up to 4 friends for informal sports sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Main Hall / Lobby / Meeting Room</td>
<td>£32 / hour</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Examples: Coffee afternoons raising money for a UK charity, local services such as Lunch Club, Hairdresser etc</td>
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<tr>
<td>(For local fundraising for UK charities and provision of local services)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projector / Video / Audio / Lighting Equipment</td>
<td>£5 / hour</td>
<td>£5 / hour</td>
<td>Max £20 / day</td>
<td>Includes internet access. Use of printer can be arranged for a small donation to RDT.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tables / chairs / staging</td>
<td>Free</td>
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<tr>
<td>Use of desk in office</td>
<td>£5 / half day (4 hrs)</td>
<td>£10 / day</td>
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Notes:
- All bookings must comply with numbers set by fire regulations
- Residents are classed as those people who are permanently resident on the Isle of Raasay
- All users agree to the standard conditions of hire

Useful Contact Numbers

Business Gateway/Highland Opportunity/Princes Scottish Youth Business Trust:
Alistair Danter, Tigh na Sgire, Park Lane, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9EP. Tel 01478 611501, Mob 07921 758451 Email alistair.danter@highland-opportunity.com

MP:
Ian Blackford MP, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA. Tel 0207 219 5292 Email ian.blackford.mp@parliament.uk

MSP:
Dave Thompson MSP, Thorfin House, Bridgend Business Park, Dingwall, IV15 9SL. Tel 01349 864701, www.twitter.com/@davytmssp

Local Councillors:
- Hamish Fraser, 8 Scullamus, Breakish, Isle of Skye, IV42 8QB. Tel 01471 822929
- John Gordon, 3 Mill Park, Staffin Road, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9EY. Tel 01478 611783
- Drew Millar, Ibrox, 6 Carndearg Place, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9PZ. Tel 01478 612895
- Ian Renwick, Lochside, Brookside, Clachamish, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9NY. Tel 01470 582386

Ward Manager:
Willie Mackinnon, Tigh na Sgire, Park Lane, Portree, Isle of Skye, IV51 9GP. Tel 01478 613849

Am Bratach advertising rates, per issue:
- Full page: £15
- Half page: £10
- Quarter page: £6
- Eighth page/Small ad: £3
De tha Dò! Talla Ratharsair | What’s on at Raasay Community Hall

- Scottish Parliament Election on Thursday 5 May.
- Screen Machine on Thursday 19 May 5.30pm Kung Fu Panda 3 and 8.30pm Eddie the Eagle.
- Bingo Night on Friday 20 May at 6.30pm.
- Craft Fair on Saturday 28 May 11.00am-3.00pm.
- Arts & Crafts – Mondays 2.00pm-4.00pm.
- Football – Tuesdays 7.00pm.
- Knitting Bee - Thursday evenings 7.30pm (except 5 May). All welcome.
- Lunch Club – Next lunch Wednesday May 18.
- Yoga – Tuesday mornings 9.00am-10.15am and Thursday evenings 6.30pm-7.45pm (12 & 19 May only). Best to practise before you have your evening meal, or at least one hour after. All welcome, bring a mat and a blanket and wear comfortable clothing. Five sessions paid upfront £15; one-off sessions £4 per session. Please contact Tekela on 660 253 or 07810 480972 if you are interested or to book. Other times can be arranged to suit a group of 3 minimum. As usual visitors and newcomers welcome.
- Contact details for the hall bookings: Katherine on 01478 660233/358 or Ann on 01478 660388.
- If you are planning an event and would like to publicise it, please get in touch with Della as soon as possible on 01478 660380 / 07952 806176 or email dellatfcheshire@gmail.com for a mention in the newsletter.

Local Services

- RDT Surgery every Wednesday 10.00am-12.00pm or by appointment. Contact Lloyd on 01478 660358 or email lloydraasay@gmail.com
- NHS Nurse – 9.00am to 5.00pm Monday to Friday on 660204. Emergency calls to 999; minor injuries or illness to 111 (NHS 24).
- GP Surgery – Wednesday mornings by appointment through Portree Medical Practice on 01478 612013.
- Vet Surgery – Rhona Campbell, Veterinary Surgeon on 01478 611269.
- Recycle Rag Bag Raasay Primary School – Please ensure that all items are securely bagged before placing in the bin.
- Pensioner’s Bus Service – Contact Theresa or David on 660337. Next trip Thursday May 19.
- Mobile Library every third Wednesday – 9.55am Inverarish Terrace Phone Box, 10.30am Inverarish Terrace, 10.45am Raasay Primary School (teachers and pupils only), 11.35am Raasay House, 12.00 Raasay Ferry terminal - next due: May 18.
- The Alexander Technique – Call Winnie Ireland on 660227.
- Coal will be delivered fortnightly to Raasay. Coal lorry also delivering/selling garden coverage.
- Split fuel logs - £50 a trailer. From May 1st RDT will be running the fuelwood supply, taking over from RHCC. Anyone wanting to order fire wood should call the office (660 358 - leave a message if Lloyd is not there) or send an email (lloydraasay@gmail.com). We expect to be able to make deliveries from early June.
- Isle of Skye Fish van deliveries weekly on Friday afternoons.
## What’s On Raasay – May 2016

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<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
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<th>Sunday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Raasay Primary Holiday</td>
<td>3 9am-10.15am Yoga</td>
<td>4 GREEN BINS</td>
<td>5 Scottish Parliament Election</td>
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<tr>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
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<td>9</td>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>10 9am-10.15am Yoga</td>
<td>11 BLUE BINS</td>
<td>12 Hairdresser</td>
<td>13 10am-1pm Meditative Walk</td>
<td>14 10am-1pm Meditative Walk</td>
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<td>9am-10.15am Yoga</td>
<td>9am-10.15am Yoga</td>
<td>7pm Football</td>
<td>7pm Football</td>
<td>6.30pm-7.45pm Yoga</td>
<td>7.30pm Knitting Bee</td>
<td>7.30pm Knitting Bee</td>
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<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>17 9am-10.15am Yoga</td>
<td>18 GREEN BINS</td>
<td>19 Pensioners’ Bus Service</td>
<td>20 6.30pm Bingo night</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>7pm Football</td>
<td>7pm Football</td>
<td>6.30pm-7.45pm Yoga</td>
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<td>7.30pm Knitting Bee</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>24 9am-10.15am Yoga</td>
<td>25 BLUE BINS</td>
<td>26 Hairdresser</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>28 11am-3pm Craft Fair</td>
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<tr>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>2pm-4pm Arts &amp; Crafts</td>
<td>7pm Football</td>
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<td>7.30pm Knitting Bee</td>
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<td>30</td>
<td>31 9am-10.15am Yoga</td>
<td>7pm Football</td>
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### Church Services
- Free Presbyterian Church – Sundays 12 noon & 6.00pm.
- Free Church of Scotland – Sundays 12 noon & 5.00pm. (Check Church noticeboard for any time alterations.)
- The Episcopal Church – 2nd Tuesday of the month at 11.00am in the Community Hall, followed by refreshments and fellowship.
- Catholic Celebration of the Word and Communion at 37 Inverarish Terrace, Sundays 11.00am. Dave/Teresa Tel 660337.