BY ANNE GILLIES

Ian Blackford, MP for Ross, Skye and Lochaber, met with Raasay Community Council when he was on Raasay on Tuesday 26th July and it was heartening that he expressed his full support for us in our struggle with NHS Highland. We are grateful to him for taking time out to hear about the problems we face. We explained to him the main issues we see regarding nursing cover on Raasay:

1. The removal of nursing cover from the island will have a devastating effect on Raasay’s ability to retain its current population and to attract new people. The future is bleak. For families, for businesses, for recreational activities – everything is impacted by the fear that something will go wrong and that medical help is beyond reach. Penny-pinching by NHS Highland is liable to negate £30 million and more of public investment on Raasay. Once people start leaving, it’s too late.

2. One size healthcare does not fit all. Different islands have different systems and there has to be sufficient flexibility to suit different circumstances – Coll for example has a doctor and a nurse! We are only asking for a nurse.

3. The new voluntary system proposed by NHS Highland is unworkable, unsustainable and ultimately more expensive. There aren't enough volunteers on Raasay. Somehow, NHS Highland expects to find a collection of volunteers willing to carry out work when they can't find a qualified nurse who would be paid to do it.

4. Just over a year ago it was deemed necessary to have a nurse on Raasay 24/7 – now we’re told that it's not. Replacing medical professionals with amateurs - given a few week’s training - leaves emergency healthcare provision on Raasay worse now than it was 70 years ago. It is not “sustainable, high quality healthcare”, as they would have us believe - it can only be seen as a dangerous failure.

We are more certain than ever that we cannot give up and accept what they are telling us. Raasay’s present and future health is under threat.

After the meeting Ian tweeted: “The NHS must act”!

The Community Council has arranged meetings in the weeks ahead with Alan Knox from the Scottish Ambulance Service, Kate Forbes, MSP and Gill McVicar, NHS Highland Director of Operations for North & West.

We will continue to argue that Raasay is as entitled to out-of-hours medical expertise as any other area of Scotland.
Coming to Raasay for a visit? Let us do your shopping for you. Call, email or send us a Facebook message and we can prepare your order for collection when you arrive, or possibly arrange delivery to your holiday cottage.

Raasay Community Stores
29/30 Inverarish Terrace, Isle of Raasay IV40 8NS
01478660103 raasaystores@aol.com
facebook.com/RaasayCommunityStores

Community of Raasay Retail Association
2762RS
More islander achievements to celebrate

BY DELLA CHESHIRE

Since our article in the July edition about pupils’ recent achievements at the Mod and the High School Prizegiving, we have been made aware that these were not the only pupils to do well! We do apologise and are keen to rectify the omission with a feature in the September 2016 edition. Please do let us know any details, and email us any photos you may have.

And if any other Raasay residents, young or old, have achieved something notable, again let us know and we’ll spread the word.

The crowd gathers, tension mounting, in the countdown to the duck race.

© Della Cheshire

NHS Highland’s latest notice

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NB: On occasions it will be necessary for the Nurse to leave early or arrive late due to unforeseen circumstances such as weather, road traffic accidents, training needs, sickness, etc. We will notify Raasay Community Council as soon as we are aware of any unforeseen circumstances.

When this arises please use the telephone numbers above.
How I came to Raasay

BY MARGARET MOODIE

“Four roomed croft house, two up and two down, very damp at rear where house stands against rising ground. No drain pipes or gutters.” To this list could have been added “Woodworm eating their way all around the house, and toilet facilities non-existent and water provided by a well, or a nearby loch when that runs dry. No electricity or any other power”.

Hardly a description to entice any but the most adventurous of house hunters. The house, with a quarter acre of land, was on the small tidal island of Fladda, close to Raasay. Fladda had been home to a population of forty people but the last families had left six years previously in 1963.

Details of three empty houses had been sent to me by the Board of Agriculture, and they asked if I wanted to put in a bid for any of them. I had contacted them some eighteen months before about possible holiday cottages, with a negative response, but these certainly did not seem the sort of property I was seeking, and my first reaction was to ignore the letter. However, after talking it over with friends and relations, I eventually decided that I had nothing to lose in making a bid, and at least it would show the Board that I was still interested in purchasing a house. The amount to offer was a bit of a problem but in the end I decided on a figure of £400 (all I could afford in those days).

That was, I thought, the last I would hear of the matter. Imagine my surprise (and horror!) when I had a letter two months later telling me that I had been successful in my bid for no. 4 Fladda and would I inform them of my solicitor’s name and address so that the transaction could go ahead. My brother told me, on reliable authority, that in Scottish Law any bid made and accepted was legally binding. Now what was I going to do?! Here I was with a house that I had never seen and did not want. At least I now knew a little about the law of Scotland, but at what price! Anyway, I contacted a Scots lawyer and tried to forget about it all. John and I were off to Mallaig for two weeks so there wasn’t much I could do about things. Work colleagues suggested that I went to see Fladda while I was in the north, but secretly I was hoping that it wouldn’t be necessary because it wouldn’t be mine.

The holiday went all too quickly and shortly after my return I was told the sale was progressing without any hitch. (No turning back now I thought). Then out of the blue, I received a letter from a Michael Baker of Northamptonshire saying that he was in charge of a party of boys belonging to the school’s Hebridean Society and they hoped to camp on Fladda for three weeks in August and asking if they could come and see me and discuss their plans. I wrote back and a meeting was arranged. (If he thought it was my croft then surely it must be).

Sunday duly arrived and so did Michael, a handsome, bronzed man in his late twenties. He explained that the Hebridean Society was a society to which a number of schools throughout the country belonged. Several holidays were organised each year for various age groups, and parties of about twenty boys and five teachers stayed on a Hebridean island for three weeks. Micheal had been up to Fladda earlier in the year to see the campsite and make arrangements with regards transport and supplies. He produced photographs of the house which looked attractive although rather neglected. He said the new owners of the other two houses were geology lecturers from Reading University who had wanted to buy the house six years ago. I suggested he use my house, and he suggested...
that I came up when they were there. A guest house had just been opened by Isabel and Alistair Nicholson. It did seem that plans were being made for me!

A few weeks later I loaded my motorbike onto the train at Euston and bade my twin brother farewell. At Inverness, I changed trains for Kyle which is one of the most beautiful journeys in the Highlands through glens and woods with glimpses of lochs and rocky shores. At Kyle, I hauled my bike up the gangplank of the steamer. At that time there was only one steamer each way from Kyle to Portree calling at Raasay, so there was a much greater feeling of adventure. The island was suffering from Dr Green’s neglect. Raasay House, now an outdoor centre, was open to the four winds as were the other estate houses that he owned. My only other visit to Raasay had been by launch from Skye during a Clan MacLeod gathering some years before, and I only remembered fields of buttercups, a ‘friendly’ black bull and a picnic that we had outside Raasay House that had just closed as a hotel.

After a warm welcome, and a comfortable night, my adventure was to begin in earnest, and I started on my mystery tour to the other end of the island. The road then ended at Brochel Castle, a ruin perched on an outcrop of rock and last lived in during the sixteen hundreds. Calum MacLeod of Arnish was at this time making his road from Brochel the two miles to his croft. Fladda is two miles beyond Arnish and the walk is very attractive with open moors, peat bogs, birch and rowan trees and numerous burns rushing seaward. On this particular day, it was pouring with rain, and as I trudged along with my knapsack full of what I hoped would be useful tools, I was oblivious to its beauties. Now and again, a lad would appear coming toward me, intent on some unknown errand. In reply to my question “How far is it to Fladda?” I always got the answer “Not far” or “Just around the bend”. Never did four miles seem so long, but eventually the uncovered causeway came in sight. It is only exposed for six hours out of every twelve, but I didn’t know this at the time. Up the cliff I struggled, and made my way down to my ‘property’. Well, I certainly had got the best of the bargain as the other two houses had large cracks down the outside. All the listed imperfections were evident but the place had possibilities.

Most of the boys were in a large marquee near the house and here they ate and spent their leisure time. I didn’t see much of Fladda because of the wet weather and quite a lot of my time was taken travelling back and forth each day. I did however spend one night in the house sleeping on a pile of tents so that I could attend a service taken by the then Bishop of Norwich, Lancelot Fleming, who was president of the Hebridean Society. It was a simple service with wildflowers and rushes either side of the altar which was a large marble slab from the house. One felt that in the early days of Christianity, religious gatherings would have been much like that ceremony.

I had my first experience of Raasay’s ‘Jungle Telegraph’ during this week. As I struggled across the moors one day, my progress was halted by a flock of sheep being driven by two men. When I said I had come from Fladda, one of them said: “You’ll be Miss MacLeod then.” This was my first meeting with the Gillies brothers, John and Alistair who had been brought up on Fladda but now lived in Portree. They were to be a great help to us during the times when our paths crossed.

In the years that followed, we brought up a number of friends to our Hebridean haven. Most of them shared our pleasure at the beauties around them but a few found the solitude and peace too much for them. Our usual routine was to pick up the already boxed-up stores from Finlay MacLennan’s shop and then we were taken in Alistair Nicolson’s lovely old boat ‘The Dignity’ the fifteen miles to Fladda. This was always a wonderful start to the holiday. Usually, at the end of the fortnight we walked the four miles to Brochel where Peter Gillies picked us
Am Bratach: Raasay’s Community Newsletter
August 2016

up; then we enjoyed the luxury of baths and good food at Churchton House.

Fladda is a magnificent island, and although it is only 1 mile by 1½ miles, there is a great variety of scenery. Every cove and bay has its own beauty, and sea bird colonies are established on the west and north sides where there are cliffs and rocky shores. There are three lochs on the island, one has water lilies and a small island where we saw our first otter. There had once been forty people living here but they had all gone now and it was sad to think of days that would never come again.

In 1978 I married, and two years later we decided to move to Fladda permanently. It was a big decision to make as we were leaving ‘safe’ jobs, a flat and friends behind, but the quality of life was going to be much better. Most people thought us mad, but a few secretly envied us. Moving from Surrey six hundred and twenty miles was going to take a little organising, but we were given the name of Lachlan Gillies of Staffin who agreed to transport everything from Portree to Fladda in his boat. A good friend said he would drive a hired van with all our worldly goods to Skye while we made our way independently to Raasay plus a dog and cat. Everything went without a hitch, which was wonderful and Lachie’s boat sailed into Fladda at exactly the hour agreed. Calum MacLeod came from Arnish with his rowing boat and then it was a race against time to move all the bags and the baggage from the vessel onto the fish trap wall and then onto the shore before the incoming tide swamped us. Eventually everything was stored in the shepherd’s hut on the shore.

Thus began our new life, we have so many happy memories of those days, we treasure the hours spent with Calum and Lexy at Arnish enjoying the food and the interesting conversation. We also enjoyed the friendship of Nancy and John Parks on the other side of the valley. The days were spent cutting peats, and growing vegetables (until the sheep devoured them!), and sometimes fishing from our small rowing boats.

Yachts came into the bay every day and often walkers came as far as ‘our’ island. One of our favourite pastimes was to watch the gathering of the sheep on the North of Raasay. It made ‘One man and his dog’ look very tame, and we would make tea for the shepherds when they came to Fladda.

Now we have moved to Inverarish in the south of Raasay where we live a quieter but equally enjoyable life. I sometimes wonder what course my life would have taken if I had ignored that letter from the Board of Agriculture all those years ago?

Margaret’s article was first published in Skye Views in 1995.

Isle of Raasay Distillery update

Our main focus currently involves groundworks to create a back yard to what will be the distillery production hall, the levelled area for bonded warehousing, and upgrading of the top access road.

A new upgraded culvert has been laid under the road to allow the burn to flow freely with a mammal passage laid alongside for animals such as the occasionally visiting Olli the Otter, whom we discovered on environmental survey. As our own Olli (Blair) said “if they don’t want to get their feet wet” of course!

Olli (the Architect not the otter) also met recently with SNP MP Ian Blackford and showed him around the progress of the site.

Demolition of remaining extensions to Borodale House is almost complete, we’re just waiting on some electrical work before continuing with this around the front and side of the original structure of the Victorian house.

You may have noticed a film crew on site recently or caught us on BBC Alba who aired a documentary piece about the distillery on July 14th (you can watch this again on YouTube). We also welcomed Scottish Heritage magazine, and John MacLeod, Clan Chief of the MacLeod’s of Raasay now living in Australia.

We’ll bring you another update via the newsletter next month. In the meantime if you have queries or issues regarding the build please contact: Site Agent – Dean Innes on 07811422041 or Project Architect – Olli Blair on 01478 470084.
Raasay’s Sanctuary Stones

BY MARGARET MOODIE

The area known as the Sanctuary usually surrounded early Christian churches and chapels from the fourth century until the medieval system of asylum was abolished by James IV in 1623. The Sanctuary was the place of religious rights for felons on the run from the law.

The first mention of Raasay’s Sanctuary Stones was made by Martin Martin in 1695 who mistakenly thought that each cross commemorated the death of the “lady of the island”. He stated that some of the crosses had three graded steps up to them. Only two of these ‘platforms’ are now visible – one on the Battery and the other behind Temptation Hill (Cnoc an Rath). There is another possible structure in the southern area of St. Molua’s graveyard.

Dr Johnson rightly surmised, when he and James Boswell visited Raasay in 1779, that these stones were the ancient Sanctuary boundaries. James Boswell mentions eight crosses in a semi-circular line surrounding the area of the chapel (which chapel?) “within which an asylum was to be had”. The first one was on what is now the Battery and the last one on the opposite high land westward. Some local people remember the latter stone which was also mentioned by a Dr Galbraith and is possibly now covered by gorse.

Several years ago three stones, thought to be Sanctuary Stones, which were lying against the back wall of the graveyard, were moved into the chapel. Another two similar ones appear to have been incorporated into the fairly recently rebuilt back wall of the chapel.
RDT Project Updates

Forestry
Following the helicopter fly-over survey in June, a “ground-truthing” survey by Forestry Commission scientists was carried out in July. They investigated likely areas of infestation by *Phytopthera ramorum* and took away samples. RDT asked if they had found any signs of new infection and they replied: “Not yet”. I guess that’s good news, so far…

Hydro Scheme
The technical studies into the options for building a local district heating scheme in the village to use up “surplus” electricity and one to investigate the possibilities of connecting the new distillery to the hydro scheme have been completed. Lloyd has copies of the reports if anyone wants to see them. In brief, both ideas can be developed, but both will cost over £200,000 to build. That would be in addition to the cost of over £0.5 million to build the hydro scheme itself. We are now hoping to look at the legal and financial implications of developing the scheme in those ways. More to follow.

Community Artwork
The artwork is up! Please pop into the Hall to have a look, if you have not already done so. It was unveiled at the recent Made In Raasay craft fair, to great acclaim. Thanks to everyone involved, especially the handful of you who put such a huge amount of effort in – you know who you are and we are all grateful.

Pontoon
Some people from the Lottery will visit Raasay in August to look at our plans for the pontoon and the boathouse. If they like what the community is proposing, then they will assist us to prepare a funding application to cover the costs of building the pontoon and refurbishing the boathouse so that we can finally build our boat in it.

Wood Fuel
This seems to be progressing smoothly, thanks to the group of volunteers who regularly turn up on a Saturday morning to chop the wood and deliver it to local customers. Please pop along to the pit if you fancy joining in, or contact Lloyd if you want to place an order for wood.
While we wait for the Isle of Raasay Distillery to come to life, we’ve crafted a single malt demonstrating our whisky making skills to offer a tantalising taster of what’s to come.

Aptly named Raasay While We Wait.

Locally available in 70cl & 20cl bottles from Raasay Community Stores & on the bar at Raasay House.
Nursing on Raasay in the 1940’s

BY JOHN MACLEOD

On a recent visit to Raasay, my attention was drawn to an article in the May issue of Am Bratach. A Childhood in Fladda, by Jen Burnet, was based on information which she received from my mother, Katie MacLeod, née Gillies, who spent her early years on Fladda.

While in Raasay, I was aware that the issue of the lack of medical cover in the evenings and at weekends was still unresolved and that set me thinking. My mother died in 2004, aged 95 years. Her survival to that advanced age was due, in no small measure, to the skill of Jemima (Mima) Sutherland, the District Nurse in Raasay in 1940. At the birth of my sister, in January 1940, there was what was described as a ‘medical emergency’ and my mother’s life was in serious danger. As was common, it was a home-birth, home being 10 Inverarish Terrace. On a dark, stormy evening my father, John MacLeod, and two of his brothers-in-law, Duncan MacLean (No. 9) and John Gillies (No. 48) rowed to Camustianavaig to fetch Dr MacKinnon, who had made his way there from Portree. By the time Dr MacKinnon had arrived, Nurse Sutherland’s skill had the life-threatening situation under control. A detailed account of the incident subsequently appeared in a nursing journal. There is also a reference to it in an obituary of Mima Sutherland in the December 2005 issue of the Newsletter of the Queen’s Nursing Institute Scotland. The obituary, by Elizabeth A Stickle, a fellow-Shetlander and also a nurse, states: “Nurse Sutherland always maintained that that was one incident in her career when she did everything by the midwifery textbook.” The article also relates: “On the night of that particular emergency there was also a surgical one in that, due to a combination of pitch-blackness and hurrying, the father of the baby misjudged the corner of the family home and grazed his face which required attention by the Nurse. This highlights the skills required of a District Nurse on a non-doctor island.”

My mother and Mima Sutherland had been close friends prior to this incident and the friendship was a lifelong one which continued until their deaths, within twenty minutes of each other, on 25th October 2004, four days before Mima’s 99th birthday.

In her latter years, a physical ailment made writing difficult for my mother and the correspondence with Mima was conducted by me. Her long, interesting letters, beautifully written, requested information, not just about our extended family, but about people on Raasay, which she had left over 60 years earlier. She was particularly interested in those to whom she referred as her “babies”.

Nurse Sutherland began her career in the Gilbert Bain Hospital in Lerwick before completing her General Nursing Training at the Royal Infirmary, Inverness, in 1930. She qualified in Midwifery at Aberdeen Maternity Hospital in 1931 and as a Queen’s Nursing Sister at the Queen’s Institute of District Nursing, Edinburgh, in 1932. After her retirement, she continued studying, while caring for an invalid sister, and obtained a BA degree from the Open University, graduating in Edinburgh at the age of 77.

After she left Raasay in the early 1940’s, she was succeeded by Nurse Matheson, who lived at
39 Inverarish Terrace, and later married Peter Gillies. She was also held in high esteem for her caring manner and professional skills. She was followed, probably after her son Norman’s birth, by Nurse Campbell who, with her husband William and children Catherine, Roddy and Willie, lived in Inverarish Cottages. She too was a very capable nurse.

I also remember Nurse Katie Tallach, sister of local Headteacher Margaret A Tallach and an aunt of Rev. Dr. James Tallach who was a minister on the island for many years. She ‘relieved’ the District Nurse on occasions. She was also held in high regard and I recall her kindness to me when I gouged a large piece of flesh from my knee in an accident. It required a month of dressings and bandages before it healed. The scar may still be seen some 70 years later!

Our family moved to Portree in January 1952 and I know that Raasay was well served by other District Nurses after Nurse Campbell left. Those nurses were on call 24 hours per day, 7 days per week and, while this was obviously not ideal for the individual nurses, it is in sharp contrast to the present provision which I understand to be 9.00am – 5.00pm, Monday to Friday – a total of 40 hours, or just under 24% of the week. On reflection, the ‘old days’, in this respect at least, were indeed the ‘good old days’.

A Song for Calum

BY LE NIALL GÒRDAN

Well, who hasn’t heard of Calum and his famous road in Raasay? But dear readers, has anyone heard of a song being composed as if the great man himself were speaking? I hope the following is a fitting tribute to Calum - and all verses can actually be sung to the tune composed by Capercaillie’s Donald Shaw. Go on - give it a go!

*Rathad Chaluim / Calum’s Road*

Thog mise rathad
rathad cho daingean ’s tha san dùthaich
slighe-iùil don lighiche
bhith tighinn nar dachaigh fhèin:
rathad a thug de thid’
de dh’innealan ’s de dh’obair dhèante
dh’fhàg mi nam thràillean
fad deich bliadhna fhèin.

Suas, sios is suas
bruach is badag àrd
an cuibhle dol mun cuairt
bu dualach leam a gàire
fuadachadh gach clach
gach ùir is ulpag ann
a’ dèanamh slighe dhìrich
gu finealta ’s gach fonn.

I built a road
as firm as any in the country
a way to guide the doctor
to our humble home and gate:
a road which took some time
some tools and some work to do
which made of me a slave
for the length of one decade.

Up and down and up
the banks and clumps on high
the wheel round and round
how well I knew its sound:
expelling all the stones
earth and boulders too
making my own head-way
finely through the ground.

Niall Gòrdan was born in Ross-shire in 1958 and became interested in Gaelic in the late 80s, discovering through this medium that he could compose poems and songs. Sorley MacLean was an inspiration, as well as many Skye poets including Màiri Mhòr nan Òran. He has a special place in his heart for Raasay and Dun Cana!

Facebook - www.facebook.com/niall.gordan.94
Raasay’s insect-eating plants

In the sixth of a series of articles on Raasay’s flora, botanist STEPHEN BUNGARD takes a closer look at Raasay’s insectivorous plants.

Two species of *Pinguicula*, Common Butterwort (*P. vulgaris*) and Pale Butterwort (*P. lusitanica*) are widespread on Raasay, the latter not being found in a large eastern section of the island. Maps show 1 km squares – red dots for pre-2000, black for 2000-2016.

Two species of *Drosera*, Round-leaved Sundew (*D. rotundifolia*) and Great Sundew (*D. anglica*) show a similar picture. The hybrid between the two is present occasionally but I am doubtful about a record for a third species, Oblong-leaved Sundew (*D. intermedia*).

In the case of the Bladderworts (*Utricularia*), which are aquatic, there is a fair amount of Lesser Bladderwort (*U. minor*) in the wettest bogs; this is the only one that flowers reliably in Scotland. There are also a few sites for other species, probably *U. stygia* (Nordic Bladderwort) and *U. australis* (Bladderwort) - there are complications that we need not go into here.

Bladderworts catch their prey with highly sophisticated suction traps consisting of little bladders that produce a reduced hydrostatic pressure. Interestingly, a recent study has shown that only 10% of their catch was animals, 50% algae and most of the rest pollen grains.

As well as these plants traditionally thought of as insectivorous, we may have others that trap insects on sticky hairs and then use their remains as fertiliser, absorbing nutrients through the roots after the dead insects hit the ground. A few years ago researchers at Kew reported this sort of activity in 235 species of plants such as tomato, potato, ornamental tobacco and petunia – so you may have carnivores in your garden.

Stephen 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

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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 printer, then copies are now available to buy in the shop for 50p. How will you read yours?
A beginner’s guide to driving on single track roads

WITH THANKS TO DEIRDRE PEPPE

Do Keep Left

Do Stop to Let Vehicles Behind Pass

Do Stop and Wait at a Passing Place

Do Notice Passing Places & Reverse!

Don’t Cross To Right

Don’t Create a Queue

Don’t Drive or Park on the Verge

Don’t Make Others Reverse a Long Way

Apologies to those of you who missed out on a paper copy of our July edition. We had an ink issue (or lack of it) which we have now resolved. With 50 copies on sale in the shop this month, there should be enough to go round. If not, please let us know!

As some of you are already aware, I have decided to stand down as editor after the October 2016 issue has been produced, by which time I will have been editor for a year. I will be embarking on a full-time postgraduate course, and while I would like to continue as a volunteer on the steering group, I feel it is time for someone else to take the editorial reins and to continue the development of the newsletter.

I am very grateful to the newsletter steering group for all their hard work, advice and support, as well as to all those who have contributed in any way - and of course to everyone who reads Am Bratach!

We will be formally advertising for a new editor once the funding situation becomes clearer. However we are keen to attract more people to join the steering group, to volunteer to help produce each edition.

So if you are interested in seeing how it all works, or are keen to get involved, please come along to our next meeting on Thursday August 25 at 10am in the Hall. Please also note the other opportunities to get more involved in Raasay life on page 18 of this issue.

Many thanks for all your contributions to this issue. The deadline for the September newsletter is Wednesday August 24. Please send any newsletter correspondence, including feedback, to Della Cheshire at Creachan Cottage, Isle of Raasay, IV40 8NT, tel 01478 660380 / 07952 806176, email dellatfcheshire@gmail.com or tweet @AmBratach.

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15% discount for 12 issues paid upfront, i.e. 12 issues for the price of 10!
RHCC Chairmans Report 2016 AGM

In 2008 the Raasay community gave the RHCC board a mandate to manage a community buy out of all the assets that HIE had on the Island. The major element of that task was to fully restore Raasay House and to install a tenant who would pay a rent to the community. HIE’s preferred tenant was the Raasay Outdoor Centre. Having a prospective tenant, from the outset, was crucial to getting funding for the restoration of the house.

We have now delivered that part of the task as follows:-

1. The restoration and then rebuild of Raasay House is now at last completed. All the snagging that had to be done as a result of Mansell not completing their contract has now been completed by LOCAL contractors and the cost covered by HIE. It was very frustrating that HIE lawyers, without any consultation, decided to release Mansell from their duty and undertaking to pay the due retention money once Mansell had failed to complete the agreed contract.

2. A full insurance and maintenance lease is in place with our tenant the Raasay Outdoor Centre. Attached to the lease is a detailed maintenance agreement which ROC are efficiently carrying out.

3. Our tenant ROC is now firmly established running a successful business in the house. The agreed annual rent, reflecting the terms of the lease, is being paid to RHCC on a regular basis starting from the time ROC moved in, in April 2013.

4. We have been using some of the rent, on a regular basis, to support local activities. School events, Playgroup, Village hall events, Christmas lunch club for our senior citizens etc. We have also made a start managing diseased and dangerous trees in the policies of the house.

Along with the House we also eventually took over the Raasay Walled Garden with a plan to firstly make it safe, and then to set about a clearance programme leading eventually to restore the Walled Garden so that it would be an asset to the community.

5. A volunteer Walled Garden Group (WAG) has been formed, which has now cleared the majority of the garden with funding from RHCC as required. Hopefully, weather permitting, they will be grass seeding the cleared areas and making good the original paths and box hedges. External funding will need to be sourced to safely clear the severely damaged and dangerous old glass houses etc., with the exception of the listed Victorian iron framed one. In the meantime RHCC will continue to support the volunteers in the WAG group with essential funding for tools and materials.

In 2010 the Forestry Commission gifted the community a quantity of 3 metre lengths of timber with a view to start a Woodfuel delivery project on Raasay to supply firewood in the form of logs to those on the community it would benefit.

6. On behalf of the community RHCC took over the pit with a lease from the Scottish Government to facilitate secure storage of the timber and to provide a place where cutting, splitting and distribution could be safely carried out. The work was done entirely by volunteers with RHCC providing the necessary funding for essential equipment, materials and operating costs. A modest charge was made per load to offset some of these costs. This timber has now been used.

7. Apart from still keeping a management role in relation to the other assets the community acquired from HIE, RHCC's major role now is to continue to ensure that our landlord's
responsibilities to our Tenant and Raasay House and it’s policies are properly managed and that we use the rent from the tenancy as wisely as possible to benefit the Raasay community.

8. This year, in order that the Raasay Development Trust (RDT) can secure funding for the Raasay Hydro scheme and locate the electrical and distribution equipment building in the pit, necessary for the success of the scheme, RHCC have agreed to transfer the pit lease to RDT. The Forestry Commission have recently gifted more timber for woodfuel use to the community and it was therefore sensible to transfer the much used and appreciated woodfuel project started by RHCC, to RDT, so that RDT can continue to expand the project in the pit along with the Hydro project.

All the members of the RHCC board sitting here today, Donnie MacLeod, Anne Gillies, Braden Gillies, John Thompson, have been with the project since its inception i.e. nearly a decade! Darryl Simpson joined us 3 years ago.

Stuart Brown, Donnie Oliphant, Angus Gillies and Alistair Iain Gillies did sterling work for the board until other commitments or events intervened. Our Administration Officers, Sara and now Rosemarie play a key role in trying to keep us organised.

I wish to take this opportunity to thank them all personally for their unfailing support throughout the ups and downs of this project.

We all had a common goal to achieve what we were asked to do and we have now delivered. We are satisfied RHCC has now established a stable, sustainable cash flow for community use as per our Articles. Thus, for the first time, the Raasay community no longer has to seek approval from external bodies for funding. We can now get modest projects underway quickly or use our funds as match funding for larger more expensive initiatives.

Hence, we are now in a position to consider the next phase which is to take on, or help the projects, within our means, which will give maximum benefit to the community.

To make the right decisions we need help from the community and encourage new and fresh directors to join us on the board.

So if anyone feels they can spare a couple of hours a month and want to help us bring maximum benefit to the future of our Island in a variety of ways, they would be very welcome.

David Westgarth, Chairman RHCC

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Course offered by West Highland College UHI – Broadford/Auchtertyre:

**Crochet Workshop**
The glorious 'Granny Square' - blankets to bunting and beyond...a basic understanding of crochet is required to achieve fun, kitschy, retro results! A classic and gloriously versatile technique. Bring crochet hooks and ends of wool as we will use these up. The more colourful the better!
**Wednesday 10th August 2016**
10am - 1pm, £15 @ Auchtertyre
To book this course, please contact Abigail Manvell Szőke on abigail.manvell.whc@uhi.ac.uk or 01397 874 530.

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Course offered by West Highland College UHI – Broadford/Auchtertyre:

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<tr>
<th>Course</th>
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<td>Bodhran Drumming</td>
<td>4th August</td>
<td>1400 - 1700</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bodhran Drumming</td>
<td>16th August</td>
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<td>Local History – Flora MacDonald</td>
<td>9th August</td>
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<td>Local History – Angus Stewart</td>
<td>18th August</td>
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To book these courses, please contact Katrina MacLeod on Katrina.Macleod.whc@uhi.ac.uk or 01397 874500.
Raasay Community Association

Hall Events - July

Thank you to all who came along and enjoyed an afternoon of fine music, food and fun at the BBQ and Duck Race held at the Community Hall and Fire Station on Thursday 21st July 2016. The joint event run by the Parent Council & Raasay Community Association was a huge success (thanks to the fantastic turn out, weather and volunteers) and raised the AMAZING total of £686.32 for school funds, and about £300 for the hall.

Family Dance - Friday 29th July
It was great to have Malcolm Jones and The Broch Inspectors back on Raasay for Friday's dance. With over 90 people at the event it was a successful night and we even learnt a few new dances. Thank you to all of those who came along and especially to those who volunteered to help.

Hall events - August

Community Hall POP Up Cafe & Crafts
Starting on Wednesday 3rd August the hall will be open from 11 till 3 on most Wednesdays and Fridays (subject to other bookings) in August for a pop up cafe. Serving a small selection of home baking, a light lunch and hot and cold drinks and with some local crafts and products for sale, we hope that this will make the hall and its facilities more accessible during the day to both locals and visitors and will help raise funds to support the ongoing costs of maintaining the hall. It's also an ideal opportunity to come along and see the newly unveiled community artwork which hangs in the stairwell.
Please see local advertising for details of when the cafe is running, or ring Katherine on 01478 660358 / 660233.

Licensed Family Dance - Friday 12th August
Tar the Croft will be providing the music for the next dance on Friday 12th August. As usual doors open from 7.30pm.
If anyone is able to volunteer on the night please get in touch beforehand, your help is much appreciated and is the only way we can put on these events.

Lunch Club
Lunch club starts again after a short summer break on Wednesday 17th August. As always regulars only need to let us know if they can't make it, but if anyone else would like to come along please ring Ann on 660388 to book in advance.

Skye Spa Therapies
As her visits have proved so popular Mary-Anne from Skye Spa Therapies will be back over in the hall on Saturday 20th and Wednesday 24th August. Anyone requiring more information or to book a treatment please contact Katherine in the first instance.

Yoga
Tuesday mornings 9.00am-10.15am and Thursday evenings 6.30pm-7.45pm (except Thursday 18th August). 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.
Hairdresser
Murdina is usually at the hall every other Thursday, in August this will be 11th and 25th.

Hall Bookings
Just a reminder that if you're looking for something to do when the weather's not so good the hall is available to hire. We have indoor football, table tennis and badminton equipment included in the hire price. For "on the day" one-off bookings residents can hire the hall for a family or group of 4 people for £5 per hour, non-residents for £10 per hour. As usual the normal terms and conditions of hire apply and all bookings must be made by an adult with an adult present at the hall during the booking period.

For any general queries, information or for bookings of the hall please contact Katherine Gillies on 01478 660358 / 660233 or email raasaycommunityassociation@gmail.com or Ann Oliphant on 01478 660388.

FIRE WOOD FOR SALE
Cut, split logs ready for burning, delivered to your house.
£50 for a load (£70 for hardwood). Contact Lloyd at RDT 660358.
All profits go to charity.
Volunteering Opportunities on Raasay

Pensioners' Minibus Drivers (one new volunteer has come forward, but at least one more is needed)
- Need to be able to volunteer once a month.
- Get the 10.55am ferry and collect minibus the other side at Sconser. Take everyone into Portree centre for 1 hour. Then up to Jans Vans for up to 30 minutes. Then Co-op leaving no later than 2.30pm for the 3pm ferry. Bring minibus and passengers over and drop them off and help with their shopping to their homes. Take minibus up to Norman in the village by shop and hand him the keys. He then takes minibus back. Need to sort petty cash as passengers pay towards petrol which is left in bus and ferry costs for minibus and driver.
- Need driving licence which enables you to drive minibus.
- Any questions, contact Dave on 01478 660337.

Raasay Development Trust Wood Fuel Group
- If you enjoy getting outside and doing some physical exercise, why not volunteer to help cut and deliver the fuel logs?
- Usually a group of up to 8 or 9 volunteers meet at the Pit on a Saturday morning and spend a couple of hours shifting logs, sawing, chopping, stacking or loading then and then delivering them to customers.
- No-one has to do more than they can manage and everyone enjoys the craic.
- To say thanks to the volunteers you get a free load of wood when you have spent 10 sessions volunteering.
- Contact Donnie O or Darryl for more details.

Raasay House Community Company
- Volunteer directors for the board sought. Contact David Westgarth for more details.

Raasay Community Association Board
- The board can have a maximum of 9 directors but currently has only 6.
- The hall is a very important facility for the community and school so please consider joining the board to ensure that it can continue to provide these facilities.
- The board meet on average for 2 hours once a month, there is not a huge amount of time or work involved.
- The next AGM is later this year so please consider standing.

Raasay Community Association Events Committee
- The events that RCA runs, along with the hire charges make up the main income stream for the hall, are vital to ensure the hall’s future sustainability but cannot happen, no matter how well attended, without volunteers.
- We are therefore looking for people to join the Events Committee and / or help at events.
- If you would like to help decide what events we put on and when please consider joining the committee - we meet 4 or 5 times a year.
- If you can only spare a few hours or more for a specific event please let us know as we are always looking for people to help set up the hall, take money at the door, run the bar, collect glasses, act as stewards, clear up afterwards etc.
- Next event dates at which help is required: Thursday 21st July at the BBQ / Duck Race, Friday 29th July & Friday 12th August during the day to set up and in the evening during the events.
- If you can help, or for more information please contact Margaret Ferguson, Ann Oliphant, Elizabeth Simpson, Henry Cheshire, John A Gillies, Iain Hill or the Admin Officer Katherine Gillies.

Am Bratach: Raasay’s Community Newsletter Steering Group
- We’re a friendly, informal, constructive group whose aim is to produce the monthly newsletter. We’d welcome one or two more volunteers to join us.
- We meet once a month for a couple of hours to review the last edition, plan the next one and receive training. Why not come along to our next meeting on Thursday August 25 at 10am in the Hall to try it out?
- If you have any experience of writing, editing, proofreading, typing, production, media, design, photography, advertising, printing etc, and if you can use a computer, then consider joining us!
- Please contact Lloyd Gudgeon (lloydraasay@gmail.com) or Della Cheshire (dellatifcheshire@gmail.com) for more details, or just come along on August 25.
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 August 11.
- 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: August 10 & 31.
- 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 (£70 hardwood). RDT is now 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).
- Isle of Skye Fish van deliveries weekly on Friday afternoons.

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: Kate Forbes MSP, Thorfin House, Bridgend Business Park, Dingwall, IV15 9SL. Tel 01349 864701, www.twitter.com/@kateforbesmsp
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

4 Oscaig Park, Isle of Raasay

Two bedroom croft house available for holidays. 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 Website: https://raasay.wordpress.com/ Facebook: 4 Oscaig Park Raasay Accommodation
## What's On Raasay – August 2016

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- 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 next newsletter.

## 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.)
- St Michael and All Angels’ Scottish Episcopal Church – Sunday 7th August at Ceòl-na-Mara; Tuesday 23rd August at Raasay Community Hall.
- Catholic Celebration of the Word and Communion at 37 Inverarish Terrace, Sundays 11.00am. Dave / Teresa Tel 660337.