Minister chooses Isle of Raasay to announce Islands Strategic Group

BY DELLA CHESHIRE

Humza Yousaf MSP, Minister for Transport and the Islands, chose Raasay out of Scotland’s 93 inhabited islands to announce the formation of an Islands Strategic Group to shape the forthcoming Islands Bill.

Mr Yousaf made the announcement on Thursday August 25 on a whistlestop tour of Raasay, during which he met with Raasay Community Council (RCC) and chairs of other community groups at the hall, toured the site of R & B’s Isle of Raasay Distillery and visited Raasay House.

Shetland, Orkney and Western Isles councils have been campaigning for devolution of power to island councils since 2014, but Mr Yousaf clarified that all six councils with responsibility for island communities will be involved in the Islands Strategic Group, including Highland Council.

During the meeting at the hall, Anne Gillies, chair of RCC, said that Raasay is “looking quite good right now” aside from three main issues: NHS Highland’s removal of 24/7 nursing cover, the absence of Road Equivalent Tariff (RET) for commercial vehicles using the Raasay-Sconser ferry route and the “unbelievably awful” state of the island’s roads.

On 24/7 nursing cover, Mr Yousaf said that healthcare was one of five key planks in the Islands Bill, which will help “island-proof” future legislation.

He said: “I am going to ask the health officials in the government to have a conversation and start to intervene”, adding that it sounded like there was an element of NHS Highland “being obstructive”.

Regarding RET, he said that a freight fares review is currently underway, while he said he was “delighted” that roads are a matter for Highland Council.

Kate Forbes MSP, who accompanied Mr Yousaf and who insisted he visit Raasay following her last visit to the island on August 10, said afterwards: “The Raasay community have been working tirelessly and innovatively over the last few years and there’s been great progress.

“But none of these success stories are sustainable without adequate healthcare and I share the community’s grave concern on this issue.”

Mr Yousaf and Ms Forbes have agreed to inform RCC of any progress made.
Now a Multi-Award Winning Whisky

Available from Raasay Community Store & on the bar at Raasay House.

www.rbdistillers.com
The gathering of Gillies

BY ANNA GILLIES & MAIRI MACLEOD

On Saturday 2nd July, descendants of Iain Aonghais Dhomhnaill Ruaidh gathered in the Community Hall on Raasay to commemorate the centenary of the Gillies families leaving Umachan, a now-deserted township on the north-east coast of the island. The family had been cleared there from Back of Castle in the 1840s by Macleod of Raasay as the land they had been living on was wanted for sheep farming. Oral history in the family only takes us back as far as Domhnall Ruadh but we now understand that he (Domhnall Ruadh) may have been the son of Calum Mor, a stonemason from Arisaig, who came to Raasay to work on the rebuilding of Raasay House after its burning by government forces in the aftermath of Culloden.

The descendants of Domhnall Ruadh and his wife Catherine Macdonald who gathered on Raasay in early July represented four generations, ranging in age from 11 to 91 and from first to fifth cousins. We were meeting some of our relations for the very first time. All of us there were descended from three of Iain Gillies’s six children: Alexander who moved to Clachan with his wife Ann Macleod (parents of 10); Sandy who moved to Fladda with his wife Mary (parents of 6); and Marion who married John Macleod (parents of 5).

In the course of the event, we connected and re-connected using a large and sprawling family tree, constructed from the folk memories of the late Chrissie and Johnny Nicolson and confirmed by entries in the old parish register and then, after 1855, from the registers of births, deaths and marriages in the Scottish Record Office. We also had copies of census returns to look up, old photos and maps to pore over and stories to share. Rebecca MacKay sang “Mo chrìdhe, mo chrìdhe, Mo chrìdhe do’n uasal …”, a song composed by Iain Gillies’s daughter Marion.

The Raasay hall was an ideal setting for an informal afternoon tea and then a ceilidh at night with the main performers being Kirsty, Duncan and Rona Macleod of Bonar Bridge, Seamus MacLennan from Skye, Mary Jane Ford from Texas and Calum Don MacKay of Raasay.

Those of you who’ve been to Umachan will know the remoteness of the site, the steepness of the path, the few small green patches where cultivation must have been possible, and the ruins now surrounded by bracken. Our family was there for nearly eighty years; some of their neighbours for even longer. We gathered this summer to remember the forces that put them there; we celebrated their survival in such a hostile place and re-established our connection to this wee part of northwest Scotland.
JEN BURNET wrote this poem to Rentokil after the London Olympics in 2012. They didn’t invent a trap for Hebridean mice, but they did send her a complimentary standard one.

Each year I spend six months on a Hebridean Isle
And let me inform you the mice there have reason to smile...
They are not like their city dwelling cousins, pallid and thin.
No, they are robust and strong, unlike their pampered southern kin.
So when I hear in my loft the trap shut with a click,
When I rush upstairs, I find the mouse with one hefty kick
Has escaped from the trap pushing open the lid
And stuffing cheese in his mouth, down the drainpipe he’s slid...

Now, I didn’t want any destruction to bring to this peaceful life,
Nor did I want to add to the wee mouse’s trouble and strife.
But I have to say my patience is now growing thin
And though I know too much cheddar cheese is no sin...

What I do consider is that you are somewhat to blame
For the fun these mice are having, they consider a most excellent game.
For miles they are coming just to show off their power.
(I know you’ll tell me ‘mainland mice’ in your traps remain inside and cower)
But I insist you need to invent a stronger trap to catch these mice.
They might look quite cute but they’re just full of vice,
And there’s just no knowing what evil tricks they’ll come up with next
And each day I am increasingly vexed...

The word has gone round that in the trap they are putting papers on which are printed their names
Getting ready to compete in the next “Rentokil Olympic Games”.
They’d be most grateful if more traps I could order from you
So the competitors can proudly show just what they can do.
To see which of them can escape with the most speed
And downstairs run to see which on the most cheese he can feed.

So, dear Rentokil, I feel of Hebridean nous you’re out of touch.
So do get on and invent a trap which is much
Much more strong that won’t let the beasts have ‘Freedom to Roam’
For soon it may be the case of it either being them or me who can continue to live in this, MY home.
So I would beg you to no longer delay
Because to feed all these beasts I can no longer pay.
And of course, for the sake of your public relations I must add
That your name is growing in disrepute on these isles...
Now that’s gotta be bad...
A glimpse of ‘recent’ past

BY VAL COREY

In summer 1969 two eighteen-year-old students from Southampton College for Girls came to the island as a result of receiving a Ford Foundation Trust Travel Scholarship. It is both pleasing and surprising that they chose Raasay as their destination for their ‘Sociological and Economic Survey’.

In just three weeks they gathered together a remarkable account of data on every aspect of island life at that time and as the 50th anniversary of their visit looms close, they have sent us a copy of their work in the hope that it will be of interest and provoke memories.

The survey is broken up into well-defined subject sections ranging from geology to religion, to land use and the Crofters Commission. One very interesting item features the role of the District Nurse on Raasay, Nancy Park. She was resident on the island, on call 24/7 and in complete control of healthcare on the island. She visited the elderly every day to ensure their well-being and was responsible for all care from cradle to grave!

Although very wisely they desisted from all criticism of affairs on Raasay it is clear that they did not view Dr Green’s regime as ideal and in the section on Raasay’s future they suggest several improvements which have since come to pass! It would be good to ask them back and show them what has been achieved in the last 50 years.

This is a remarkably mature work for two such young women to have compiled. Obviously it does not have great depth but as an overall picture of Raasay 50 years ago it is fascinating and very informative. Well worth a read.

If anyone remembers their visit it would be good to hear from you.

Back in the summer of ’69: The nurse

BY CATHERINE WARD PENNY (NÉE PIDGEON) & ROSEMARY WATKINS

Raasay does not have a Doctor but it does have a District Nurse which means that a lot of responsibility is placed on her. The present nurse is Nurse Parks who has been on Raasay for just over two years. Her main job is to make sure that the condition of her patients does not become serious. If there is the slightest chance that the patient’s condition might become serious then the patient is put on the ‘Loch Arkaig’ and taken to Portree on Skye. It is always safer to send the patient away than call a Doctor in. The motto of the nurse is: “If in doubt, ship them out.”

In the case of an expectant mother, the practice is to give her good ante-natal care and then, two weeks before the baby is due, the mother will be sent to Portree.

Very occasionally a Doctor visits the island. Most of the time the nurse has only minor accidents to treat, but of course, she must always be prepared for an emergency.

Another of her main duties is to keep an eye on the island’s many old people; a lot of them are over 65 and there are quite a few over 80 and five who are over 90. Because of the calm way of life many people live to an old age. She makes her rounds to the old people every day.

Obituary

BY DONNIE OLIPHANT

We are very sad to learn that David Dickson, who divided his time between Sleat and Edinburgh, died in August after a short illness. It was David who worked for the community to prepare the first Local Development Plan for Raasay, in 2011. During that time he made many friends here, and grew to love Raasay. Later, he brought an international team of young volunteers back to the island to help RCA paint and decorate the Hall. In 2013 he was successful in getting funds for the South Sleat Community Moorings Association to develop the pier and moorings at Armadale. His wife Pat wrote to say that he very much enjoyed his time working here and that he valued the friendships he made on Raasay.
Bonnie Prince Charlie on Raasay

BY JEN BURNET

The Jacobite rising of 1745 is one of the episodes in Scottish history which, although surrounded by such a romantic atmosphere, caused great hardship and suffering to the supporters of Prince Charles Edward Stuart – Bonnie Prince Charlie. Not least amongst the loyal supporters of the Prince were the MacLeods of Raasay headed by Malcolm MacLeod (the MacGillechallum of Raasay) accompanied by his third son, Murdoch (Dr Murdoch MacLeod of Eyre) and his nephew, Captain Malcolm MacLeod. These, with one hundred of the Siol Torquil (MacLeods of Raasay), joined the Prince in his attempt to regain the English throne for the Stuarts.

When Prince Charles landed in Scotland from France, the old Laird of Raasay, to save the estate from forfeiture, made it over to his son and hid the clan’s silver in Uamh Ramh (Cave of the Oars, the souterrain above Clachan). We see from the account of charge and discharge by Mr Murray of Broughton, who was the secretary to the Prince, in the appendix to Chamber’s ‘History of the Rebellion’:

4. Sent by de. to MacLeod of Raza and MacDonald yr. of Scotus, being all that remained of the sum Mr M. then had carried with him...£20,00
6. Sent from the wood on the side of Lecharkik by MacLeod of Raza, upon receipt of a letter from him complaining that the former sum was too small...£40,00

Amongst the soldiers sent from Raasay, there were 23 pipers, but although the clansmen fought courageously, the 5,000 Highland soldiers were no match for the 9,000 soldiers of the Duke of Cumberland at the fateful battle of Culloden on 16th April 1746. All but 14 of the Raasay men returned home. This defeat for Prince Charles was to alter the course of Scottish history. The earlier Disarming Act was revived but it now contained several new clauses:
- The wearing of Highland dress or the use of tartan was prohibited. However, later the canny Highlanders were not outdone! There existed in Clachan Seil, Argyll, ‘Tigh-an-Truish’ – Gaelic for ‘House of the Trousers’ where trousers or kilts could be supplied as desired.
- Bagpipes were forbidden to be carried or played as they were considered a weapon of war.
- Catholics were debarred from holding any public office or commission and were unable to move freely through the country.
- The Episcopal Church was severely restricted and congregations could only be five or six worshippers.
- Those Highland and Islanders who could not read or understand the ‘New Act’ had to agree to obey its ruling by swearing an oath on their dirks. Six months imprisonment or transportation to ‘Plantations beyond the Seas’ were the penalties for breaching the Act.

But although the Chief of the MacLeods had made the house and the estate over to his son, this did nothing to stop the revenge of the Hanoverian Government against the islands of Raasay and Rona. On learning that a contingent from Raasay had set out to join the Prince, the Government immediately took steps to harass their lands. The commander of the Government’s tenders was a Captain Hay, who landed a party on Rona to slaughter all the cattle and then proceed to plunder two or three townships at the north end of Raasay. Again, in the middle of May 1746, the work of devastation was resumed. This time Captain Ferguson of the ‘Furness’ sent a party led by Lieutenant Dalrymple. Once the soldiers had taken possession of the most precious part of the plenishings and the windows of the Chief’s residence at Clachan (Raasay House), the house was burned to the ground. Lieutenant Dalrymple’s troops marched through Raasay killing all the animals in their path, not for food for themselves but for revenge, leaving the carcasses rotting on the ground. Jacobite Bishop Robert Forbes was informed by the Jacobites that: “The whole island of Raasay had been plundered and pillaged to the utmost degree of severity, every house and hut being levelled to the ground; and there was not left in the whole island a four footed beast, a hen or a chicken”.

The Prince saw first hand the devastation and destruction of Raasay, as when on 1st July 1746 he landed in Glam, on the west coast, there was difficulty finding a lodging still standing where he could hide from Government troops. It had not been easy to get the Prince from Skye to Raasay, as all the boats belonging to the young...
laird had been carried away or destroyed by the military and they did not feel they could trust a crew from Portree. Help finally came from Murdoch MacLeod, Raasay’s third son, who was then residing with his sister, Mrs MacQueen at Trotrome, for he knew there was a little boat on one of the fresh water lochs nearby.

TO BE CONTINUED…

Jen’s article was originally published in Skye Views.

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**RDT Project Updates**

**Forestry**
There will be a meeting with Forestry officials in September to hear about the plans for next year and to find out if there is any additional infection in the larch. Meanwhile, the last of this year’s harvested timber is being removed to the yard at Suisnish for export off the island.

**Hydro Scheme**
We are still trying to develop an agreement with SHEPD (who own the poles and cables distributing electricity on Raasay) that will allow us to sell our surplus electricity through their wires, hence saving us the enormous costs of building our own distribution grid. It is at the early stage, and may not happen, but it will make everything much easier and cheaper if it can go ahead. Meanwhile, we continue to investigate the costs and legal implications of having to build and operate our own local grid.

**Pontoon**
Two officials from The Lottery visited Raasay to look at our proposal for a pontoon at the harbour and the repair of the old Boathouse. They were impressed by the strength of Rassay’s community spirit, and they could see how a pontoon at the Harbour would contribute to the economy and security of the island. However, they cautioned us that there are many applications for Lottery funds just now, and with a small population on Raasay it may be that the fund will not be able to support us. We hope to know for certain by the end of September.

**Wood Fuel**
Stock up now for winter - £50 for a load of softwood logs, £70 for hardwood. Contact Lloyd to make an order.

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**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.

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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?
Message in a Bottle (The Arrival of MV 'Hailaib' at Raasay)

By Wuddus Thymes

On a Greek ship built upon the Clyde,
Charybdis dove the waters on yer haunches,
Will teams wider than wings off a birdie,
Rudder turning skill, much in abundance.

When Porrosee sets Fairboard sea,
The crew is home in time for tea.

Green dippers round the bend of Bowfin,
Wot oot the need for tanks, nor royin',
Deck's green, wot yellow graphs showin'!

Fished up pride, Mr Breeze uses all four.

Brown hood and danchet "What Larks!"

The Skipper calls, "Mind the high seas!"

From Alba Croft, coughin' Dolphins, o' Antisal.
Around which shape your contest, fair Taransay,
Heart and soul, and breeder whales, that's Malia.

(A gone brig 'Brave' The Rober Pike - Gave Alive)

Lads by Canastosatival & Thainival.

Shouting aloud! "'Here comes the Healess!"'

Rainbows arn, yet haigie getting
Angus Mac, sweatin' one-handed!

Atone the point of Salsal, thru the rain,
A cloud White Angel: Heavens be thy name,
Blar the crew in this Cla'st day's domain.

Whit the anchor, hölse the main: "Toan MacBrann!

[Excut her name: She, on the Sabbath came]

All who board from Kenneth Cooie.

The wee boat run 'I Am I Gie them Run!'

Postmen slips, leavin' off Leithen flits.
Barren's the hill slips: 'Green' as dollar bits.

Eco Pheasant, that's no Dressy slits.

Saturday night Lamp the Amap: Goodto thrive!

With luxury pow, the Canulous about.

Across the pitch: "Thats she brash!

Triple decked, a funnel, you'd mackle.

'Round repainted an open smoker's deck.

Davo's gone, no cigarrene, it can crack,

Mind the pipe smorns heiny pecy.

The middle deck, awash with wine,

Thurs's toss the snad hot the sea.

A crew, in furono, rushing down the shore.

Grab bin mixter's perspicience, thru her door,

Firemen who had been us, at night before.

Oooy Pate's tug had made quite a roar.

The skipper shine them six a beam.

He's running jutties up the bash.

A coach and four, hurtin' near Convenir shore.

The ferry dropping down her cairned door,

God save to days of Warrior Gaun-

As I wade in the Gaelic sthewon,

It's Greenlith Gist: GMT minus dot.

You've raised the Greenlith's 'Chie' bus! (Class !)

Mind I Abroad ship, the other midday-free night,

I had me quite a frightful fright.

On came a thousand walders lightin' bright,

A laddie shouts: "Alba 'Flaming Graceliter!"

'Start fish smooth, water founin',

'Start bathe doun a rat's mouthe!

Wuddus Thymes with Thomas (Aug 10)
Great Fen-sedge

In the seventh of a series of articles on Raasay’s flora, botanist STEPHEN BUNGARD takes a closer look at Great Fen-sedge

Driving along the Raasay Highway as it crosses the island just south of Brochel, you may have noticed a dense stand of reed-like plants below the road in the marsh. This is Great Fen-sedge (*Cladium mariscus*) and it was first recorded there in 1969 during a Botanical Society of Britain & Ireland (BSBI) field meeting. It was apparently not there in the 1930s when Heslop Harrison and his team covered Raasay pretty thoroughly, as they made a point of saying they found it only in Loch Braig on Rona. The patch has been slowly growing over the 33 years I can vouch for. It is also known very occasionally along the northwest coast of the mainland and also on Muck and Soay and, since 2011, in one spot on Skye.

Great Fen-sedge is a perennial with short horizontal rhizomes and can reach a height of 2.5 metres. The leaves have sharp serrated edges and for this reason it is sometimes known as saw-grass.

It requires a water table close to ground level, a range between +40cm and -15cm in relation to the soil surface having been found most favourable, so removal of peat can give rise to suitable habitat but obviously, seed or rhizome fragments are needed for colonisation.

This is the generic ‘sedge’ of East Anglia where it was used for thatching and fuel, though serious protection for the hands is needed. It is too sharp to be much use as forage but Highland Cattle have been known to eat young shoots. One wonders whether its sporadic appearance in the Northwest Highlands is the result of deliberate introduction with one or more of these uses in mind.

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
News from Raasay Primary School

Pupils and staff at Raasay Primary School are now settling in to the new session after our summer break. The weather wasn’t particularly kind to us during the holidays but we did have some sunshine to welcome us back to school! We are delighted to have Hamish in our P1 class and we all look forward to working with him over the year. Here he is pictured with his classmates in a photograph that was sent to the Oban Times for their P1 feature page. This special edition will be published in the Oban Times on Thursday 29th September.

We are also delighted to have Mrs Tracey Marsh as class teacher on Mondays, Tuesday mornings and Wednesdays. Meanwhile, in the Nursery, we have Tamsin and Calum returning for this session.

Duck Race:
During the summer holidays, the Parent Council very kindly organised a Duck Race, barbecue and ceilidh in conjunction with the Community Hall. The day was a huge success and a really fun way of bringing people together. The total raised for the school was £686.32 – this was to cover costs for the recent P6/7 trip to Perth. Thank you to all who helped with the organisation and the running of the event.

Seashore Exploration:
This term, we will be studying the ‘Seashore’ and have arranged to have visits each Friday from Ellie MacLennan, Highland Council Ranger to help us with this. On Friday 19th August Ellie visited the school and we all took part in a field study of our local shore. Here are some of the pupils exploring the shore line to see what they could find.

The afternoon was rounded off with a visit to the fantastic ‘Pop-Up’ Café at the Community Hall. The pupils thoroughly enjoyed their juice and cakes – we hope to visit again sometime!
Coffee Day:
A date for the annual Coffee Day has been set for Saturday 1st October – and it’s not far away! We hope to have all the usual stalls and fun along with some fabulous food and baking. If you have any items for the Silent Auction or raffles, etc. please drop off at the school or give us a ring to arrange collection. We will keep you posted nearer the time with more information. We are also in the process of producing a 2017 Calendar with another beautiful collection of photographs of Raasay, Rona and Fladda. Copies will be available from 1st October.

Mod:
At the local Mod in Portree on Saturday 4th June Lauren MacLennan, Leia Croy and Nelly Blair represented the school in their respective competitions. All three put in fantastic performances and were praised for their pronunciation, expression and excellent Gaelic. Lauren, Leia and Nelly were all awarded Silver medals and their points tally resulted in the school being awarded the Oban Rose Bowl for the highest total for a non-Gaelic Medium school. Their photograph appeared in the West Highland Free Press back in June.
Check out our freezer section. Always new products being added.

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
01478 660203 raasaystores@aol.com
facebook.com/RaasayCommunityStores

Community of Raasay Retail Association 1762RS
As I indicated before, my association with Raasay goes back some years—however, my Dad’s experience is even longer! When I was very young, Joe Gordon worked away a lot—to my immature imagination, Skye and Raasay were as distant as Hong Kong! He worked for a firm—either Halls or Hasties—and painted homes in the Highlands from Fort Augustus to Drumnadrochit, even reaching Raasay. I believe he was given permission to fish in nearby Scalpay!

The title of this composition is “My Father Engaged in his Trade in Raasay”... hope you like it. Does anyone remember him? I recall him once looking up from his newspaper upon hearing Sorley Maclean mention Suishnish—he painted there too.

Long before the days of personalised number-plates, he possessed a motorcycle—a BSA Bantam—which bore his own initials, Joseph William Gordon! My Mam often travelled on the back on the old Skye roads, which meant she was "Molly at the Moll"!

It’s good that I can recall
From a while back to now
My Dad being once in Raasay
Because often in his trade
He went by road and by boat
To stay a few days from the Muir
Painting houses inside
And outside as well
That’s the work appointed him there
It’s a wonder to me in my time
That I’m fond myself
Of shapely wee Raasay since long
I greatly hope in my day
That others remember
A quiet Gordon man with affection
Because the place was fine
Due to all he did there
The trace of beauty he left on Raasay.
We are looking for interested applicants in being part of an integrated health and social care service that supports North Skye and Raasay communities.

If you are a caring individual then this may be the post for you. We are currently looking to recruit to our Care at Home bank (relief), specifically for the Isle of Raasay and would welcome expressions of interest/applications from within the community. Orientation and induction training will be offered to support these roles. If you are interested please contact Jenny White, Care at Home Officer on 01478 613937 and for an application, please follow the following link https://jobs.scot.nhs.uk/_Details.aspx?vacNo=438592. Paper copies can be requested from NHS Highland Employment Services on 01463 888264.

As part of sustaining our rural communities we will soon be looking to employ support workers for Skye and Lochalsh, including Raasay, who will work across both health and social care roles. These future roles will be varied, person centred and support the whole integrated service. A comprehensive training programme will be available, supported by our Learning and Development Facilitator, Advanced Practitioner District Nursing and Integrated Team Lead. If this is a role that you might be interested in and want to know more on an informal basis, please contact Kate Earnshaw, District Manager on 01471 820600 or kateearnshaw@nhs.net
Volunteering Opportunities on Raasay

**Pensioners’ Minibus Drivers**
- 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.
- 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 September 22 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!
- Contact Lloyd Gudgeon (lloydraasay@gmail.com) or Della Cheshire (ambratach@gmail.com).

**Play Pieces Event Management Volunteers** - see p16.
Raasay Community Association

EVENTS - AUGUST

Family dance on Friday 12th August with Tar the Croft
Unfortunately, despite having a great Skye band over for the night, the dance was not well attended and whilst those who did come along thoroughly enjoyed the great music, with only approximately 40 people present we lost money on this event.

Thank you to volunteers
A huge thank you to those who helped with all of the events over the summer, as we’ve said many times before, they cannot go ahead without help from members of the community and it is very much appreciated. These events run as part of RCA’s commitment to provide a range of events and activities for the community but they are also a fundraiser to assist with the running costs of the hall.

Pop Up Cafe
The new Pop Up Cafe ran from the hall on Wednesdays and Fridays in August. Offering local information, hot and cold drinks, home baking and light lunches it proved to be very popular with both visitors and locals alike with nearly 300 guests coming in over the 8 days. It is anticipated that the cafe will close for the summer at the end of August but having been such a success, we expect to re open next summer and possibly at other busy / holiday times throughout the year. Any future dates that the cafe will open will be advertised on Facebook, via the newsletter and on posters on Raasay.

Thank you very much to everyone who came along and supported this new venture, either by having something to eat and drink or by helping with the washing up and tidying away. It's raised money for the hall, provided a bit of local employment and it's been great to see the hall open to all and well used.

Book Exchange
The book exchange bookcase that has been in the hall for the last few weeks will continue after the cafe closes. Books are available for you to take or exchange for a donation towards hall funds. The bookcase is at the bottom of the stairs and if you would like access when the hall is not open please contact the Hall / RDT office on 01478 660358 or Ann Oliphant on 01478 660388.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Wee Theatre Festival - Saturday 17th September
Raasay features in this year’s Wee Theatre Festival! Craig Manson will be performing his short piece near the ferry terminal at 1pm and 3pm. He proposes “to create a performance in response to the current ecological climate, culture and heritage of Raasay Island through the eyes of a spiritual Deer and Stag as in the isle’s namesake – the Protector and the Spiritual Messenger”. The performance is £5 to watch; more details will be published nearer the time.

Play Pieces are looking for Event Management Volunteers at each site. As these pieces respond to the spaces and collections that house them they require more hands-on support, working with the venue staff and supporting the creative teams to ensure that the pieces enhance rather than disrupt visitor experiences. The focus for these roles will be in practical delivery and planning of events, production assistance. These skills would be useful in the events sector, entertainment or community projects. If you know a young person who would benefit from this opportunity please pass this information on.

For more information, or to express your interest please contact Lindsay Brown, Artistic Director www.playpieces.co.uk on 01463 831625 or email director@playpieces.co.uk
A Highland Wedding Murder Mystery Evening - Friday 7th October

Based around a Highland Wedding and unfolding over a three-course meal at the Community Hall, this evening will see a murder mystery take place on Raasay. Alongside actors from The Walking Theatre Company, guests at the meal will be gently encouraged to play their part as characters at the Wedding. Tickets for this event must be purchased in advance and will go on sale during September. More details will be available via Facebook and on posters locally in the next few weeks. This should be a great fun night, and something a bit different so please book your tickets soon!

Citizens Online Computer / Tablet / Mobile Training Courses

Citizens Online are looking at running some courses on Raasay covering the use of computers / tablets and mobiles. The areas that they cover include:

- Setting up email accounts
- Sending and receiving emails
- Searching online
- Shopping online
- YouTube tutorials
- Skype
- Social media: Facebook, Twitter and Pinterest

If anyone is interested in attending such sessions please contact Katherine Gillies so we can ascertain if there are enough people to go ahead.

ONGOING RUNNING COSTS AND REPAIRS TO THE HALL

As well as providing facilities and events for the benefit of the community, Raasay Community Association is also responsible, on behalf of the community, for managing the Community Hall. This includes raising money to ensure the maintenance and running costs of the hall is covered. Money is obviously raised for this through hire of the hall and charging for entry to the hall and running the bar / selling food, during events put on by RCA. However as well as the usual ongoing costs such as insurance, electricity, licenses, annual maintenance etc there are also some major costs associated with work that was not carried out to the required standards during the building of the hall. Some of the required repairs, such as the internal doors not closing, some of the ridging on the roof blowing off, and problems with the plumbing in the toilets have already been dealt with and many have been fixed by volunteers - to whom we are very grateful.

As you will probably be aware we still have major ongoing problems with water ingress along the front of the building and with all the external doors. We have recently received quotes for the work required to fix these issues and the total cost will be over £22,000. RCA does not have sufficient funds to cover these costs and grants are very hard to find for revenue costs. Therefore it is likely that we will need significant fundraising and to take out loans in order to cover the costs.

RCA’s average expenditure over the last 3 years on running costs of the hall stands at £18,326, our annual average income over the same 3 years is £13,738. So as you can see there is already an annual shortfall without the cost of these vital repairs.

If you are able to help in any way: by donating, by organising fundraising, volunteering at events, helping with some of the more minor repairs and maintenance, or just by attending events and hiring the hall, please do.

If you would like any more information please contact a member of the RCA board or Katherine Gillies, Admin Officer.
We hope you are enjoying reading the September issue of the newsletter, with a distinctly poetic theme! Many thanks for all your contributions.

We were pleased to welcome Barbara Camilli and Jen Burnet to our steering group meeting on August 25. Although rather rushed due to the imminent arrival of the minister, we managed to review the last issue, plan this one and run through the ins and outs of copyright law. We are still keen to get others involved, so if you are interested, please come along to our next meeting on Thursday September 22 at 10am in the hall.

The deadline for the September newsletter is Monday September 26. Please send any newsletter correspondence, including feedback, to our new correspondence address: Am Bratach, c/o RDT, Raasay Community Hall, Isle of Raasay IV40 8PA. Tel 01478 660358, our new email address ambratach@gmail.com or tweet @AmBratach.

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 September 8.
- 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: September 21.
- Murdina Hairdresser – Alternate Thursdays on 07799315756. Next due September 8 & 22.
- Yoga – Tuesday mornings 9.00am-10.15am and Thursday evenings 6.30pm-7.45pm (except September 22 TBC & September 29). 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.
- 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.
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

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**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

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**Veterinary Centre**
Tel: 01478 611269

**Veterinary Services and Animal Health Supplies**
Farm and Companion Animals

**Serving North Skye & Raasay**

**Daily surgeries in Portree – Monday to Saturday**
9-10am Mon-Sat
5.30-6pm Mon-Fri

**Other times by prior arrangement**

**Please phone for an appointment**

For our clients in Raasay we can offer the following: ‘Brookie’ can take over any required food/medicines on a Friday on the fish van. Please let us know if anything is needed no later than Thursday lunchtime.

***Special Offer***

*EctoFy 5 Litres*
Pour on for Sheep & Lambs
Ticks, Fly Strike & Biting Lice
Withdrawal only 8 Days

£ 59.00 + VAT
### What’s On Raasay – September 2016

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- If you are planning an event and would like to publicise it, please get in touch with Della or Lloyd as soon as possible on 01478 660358 or email ambratach@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 – 11.00am on Tuesday 13th September at Raasay Community Hall; 11.00am on Thursday 29th September (Feast of St Michael) at Raasay Community Hall followed by bring and share lunch. All are warmly welcomed.
- Catholic Celebration of the Word and Communion at 37 Inverarish Terrace, Sundays 11.00am. Dave / Teresa Tel 660337.

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

**Chainsaw Maintenance & Cross Cutting**

This 2 day ITA LANTRA award chainsaw course is for novice operators with little or no experience of chainsaw use, who are required to maintain and operate chainsaws for cross cutting but not felling. This course is aimed at the casual user.

**Broadford College Centre**

22nd & 23rd September, £325.

To book this course, please contact Abigail Manvell Szőke on abigail.manvell.whc@uhi.ac.uk or 01397 874 530.