



THE HEBRIDEAN TRUST

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Issue 02

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Self-drive bus used by guests at the [Hynish Centre](#)

St. Edward's Centre looking good



The new St. Edward's Centre set in stunning scenery on the Isle of Canna

With the fit out taking place in September, The St. Edward's Centre has undergone a remarkable transformation. The scaffolding came down a short while later. Donald MacAskill, National Trust for Scotland building inspector for the area, described the work as "very impressive" after his visit on 28th November and members of The Hebridean Trust working team were delighted with the quality of the conversion job.

It is hoped that a warden will be installed early in the New Year, well in time to prepare for summer visitors. The St Edward's Centre will provide 12 additional visitor beds as well as living and working facilities for students of Gaelic. Canna has a unique resource in the John Lorne Campbell archive collection. The Hebridean Trust is working with NTS to establish a centre of learning on the island, which will help to stabilise the island's falling population.

Retirement of James Dunsmure after seven years as executive director of The Hebridean Trust

July 11th was an opportunity for The Hebridean Trust to celebrate the 7 years James Dunsmure served as

Executive Director and Secretary to the Trust. A dinner was held at St Edward's School, Oxford and he was presented with a pair of prints depicting Hebridean islands.

Trust chairman, Michael Stanfield commented on James' years as director, "We have seen an enormous increase in activity," he said, "our assets have almost tripled. We have carried out 3 major building projects; [The Barracks](#), [Morton Boyd House](#) and ancillary buildings and of course St Edward's, each project having budgets approaching £1m each."

As well as administration, James has raised some many thousands of pounds from grant making trusts. He set up our group of volunteers to run the Sandaig Museum amongst whom he is both liked and highly respected and variously know as James, Shamus or just "The big man." James continues to take an interest in the Hebridean Trust as a member of our advisory council.



Michael Stanfield left, with James Dunsmure who retired as Executive Director at the end of September

The Hebridean Trust Council of Management:

Michael Stanfield (Chairman)
 Professor Ian L Boyd (Director)
 David Christie (Director)
 Alan Smith (Director)

The Lilley family commemorates 70 years of Visits to Tiree.

On 4th August this year, Mrs. Sheila Lilley presented a wonderful bench to Alan Stevenson House at [The Hynish Centre](#), Isle of Tiree. As you can see from the photograph, it really is a remarkable crafted piece of furniture and a fitting commemoration to a unique family experience of Hynish. Back in November 1999 Mrs. Lilley wrote to James Dunsmure describing the connections her family has with Hynish: "We were really just a family who came to [Tiree](#) all these years ago and fell in love with it. My father first came to Tiree as a boy of twelve nearly seventy years ago; he sailed up to Tiree from the River Clyde on a boat called the "Cygnet". He loved Tiree as a boy and always wanted to go back.

That was to be many years later after he and my mother married and had four children. The Island held a sort of magic for us and we just loved it, these were very happy years. That was when my parents took the house at [Upper Square, Hynish](#). The whole family was completely captivated by Hynish and we just felt that that's where we wanted to be. It was beautiful.

Later we rented No. 3 Lower Square. There were only one or two people left at the square and Mrs. Sutherland who lived in the cottage that Monica now lives in, most of the people had moved as the houses were in a very poor state. The square itself was an eyesore and the outside of the building and surrounding areas were very run down and neglected. There was no electricity in the house; everything was Calor Gas, which provided our lighting and cooking, we even had a Calor gas iron, there was no toilet in the house only a chemical toilet in the barn, all these things we took in our stride and didn't bother us in the least. We were fortunate enough to have running water in the house, not everyone did. Mrs. Sutherland had no running water in the cottage; she got her water from the well in the square.

It was many years later when my parents had the



We think the Trust has done an excellent job throughout Hynish, it's just lovely to see it. [The Alan Stevenson House](#) is very nice and the [Morton Boyd House](#) is just lovely. It's hard to believe that all our children many, many years ago used to play in these old buildings especially the old cowshed where the cows and chickens were kept and is now the Morton Boyd House. What a transformation!

To date there have been five generations of our family who have come to Tiree and will continue to come, as they all have a tremendous feeling for Tiree, especially Hynish."

The presentation was a great success. Professor Ian Boyd, expert on Hebridean ecology and member of the Trust council of management since 1990 and Colonel James Dunsmure, executive director since 1993, formally received the bench and the group of about 30 people who had gathered for the ceremony retired to the dining room to enjoy the now famous Hynish teas, provided by Monica Smith. The bench will be kept in the lobby of Alan Stevenson House. Meanwhile we would like to thank Sheila Lilley and her family again for their labour of love over the years, which has certainly proved an inspiration and helped to preserve Hynish for future generations.

electricity put in and a running toilet, that was only after the Electricity and Water Boards brought their supply along to Hynish. It was a working holiday for all of us when we arrived in Hynish, my father put us all to work. He painted the whole building, walls, windows, doors etc, he even managed to persuade the factor into fitting new gutters and downpipes around the whole house as most of them were non-existent. They had disappeared over the years and the water had been pouring down the outside walls of the building for years.

We made pathways and gardens and planted flowers everywhere, my father fitted gates in the square. Everyone helped collect pebbles from the shore, (with the help of Lachie MacArthur and his tractor) to cover the paths. When finished it looked lovely and really transformed the place completely.

See our web page for more information on the [Hynish Centre](#) and to find out if accommodation is available. You can book your stay using our online booking form. Alternatively send for our full colour brochure on Tiree (see end of newsletter for address).



Lower Square - including The Hynish Centre - facilities for holidays, courses, and functions

Skerryvore lighthouse trip

While Tiree and many other islands were suffering from a drought this summer, the sunshine and blue skies were a blessing to holidaymakers and the sea was calm and kind to travellers.

These were ideal conditions for the group of Lancashire Divers who used [The Hynish Centre](#) as a base this summer. Their excursions in powerful rigid inflatable boats took them as far as Barra Head, exploring wrecks and reefs in the clear Atlantic waters. When they offered our warden, Monica Smith, the opportunity to travel out to the [Skerryvore Lighthouse](#), she jumped at the idea.



High speed boats used by divers based at the Hynish Centre - summer 2000

Our Warden, Monica, at the foot of Skerryvore Lighthouse



During the last week in June, Monica and Rosie Kelsall, also of Lower Square, Hynish, set out with the Lancashire divers to the famous lighthouse that has guarded the western approaches for over 150 years.

"The day was perfect", enthused Monica, who has always wanted to visit the lighthouse, which she can see on a clear day from her home on Tiree. Like all offshore lighthouses, Skerryvore is now automatic and therefore unmanned, but luckily [Northern Lighthouse Board](#) workers were also taking advantage of the fine weather to catch up on the mammoth task of repointing the 137-foot stone tower. Thanks to their presence, Monica and Rosie were able to climb the tower and get a fantastic view of the hills of Tiree in the distance.

Sandaig Museum of Island Life

Improvements, including rethatching, funded by Hebridean Trust with assistance from Historic Scotland and Argyll and the Isles Enterprises are currently taking place at [Sandaig](#), the fascinating museum of Island Life on the Isle of Tiree.

A new home for Hebridean minerals

Thanks to Dr. Richard Gillanders of the British Geological Survey in Edinburgh, we are now proud to display this unique collection of minerals at [The Hynish Centre](#). The dazzling array of crystalline rocks has each been carefully labelled with its scientific name and island of origin.

The collection is on display in the original cabinet, also donated by the late Robert Taylor, one time member of The Hebridean Trust council of management. Dr Gillanders and an associate from BGS braved the petrol crisis in September in order to travel to the island but



Inside the
Sandaig Museum

described this, their first trip to Tìree as "very enjoyable" and are looking forward to a return visit.

For a detailed brochure describing the construction and use of traditional Hebridean thatched cottages send your address to [The Hebridean Trust](#). The museum survives through the hard work of our volunteers on Tìree and on donations for which we are always very grateful.

Generous donations put Upper Square on track for Spring

The Hebridean Trust project to renovate the [Lighthouse Keepers' cottages](#) at Hynish, Isle of Tìree took a step in the right direction this autumn.

Two generous donations totaling £50,000 have brought the starting date within sight. The Hebridean Trust is now awaiting tenders, which have gone out to 4 building firms in the area in order that grant offers from The Heritage Lottery Fund, Historic Scotland and Argyll and Bute council can be firmed up.



Meanwhile we will continue with our fund-raising efforts. The category A historic cottages will be used to provide low cost accommodation to four island families.

The Hebridean Trust has a policy of not beginning projects until they are 100% funded.

Spotlight on The Treshnish Isles

In April 2000, with the assistance of a grant from The Heritage Lottery Fund, The Hebridean Trust acquired the [Treshnish Isles](#) with the aim of managing them to promote conservation and visitor awareness of conservation issues.



Bac Mor, also known as The Dutchman's Cap, is the second largest of the Treshnish Isles

- There are 8 principal islands varying in size from less than 4 hectares to 60 hectares. The largest is Lunga, then Dutchman's Cap, Fladda, Cairn na Burgh Beg, Cairn na Burgh Mòr, Bac Beg, Sgeir a' Erionnaich, Sgeir a' Chaisteil and there are scores of skerries and reef areas.
- Apart from the scenery and their mystique as a group of uninhabited islands, they hold nationally important archaeological sites in the form of a large mediaeval castle as well as

- In autumn they are the breeding ground of Atlantic grey seals, which give birth to their white pups along the shore.
- The Treshnish are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest, and they are recognized as being of European importance as a breeding ground for wild birds and seals.
- They formed quite recently (in geological terms) some 60 million years ago. The Treshnish, together with nearby Staffa (site of the wondrous Fingal's Cave) are all that remains today of the extensive plateau of molten lava that spread out from the eruptions of a large volcano on the nearby Isle of Mull.
- The islands we see today were carved out of this plateau by glaciers during the ice age. The sea level was once much higher and so you can observe ancient sea caves and beaches high above the modern day shoreline.

The Hebridean Trust is preparing a management plan for the islands a draft of which is being distributed for consultation with interested parties. The plan includes provision of information leaflets and signage in order to encourage a sensitive and educated approach amongst visitors to the islands and a full archaeological survey.

The Hebridean Trust would like to thank The National Trust for Scotland for their generous contribution towards the Treshnish Isles purchase.

large colonies of breeding seabirds.

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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