



FM 22.3.88

NEWSLETTER 6

MARCH 1988

GATLIFF TRUST ACTIVITIES IN 1987 & 1988

Bernerary

In May 1986 a party from the Prince of Wales Community Venture in Sunderland dug out the ruin just north of the hostel. This is the building which currently houses the elsan and is largely submerged in sand. They also painted the outside walls white. Donald Angie, the ferryman, cut bent and thatched the roof.

1988 will, hopefully, see the completion of the final phase of the project. A second dormitory will be created, and a w c installed when the ruin is renovated. This will depend on the availability of volunteers for the work parties listed later. Do please volunteer if you are able to help.

Claddach Baleshare

Electricity arrived at Berneray hostel in May 1987. The Prince of Wales group dug the trench for the cable. They also painted the inside of the hostel white and painted exterior woodwork. Tommy Tosh cut bent at Sollas and rethatched the roof.

Arthur Meaby has designed a porch extension which will include a w c.

Howmore

Howmore was rethatched and is, once again, water tight. The bent was cut by Jim Souness, Steve North and Peter Clarke at Benbecula Airport. (Many thanks are extended to the airport authorities for this.) The chimneys have been flued with vent linings and a small Artic stove has been fitted in the large dormitory. The old, defunct, Raeburn has been removed from the Common Room and will be replaced with a new multifuel flat topped stove (without an oven), hopefully before Easter. The Prince of Wales group painted the interior of the hostel.

If sufficient people make themselves available for work parties, we will be able to install benches for the gas cookers. Also the v-lining in the large dormitory, removed for the chimney work, will be replaced.

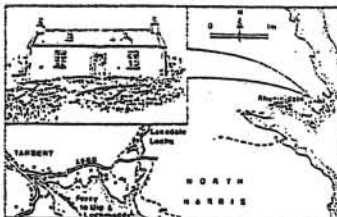
Rhenigidale

Early in 1987 we were able to purchase the hostel from Roddy MacInnes' executors. The Countryside Commission for Scotland and the local council, Comhairle Nan Eilean gave us, respectively, 50% and 25% of the cost, for which we are very grateful. Plans are being made to improve the hostel, with the work starting in autumn 1988. A mansard roof will replace the existing roof and the hostel will be wired for electricity.

By December 1988 the road, at least to Land Rover track standard, will have reached the village. Having made that road, a full metalled road will then be built on top of the track. It will end just above Roddy's old home. (Don't worry folks we are not building the road!) These works will affect the water supply for part of the village. So the Council is planning to improve the supply for the whole village and this will benefit the hostel.

Thanks

Many thanks to all who helped during the year, especially the Prince of Wales Community Venture Sunderland.



- 4 Rhenigidale North Harris PASS 380 (Gatliff Trust).
Unclassified. Charges as per Grade 2.
28/2 - 1/10 at other times at Warden's discretion.
11 beds.
No stairs.
Tarbert 6 miles (4 miles difficult track).
No advance booking.
Tarbert/South Harris/Stornoway.
Tarbert to Uig/Lochmaddy 16 miles. Stornoway to Ullapool 15 miles. Leverburgh to Berneray/Newton Ferry 24 miles. Foddun 1,782ft.
Sea bathing.
See angling.
Stoobinish (S.Y.H.A.) 14 miles. Berneray (G.T.) 28 miles via Leverburgh. Lochmaddy (S.Y.H.A.) 8 miles via Tarbert/Lochmaddy Ferry.
Points of Interest: Coast line.
Map References: O.S.14 (G.R.229018).

The Gatliff Trust is a charity which helps local people to run traditionalcroft houses as simple hostels. The accommodation is very much simpler than the usual youth hostel and some discomfort must be expected if used outside the summer. Basic equipment is provided but it is recommended that visitors bring a quilted sleeping bag with them. Advance bookings cannot be accepted.

*Note: Track not suitable for cyclists.

SYHA HANDBOOK

During 1987 the SYHA offered our hostels 'adopted' status and inclusion in their 1988 Handbook. This offer was accepted as it will be a great aid to publicising the hostels.

The ethos of the Gatliff Hostel will remain unchanged. Our hostels will remain open to all, whether they are members of a youth hostel association or not. We will also continue to keep the rules to the minimum, sufficient to guarantee everyone's safety and comfort.

INTERNATIONAL SIGN

This is the international sign, with blue surround, which appears at the approach to most youth hostels.



FINGER POSTS

Adopted status allows us to use the international youth hostel road symbol on any finger posts. We have obtained Planning Permission for finger posts to be erected on the spinal road in Uist (the A865) at the road ends to Claddach Baleshare and Howmore.

GAELIC ROAD SIGNS

The local council have adopted a gaelic only policy for road signs, as part of their efforts to preserve the gaelic language. During this winter the road signs in Uist were changed.

Berneray becomes

Bearnaraigh

Claddach Baleshare becomes

Cladach A' Bhaile Shear
(Road sign to Baile Sear)

Howmore becomes

Tobha Mor

Rhenigidale in Harris is

Reinigeadal

The sign at the start of the track (from the Scalpay road) is bilingual. Interestingly this is now out of step with Comhairle Nan Eilean policy, since bilingualism was rejected except in Stornoway and Benbecula.

GATLIFF HEBRIDEAN HOSTELS TRUST

From 1 April 1988 the day to day management of the hostels will devolve to a new charitable organisation, incorporated as a company limited by guarantee. This is the Gatliff Hebridean Hostels Trust, also known by its gaelic equivalent, Urras Osdailean Nan Innse Gall Gatliff. It will 'trade' as the Hebridean Hostellers.

All members of the Hebridean Hostellers will become members of the Hostels Trust. Six directors will be drawn from the Hebridean Hostellers, the rest will be nominated by the Gatliff Trust.

So far, the Gatliff Trust have nominated John Joyce (Chair), Peter Clarke (Vice chair), Frank Martin and Roger Clifton. Hebridean Hostellers Dave Brown and Alan Busson have agreed to become directors. Alan has kindly agreed to become company secretary. Philip Lawson will represent the SYHA.

This is an opportunity for Hebridean Hostellers to get more closely involved in the running of the hostels. So over to you!

VOLUNTEER WORK PARTIES 1988

The Trust have planned an ambitious work programme for the hostels in 1988 and once again we need volunteers for work parties.



CAN YOU HELP?

BERNERAY

OUTLINE OF WORK PLANNED

At Berneray the second phase of the renovation will start at Easter; it must be complete by the end of September 1988. Part of the ruined outbuilding will be built up to provide flush w c, shower and washroom. This will involve the installation of a septic tank and the laying on of water and electricity supplies. A further dormitory will be created in the hostel.

At Howmore there is considerable interior work to be done, including the installation of a multifuel stove, cooking benches and work tops, an extension to one dormitory, rewiring, pointing and painting and possibly the reorganisation of washroom including the installation of a shower.

Rhenigidale is in need of extensive renovation which will include the provision of a shower and washroom, kitchen with cooking stoves. The roof will be extended to the rear to increase the size of the dormitory, provide more headroom and allow for emergency exits. Wooden bunks will be constructed. A number of internal and external repairs will be carried out and full redecoration. This work is planned to start in September.

At Claddach Baleshare there are plans to build a thatched porch to provide a new kitchen, shower and flush w c. A septic tank will be installed. It is not known when this work will start.

WHEN ARE THE WORK PARTIES?

So far leaders are available on the following dates:

March 26 - 31

April 9 - 16

August 1 - 12

September 3 - 17.

April 23 - 30



Other dates may be arranged.

If you have been on one of our work parties and think you could lead a party this year, please get in touch.

PRACTICALITIES

Food and cooking will be on a communal basis. Please let us know if you are vegetarian. The Trust will contribute £2.50 per person per day towards food. Accommodation is free. However, volunteers will have to pay their own travel costs. It is possible that transport might be organised, depending on leaders or volunteers bringing their own transport.

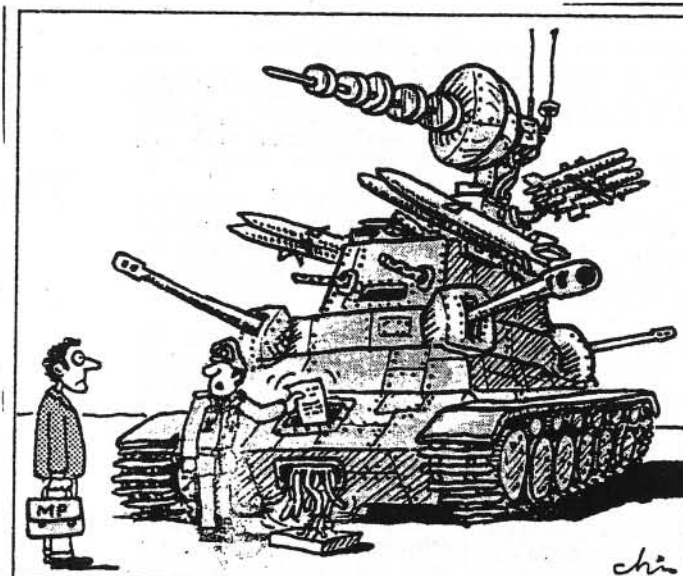
You are strongly advised to bring a good quality sleeping bag, good footwear, warm clothing and waterproofs, *and a torch!*

All materials and tools will be supplied by the Trust at site but nonetheless if you have your own tools you should bring them. Please let me know if you have any particular skill or have a driving license.

If you want to come on a work party or would like to know more contact me by letter or phone:

JOHN JOYCE, 2 BEAUMONT ROAD, UPPER NORWOOD, LONDON SE19 3QZ. TEL 01-653 8376.

From the newspapers



"This is the bit that does the actual shredding"

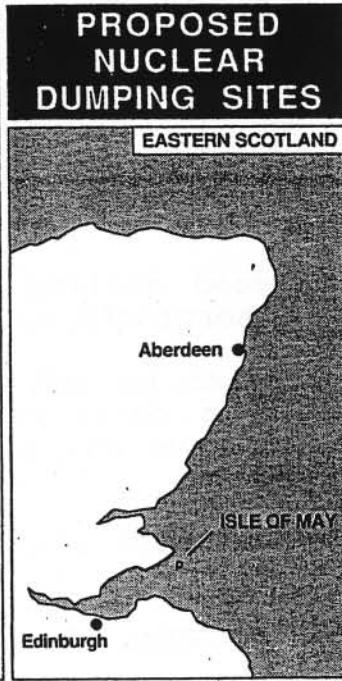
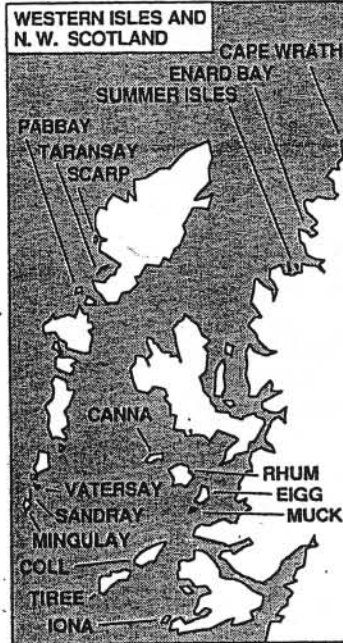
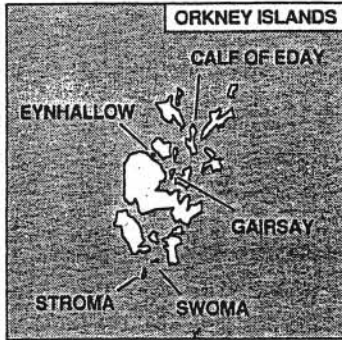
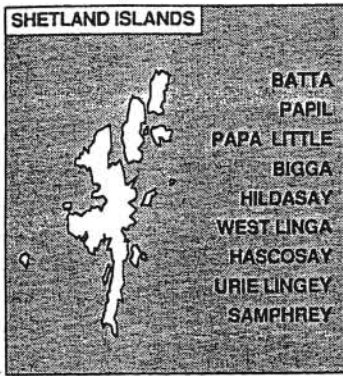
Intergalactic shredder!

What is a "volumatic disintegrator"? That question occurred to Mr Calum Macdonald MP after learning that one is to be installed at the Royal Artillery range in Uist.

Mr Macdonald put down a ques-

tion asking what the purpose of this fearsome-sounding piece of military hardware might be. The reply explained that a volumatic disintegrator is, in fact, "a large paper-shredding machine"!

West Highland
Free Press
13 February 1988



The Independent
2 May 1987

Potential island sites

MORE THAN 120 islands have been identified as potentially suitable for storing intermediate level waste, a report by the British Geological Survey, *Site Selection and Characterisation for Deep Radioactive Waste Repositories* shows.

A process of weeding-out most of the inhabited islands, the most remote islands, and islands owned by the National Trust for

Scotland or used as bird sanctuaries, is virtually complete.

Among those almost certain to have been excluded are Raasay, the inner isles of Coll, Tiree and Iona and some of the uninhabited "Summer Isles" off the Sutherland coast.

There are about 20 likely candidates left, of which seven are thought to be around Orkney and Shetland.

Island crofters paid off after missile range protest

By Jean Stead,
Scottish Correspondent

PROTESTS against the installation of a guided missile range on the small island of South Uist led to an uproar that threatened the plan to build a base there. It was only resolved with substantial "disturbance" payments which are still paid.

This is disclosed in records released yesterday by the Scottish Record Office under the 30-year rule.

The small island has since served for rocket target practice for nuclear battlefield weapons.

The protest of the crofters was led by local churchmen and the writer, Sir Compton Mackenzie, and culminated in a mass meeting on the crofters. The Reverend John Morrison, a local JP, in March 1957 sent the Government a resolution passed unanimously by more than 1,000 crofters from South Uist, Benbecula and North Uist.

"From this resolution I am sure that you will appreciate the hostility of the islanders to the project," he wrote. "As one who knows the islanders intimately, I must stress that they will never change these views." He called for immediate action on the resolution, which demanded initial operations on the range to be stopped, an official inquiry and a referendum

The protests caused a stir at Cabinet level and a torrent of inter-departmental memos between Whitehall and the Scottish Office.

Advice was given to the Secretary of State for Air, Mr George Ward, from Sir David Robertson, MP for Caithness and Sutherland.

"The way the RAF contemplates going into Uist is not far removed from an occupation force in wartime.

"I know that Father Morrison, Compton Mackenzie, Morray McLaren (a novelist) and Co can be licked, and with ease, but coming into their quiet little island, taking some of their land, dispossessing some of the crofters and bringing in all your own goods and stores is just about the crudest thing that could have happened.

"A self-contained community coming in and taking possession, that is the case against the RAF and the Army. If that attitude is persisted in you will have a hell of a lot of trouble."

The Government was proposing to move about 4,000 servicemen to an island with a population of about 6,000.

Sir David proposed an extraordinary inducement to try to get the crofters, some of

to accept the range. "It would be a masterstroke if a miniature Harrods was set up there to provide produce of all kinds and services similar to those in the Brompton Road or in

Oxford Street." The matter was settled with the appointment of an inquiry sympathetic to the crofting outlook to examine the funding of "disturbance" payments.

Ms Mary Bremner, of the Western Isles council, who lives on South Uist, said yesterday: "They put up a good strong fight in 1957, and it is still benefiting us."

"As far as I can see it is the only range in the UK where these payments are made. They extended the firing times this year, and we were able to go right back to the original agreements and secure additional payments, which the crofters share. Our relationship is excellent."

The Guardian
2 January
1988