



THE HEBRIDEAN TRUST

Newsletter - New Year 2005

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See our web site for the Hynish Centre
<http://www.hynishcentre.co.uk>

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"Our Tiree Mum"



Visitor to the Hynish Centre abseiling on the Isle of Tiree

Around 300 young people from all over the UK visited Alan Stevenson House in 2004. Alan Stevenson House is the activity centre on the Isle of Tiree where The Hebridean Trust provides disadvantaged children with an opportunity to develop their skills. They benefited from taking part in activities including kayaking, canoeing, paddle surfing, rock climbing, abseiling, hill walking and mountain biking. Whilst many of the groups visiting in 2004 had been before, several new groups appeared and, as ever, Monica Smith, the warden, was praised for her warm hospitality and culinary skills. She even won the award for being "Our Tiree Mum" by an inner city school group from Scotland.



Now into a New Year and a new season, Monica looks forward to the challenges ahead in 2005. The number of subsidised groups visiting has steadily increased and reservations for 2005 are up again. The Trust subsidises the cost of providing the visits and, although income is increased with more groups staying, the higher level of subsidies increases the costs, so the Trust is faced with a deficit.

Whilst Monica has enlisted local help on a paid for and voluntary basis over the years, there are a lot of long hours and the weight of responsibility a role of this type brings. The stage has been reached where the Trust needs to recruit a new employee to assist Monica. It is anticipated that this role will, initially, be a seasonal one but may have year round responsibilities in the future. Naturally the Trust is pleased to be able to create a new job on the island and is currently seeking funding for the position.

The Trust maintains strong links with schools, community groups and social workers and is rewarded with comments including, "For young disadvantaged people there is no doubt that a trip to such a place is a wonderful experience". Monica herself sums up the personal rewards of the role, "When you realise the hardship and lack of opportunity these young people face back home you get a warm feeling when you see their once withdrawn faces literally start to beam after just a few days."

If you would like to enquire about how you can help the Trust fund the essential new role please contact the Development Office on 01865 311468 (info@hebrideantrust.org)

Housing in Demand



Family Life at Upper Square, Hynish © Historic Scotland

One of The Hebridean Trust's objectives when it set out to restore the lighthouse shorestation village of Hynish, Isle of Tiree, was to help reverse the population decline on the island by creating low cost housing.

The lack of low cost housing is an increasing concern in many rural areas in Scotland. This is mainly associated with the composition of housing stock and the costs of renting or buying a house.

The Trust has created 12 properties that are available for let but housing availability is still poor on Tiree, particularly for those looking to rent. The Trust and Argyll & Bute Council are the main providers of rented accommodation on the island but the Trust augments this using its housing stock in converted listed buildings.

House prices and house site prices have followed national trends. This has resulted in the cost of housing being beyond the financial reach of most young families. Indications are that the demand for low cost housing is not currently being met which restricts the accessibility of the island as a destination for economically active in-migrants. In fact, many factors combine to identify a shortage of housing as a key issue preventing the development of the Hebridean islands.



Upper Square, Hynish © Historic Scotland

So, the Trust has taken the opportunity to invite applicants for its recently available property at Upper Square, Hynish from further afield - provided they bring something extra to the party! The added ingredient the Trust is seeking is a tenant with building trade skills, so that they can attend to the Trust's own repairs and maintenance work and apply their skills elsewhere on the island. Who knows, maybe they'll help with the housing demand by building a house or two themselves!

If you would like to enquire about how you can support the Trust's increasing repairs and maintenance costs on the Category A listed buildings in Hynish please contact the Development Office on 01865 311468 (info@hebrideantrust.org)

Invite to dinner

Volunteers and colleagues of The Hebridean Trust on the Isle of Tiree were invited to a dinner to thank them for their support and commitment. The dinner was well attended by 19 guests. Mike Stanfield (Chairman) took the opportunity to thank Jan Hunter for her contribution. Jan, who retired as a volunteer in 2004, had been a loyal volunteer at Sandaig for many years. The dinner was held on Saturday 2nd October at The Glassary Restaurant, Sandaig, Isle of Tiree, next to the Trust's Sandaig Thatched Cottage Museum.

If you are able to offer your skills on a voluntary basis across any of the Trust's project areas please contact the Development Office on 01865 311468 (info@hebrideantrust.org)

Developments

Sandaig Thatch Shortage



Sandaig © Historic Scotland

Work on restoring the roofs of the Sandaig Thatched Cottage Museum on the Isle of Tiree has been hampered by a shortage of thatch. Recent storms, which have caused extensive damage across the area, have further blighted the work. The Trust is pursuing on and off island solutions to bring the roofs of the cottage, barn and byre back to their former glory. Following the publication of the Trust's last newsletter, one of its members made a very generous

donation towards the repair work.

St Edward's centre Canna

Work is well underway to solve the problem of water ingress at St. Edward's. There is an agreement with the National Trust for Scotland

to complete the programme of improvements and remedial works in partnership with The Hebridean



Morton Boyd House



A visitor car park, including two spaces for the disabled, has been created by The Hebridean Trust in Hynish, Isle of Tiree. It is situated in front of Morton Boyd Hall, which houses The Story of

Skerryvore Lighthouse exhibition, and was developed by Touchwood Renovations of Tiree.

The Skerryvore exhibition, housed in Morton Boyd Hall, Hynish, is open daily and entrance is free to the public

Alan Stevenson House

Work is almost complete on the toilet for the disabled and access improvements at Alan Stevenson House, Hynish, Isle of Tiree. The



former stores building was converted by The Hebridean Trust 14 years ago to create accommodation for visiting groups of disadvantaged children and a facility for local community and

in partnership with the Hebridean Trust. With the South face of the tower and some other elevations having been repointed, the building is starting to dry out. Work will recommence in Spring 2005 and is scheduled for completion by the end of 2005. It is hoped that study groups will be able to start enjoying the facilities in 2006.



social events. It is also used to provide catering and refreshments for visitors to Hynish. The improvements, undertaken by Touchwood Renovations of Tiree, are a welcome development for all users.

Friends get Younger

When 12 year old Joe Withers-Green was given £200 to donate to charity, he quickly made up his mind that The Hebridean Trust was his first choice. Joe was drawn to the work the Trust does to improve the lives of disadvantaged children and, being keen on the environment, was fascinated by its role as owner and conservation manager for the Treshnish Isles. He decided that the best way he could contribute to and become involved in the Trust's work was to take out life membership as a "Friend of The Hebridean Trust". Little did Joe know, however, that his decision would land him the honour of becoming the Trust's youngest member.

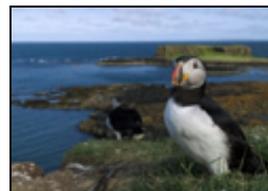


Now 13, Joe is looking forward to a trip to the Treshnish Isles with his father this Summer. He hopes to visit in May, around the time the Trust plans to have a team carry out an archaeological scoping trip. The archaeology of the Treshnish Isles merits further research into

the interactions between the settlement and agriculture of the islands and their fortifications. It is not known, for example, if the fortifications overlie earlier Viking settlement. The castle, which is divided between two islands, is unique and of considerable national importance. It is expected that the archaeological survey itself will be one of the projects the Trust undertakes in 2006. The Trust has already received some financial support for the archaeological reconnaissance trip and is currently seeking funds for the remainder. It will later launch an appeal to fund the proposed 2006 survey.

Although Joe's visit will not coincide with the Trust's survey of the breeding colonies of seabirds, which will take place in June 2005, Joe should have the opportunity to enjoy the greatest single wildlife spectacle of the islands. In particular, the concentrations of seabirds on Lunga, especially in the vicinity of Harp Rock.

The most significant features of the seabird fauna are the large number of guillemots and storm petrels. Manx shearwaters also breed on the Treshnish Isles in significant numbers while puffin numbers are the largest in the southern Hebrides. The corncrake has recently become one of Britain's most endangered species of birds and their breeding range is now mainly restricted to a small number of islands in the Hebrides, including the Treshnish Isles. The Trust is currently fundraising for the seabird survey.



Puffin © Dr Dirk Funhoff

Joe comments, "It's very rewarding to contribute to the charity and I'm really looking forward to visiting the Treshnish Isles - I had no idea that I'd be the youngest member when I joined". The Trust welcomes new members and, as Joe has demonstrated, there are no age limits!

If you would like to enquire about how you can support the Trust's archaeological or seabird surveys please contact the Development Office on 01865 311468 (info@hebrideantrust.org)



Accommodation availability

There are a few weeks/weekends available for the 2005 season in both

Morton Boyd House (sleeps up to 8) and Alan Stevenson House (sleeps up to 24) in Hynish, Isle of Tiree. Families and couples welcome. You can check the latest availability for our accommodation by visiting our web site at www.hynishcentre.co.uk

For more information on Tiree and the Hynish Centre please send us your address - we will send you a copy of our full colour Tiree Brochure.

Bright Start for Skerryvore Exhibition

The Story of Skerryvore Lighthouse exhibition, opened by The Hebridean Trust in Hynish, Isle of Tiree last Summer (see

Summer 2004 new sletter) has exceeded visitor number expectations



Few exemplify this more than Hynish resident, Maureen McMullen, who kindly volunteered to oversee the exhibition and who enjoys the feeling of participation the role gives her. "It's good to put something back into the community," says Maureen.

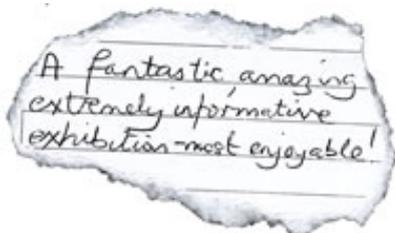
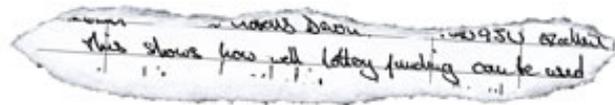
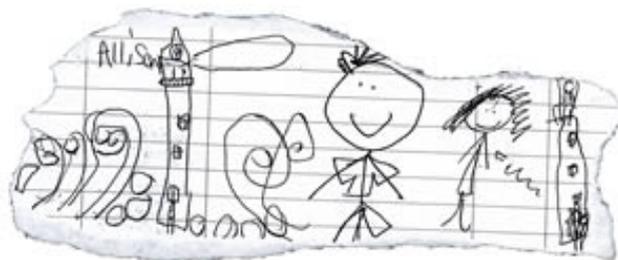
A survey for the island highlighted that visitor groups are predominantly interested in knowledge transfer; looking for a learning experience. The extracts from the visitors' book indicate the exhibition's success in appealing to these groups, and satisfying the interests of a wider cross section of visitor ages and interests, including the inspiration for some artwork from one of its younger visitors!

and received some very positive feedback.

During its first four months of opening, it is estimated that the exhibition received almost 4,000 visitors.

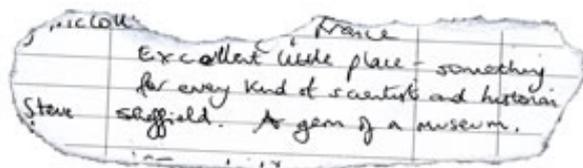


Visiting the Story of Skerryvore Lighthouse exhibition © Historic Scotland



Analysis of comments from the visitors' book has revealed that the exhibition has been effective in increasing visitors' understanding of the heritage of

Skerryvore Lighthouse and Hynish and awareness that this heritage needs to be protected for the future. Among locals, there is evidence of instilling a sense of place in the community and a commitment to preserve their heritage.



Admission to the exhibition is free but the Trust welcomes donations. The Trust uses the donations to contribute towards the running costs of the exhibition. The Trust also welcomes financial support towards its maintenance programme for the exhibition.

If you would like to enquire about how you can assist the Trust with the maintenance costs please contact the Development Office on 01865 311468 (info@hebrideantrust.org)

The Hebridean Trust Trustees:

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For more information on [Tiree](#) and the [Hynish Centre](#) please send us your address - we will send you a copy of our full colour Tiree Brochure.

Join the Friends of the Hebridean Trust



We need your support! We invite you to join the Friends of The Hebridean Trust where you will be helping us to conserve the unique Hebridean way of life and environment. Your membership or donation can help develop new projects, to ensure future generations will continue to enjoy a rich and varied experience of life in the Hebrides.

See our pages on [membership](#) and learn more about the other ways you can [help the Hebridean Trust](#).

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