



Carraig Log Book Voyage 5

Cnoc na Carraig
55° 52' N
5° 14' W

2019

Carraig's Log Voyage 5 Year 2019



There were magnificent times and sometimes good weather too

The winter season (2018-19) had gone well, with minor repairs to the cockpit cover zip and other routine small repairs, but the blue cover is almost at the end of its working life and needs more attention each year. This year's winter project had been to repaint the fore cabin and the red hull stripe, which really freshened up Carraig.

The Log indicates that this year's weather has not been kind to us. The Jet Stream rarely ventured far enough North to usher in fine settled periods of weather, any high didn't stick around for long, mainly, the West Coast had a train of depressions trundling on East in a four day cycle, and we had to make the best of a rather damp Season. Even during the high summer, there were days when the wind was well over force 6 and Carraig was stuck in port whilst it blew through. Nevertheless, we

sailed well to the North of Archamuranan; the Small Isles; Skye and Raasey; then to the Outer Hebrides, earning our bunch of bow heather.

The engine continues to surprise. This year, after reassembling the heat exchanger I overtightened a phosphor bronze bolt, it eventually snapped whilst in Loch Fyne, creating assorted downstream problems starting with a trickle of water from the cooling tank, which eventually required repairs to the cooling system at Port Bannatyne and a new alternator at storm bound Dunstaffnage Marina mid-season.

A mild case of diesel bug has been contained over the last few Seasons by dosing with killer and filter changes, but this Season it was really bad and it took several filter changes, dropping down and disposing of 15 litres of grungy fuel and a determined effort at eradication, which towards the end of the Season proved effective.

The overheating at 18,000 revs proves problematic again, a tweak of the propeller's pitch improved performance. Essentially, the engine was originally filled with Essex's limed water necessitates a descaling and this may well, in the short term, be a continuing ongoing process to clear all the channels.

The engine raw water intake picks up a lot of weed, which is caught in the strainer, clearly it's doing its job, but it too causes overheating, nevertheless I'm inclined to think that a better arrangement may cure this problem.

We were to do a fair distance this year, up the Mainland West coast as far as Skye and out to the Outer Hebrides, before a fast moving depression drove us back into the safety of Arisaig. From there, it was threading Carraig South thence around the Mull of Kintyre to her home moorings again.

Clyde to Crinan

The Firth of Clyde Basin and surrounding lochs are some of the most sheltered sailing waters in the whole of Europe. The Highland boundary line runs down the Firth and out by Bute and Arran. To the West around the Kyles of Bute are the Cowal Hills the whole area gouged out by the Rannoch Moor glaciation, at the very edge of the Highland Boundary and it's spectacular scenery. History shows that the Kyles have always been a sheltered waterway, guarded by vitrified forts on the small islands protecting copper deposits at Kilfinan, then through time to large estates made wealthy by double dealings, the trade in slaves*, cattle and sheep - latterly to be split up into smaller units by the excursions of the wealthy Victorian Glaswegians, who developed the small coastal villages of Tighnabruaich and Kames on the Kyles and Rothesay and Port Bannatyne on Bute. Argyll's whole population is equivalent to that of Bradford's, and, with so many low density coastal settlements, it is not unusual to find documented historical artifacts still insitu.

*Paying off the slave trade - The loan taken out in 1833 to compensate British slave owners was only paid off in 2015. That was when we - you, me and ironically the slaves' British descendents too, our taxed money - finished paying off what was originally a £20m loan. In today's terms, it was around £20bn.

Tuesday 7 May

James Watt Dock to Caladh (Gaelic: Harbour)

In the water early at the east pontoon in James Watt Dock, a basic stow and sails bent on. 1612 Hrs off berth and proceed down river.

1810 Hrs off Toward Point, stopped engine due to overheating and continue under jib. Clear water intake of debris. Wind is NE 3-4 then just at the East Kyles turns variable, but continue to drift and tack. 2112 Hrs anchored in Caladh Harbour for the night. It's cold enough for the heater and hot water bottles.

Caladh was once the harbour for the Estate, requisitioned by the Navy, Caladh house was demolished after WWII. Recently, the Estate, like so many others, has quietly been sold by Scottish Forestry to private individuals, which now forms part of a larger forest unit stretching as far as Loch Fyne. The link to previous owners is the well maintained graveyard on Eileen Dubh which protects the harbour.

Wednesday 8 May

Lochranza (Scottish Gaelic: Loch Raonasa)

Serious sort out of gear. The weather's not at all kind - cold with a NE'ly 4-5 gusting 6. 1600 Hrs anchor aweigh and a broad

reach under a glowering sky. 1812 Hrs re-anchored in Lochranza - we pick up a mooring as far into the loch as we can go to shelter from the notorious down draughts from the surrounding high mountains.

Heater on full blast.

Lochranza is reputed to have the least hours of sunshine of any village in the United Kingdom, since it lies in a north-facing glen on an island with a particularly high level of rainfall. The streets do not have any street lights so it can be dark in the winter months.

Scottish Salmon (Faeroes owned) has submitted plans for a 5,000 tonne salmon net farm off the North of Arran. Having grossly polluted the Scottish lochs, these fish farms are being sited in more open deeper water in the hope that the effluent, sea lice and detritus will be washed away to be spread more widely. Between Bute and Arran is Glasgow's last (now disused) effluent dumping ground also containing low level military grade atomic pollution. The Norwegian lobsters burrow into this mound of "shite" and are sold as Cumbrae prawns, but otherwise the mound's so toxic that there's little evidence of even weed getting a long term toe hold. Frankly if this was a contaminated refuse dump ashore it would have been declared off limits years ago.

Caged salmon rearing in Scotland, is a heavily mechanised big business, employing an increasing numbers of people in remote locations. Whilst big business is moving out of lochs to remoter "difficult" sites, entrepreneurs are back filling these vacated sites with lower density cages and secondhand automated feeding systems. Nevertheless, indications both here in Scotland and in Norway are that both caged and wild salmon welfare is deteriorating and that their environment is becoming heavily polluted, the use of hydrogen peroxide to contain disease is more prevalent (disease-causing organisms, including external parasites, bacteria, and fungi, on different species and life-stages of fish are controlled by high doses of hydrogen peroxide which then breaks down quickly in sea water) and the increasing tonnages of diseased and dead finfish being reported to The Scottish Environment Protection Agency (SEPA) raises concerns. Indeed an internal SEPA report, a 2017 consultation, and two Scottish Parliamentary committees, one of which concluded that "the status quo is not an option", adding that the industry's expansion goal "will be unsustainable and may cause irrecoverable damage to the environment" unless governance and practices are improved markedly". Have all been highly critical of the finfish industry and SEPA's inability to regulate. Yet, the Scottish Parliament's SEPA, the Crown Estates and Local Authorities

licence bigger and remote sites. A money spinner. Clearly an industry that for the public is truly out of sight and out of mind.

The Scottish government has said it would do all it could to safeguard the future of the species and announced £750,000 to support a project to track the migration of smolt - young salmon - on the west coast of Scotland. A spokesperson said: "The decline in the numbers of wild salmon returning to Scottish rivers is of great concern and caused by a range of complex factors. That is why the Scottish government has committed, in its latest Programme for Government, to develop a wild salmon strategy by September 2020."

Thursday 9 May

Loch Fyne - Glack Mor Bay

1006 Hrs leave mooring in a Light Easterly.

1230 Hrs ashore in Tarbert for wash, shop and lunch. As usual Tarbert is sheltered and extremely pleasant. We've only stopped for a lunch break so avoid a marina payment, it's also early in the season so both the marina and town are quiet.

We sail up Lower Loch Fyne, tide rode and becalmed at Otter Spit Beacon we motor to a mooring at Otter Ferry and ashore for dinner and a grand heat from a roaring fire. With the wind to veer Northerly, this will expose the mooring to a fetch down the Loch, so we let go, head back down the spit to anchor in Glack Mor Bay at 2106 Hrs just as the sun begins to set.

Glack Mor (Gaelic: Glac Mor) probably means Big Hollow although, typically there are many other possible meanings too. It's a pleasant sheltered anchorage with oyster catchers busy on the shore and terns nesting on the islands. Recently, close by, a medieval incised cross and earlier cist were turned over when installing field drains during the refurbishment of the £1.3 million Castleton House and grounds. The previous owner was the late Sir Ian MacGregor, Margaret Thatcher's coal boss during the miners strike of the mid-1980s.

Friday 10 May

Glack Mor Anchorage to Kames mooring

Anchor aweigh at 1030 Hrs and head out under sail towards the Cowal coast. The upper hills are being cleared of trees. We anchor at Bagh Buic, (Buck Bay) on Crispie Estate for lunch. Crispie was one of the bases for the Norwegian Special Operations Executive (SOE) Commandos. The film "Heroes of Telemark" was based on their daring exploits to destroy the German's heavy water project and prevent the development of a nuclear bomb.

The minesweeper HMS Middleton is producing underwater explosions in Ettrick Bay. The Bay Area and Inchmarnock were used for "D Day" landing practice and even today the shore and shallow bay are a veritable junk yard. The Navy find it conducive for conducting live dive, mine and bomb exercises.

Inchmarnock is steeped in history dating back as far as 3,500 years. The earliest evidence of its habitation comes from the discovery of a local Bronze Age woman, the Queen of the Inch, by a farmer ploughing in the 1960s. She was discovered in a stone cist on the north east of the island, wearing a jet black lignite necklace and with a flint dagger. These items now form part of an exhibition in the National History Museum in Rothesay, alongside a reconstruction of her face which depicts how she might have looked.

The island takes its name from a settler in the 7th century, a holy man named Saint Ern, who established a monastery. The current owner commissioned a 5-year archaeological project, focused around the remains of a chapel at Midpark. This uncovered an array of artefacts, including carved stones and the largest collection of inscribed slate in the British Isles.

A very important part of the finds from Inchmarnock were a collection of inscribed slates and stones. This collection was awarded jointly to Bute Museum and the National Museum of Scotland. The slates help to tell the story of the monastery on Inchmarnock from its early beginnings to more recent times. The assemblage includes boards for games as hnefatafl and merles (games of strategy being an important part of the education of young boys).

Slates were used like scrap paper is nowadays, to draw out ideas before committing them to expensive vellum, so there are trial letters, designs and small scraps of text. Two languages are used, Latin and Gaelic. Some of the inscriptions would be made by monks but others seem to be the work of their pupils. The most important of these slates are on permanent display in Bute Museum, although there are often a few on loan to other museums.

Hostage Stone: This stone is thought to be the work of a young novice at the monastery. It depicts a scene where a hairy, scary Viking is leading away a monk carrying a reliquary. Other figures in chain mail and cross-hatched leggings are depicted. The monk is being led to a Viking ship, oars ready to row him away. This little sketch is of such importance that it is frequently requested on loan by other museums and for most of 2014 was in Denmark at the Viking Ship Museum in Roskilde. In the 8th century the island was subject to Viking raids and possession, and it is believed that victims of the Battle of Largs in the 13th century were buried on the island, which was later restored as a Christian settlement.

Fast forward to the 17th century and the island was purchased by the Stuart family who were the Earls of Bute at that time. A surveyor for Bute Estate described Inchmarnock as a delightful retirement, can supply all the necessaries in life within itself.



Cooling tank removed for repair and alternator lower right

During the second world war, the island was used as part of Bute training ground by the armed forces in preparation for D-Day. Having been subject to live artillery fire, mortar bomb craters pock marked the island and are still evident in places.

With a population that at one time numbered 41 residents, the island was divided by Bute Estate into three farms, logically named; Northpark, Midpark and Southpark. The walled boundaries of the individual holdings remain. The final permanent resident of the island, a Bute farming tenant left the island in 1986. The Island is again up for sale.

Motoring round to the Kames mooring an overtightened phosphor bronze bolt in the engine's cooling system shears, a pencil as an emergency plug gets us to the mooring and ashore at 1900 Hrs.

Saturday 19 May to 21 May Port Bannatyne

I sail Carraig round to Port Bannatyne, using the engine only to manoeuvre into the Marina. The engine's cooling header tank is removed and repaired ashore. I take an opportunity to give Carraig a wash down and tidy up before returning to the mooring.

In the Second World War midget submarines exercised in the bay and nearby Loch Striven. The then luxury Kyles Hydro Hotel, overlooking the Port, was requisitioned by the Admiralty to serve as the HQ for midget submarine (x-craft) operations. In particular, it was from here (hotel renamed HMS Varbel) that the top secret and audacious attack on the Tirpitz was masterminded.

Sunday 2 June to 3 June Port Bannatyne

The rev counter is behaving erratically. The system is checked, contacts cleaned and a hearty dose of WD 40 applied, the counter springs back into life, the problem is actually masked by WD40. Unknown at this time is that the alternator bearings and windings are failing, probably in part due to a salt water bath from the damaged cooling system. Nevertheless a temporary fix is made.

The sail back to the Kames mooring is outstanding. I had delayed going through the Kyles due to frequent rain squalls and gusts to 6 at times. But under a double reefed main and a good couple turns to flattened the foresail we're off. The run into the Kyles was fine, but the closer to Colintrave the more the wind turned "fluckier" with sudden down draughts, calms with it backing and veering all over the place. Single Handed: Well balanced, slow but purposefully to tack, Carraig's a joy to sail, she gives ample time to set up for each tack and to take each lift as it comes. It's clear at the Narrows that the winds from the North NorthWest and steadying up on 6s. Discretion being the better part of valour, I start the engine and shape up to take the Southern passage. The tide's just on the turn and on the Western side of the Narrows there are white horses. I give it a go, but to be honest, she's horsing about the narrow channel and I'm putting in increasingly shorter tacks - at Beere Rock buoy I miss stays in a gust and can't get her round to the next tack. Engine in gear and let everything fly as I bring her head back onto the course in a "humdinger" of a squall. I motor into Wreck Bay, aware of a couple of sets of binoculars trained in my direction, there I

douse the foresail and sort out the main sheet. Now back in charge I head round Buttock point in what is now closer to 7, with the wind pinging off the surrounding hills our speed drops to 3-4 knots as we head for Rubh Ban point. Past Rubh Ban Buoy the squalls ease and with the main eased, the engine can be throttled back and with Carraig now off the wind and picking up speed, picking up the mooring at 1512 Hrs.

Kames to Crinan Basin

Wednesday 5 June

Towards Portavadie and Black Harbour Anchorage

1130 Hrs Off the mooring in heavy rain and cyclonic winds 3-4 increasing 5 at times.

1340 Hrs alongside the fuel berth to bunker 90l of fuel and top up water etc - lunch ashore with Sue and Pamela.

Pamela heads back to Rockholm to attend to Mum, who's recovering from a fall. Late afternoon Sue and I sail up Lower Loch Fyne to anchor in Black Harbour at 1942 Hrs. Black harbour is sheltered by a row of skerries and is deep right up towards the muddy beach. The Ardmarnoch Estate backs uphill out of the bay - the owner, Rodney Beddows of London - has spent considerable energy and cash bringing the Estate back into use, but has left the Bay Area to its own devices. It's a tad less cold and dinner is had in the cockpit.

Thursday 6 June

Towards Ardrishaig

Woken at some ungodly hour by a bloke on a homemade hovercraft entering the harbour and zooming out again between the skerries. We were mindful of the timing for the Crinan Canal, which now needs 24 Hrs notice of arrival and transit. 0924 Hrs Anchor aweigh with a bit of black sludge to be washed down. The light winds allow for a long reach up towards Otter Spit (Gaelic: a spit - created by a breached terminal moraine) 1148 Hrs reached as far North into Loch Fyne as time would permit, and tacked to proceed directly to Ardrishaig.

1454 Hrs through sea locks and alongside in the basin for the night.

Pamela rejoins for the night, bringing in fresh scallops, prawn tails and oysters from Tarbert. Sue says, "Pleasant evening, sun comes out, but still a cold wind stops it from feeling like summer". A quick blast of the diesel heater brings the temperature up.

Friday 7 June

Crinan Canal Transit

0900 lock begins working - Carraig is to transit with Redwing a Moody Eclipse, who have hired Andy as a pilot. Pamela and Sue are "old hands" at Crinan's locks but welcome Andy's muscle and expertise.



The Crinan Canal between Crinan and Ardrishaig in Argyll and Bute in the west of Scotland is operated by Scottish Canals. The canal, which opened in 1801, takes its name from the village of Crinan at its western end. Approximately nine miles (14 km) long, the canal connects the village of Ardrishaig on Loch Gilp with the Sound of Jura, providing a navigable route between the Clyde and the Inner Hebrides, without the need for a long diversion around the Kintyre peninsula, and in particular the exposed Mull of Kintyre.

The Canal is in need of much TLC, with the price £128 per transit, and the ever present mischance of damage, traffic is down, and many boats are now electing to go round the Mull.

Without a midway stop at Cairn Ban, we are tied up in the Crinan Basin by 1630 Hrs at the Pampas Grass berth with plug in electricity (which is not included in the transit price).

Pamela says, "Beautiful" morning, a perfect day for a canal transit. Sue and I worked well and happily as a team with Pilot Andy. Glorious trip up this beautiful canal. Very heavy rain from 5pm. Nice dinner early to bed Zonked".



Adrishiaig dinner aboard. The Crinan canal is still hard work. Ambitious lifeboat conversion - the marvels of fibreglass. In the 70s there were four boats to a lock.

West Coast

Crinan, Lower Inner Hebrides, Oban and Dunstaffnage.

Saturday 8 June

Crinan towards

West Loch Tarbert - Jura.

Pamela, leaves early to collect her car and the drive back to Kames. But before she goes we all have bacon butties at the Crinan cafe. 1142 Hrs Clear of Crinan sea loch and wave goodbye to Pamela. We slope out across the Sound of Jura with the tide and a South Westerly 5-6 at times. 1618 Hrs Rubha an Traile (Headland of the beach) abeam to starboard and alter to enter Sound of Jura. Put in a couple of tacks to anchor behind Fraoch (Heather) Island to await the tide. Behind are the 3 paps of Jura. Old Norse translations can be either Deer Island or Udder Island, since Victorian times the naming veers towards Deer Island, although the Paps are more visible and remarkable.

About 678AD there was a great battle between the Picts and the Irish Scots, since that time the island has transferred ownership many times. 1840 saw the widespread introduction of sheep and the crofters were cleared from the land, which deteriorated as a consequence, and as such the ground is only fit for deer, overgrazing by 5,000 deer and some wild goats has hastened further deterioration.

Anchored close to Jura house on the Ardfin Estate at the southern tip of the island, between Freolin and the main settlement of Craighouse. Jura House is a Category C listed building. In November 2010, the Ardfin Estate was purchased by Greg Coffey, an absentee Australian hedge fund

manager. With almost immediate effect, he closed the spectacular gardens to the public, and disposed of all livestock from the estate's working farm - a modern day clearance. The closure of the gardens immediately aroused concern among residents, although Coffey's spokesman indicated that in due course they would be reopened. However, more recent information suggested that the closure has become permanent, and in June 2012 it emerged that Mr Coffey was planning to build a golf course on part of the estate. Construction of the course was completed in 2018 and an official launch has been planned. Mention Coffey's name in the crowded Jura Hotel will elicit stony stares and deafening silences.

On 23 August 1994, a disused boathouse on the Ardfin Estate was the location of K Foundation Burn a Million Quid, an event in which art group K Foundation burned an alleged million pounds in cash that they had earned as pop duo The KLF. The event was filmed, and was screened on Jura exactly a year after the burning.

1740 Hrs Anchor aweigh and motor through the Sound of Jura with the tide running at 4 knots. Clear of the tide about 1824 Hrs we hoist the sails and at 2030 Hrs are securely anchored in Cumhann Mor (probably Chumhainn - Great Narrows) in 7 metres.

There have been a couple of jack up barges and cable ship laying a cable to the west of Islay. With the advent of wind farms, much of the electrical network is being made more resilient.

The West Coast Estate has a few holiday cottages, but is largely deserted. Excepting the hunting lodge of the owners The Astor family, and their relatives, Samantha and David Cameron PM.

Ruantallain: immediately north of Loch Tarbert had been a part of the Tarbert Estate, until its sale in 1984. It is owned by businessman Lindsay Bury, who ironically, considering the island's deer overgrazing, is a former president of the influential wildlife charity Flora and Fauna International. Excepting one of the 7 estates all have absentee landlords. The 200 permanent inhabitants live on the east of the island.

This West side is perhaps one of the wildest and remotest parts of the Hebrides. The landscape is unique with huge raised beaches. Jura is composed largely of Dalradian quartzite, a hard metamorphic rock that provides the jagged surface of the Paps. On the western half of the island the quartzite has been penetrated by a number of linear basalt dikes that were formed during a period of intense volcanic activity in the Lower Tertiary period, 56 million years ago. The dikes are most apparent on the west coast, where erosion of the less-resistant rock into which they are intruded



The entrance to Cumhann Beg, threading our way in and out before the bay dries. With 1.4m draft we were careful to watch the tide's direction and rise.





The huge raised beach on Jura's west coast through which the loch percolates. The stones are all graded and polished and so deep that there's no soil to allow plants to take root.

has left them exposed as natural walls. The west coast also has a number of raised beaches, which are regarded as a geological feature of international importance.

Sunday 9 June

Cumhann Beag and onward to Oban
0930 hrs Anchor aweigh head out through Cumhann Mor and through the narrows to Cumhann Beag (Small Narrows). The tide is still on the rise with +3 metres above chart datum. Loch Tarbert, on the west side of Jura just about cuts the island in half but has one of the most beautiful, remote, yet sheltered anchorages of the Inner Hebrides. Once at anchor there is a freshwater loch separated by a raised shingle beach to visit, beautiful sandy beaches from which to bathe, a seal colony and, best of all, miles of inner lochs and little gorges to explore.

There are relatively exposed anchorages on its north and south shores but the place we seek is about two miles in - Cumhann Beag. Exploring West Loch Tarbert for the first time is an exciting experience.

Negotiating the outer loch past Eileanan Glenn Righ (Island of the royal glen) through Cumhann Mor into the middle loch with Eileen Ard to the North and finding the passage through, the concealed entrance at Cumhann Beg, following a series of beacons in the dog-leg passage leading to the inner sanctum. This entails slipping past jagged rocks and tidal eddies, squeezing past little Eilean an Easbuig (Bishops Island), with a work boat moored right on the transit lines, and then, at last, the shallow inner loch opens up with its one deep patch in the centre, with a few anchored workboats. This "pot" of water has 30metres in the middle and shallow out to be un-navigable at its edges. This is truly wild. 1030 Hrs is approximately high water, so it is important with Carraig's 1.4 metre draft to be heading back out with the tide still running in, otherwise we'll not transit the channel and have to anchor in a small pool of water, we navigate the course on the Antares charts closely. With the engine ticking over and stemming the tide, the channel and entrance are even more

forbidding, with the jagged splintered rock sides continuing in the channel, it's impressed on both Sue and I on getting the tide calculations and transits right.

1112 Hrs we are back at anchor and dinghy ashore to the fabulous raised beach at Loachan Maol an t - sornaich (the lochan by the sorrel cover mound) - The charts and maps do not name the actual raised beach. It's possibly 2 Km in length and about 15 metres above sea-level with the Loachan percolating through this pebbly dam. It is clean, with no weeds and the surface looks like a gardener has just finished raking the smooth round pebbles. And yet it has been lying there for some 10,000 years! Pamela has asked for cricket ball sized round pebble, and like a needle in a haystack we search fruitlessly, although we do bring back some very pretty ones that glint in the increasing cold drizzle.

1448 Hrs Anchor aweigh. We motor out on transit then clear of Jura's South Western coast. Just clear, the engine's charging alarm goes off, and the rev counter has failed and we stop engine and switch off the engine starter battery. We set the sails and decide to go North towards Oban. An hour into our trip, we make a course change to go round the Corryvreckan's great race as its forced between Jura and Scarba.

Strong Atlantic currents and unusual underwater topography conspire to produce a particularly intense tidal race in the Corryvreckan channel. As the flood tide enters the narrow area between the two islands it speeds up to 8.5 knots and meets a variety of seabed features including a deep hole and a rising pinnacle. These features combine to create whirlpools, standing waves and a variety of other surface effects, which extend Westwards for up to 4 Miles.

The wind has slowly died and there's no sea running, but the Race is impressive all the same. Now Sue's looking none too well, not good at all, indeed she's probably a bit chilled and "bone weary" from this mornings cold drizzle - she takes to her bunk with a hot water bottle. The engine restarted and the revs guesstimated for 5.5 Knots to make best passage for Oban Marina. 2224 Hrs alongside on the pontoon at the Kerrera Marina, with the diesel heater on and shoreside power to the electric heaters. Sue appears to be responding to the heat.

Monday 10 June

Oban to Dunstaffnage

Sue's back to her usual self, probably caught a really bad chill yesterday. She goes to the showers then onto the honesty shop for eggs and sausages. Meanwhile, I've tracked down an engineering facilities and a possible replacement alternator at Dunstaffnage Marina. The Engineer will be

available to work on Carraig tomorrow. This allows Sue and I to take the local ferry from Kerrera to Oban for shopping and lunch at Euusk, while waiting on the return ferry - it has a complicated App or internet booking system. 1548 Hrs off the pontoon and hoist the jib, but leave the engine on tickover as we sail into the narrow channel at Maiden Island. 1706 Hrs alongside the outer breakwater. The weather forecast is non to good and we decide to bring Carraig inside the breakwater - although there is a disconcerting rolling swell as the tide pushes through the marina towards the approaches to Loch Etive.

Tuesday 11 June

Engineer out first thing this morning. Alternator removed and sent to Inverness for testing. Although Inverness is right across the country I am assured that if it needs repairing or another ordered it will be back with the marina by 0700 Hrs tomorrow. There's nothing to be done but catch the bus to Oban and hit the bright lights, tourist sights and have a hair cut!

Wednesday 12 June

The alternator has been declared a write off as the bearings are shot, it and a nice shiny new one arrive as planned at 0700 hrs. Unfortunately, there is now a force 8 - 9 gale blowing and the breakwater is being immersed. We have extra lines out to hold Carraig in position and it is decided that it is too dangerous for the Engineer to venture down or for that matter work in the engine compartment.

Thursday 13 June

The alternator is fitted first thing today, engine run up and all is well. However, my 95 year old mother has called again and we need to hot foot it back to Rockholm at Kames. Generously, George McKay has driven up from Tighnabruaich and we are given a lift back by an expert ex-police driver in less than 2 hours. Mum is in considerable pain having cracked a couple of ribs. Her support team are excellent, and with a liberal dose of painkillers she is to make a full recovery.

Saturday 15 June

Dunstaffnage to Fiunary Anchorage, Sound of Mull

Mum is much improved and is now mobile again. The complexity of travelling on the west coast at the weekend is that it will be quicker to drive from Kames at 0845 hrs to Cumbernauld, leave the car with family and bus back into Glasgow and continue out to Oban by train arriving at Oban at 1608 Hrs.

1708 hrs off the pontoon. We give the new alternator a run and all is well. With the longer days and sunset at 2217 Hrs we have time to set course for the Sound of Mull, missing the tide gate at Duart Castle on Mull, we have nothing for it but to

motor on as the wind fades. 2140 Hrs anchored in Fiunary Bay on the Morvern coast. I have never used this as a passage anchorage, but we're well tucked in a pool behind some rocks and its a flat calm. We put the heater on to lift the temperature as dew begins to settle.

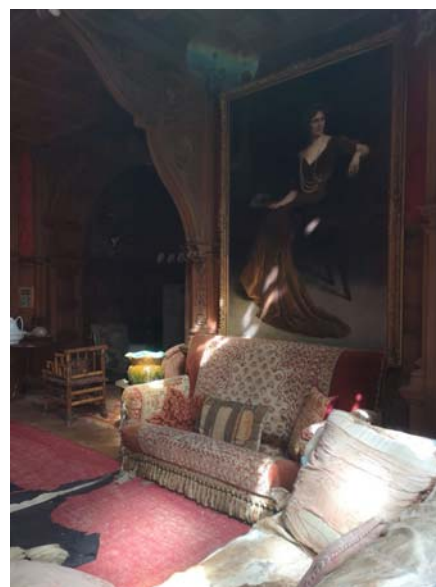
Morvern from the Gaelic A' Mhorbhairne (the Sea-Gap) is a huge land area of 350 sq miles was cleared for sheep runs in the 18th Century and now has a permanent population of 240 confined to the ribbon of land round the coast. It struggles to maintain its full time population although the rash of new build of fine summer houses and the silica mine at Lochaline gives employment. Nevertheless, with Government backing, the local Morvern Community Development Council has given notice to all the Estate owners of their intentions to take land and forestry into collective local ownership. Many Estates have now published strategies for ecological regeneration and local community employment benefits and now activity encourage the local community to contribute to future plans - which hasn't always been the case. The road by the bay was one of the many Victorian poor relief roads dug out in the 1880s, which evidences just how tough things were in the area. However, the scheme was by no means a failure. The families that lived along the coast, certainly beyond Drimnin, all achieved wealth beyond their dreams - from the wages that they were paid. These wages were then invested in a one-way ticket away from Morvern, and anecdotal evidence suggests that by 1900 the landscape was about as deserted as it is today.

Clach na Criche is an impressive boulder located along the mainland coast of the Sound of Mull to the North of Fiunary Bay. Distinctive in shape, looks like a stone wall with a hole in the middle. This strange shaped stone was created millions of years ago when hot volcanic magma forced its way through the earth's crust and then hardened. Although natural in origin, it has played a part in local history and tradition for a long time.

Many natural places in Scotland have stories and traditions attached to them that make them a part of people's everyday life. Locals believed that Clach na Criche held magical properties to fulfil wishes. Local folklore tells of a well or spring that existed nearby to the stone. To gain your wish you had to fill your mouth with water and pass through the hole in Clach na Criche three times, without touching the stone with your hands. While doing this you must continue to hold the water in your mouth and think hard of your heart's desire. On completing this ritual, your wish would be granted. Another tradition was to pay respects to the dead at Clach na Criche. The Wishing Stone was a stopping place on the twelve mile funeral march



The new alternator



Kinloch Castle's Victorian splendor

from Lochaline to Drimnin graveyard. "peace to thy stone and a stone to thy cairn" - Traditional Gaelic Benediction The mourners would walk down to the beach and each take a stone to build a cairn, a pile of stones. This would serve as a monument to remember their loved one who had just died. The tradition continues today. On visiting the stone you will see numerous small cairns, each marking a funeral.

Sunday 16 June

To the Small islands

Fiunary towards Eigg and Rum

1030 Hrs Anchor aweigh and proceed up the Sound of Mull under main and poled out foresail. 1300 Hrs Bypassing Tobermory, Rubha nan Gall (Strangers point) Abeam to port - the wind is dropping and at some point we will have to motor. 1428 Hrs Motoring round close in to Ardnamurchan. 1642 Hrs Galmisdale



Kinloch Castle frontage.

Bay at Eigg in the Westerly pool. But the Pool is now restricted by moorings and it's difficult to drop the anchor on clean sand away from kelp. We stop for a cup of tea and a bite to eat, but with the wind to come round to the South West will make the anchorage untenable and the decision is to make for Rum. 1718 Hrs anchor aweigh and we stand out from Eilean an Chathstail (castle island).

Much of the local nomenclature is based on Ordnance Survey and the ability of the then English speaking non native to record what only a Gaelic speaking local was trying to convey. Many Old Nordic terms have been lots in antiquity, but sadly also often Gaelic meanings have been made unintelligible and significant local names been lost in time. It's a sad indictment that we live in a land that we cannot describe or confidently name, unlike our forebears.

2012 Hrs Anchored in Loch Scresort, Rum. Sue records that it's been a lovely sail in good weather, sunscreen applied. Lunch underway, and although arriving relatively late, we have a hearty dinner which includes herbs, which are thriving under the spray hood.

Monday 17 June

Rum towards Canna

Scottish Gaelic name often anglicised to Rum, is one of the Small Isles of the Inner Hebrides. For much of the 20th century the name became Rhum, a spelling invented by the former owner, Sir George Bullough, because he did not relish the idea of having the title "Laird of Rum".

It is the largest of the Small Isles, and the 15th largest Scottish island, but is inhabited by only about thirty or so people, all of whom live in Kinloch on the east coast. The island has been inhabited since the 8th millennium BC and provides

some of the earliest known evidence of human occupation in Scotland. The early Celtic and Norse settlers left only a few written accounts and artefacts. From the 12th to 13th centuries on, the island was held by various clans including the MacLeans of Coll. The population grew to over 400 by the late 18th century but was cleared of its indigenous population between 1826 and 1828. The island then became a sporting estate, the exotic Kinloch Castle being constructed by the Bulloughs in 1900. Rum was purchased by the Nature Conservancy Council in 1957.

By rights, Rum should be one of the most interesting island - uniquely different from the other small islands, excepting it is wet with an average rainfall of 300cm, and deliberately kept as a wilderness - indeed up to the late 1970s a landing permit was required. Despite its inhospitable climate it is the site of early Scottish inhabitants - a vast number of artifacts have been recovered mainly stone tools made from Rum bloodstone and flint. The land was cleared of settlements and converted to sheep farming, when that failed the new owner The Marquis of Salisbury converted Rum into a sporting estate, bringing in red deer before he too sold out. The Bullough family of Oswaldtwistle (father and son) turned the estate into a holiday retreat, building Kinloch Castle in 1902 - with prime extravagant Edwardian opulence - everything from the Ayrshire soil and stone was imported, including the fleet of Albion cars to meet the ferried guests brought into Mallaig by private train. The house itself is an Edwardian time capsule with its orchestration of trumpets and drums, central heating and double glazing.

Ashore in the morning by dinghy to the ferry pier. Kinloch house is locked and shuttered, but we see enough from the outside as the rain falls as unremitting drizzle. We beat a retreat to the village hall, shop and cafe for bacon sarnies and coffee in the cafe. Now to say the natives are unnaturally uncommunicative in every sense of the meaning is an understatement. It had a population of only 22 in the 2001 census, making it one of the most sparsely populated of all Scottish islands. There is no indigenous population; the residents are a mixture of employees of Scottish Natural Heritage and their families, together with a number of researchers and a school teacher. Certainly the service ethic (even lets fleece a tourist ethic) is non existent. I remark in the log that this has been the most unfriendly / unhelpful people I have met in yonks.

Sue is even more disparaging in the Log book, she writes: "Most unwelcoming and unhelpful in the shop, so just bought milk. Tea room had no cake or soup (yet) so settled for a bacon sarnie and coffee. Chatted to woman off a Dutch ketch and other yachties - studiously ignored by the locals, including the designated local

Nature Conservancy Council Guide, who sat close by, but by her attitude and demeanour could have been from another planet - All in all glad to leave Rum behind"

We return to find the dinghy high and dry, and have difficulty launching it which just about sums up the day.

Of interest we met the Head of Geology at St Andrews University - he too was scratching his head, as he considered what the locals had promised prior to his arrival but now failed to deliver, leaving him in search of a boat to take him to a remote location to connect with a research student.

1254 Hrs anchor aweigh and proceed round the North of the island under double reef in main and foresail. We had to take Carraig further off the coast to avoid a new fish farm - no bad thing really as we were getting large down draughts from the hills. However, these "Mega" remote salmon farms are replacing the smaller loch based ones, as the salmon farms try to contain the pollution and lice from this multi million pound industry that is very much out of sight and mind. Mowi (the new name for the Norwegian owned Scottish Salmon business) reported in June 2019 of some 125 tonnes of dead salmon from its Rum farm alone. Lice-infested, "blind", "physically damaged" and "anorexic" salmon were disposed off site as reported to Sepa - the Scottish Environmental Agency.

The wind dies as we come out of the Rum weather shadow and we motor on towards Canna. 1536 Hrs Anchor in Canna harbour - it is extremely cold for this time of year. Decided against going ashore - small maintenance jobs done and a quiet evening reading - heater on yet again.

Heading to Skye

Tuesday 18 June

Canna towards Soay

Ashore and a walk round to Sanday via the road - the wind was Southerly 4-5 gusting 6, but down in the shelter of the harbour it was remarkably pleasant. We shower at the farm and have a chat with a "gang" who sup from beer cans while discussing venturing out in the two ribs moored in the bay - all very relaxed in comparison to that on Rum. We make use of the wifi at the shop. There's no pressure to move off as we cannot enter Soay harbour before half tide.

Canna (Scottish Gaelic/Norse: Canaigh; Eilean Chanaigh) is the westernmost of the Small Isles archipelago, in the Scottish Inner Hebrides. It is linked to the neighbouring island of Sanday by a road and sandbanks at low tide. The island is 4.3 miles (6.9 km) long and 1 mile (1.6 km) wide. The isolated skerries of Hyskeir and Humla lie 6.2 miles (10.0 km) south west of the island.

The islands were left to the National Trust for Scotland (NTS) by their previous owner, the Gaelic folklorist and scholar John Lorne Campbell and his wife the talented artist and photographer Margaret Fay Shaw in 1981, and are run as a farm and conservation area. Canna House, one of two big houses on the island (the other being Tighard), contains John Campbell's important archives of Gaelic materials that were donated with the islands to the nation. Unfortunately, Canna House was being refurbished and our trespasses were repulsed by a formidable librarian. The NTS has engaged in new initiatives to attract new residents and visitors to Canna. However, these initiatives have enjoyed only limited success, and in December 2017, it was announced that the NTS would be devolving to the island community the responsibility for attracting and retaining new residents.

There has been a serious rat infestation for years on Canna. Now after a 3 year eradication programme the rats are gone and the bird life is recovering, without the rats, the rabbit population has exploded and they too are now being culled.

1600 Hrs anchor aweigh - we pick up a lot of kelp and their associated rock moorings on the anchor.

Kelp ash is rich in iodine and alkali. In great amounts, kelp ash can be used in soap and glass production. Until the Leblanc process was commercialized in the early 19th century, the drying and burning of kelp in Scotland was one of the principal industrial sources of soda ash (predominantly sodium carbonate). Alginate, a kelp-derived carbohydrate, is used to thicken products such as ice cream, jelly, salad dressing, and toothpaste, as well as an ingredient in exotic dog food and manufactured goods. In many respects, the harvesting of kelp was one of the Highlands and Islands economic drivers - the end of the Napoleonic Wars (1803-1815), saw Britain not only again accessing continental kelp ash, but also continued the "ethnic cleansing" of the indigenous Highland population, firstly off the good land to the rugged coastal strip then finally removed from the land altogether and replaced by huge sheep runs and shooting estates.

Numerically insignificant and geographically distant from the centres of British industry, trade and political power, islanders and crofters exercise no great influence on the country as a whole. Now in the twentieth century, there is an economic and environmental disdain for North West Scotland by their Southern brethren. The difficulty in recruiting local teachers, care, fish and tourist industry workers - produces a major impact on population centres and can wipe out a community's viability when the primary school register thins, the collapse of the



Soay deserted shark fishing plant and buildings



Soay - Sue searches for a mobile signal and connects.

shoals of herring and fishing in general, (Margret Thatcher abandonment of the 3 mile no take zone allowing trawlers to dredge into the fish hatchery zone) running down of the rail network and reliance on incredibly poor West coast roads and communication in the 1970-70s saw a second exodus and another population crash. History will probably repeat itself in 2020s with restrictions on EU migrant workers, where Scotland needs net immigration, the UK Government points system will probably lead to the Highlands and Islands further depopulation. Mobility is about so much more than the economy: for one thing, it's

about social connection and population stability. Extending the right to fast, cheap, decent transport should be at the heart of what government does, because getting around is something you take for granted until the day you can't.

[As of January 2020
Marine conservation campaigners have called for trawlers to be banned from fishing within three miles of Scotland's shoreline to help depleted fish stocks and seabeds to recover. The Open Seas coalition, which includes angling bodies, ecotourism firms, scallop divers, coastal communities and salmon conservation boards, believe a ban on inshore fishing

would also help prevent illegal scallop dredging and trawling inside existing protected areas. The National Trust for Scotland (NTS), the country's largest landscape conservation charity, broadly supports the proposal, which would affect 18,000km (11,185 miles) of mainland and island coastline and 13,790 sq km of sea. It has called for ministers to investigate reinstating a ban on trawlers within three nautical miles of shore in a new marine policy paper, the first in its 89-year history. The document codifies the trust's calls for much stricter policies on fish farms, offshore renewables and mitigating the impacts of climate change on the sea.]

The wind's gusting 6 with rain with a South to South West sea running, we're pleased to run up and into Soay Northern coast and its shelter, with Skye's mist and rain shrouded Cuillins close to the North.

Soay Harbour on the Northern coast is a narrow sheltered gut, accessible at half tide, but the entrance dries to a boulder and shingle drying bar, which provides the navigational interest. Entering along the leading line of tin cans on poles we anchored at 1830 Hrs and quickly launched the dinghy to have a potter round the bay and go ashore.

In 1946 Gaven Maxwell bought the island for a shark fishing venture. Unfortunately, in spite of his espousal of the cause of conservation, Maxwell's shark oil venture on Soay contributed to a serious reduction in the number of basking sharks in the West Coast waters. The sharks have never really recovered since.

Gavin Maxwell FRSL, FIAL, FZS (Sc.), FRGS (15 July 1914 – 7 September 1969) was a Scottish naturalist and author and gifted raconteur, best known for his non-fiction writing and his work with otters. He wrote the book *Ring of Bright Water* (1960) about how he brought an otter back from Iraq (therefore a non-native species) and raised it in Scotland. The otter was of a previously unknown sub-species which was subsequently named after Maxwell. *Ring of Bright Water* sold more than a million copies and was made into a film starring Bill Travers and Virginia McKenna in 1969. The title *Ring of Bright Water* was taken from the poem "The Marriage of Psyche" by Kathleen Raine, who said in her autobiography that Maxwell had been the love of her life.

'Tex' Geddes (a teller of tall stories) - Maxwell's harpooner had crofting rights to most of the crofts. In 1980 A Kent doctor, Nicholas Martin bought the island from Geddes for £100. But this didn't include the crofting rights and he lost the subsequent long and expensive Land Court hearing. In 1993 Geddes bought back the island for an undisclosed sum. Soay is now owned by Geddes daughter. Communications remain erratic with contact maintained with Elgol on Skye.

The first solar powered phone box was first tried on the island. The island is basically not very fertile and is a sheep run. In 1930 it was cleared with some overtones of that of St Kilda.

The harbour today has a deserted aspect. The remaining shark factory building and machinery are mouldering and rusting back into the island's landscape. Sue, led the way "a merry dance" in search of a phone signal, standing on a small hill surrounded by bog, she was able to raise Graham, who was making his way North by camper van for a get together on Skye.

Wednesday 19 June

Soay to Plockton via Armadale and Kyle of Loch Alsh

0836 Hrs Anchor aweigh to clear Soay harbour bar entrance. In the lee of the island we put 2 reefs in the main to motor sail into a moderate sea and low South Westerly swell. There was nothing for it but to punch into the headwind. 1106 Hrs Point of Sleet rounded at Skye's Southern tip allowing us to free up and broadreach which gave Carraig a comfortable movement. 1230 Hrs picked up a mooring belonging to the yacht hire business at Armadale and prepared for lunch. Sue had bought sausages at Canna's community shop and popped some part baked bread in the oven. After lunch Hamish retired to bed for a snooze whilst Sue put together Rhum/Canna/Soay Facebook post. Armadale is the busy Skye ferry port to Mallaig.

1600 Hrs let go the buoy and broad reached up the Sound of Sleet. There is no discernable exit from the Sound as Kyle Rhea is dogged shaped. 1842 Hrs Motor sailed through Kyle Rhea with the tide running at 9 Knots. Sue watched the seals playing in the tide rips. The last manually operated single turntable ferry runs in the summer months, normally the cars are parked way up the road awaiting their turn, but not today.

Plan A disintegrated as there's no longer a pontoon at the Kyle of Loch Alsh. The other pontoon at Kyle Akin is taken up with fishing boats and unloved yachts, not exactly a welcoming prospect.

I can't quite put my figure on it, but there was an oddness to the Kyles. Firstly, It has a huge outsourced Royal Navy testing ground, with all the incumbent paraphernalia, including massive Serco tugs, primarily for testing our nuclear deterrent. Submarine HMS Trafalgar sustained millions of pounds worth of damage when it ran aground off Skye in 2002. Two senior commanders were reprimanded after admitting that their negligence caused the incident - they covered up navigational equipment with post it notes to demonstrate to the Americans their superior navigation skills - Oops.

Then, in 2017, the Royal Navy's newest and largest attack submarine HMS Astute ran aground off Skye. Described as the stealthiest ever built in the UK, the £1bn boat was being put through sea trials and was not armed. A Ministry of Defence spokeswoman said: "This is not a nuclear incident. The submarine was subsequently towed to Faslane. But not before photos of its top-secret ramjet propulsion system had been photographed by drone from the linking Skye bridge and flashed round the internet. Turns out, they had no local navigation charts on board for the area. The submarine's Commander went to a desk job and then was quietly retired - bless - things were certainly different in Admiral Byng's day.

There's really nowhere to lay up for a night out of the swell and ship traffic, so the decision is made to run round "the corner" to Plockton. 1942 Hrs Underneath the Skye Bridge, avoiding tugs towing fish farms. Just to the West of the Bridge is Mowri's incongruously huge fish food plant and fish farm manufacturing plant.

2106 hrs Plockton - anchored clear of the moored boats in 5 metres, well sheltered from most directions.

Plockton is on the shores of Loch Carron. It faces east, away from the prevailing winds, which together with the North Atlantic Drift gives it a mild climate allowing the Cordyline Australis palm to prosper. Most of the houses date from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. It is a planned fishing village on the northern edge of the Lochalsh built when introducing sheep farming in 1814-20 and removing the population from their old houses was Governmental policy.

The village is a tourist resort. The television series *Hamish Macbeth*, starring Robert Carlyle, was filmed there, substituting for the fictional Lochdubh Plockton was also used for various scenes in the film *The Wicker Man* and the *Inspector Alayne Mysteries* television series furthering its reputation.

Nearby is Duncraig Castle, a nineteenth-century stately home built by the Matheson family, who made their money in the Chinese opium trade (Britain started 2 wars with China because they weren't buying enough of our drugs). The castle was derelict for many years. It was once owned by the extended Dobson family who were in the process of renovating it when it was shown in the BBC documentary titled *The Dobsons of Duncraig*. The castle was sold in 2009 to Suzanne Hazeldine a London based marketing executive.

Between the years of 1956 and 1972 Plockton was home to the renowned Gaelic scholar Sorley MacLean (Somhairle MacGill-Eain) whilst headmaster at the high-school, who introduced the teaching of Gaelic and championed shinty.

Skye and surrounds

Thursday 20 June

Plockton

There's not much movement on the 16 visitors moorings. Then the penny drops: A safe harbour bay; a weekly mooring fee of £12 per night, and Plockton rail station close to hand. The owners are taking advantage of low prices and accessibility.

Graham has made it from Skipton in the camper van. Sue, Graham and I decamp to the Plockton Hotel for lunch. Sue and Graham then find a campsite for the night.

Alasdair and I have struggled to start the replacement outboard (Carraig's original one got a ducking and was irreparable - this one belonged to Lassiette, or Rockholm's dinghy.) With a bit of tinkering it's made to start on the second pull a great improvement.

Early to bed as it's very wet and cold.

Friday 21 June

Plockton

Carraig is moved to the loading pontoon to take water and await Pamela.

Pamela is with Alasdair, Amy and Isla in Harpenden and has managed to get connections via Inverness. The original Luton flight is cancelled at the last minute, but EasyJet pull a rabbit out of the hat and redirect another plane. The ouch factor is a 15 minute taxi ride from Inverness airport to the station at £21. Nevertheless, she makes it to M&S for refreshments and catches the train on one of the world's most scenic railway journeys and arrives at Plockton Station at 1600 Hrs, bang on time. We invade Plockton Hotel again for an evening meal.

Back on board, Pamela and I move Carraig back to the anchorage and fire up the heater, it's an early night and Pamela has purloined all the hot water bottles too as the evening cools.

Saturday

22 June

Plockton towards Kyle of Lochalsh and then to Loch Duich (Black Loch).

1100 Hrs anchor aweigh, Pamela and I proceed back under the Skye bridge and moor up against Kyle of Lochalsh fuel berth at 1230 Hrs.

The station and pier were opened on 2 November 1897 by the Highland Railway, following the completion of the extension of Dingwall and Skye Railway from Stromeferry. The extension took more than four years to complete due to the unforgiving nature of the terrain through which it was driven - 29 bridges had to be constructed and more than 30 cuttings excavated through solid rock, which led to it costing £20,000 per mile (making it the most expensive rail route to be built in the UK at the time). Until the early 1970s, the



Eileen Donnain Castle

station provided a connection to the ferry services for the Outer Hebrides. The ferry terminal at the Kyle of Lochalsh was 71 miles from Stornoway, and Ross and Cromarty council created a new £460,000 (equivalent to £6,989,000 in 2018) ferry terminal at Ullapool which was only 43 miles from Stornoway.

The station is located next to the piers that used to offer sailings to Skye, the ferries being superseded on 16 October 1995 by the Skye Bridge that lies close to the station.

Pamela goes ashore to do some shopping and I work hard to locate the Harbour Master for some diesel. In its day Kyle of Lochalsh was a busy ferry, fishing and rail connection. The rail station is on the pier and fenced off, the pier itself is the realm of Norwegian salmon deep well boats, timber boats and scruffy local trawlers. This is a Highland Local Authority managed pier and a chat with a local prawn boat's skipper confirms the lack of urgency in the proceedings, but he offers to work the fuel pump and we take on 70 litres of diesel for £42 a proper bargain. He also explains how the key fob system works here and out in the Outer Hebrides - I immediately applied to join the system and Carraig now has a shiny diesel black key fob. I can't thank this skipper enough for his help.

Pamela returns with 3 bags of shopping and confirms Kyle of Lochalsh as a fading frontier town with little to recommend it. 1318 Hrs off the berth and underway at reduced speed to meet the tide gate at Racoon Rocks. 1620 Hrs were comfortably anchored in Totaig Eastern anchorage in Loch Duich and the crab pot's out. A truly delightful spot next to an old ferry slip and converted bothy

It's such a great evening that we can sit out in the for'd well deck and have dinner on deck, without midgies either. Later that night Eileen Donnain Castle (Donnan an early Irish Saint) is floodlit and it's all very spectacularly picturesque and delightful.

It is possible that an early Christian monastic cell was founded on the island in the 6th or 7th century, dedicated to Donn of Eigg, an Irish saint who was martyred on Eigg in April 617. No remains of any Christian buildings survive, though fragments of vitrified stone, subjected to very high temperatures, have been discovered indicating the presence of an Iron Age or early medieval fortification. As a fortress of some distinction, it has been demolished and rebuilt several times, lastly between 1919 and 1932, the castle was rebuilt by Lt. Col. John MacRae-Gilstrap. The restoration included the construction of an arched bridge to give easier access to the island. Over 314,000 people visited in 2009, making it the third-most-visited castle in Scotland - shortbread tin perfect. In 1983, ownership of the castle was transferred to the Conchra Charitable Trust, established by the Macrae family to maintain and restore the castle, and a purpose-built visitor centre was opened on the landward side of the bridge in 1998. The Conchra Charitable Trust has a Mrs Van Linden on the Board, who also owns the Baltimore Estate at Otter Ferry, Cowal.

Sunday 23 June

Towards Skye, Broadford, Portree and Loch na Cairidh

0930 Hrs anchor aweigh and set off towards Broadford to pick up Sue and Graham, who had booked a pitch in the campsite there. 1206 Hrs alongside the head of the drying pier at Broadford. The weather's to be East or North East 3 or 4 increasing 5 at times, but otherwise good. There's not much shelter in the bay and only one neglected visitor's buoy. 1343 Hrs Sue and Graham on board and we set off for Portree. With insufficient water at the Southern Kyle Scalpay we motor sail round Scalpay's northern tip (possibly cave island or Norse scallop island).

Scalpay is owned by Ibercasa Anstalt of Liechtenstein. Due to Liechtenstein secretive business laws it's impossible to



Leaving Broadford for Loch na Cairidh anchorage

gauge the benefits Mr Anstalt has brought to the proceedings, excepting that he has leased landing rights to Mowi who have vast salmon farms in the area. Essential to the control of the countryside is secrecy. Landowners have successfully resisted a comprehensive public catalogue of their holdings: the Land Registry is incomplete and protected from full public scrutiny by a paywall. Vast tracts of land are held by trusts and shell companies based in offshore tax havens. But they continue to receive our money, in the form of farm subsidies paid by the hectare. The more you own, the more you are given. On Scalpay, there is no normal public access as the island is run as a deer park with many high fences, and despite the Scottish right to roam, it appears somewhat to be run as a Liechtenstein feudal fiefdom.

Dr Johnson was moved enough to want to buy the island and "found a good school", but then again when possibly sober thought better of it.

1618 Hrs in Portree Bay and alongside the Harbour pontoon. The Harbour Master waves any landing duty. The crew have mixed views on Portree, probably because it's Sunday, late, busy and the restaurants that are open are fully booked. In addition Skye has a major tourist boom disproportionate to the island's ability to serve it. The Co-op provides dinner and very good it is too.

The current name, Port Rìgh translates as 'king's port', possibly from a visit by King James V of Scotland in 1540. However this etymology has been contested, since James did not arrive in peaceful times. The older name appears to have been Port Ruighe(adh), meaning "slope harbour". Prior to the 16th century the settlement's name was Kiltaraglen ('the church of St. Talarican') from Gaelic Cill Targhlain. In the 1700s, the town was a popular point of departure for Scots sailing to America to escape poverty. Repeated again during the

potato famine in the 1840s. The town also began exporting fish at this time, which contributed greatly to the local economy. The town had the last manual telephone exchange in the UK, which closed in 1976.

1952 Hrs Let go and proceed back via the drying bank to the south of Scalpay which separates Loch Na Cairidh (Loch of the Weir) and Kyle Scalpay. Sunset is at 2223 Hrs. 2230 Hrs arrive at Broadford Pier and quickly "discharge" Graham and Sue at the steps. The weather forecast is for Easterly's increasing to 6s so I'm keen not to hang around and to find shelter, which means going back over the drying bank in the dark and anchoring in Loch Na Cairidh. Now there's considerable chop in Broadford Bay, and making our way round to Kyle Scalpay the engine overheats, and I drop the speed till the alarm stops, I am reluctant to sail under jib, as the "weir" dries to 1.4 metres, the channel is very restricted and needs careful navigation in the deepest water as we follow the previous Antares chart track. Not only that but we are to anchor in the dark using the Clyde Cruising Club's pilot as a guide. 2342 Hrs Anchored in Loch na Cairidh in 10 metres with a trip line and 50 metres of chain out - that should do it. Pamela says its a calm anchorage, but noisy from the main road.

Monday 24 June

Loch Na Cairidh to Clachan Raasay

The engine intakes is checked and there's quite a bit of sea lettuce in the strainer. 1200 Hrs Anchor aweigh and proceed up Loch Na Cairidh under engine. 1306 Hrs we anchor in Churchton Bay in the shelter of the harbour breakwater and go ashore to meet Sue and Graham who have ferried their camper van across from Skye to Raasay. We walk to the post office and village before returning to Raasay House hotel for a light lunch. There a goodly conversation with others in the bar including a couple from Melbourne. The Hotel WiFi gives an updated weather forecast and it's to be North to North East gusting 6s. Now, Raasay ferry harbour should provide a good deal of shelter and the locals boats are all moored there. 1750 Hrs move anchorage round to the ferry harbour, lifted a lot of weed when weighing anchor, and cleared more sea lettuce from sea water intake. Sue has moved the camper van into a sheltered spot by Calmac terminal and have dinner there and Pamela and I stay ashore til 2200 Hrs but go aboard while its light.

Tuesday 25 June

Raasay Ferry Harbour

There are some fierce gusts and Carraig drags her anchor, but it holds and she's left as is. Sue boards with breakfast and we debate what's to be done today now that it's raining heavily. Graham has found free WiFi in the ferry terminal and has settled down for the day. I'm dithering: The ferry

has been passing uncomfortably close, and I'm worried that Carraig may just take a run at it in a gust with a poor outcome; a couple of boats have come into Churchton Bay for shelter and look to be lying better in the bay and I have decided to move. This is indeed a poor decision on my part. 1552 Hrs I move anchorage and despite dropping the hook twice Carraig schooshes down the bay at a rate of knots in some fierce gusts dragging huge bundles of kelp that need to be single handedly removed. I quit and return to my previous anchorage at the ferry terminal. Anchored successfully I put out a kedge to prevent swinging and the multiplat line gives a bit of spring and Carraig sits much better in the near 7 out of the ferry's way.

Raasay (Scottish Gaelic: Ratharsair) is separated from Skye by the Sound of Raasay and from Applecross by the Inner Sound. It is most famous for being the birthplace of Gaelic poet Sorley MacLean, an important figure in the Scottish Renaissance. The island was ruled by the MacLeods from the 15th to the 19th century. Subsequently, a series of private landlords held title to the island, which is now largely in public ownership. Raasay House, which was visited by James Boswell and Samuel Johnson in 1773, is now a very good hotel, restaurant, bar and outdoor activity centre. Raasay means "Isle of the Roe Deer" and is home to the Raasay vole (*Clethrionomys glareolus erica*), a subspecies of bank vole, which is darker and heavier than the mainland variety and found nowhere else in the world. It is possibly a survivor of a Scandinavian race.

Although Protestant, the MacLeods of Raasay supported Bonnie Prince Charlie in 1745. After the defeat at the Battle of Culloden, the Prince spent 2 days hiding from the British troops on Raasay and as a consequence of the island's support for the Jacobite cause the original Raasay House and many dwellings were burnt down by government troops. In conversation with Malcolm MacLeod of Raasay during his short stay on the island the Prince confided that although his life on the run was hard, he would rather live that way for ten years than be captured as he feared assassination. He seemed less aware of the risks his supporters ran. The atrocities perpetrated in the aftermath of Culloden were a shock to him. Of Butcher Cumberland he said: "Surely that man who calls himself a Duke and pretends to be so great a general cannot be guilty of such cruelties". In 1773 James Boswell and Samuel Johnson arrived on the island during their Hebridean tour. They visited Raasay House and Johnson wrote:

Our reception exceeded our expectations. We found nothing but civility, elegance, and plenty. After the usual refreshments, and the usual conversation, the evening came upon us. The carpet was then rolled



Raasay Ferry loading Sue and Graham's campervan

off the floor; the musician was called, and the whole company was invited to dance, nor did ever fairies trip with greater alacrity. The general air of festivity, which predominated in this place, so far remote from all those regions which the mind has been used to contemplate as the mansions of pleasure, struck the imagination with a delightful surprise, analogous to that which is felt at an unexpected emersion from darkness into light.

When it was time to sup, the dance ceased, and six and thirty persons sat down to two tables in the same room. After supper the ladies sung Erse songs, to which I listened as an English audience to an Italian opera, delighted with the sound of words which I did not understand.

In 1843 the last laird, John Macleod, was deep in debt and chose to emigrate to Tasmania having sold Raasay for 35,000

guineas to George Rainy. After the failure of the potato harvests in the 1840s the new owner decided to convert as much arable land as possible to sheep farming. This required the removal of the islanders and his solution was to ban marriage. Several townships were cleared including Hallaig and Screapadal. Two boat loads of emigrants left for Portland in Australia in 1854 as a result and another 165 left for the same destination in 1865. The estate was then sold to Edward Wood and conflicts between the laird and the islanders grew as he decided to turn the island over to sporting purposes.

In 1949 The Forestry Commission was granted land bringing much-needed employment, and in 1956 The North of Scotland Hydro-Electric Board delivered mains electricity to the island. In the 1960s Raasay House and various other

properties were purchased by John Green, a doctor residing in Sussex who visited the island only once and whose lack of interest in it earned him the sobriquet "Dr No". Having purchased the property for £8,000 he sold it to the Highlands and Islands Development Board in 1979 for £135,000.

The record of ironstone on Raasay was by HB Woodward, and the subsequent analysis convinced him to commence mining.

Baird's original plan was for a railway from the outcrop site down to just south of Suisnish point with the erection of five kilns. Objections led to the plan being revised for two kilns further south, where the current pier is. This pier was a public pier with landing charges regulated by government order. By the outbreak of war Baird's had completed the pier (constructed by Robert McAlpine & Sons), kilns, railway and "other works". To house the workforce Baird's planned the village of Inverarish, today known as Inverarish Terrace. With the introduction of unrestricted submarine warfare in 1916 the Ministry of Munitions became concerned about the availability of foreign iron ore. Baird's were one company amongst others which opened up domestic mines in order to supply the war effort. In May 1916 Baird's signed an agreement to run the mine on behalf of the Ministry, although there was a minor skirmish over the amount of processing to be done on the island. The first prisoners of war were on the island by June that year. The northern part of the village was converted into a prisoner-of-war camp by the simple expedient of building a barbed wire fence around it and erecting sentry boxes and arc lamps at the corners.

The poet Sorley MacLean was born in Osgaig, a small crofting community on the west coast of the island; perhaps his most famous poem is about Hallaig, an abandoned community on the east coast. MacLean's writings often combine an ancient traditional awareness, with a modernist political outlook, in which Raasay, and the areas adjacent to it are frequently referenced. But while MacLean's work dwells on the brutality of war, of the Highland Clearances and modern exploitation, he also writes about nature. Thus, although the Clearances leave an empty landscape populated only by the ghosts of those evicted or forced to emigrate, "Time, the deer, is in the Wood of Hallaig".

The two miles (3 km) of road between Brochel Castle and Arnish were built using hand-tools by Calum MacLeod BEM over ten years. The Council watched him labour, only when complete was the road surfaced by the council; by then Calum and his wife were the last inhabitants of Arnish. Calum's Road has been commemorated in music both by Capercaillie on their 1988 album *The Blood*

is Strong and by Runrig in *Wall of China* from the album *The Stamping Ground*, as well as in a book by Roger Hutchinson. The BBC Radio 4 drama *Calum's Road*, based on Hutchinson's book and dramatised by Colin MacDonald, was first broadcast on 5 October 2013 starring Ian McDiarmid as Calum MacLeod.

The composer Sir Harrison Birtwistle lived on Raasay from 1975 to 1983. His *Duets for Storab*, takes its name from Storab, a Viking prince who was shipwrecked and sought refuge on Raasay. Birtwistle's string quartet, *The Tree of Strings*, written in 2007, takes its title from a poem by Sorley MacLean.

Towards the Outer Hebrides

Wednesday 26 June

The weather is really unseasonably poor, by now it should have had more of Southerly in it, but it remains steadfastly Northerly, and although fair, it is disappointingly cold. The four day outlooks is for more settled weather, with fog patches. Pamela and Graham have decided that now is a good time to go South. Pamela has booked a Mallaig hotel and the train south - Graham has decided to take the camper van to Skipton. Graham manages the single track route to the Armadale/Mallaig ferry with Pamela as passenger. Pamela report back that the Mallaig hotel is fab - bath and steak done to her satisfaction. Graham reports in that he arrived home in Skipton "in a oner" at 2030 Hrs.

1100 Hrs having retrieved the kedge and the anchor Sue and I motor North Westerly to round Raasay. We come off the wind, which pulls us away from the coast of Raasay and Rona and more towards Skye. At Skye's Staffin island we'll have to decide whether to head north or go out towards the Hebrides. Staffin's Norse name may have been Fladdaidh meaning "flat island". It's reported that the island may be the last in Scotland where the old tradition of having cattle swim between grazings is still carried out. Crofter Iain MacDonald, who used to swim with the animals, now uses a boat to encourage them to swim from Staffin Island to Skye in early spring and back again in October. "The Hut on Staffin Island" is a tune composed by Phil Cunningham. There's a good sound anchorage behind the island.

1525 Hrs and abeam of Staffin Island and we head Carraig west. Behind Staffin is the Quiraing (in Gaelic: A' Chuith-Raing) - the name Quiraing comes from Old Norse 'Kvi Rand', which means "Round Fold", is a landslide on the eastern face of Meall na Suiramach, the northernmost summit of the Trotternish on Skye. The whole of the Trotternish Ridge escarpment was formed by a great series of landslips; the Quiraing is the only part of the slip still moving - the road at its base, near Flodigarry, requires repairs each year. Parts of the distinctive

landscape have earned particular names. The Needle is a jagged 120-foot (37 m) high landmark pinnacle, a remnant of landslipping. Northwest of it is The Table, a flat grassy area slipped down from the summit plateau, with vistas of the Torridon Hills and the mountains of Wester Ross. Southwest is the Prison, a pyramidal rocky peak which can look like a medieval keep when viewed from the right angle - the ascent of this is an airy scramble.

1630 Hrs we pass Trodday - the Island of the trolls to port, the wind backs then veers and then dies away - at least the trolls didn't whip up a storm. We motor, in a low swell from the north making the Shaints a viable anchorage.

1900 Hrs We anchor Carraig close off the tombola that joins Eilean an tigh and Garbh Eilean in 14 metres with 55 metres of chain out. As Sue says, "Tide, wind and time put the Shaints in our path, so went there. So pleased, absolutely lovely location. Sheltered and the bird life is amazing. Thousands of nesting birds on the cliffs swirling round the sky and bobbing in the smooth water."

Thursday 27 June

Shiants towards Scalpay

The name Shiant is from the Scottish Gaelic Na h-Eileanan Seunta, which means the "charmed", "holy" or "enchanted isles". The group is also known as Na h-Eileanan Mura, "the big isles". The main islands are Garbh Eilean ("rough island") and Eilean an Taighe ("house island"), which are joined by a narrow isthmus, and Eilean Mhuire ("island of the Virgin Mary") to the east. Eilean an Taighe was called Eilean na Cille ("island of the church") prior to the 19th century.

In geological terms, these islands essentially represent an extension of the Trotternish peninsula of Skye. The rocks are volcanic, and at 60Ma, very young by Hebridean standards. Dolerite columns on the north side of Garbh Eilean are over 120 metres (390 ft) tall and about 2 metres (6.6 ft) in diameter. Similar to those at Staffa and the Giant's Causeway and much higher in places, they were formed by the slow cooling of volcanic rocks deep underground. Intrusive sills show a progression in their chemical compositions, from olivine-rich rocks at the base to rocks with very little or no olivine at the top.

The sills are thought to have formed by crystal settling. Recent study has suggested that at least one of the sills represents a multiple intrusion. In some places the basalt is overlain by Jurassic mudstone, which weathers to form much more fertile soil than elsewhere in the Western Isles.

Sir Compton MacKenzie bought the islands in 1925 and refurbished the bothy on Eileen an Tigh. In 1937 he sold the islands to Nigel Nicholson, whose family owns these islands today. To do the islands justice I can recommend Adam Nicholson's book "Sea Room" about his love affair with these Islands - the current owner is Thom Nicholson who was gifted the islands on his age of majority, as was his father before him. The Islands are leased at a peppercorn rent as a sheep run. The Nicholsons have an enlightened attitude to conservation, yet welcome those who make the effort to visit.

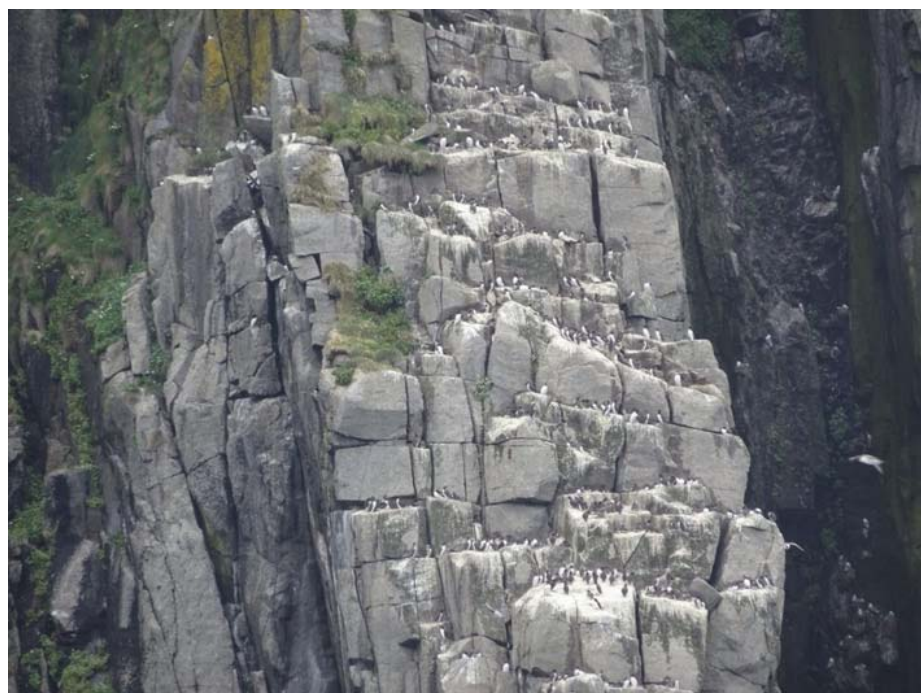
We are not alone on the islands - the Hebrides Sky decamps tourists in ribs, they zoom around, before they return and she weighs anchor. On land, there are a number of birders ringing stormy petrels and kayakers camped out around the old bothy. Sue and I scramble up the beach dragging the dingy clear of the tide. It is a scramble to get on to Eileen an Tigh, and the walk to the island's summit is stiff, but well worth the effort. The rat infestation had crashed the bird population, but now at the end of the eradication programme large numbers of puffins have begun again to nest in the turf. There's a large colony of endangered herring gulls and oystercatchers, nesting eider, shag, snipe, lark, many other species. Thousands of endangered kittiwakes, guillemots, razorbills and fulmars nest among the scree and basalt columns, many attempting to leave their mark on Carraig's deck. We listen as the kayakers get instructions from the ringers as to the best route up Garbh Eilean, complexity and height are brought into focus as their silhouettes become smaller against the steep hillside. The birders are helpful and informative, in return we email them directions for Antares charts and screen dumps of island's shore line with the best anchorages. Surprisingly, they have only a small dory incapable of lifting a team of ringers and their gear off the cliffs in one go.

The last family to farm the islands met with tragedy. Both the shepherd's wife and his son fell to their deaths while chasing sheep above the steep cliffs. Not long after, one of his daughters fell to her death while collecting eggs. So this left only the shepherd and his younger daughter. After a short time he too also died - but of natural causes - and so his daughter was left alone on the island. Ten days went by before the weather settled enough for her to row the twelve miles to Harris. She never returned. (Then the story loses some of its drama when we learn that she had quite often rowed over to Harris to visit her boyfriend).

1148 Hrs anchor aweigh and we motor round the islands for a closer view. The cliffs are stunningly tall a vertical bird city. The islands 'green valleys still show the



Carraig at anchor in the bay on clean sand from the top off Eileen an Tigh



Razor bills are none too fussy - the bird population is increasing after the rats' eradication.

silhouetted ridged runrig system of cultivation. It is indeed a magical place. 1240 Hrs Clear of Garbh Eilean and heading Westerly off the outlier islands and rocks, the strong current taking us Southwards. We head out across the Sound of Shiant to Scalpay running in light winds with the jib boomed out.

1500 hrs Eilean Glas Lighthouse on Scalpay 4 points to port heading for Scalpay Sound. In the distance we see a large pod of dolphins frolicking in the tide as we head down towards and under Scalpay bridge at 19 metres giving

adequate clearance. Just at the bridge a large minke whale arches, breathes and dives.

1630 Hrs Alongside starboard side to at Scalpay pontoon. We have sailed most of the way running, but had to tack under the bridge which added to the excitement.

Mac an Tilleir suggests the name derives from "ship island" from the Norse. However, Haswell-Smith states that the Old Norse name was Skalpoy, meaning "scallop islands". The vast majority of the locals in Scalpay are Protestants.

Scalpay is home to two Presbyterian churches, the Free Church of Scotland and the Free Church of Scotland (Continuing). This is no place to be derogatory about Religion, the Outer Hebrides only recently achieved one Sunday mainland MacBrains ferry services, in the teeth of opposition from the Islands Clergy: Generations of God fearing tight knit and lipped, voting locals and the Island's Council - Comhairle nan Eilean Siar - consistently opposed Sunday transport and trading services (there are still no Sunday inter island ferries or busses) and the powerful Lord's Observance Society ensured business complied. In Stornoway all shops shut, until recently, this included most pubs. Gaelic Psalm Precentors are common in Church as the playing of music on Sunday is opposed. Hillside drinking bothies were/are common. Deoch bheag, fear airson an rathaid. Just a wee deoch an doris, just a wee drop, that's all - goes the song - there's no mention of fine English breakfast tea, indeed no light refreshment of any flavour. The Sunday streets are as deserted as Aberdeen on a charity day. From North Uist Southward the Islands are predominantly more relaxed Catholic. The Islands still have the highest church attendance in the whole of the UK. To put it in context. In my Merchant Navy days, (1980), I accompanied Dad on BBC business to South Uist. In a hotel bar, I was very mildly verbally abused in Gaelic by some very very pissed locals for having an "English" accent - much to the hilarity of the assembled crowd. Dad's deferential, hesitant and very shaky basic Gaelic ongoing chat with the barman momentarily stopped as the barman Gaelic interruption shut the general hilarity down to a very short stunned silence, then the hubbub continued and the conversation naturally moved on. The next day, we were sought out by the local Priest, who apologies on behalf of the community, and confirmed that the "lads" would be saying extra Hail Mary's and that there would be no Absolution for them that week - no harm done - he then invited us for a deoch bheag - then some parishioners joined in for a "session" - It's that sort of place.

In 2001, Scalpay had 322 people, whose main employment was fish farming and prawn fishing. By 2011 the population had declined by 9% to 291 whilst during the same period Scottish island populations as a whole grew by 4% to 103,702. Scalpay is home to many Gaelic singers and psalm precentors. The island used to have more than 10 shops over 30 years ago but due to lack of people and work, the last shop closed in 2007. There also used to be a salmon factory, which was a major local employer from 2001 until its closure in 2005. The factory has reopened as a net washing facility to support the local fish farming industry. In 2012, the Scalpay community bought and opened a community shop/cafe, Buth Scalpaigh.

Photographer Marco Secchi lived on Scalpay for few years between 2002-2008 and documented life and landscape of the Outer Hebrides.

In 2011 the island's owner, Fred Taylor, a restaurant owner currently living in London, was given ownership of the Outer Hebridean island of Scalpay off Harris in 1998 following the death of his father John. Residents voted to take over the running of the island after the offer of the land for free.

Dinner that night was memorable. Sue had wandered around the pontoons to a local fishing boat and for a ridiculously small amount of cash had bought a rather large lobster. We can confirm that "Gerald" (for that was his given name), whilst straight from the sea, and previously caged was clearly wild, indeed he was absolutely livid and needed careful handling - without doubt the freshest tastiest lobster to ever grace a pot on Carraig. Yum.

Why Gerald?

Not the Nine O' Clock's News script

Interviewer: Professor, can Gerald really speak as we would understand it?

Prof. Timothy Fielding: Oh yes, yes. He can speak a few actual words. Of course it was extremely difficult to get him even to this stage. When I first captured Gerald in the Congo, '67 I think it was...

Gerald, the Gorilla: '68

Prof. Timothy Fielding: '68. Umm... there was an awful lot of work to do. He was enormously slow and difficult. I had to do a lot of work with him on a sort of one-to-one basis...

Gerald, the Gorilla: Yes, yes, if I might just butt in at this point Tim, I think I should point out that I have done a considerable amount of work on this project myself and if I may say so your teaching methods do leave a bit to be desired...

Prof. Timothy Fielding: That's a bit ungrateful, isn't it?

Gerald, the Gorilla: ...and your diction for instance...

Prof. Timothy Fielding: I'm sorry, I'm sorry! Can I put this into some sort of perspective? When I caught Gerald in '68 he was completely wild.

Gerald, the Gorilla: Wild? I was absolutely livid!



Above, Gerald in his natural state
Below, Gerald pacified



Outer Hebrides

Friday 28 June

Scalpay to Loch a Laip

0900 Hrs off the pontoon and proceed out of the South channel

1200 Hrs abeam of the South end of Harris
1312 Hrs Abeam of North Uist. 1730 Hrs proceed to Loch a Laip and inspect the loch - it's very busy with scattered fish farms and gear. Now with the benefit of hindsight I should have given the onward route more consideration, but up until now the day had been glorious, variable becoming South or South East 3-4 with haze or fog patches. The outlook was for 4-5s occasionally 6 later - actually this was to become imminent with gusting to 7 at times.

The four day surface pressure chart didn't look that clever, with a deep depression tracking Eastward.

1800 Hrs anchored in Wizards Pool in South Uist in Loch Skipport by Shillay beg. The down draughts were fierce and it was clear we were dragging in soft mud with both the main anchor and a kedged out. Nothing needed to be done immediately, but the situation wasn't improving, and over a cup of tea, a plan was hatched to go back to the previous loch before sunset at 2233 Hrs and low water at 2250 Hrs

In the meantime another yacht, astern and well to starboard, thought we were just too intrusive and up anchored and motored across to tell us: our fortune; instruct us on anchoring etiquette; and tell us we were dragging. When I say "we", I mean me. Ah well, some you win, and I was considering just hanging on to see if the anchor caught as there was now no danger of collision or entanglement, no matter how remote it had previously been. However, the pilot book said that if it blew-up it was best to clear out and without much ado we retrieved our chain and anchors and headed North.

2125 Hrs loch Carna fairway buoy abeam to port 2200 Hrs Anchored in Loch a Laip opposite bay na Creige in a designated anchor area with 55 meters of chain out. A couple fierce gusts hit Carraig and each time she dragged, eventually she holds in 6 metres of water just after low water and we adjudged about midnight she was holding and the anchor alarm's reset and we turn in to a hopefully trouble free night.

Towards the Small islands and the Mainland

Saturday 29 June

Loch a Laip towards Cana and Arisaig

0100 Hrs The anchor alarm goes off, but this time the wind had veered and Carraig was settling down on her long scope. This time, with the anchor alarm reset we did have a trouble free period.

0430 Hrs sunrise 0628 Hrs Anchor aweigh and proceed down the loch with wind Southerly 4-5. We set course motor sailing for Cana and at times the wind backs and allows us to fly the jib. The trip is uneventful, but the sea is grey, the sky is grey and Cana when it's raised is grey too. 1218 hrs anchor in Cana bay, ashore for lunch, stores and WiFi. The surface pressure chart doesn't look too good with tight isobars for Monday onwards. Sue's soon to go campervanning with Graham and we have now settled on Arisaig as good a drop off point considering the rail and road connections.

1450 Hrs Anchor aweigh and proceed North of Eigg and Rum towards Arisaig. It's now a cracker of a day with light breezes 1742 hrs off Loch Scresort, Rum with a hint of rain under the banner clouds. 2000 Hrs Enter South channel at Rub H Arisaig and follow channel in. 2048 Hrs pick up buoy and tidy up for the night.

Sunday 30 June

Arisaig

It's miserable and the Harbour Office want us to move to buoy number 34. We prepare for the move, but it's gusting 6+ and I don't want to leave the dinghy in the water and I'm too lazy to unship the outboard. Sue is already packed for going and has worked out her timings and route.



Loch a Laip unlit net rafts and other "junk".



Friendly Cana

On 20 September 1746 Bonnie Prince Charlie left Scotland for France from a place near the village following the failure of the Jacobite rising of 1745. The site of his departure is marked by the Prince's Cairn, located at Loch nan Uamh to the east of Arisaig. A few decades later, much of the local population left as well, emigrating to Canada, where in 1785 they founded Arisaig, Nova Scotia.

Arisaig House became the headquarters for the Scottish section of the Special Operations Executive, who ran paramilitary training courses in the surrounding area, to prepare agents for missions in Occupied Europe; the remoteness of the rough bounds made it ideal. On 11 November 2009 a memorial to Czechoslovak soldiers who had trained as SOE agents in 1943-1945, was unveiled in Arisaig.

Monday 1 July

Arisaig

0830 Hrs we move Carraig to buoy 34 - the buoy pennant's too short to bring on board - run multiple bights of multiplait rope through the eye, and all secured.



Time to change spelling to only Arasaig? "i" that'll be right.

Run Sue ashore to the landing pontoon, it's decidedly unpleasant weather, but Sue is travelling with minimum gear. The up train goes by to Mallaig and we wait for its return on the down line. Sue boards and is off.

I have very little to do until the wind moderates, so have a lazy shower and breakfast in the new marina cafe and facilities. On top of my shower at £3, I also pay £36 for 3 nights stay - as they say it's a sellers market and out of the designated surveyed areas this bay is littered with rocks.

Tuesday 2 July

Arisaig towards Oban

0626 Hrs Off mooring and motor out of the fairway. I have the main up to steady her in the residual moderate southerly swell. I pull Carraig off the Ardnamurchan coast to avoid the heavy backswell associated with the previous bad weather, but it's lightening and expected to go round to the South East 3-4 later. Once around Ardnamurchan I pole out the Jib and Carraig picks up to a steady 8.5 Knots.

The north western corner of Ardnamurchan consists of a lopolith (previously interpreted as a ring dyke) that has been exposed at the surface. The sub-concentric rings of the geologic structure can easily be seen in satellite photographs and topographic maps, though they are less obvious on the ground. At least seven other similar complexes of the same tectonic episode exist along the west coast of Britain, and these are popular sites for many university geological training courses.

Ardnamurchan Light is reported to be the most Western point in the British isles, although Corrachadh Mur, a kilometre to the south, is now reported as a few metres further west.

1200 Hrs Round up into Tobermory Bay and head for the refuelling pontoon. There's a traffic jam as the local garage operates the concession and a "lad" has little idea what's required of him - he's doing his best (with no PPE or life jacket), but it takes 25 minutes to process one boat. 1300 Hrs with 90 Litres of diesel and full water tanks onboard, I set Carraig up for more down wind action. 1636 Hrs Lismore Light abeam 1736 Hrs Alongside Oban Marina on Kerrera. A good reasonably fast passage.

Western mainland

Oban to Loch Melford via Cuan Sound

Wednesday 3 July

0742 Hrs Depart berth and head down Kerrera Sound. To be at Cuan Sound before 1000 Hrs to catch the through tide. 0920 Clear of Easdale Harbour with the Cuan Sound running go through at 9.5 Knots

Cuan Sound is the narrow channel, 200 metres (660 ft) wide. It separates Seil and Luing and later becomes the Firth of Lorn. It has a very strong current. The Sound is seldom attempted except near slack water, but it's a shortcut to Loch Melford.

1042 hours Alongside the pontoon to spend time on laundry and sorting minor bits and bobs 2130 Hrs Move Carraig to buoy 123 In Loch Melford. Have moored yard dingy alongside for morning getaway. Thursday 4 July. Ashore and train south.

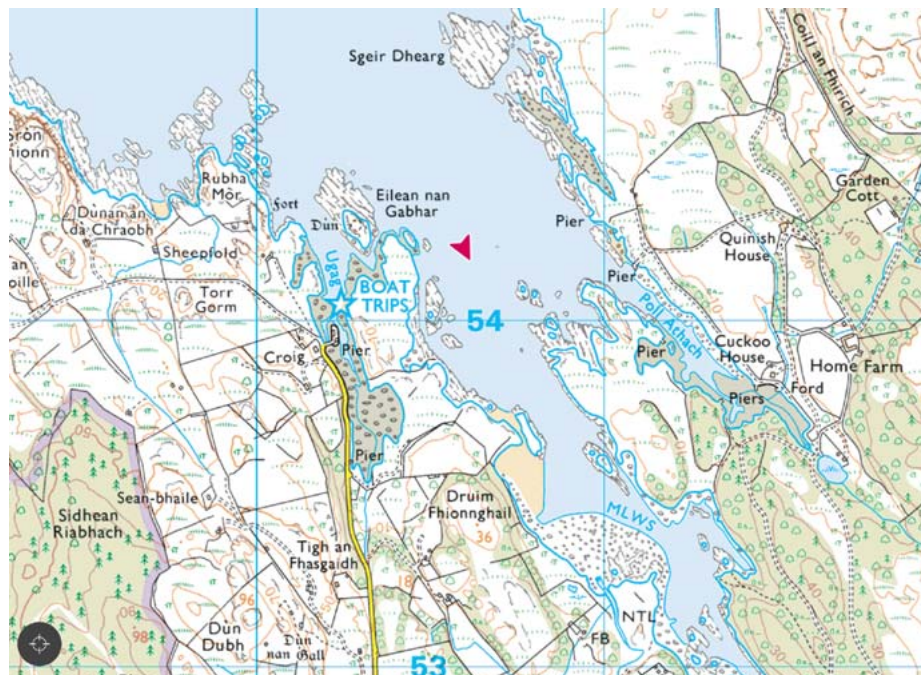
To Mull

Wednesday 24 July

Loch Melford to Fishnish Bay, Mull

Have travelled up from Leeds 1400 Hrs on board Carraig and take her to the loading pontoon. 1506 Hrs off the pontoon and head out towards the Cuan Sound in South easterly 3-5 with thundery showers. 1630 Hrs through Easdale harbour

1706 Hrs Off Duarte Castle with the tide running North the wind is dropping off. 1954 Hrs Anchor in Fishnish Bay, the weather is very hot now and I have had a great sail. I miss Aja with Donald and Sheena, who are sitting in Loch Aline and are heading South.



Loch Croig

Thursday 25 July

Loch Fishnish to Tobermory Bay and onward to Loch Croig

It's a glorious day 0724 Hrs Anchor aweigh in a light following wind - goose-winged till the wind goes Easterly 3-4. 0942 Hrs Tobermory Bay and its very busy, there's now very little room to anchor and I anchor down in Aros bay in the South corner by the waterfall - it's a real sun trap. There's no wind now and its baking hot - I dinghy ashore for stores at the co-op. Tobermory is packed and busy. 1244 Hrs Anchor aweigh and head out of the bay - with the general idea of going anticlockwise round Mull. 1352 Hrs Ard More point abeam - North Mull reached - the forecast with a good bit of Easterly in it make this feasible, but of course I'm now more exposed to the open Tieve Passage and there's a bit of cross sea and swell developing. Carraig broad reaching in a fine 5-6 and I decide to put in a double main reef and reduce jib too, as the wind gusts occasionally to +6. This awkward cross sea is getting unpleasant and come up to windward to gain shelter and tack into Loch O' Chumhain (Loch of the Narrows) and Loch Croig (harbour loch).

At this point the automatic pilot won't disengage - the plastic engaging lever has exploded and disintegrated into shards of plastic. I switch off the autopilot and manually force the steering wheel with gear linkage engaged - it's tough going but manageable. Engine on and sails dropped.

1612 Hrs I manage to drop the anchor onto the only biggest patch of weed, and successfully re-anchor onto clear sand. In 6 metres I deliberately run out a lot of chain and make sure the anchor is well bedded in. I then motor to starboard and drop the kedg and drop back to both chain and

multiplat line - this steadies Carraig. It's a nice sandy Loch, but open to the West, but there are some fierce squalls from the East too. My main focus is clearing the autopilot and disengaging it from the wheel. I take the wheel and autopilot off and now I can see that age has simply got the better of the lever. I refit the wheel so that I can work on the autopilot's mechanism yet still steer.

2000 Hrs I have "cobbled together" a temporary fix for the autopilot using, wire, screws and an Allan key - all back together and working - justifiably proud I celebrate with a gin and tonic.

Close by there's a large standing stone called the Caliach (old woman). Now there's considerable research into standing stones and there's a movement that now calls them Menhir (from Brittonic languages: maen or men, "stone" and hir or hor, "long"), standing stone, orthostat, or lith is a large man-made upright stone, typically dating from the European middle Bronze Age. They can be found solely as monoliths, or as part of a group of similar stones. Menhirs size can vary considerably, but they are generally uneven and squared, often tapering towards the top.

Friday 26 July

Abandon going round Mull and retire to Tobermory Bay, Dorlinn

1037 Hrs The forecast is all sixes and sevens - now, I'm unsure if the South to South Easterly wind is due to katabatic or land and sea breezes its blowing +6. Occasionally its topping 40 Knots and I fiddle with my anchor cables to sort of prevent Carraig from shearing - I have far too much cable for the depth, but with yesterday's drama I wanted her to be safe before doing any repairs.

1400 Hrs The Met Office forecast is totally at odds with what I have got here. For Saturday evening they are forecasting North to North Westerly 5-6 so that does it - I will have to clear out of here anyway as that makes this bay untenable, but in the right direction for a fast circumnavigation of Mull. Meantime, the barometer's steadying and the anemometer showing the wind's downward trend.

Locally, there all sorts of things kicking off as the VHF alarm goes off from a distressed vessel with a fouled prop, down at Ulva, and I can see the lifeboat racing down the coast in sprays of water as it dips it's bow down.

1430 Hrs There's a lull in the wind, Carraig's reefed down and tentatively heading Southerly

1539 Hrs Off Calgary Bay, There's this loud "pop" and I find that the dinghy on the davits has a 4 inch tear just at its port bow upper seam and the for'd sponson has totally deflated - this looks a difficult repair job. Looks like a rough edge on the starboard davit has worn down the material. Now with no usable dinghy it is imperative that I look to it's repair. Whilst the seas had been bigger than expected, I was now in a position to tack into towards the Treshnish Isles and the shelter of Gometra, and eventually the Ulva pontoon, and with the wind veering more Southerly this is a perfectly feasible and sheltered destination. I rule Coll out in that there's no place to come alongside to land the dinghy for repair.

The Tobermory lifeboat goes passed heading Northward throwing up sheets of spray. That settles it, with a dicky temporary repaired autopilot and useless dinghy, it's time to wear ship and head back to Tobermory. 1603 Hrs Caliach Point passed as the wind continues to moderate to force 4 although there's still a bigish swell running

To the West of Ardmere Point is Glengorm Castle, surrounded by a large estate. There was such an attractive haze in the air when the new 19 Century owner arrived that he named it Glengorm (the Blue Glen). He had not realised that the haze was caused by the smoke of burning crofts which were being "cleared". The Castle itself is now a Hotel, with its prominence has fantastic views over the Inner Hebrides. With the changing wind patterns I take the opportunity to close with the shore. And have to tack round Ardmere Point. 1718 Hrs Ardmere Point abeam and Carraig's well balanced, and I shake out a reef and tack out to the New Rocks West Cardinal Rock buoy in a good wind; tack again and slant into Tobermory bay.

1830 Hrs A cracker of a sail as I derig in Tobermory Bay - the Fleets in - there's no space to anchor, they're even squeezed more into Aros Bay. Mind you, many of the

boats haven't moved and I have a suspicion that they are being left there or are now semi-permanent houseboats. A feature first noted in Plockton.

1912 Hrs Anchored just off Calve Island which protects the bay and the tidal Dorlinn in the extreme South of the bay. HW at 1950 Hrs and a fishing boats flashes passed over the shallow Dorlinn, which will dry at 0230 Hrs. I put out a running mooring with the kedge astern to stop Carraig swinging out into the channel and then we're less likely to be battered by a fishing boat. It really is a remarkably nice anchorage and just to confirm it a huge white bummed sea eagle lands on a tree opposite, mobbed by crows it and settles down to roost.

Saturday 1 July

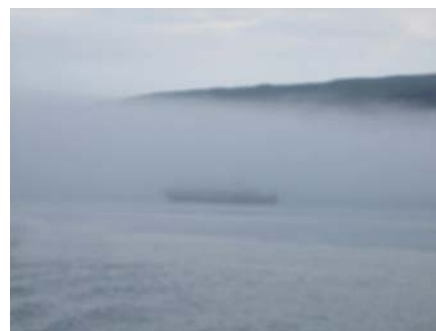
Tobermory to Loch Aline

Tobermory (Tober Mhoire - Mary's Well) I spent the morning preparing a patch and fixing it onto the dinghy, but deep down, I know it's temporary as the patch has to straddle a welded seam and it's just not feasible to get a watertight finish, besides the emergency repair kit's been used before and is not really doing the job, a new dinghy is £300, so resolve to buy a repair kit at Craobh marina.

1330 Hrs I'm watching the beacons in the Dorlinn as they cover. Hw Tobermory 1450 Hrs (3.4 Metres) Anchors aweigh and slowly, ever so slowly, head out. The bottoms clear fine sand with Ladies Laces snaking in the tide - bloody hell it looks shallow - but the sounder showing a least depth of well over 1.2 Metre under the keel, and then we're clear. Use the Dorlinn again? - well yes, not at neeps as it is today and even closer to HW.

I'm goose winged down the Sound of Mull and now that the tides changed I'm reeling in other boats - The style of sailing is changing - with yachts having such big fore sails it looks like there's a reluctance to host the main and if the speed dips to start to motor. Deeply satisfying to overtake those motoring.

The ferry M.V. Clansman's coming up on the Starboard bow and has to round me at Green Island - it should all be routine - but as she alters she overshoots her course by a huge margin - I do actually bear away - then she corrects herself and you can see she's putting on quite a bit of opposing rudder driving her stern clear. The Second Mates looking aft in her modern enclosed bridge wing as we begin to clear and then she dives off course again - there's been no risk of collision, but - you can almost see him mouthing profanities as he countermand his helmsman and then rapidly disappears as the ship fishtails hugely before the course is corrected. I remember it well, the joys of the Junior Ordinary Seaman at the wheel putting in their time for their Steering Ticket on the



Fog in the Sound of Mull



Cullipool

12-4 watch - particularly that JOS idiot who couldn't distinguish his port from starboard - the stuff of recurring nightmares - some things never change.

1700 Hrs Alongside at LochAline pontoon tent up pronto as the weather turns exceptionally wet.

Ashore to lochaline hotel for tea. An awful dump - no that's being too kind - i nd-ir!re a shite. Then to the Lochaline Miners club for a chat and beers, back into the rain and home to Carraig.

Sunday 28 July

Lochaline

It's wet - I'm ashore to the shop and fill up the water tank, ponder about laundry and decide that now is a good enough time - the problem is not the wash, but the cost of tumble drying items - it's always expensive, but for some reason the drier works without any cash - hey a result - and I'm at the laundry all day.

1600 Hrs it's drier and I move off the pontoon to avoid paying for another night and anchor in the bay.

Monday 29 July

Lochaline to Craobh via Cullipool on Luig

0712 Hrs anchor aweigh - the weather is variable 3 or less, following on from yesterday's heavy rain the air's saturated and there's fog banks too.

0743 Hrs Ardtornish point abeam fog banks - ferry whistle heard

0756 Hrs Yule Rocks abeam - ferry seen at 600 metres

0834 Hrs Duart Castle abeam - fog banks off towards East.

1050 Cullpool pick up adventure holidays spare mooring.

Luing (Gaelic: Luinn) is one of the Slate Islands and is bounded by several small skerries and islets. It has a population of around 200 people, mostly living in Cullipool, Toberonochy (Tobar Dhonnchaidh), and Blackmillbay.

The graveyard at the ruined church of Kilchattan documents the lives of past islanders, with quarriers, sailors and crofters side by side.

Cullipool (boat pool) is a pretty village - I've come down here as I have to wait for 3 hours for the tide to change in the Cuin Sound there little or no wind and haven't been in here for a while, the problem is that there's nowhere now to anchor as there's just too many moorings.

1400 Hrs Let go and for the Cuin Sound

1542 hrs all fast at Craobh Marina berth B30

Well I'm berthed by Robin and Gina Marsden new Moody Eclipse, we first met off Otter Ferry, and it's a delight to see them again in their very swish boat. Dinner together at the Lord of the Isle is a delight, and they have done so much too, I'm sure our paths will recross.

The Lord of the Isles and Tobermory's Mishnish are jointly owned and I must say it is a marked improvement on previous stops.

Tuesday 30 July

Craobh to Loch Craignish E Na Garbh
Carraigs looking like she's been hard worked, there's mud and weed to clear off the for'd well deck. I slap on another patch on the dinghy - it's holding but still there's this slight leak - it will do in an emergency.

I also change the fuel filters for the first time - there's quite a bit of black rubbish in them, which is concerning, which indicates diesel bug and I dose the tank again as a precaution.

1530 Hrs there's no rush, the tide gate is the Doris Mor

The weather's variable with occasional showers. I just motor down the coast on low revs. I haven't noticed before but the Craignish Peninsula has many wee butts and benn type buildings, some simple, some more elaborate, others mostly looking like ongoing works in progress, most pitched in wee ravines with access to the shore, quite extraordinary.

The Craignish Peninsula has ruined forts, standing stones, cairns and the mysterious cup and ring marks. The peninsula's history is traceable back to the 7th century when Celtic missionaries moved into the area, including the Red Monk, Maol Rudh, a kinsman of St. Columba from Bangor. The chapel at Kilvaree is dedicated to him - In the shelter at the west end there is a beautiful collection of medieval grave slabs.

The Vikings arrived in the late 8th century and some of the consequent battles that were fought are commemorated by a number of cairns at Bagh dal nan Ceann (Bay of the Field of Heads, on the west coast below Gemmil) and in the Barbreck Glen. At Drumrigh, (the King's ridge behind Barbreck House) the army of the Danish King Olaf is said to have been defeated by the Scots. A standing stone, and cairn - known today as The Danish King Grave is clearly visible from the main road on the bealach above Kintraw. By the time the Vikings left in the 13th century, the area was known as both Kilvaree and Chreiginis which means rocky headland in Norse. Parts of the current chapel at Kilvaree and the core Craignish Castle keep date to the 12th Century.

For hundreds of years the area was owned by the Campbells of Craignish. In the late 18th Century, starting with the sale of the central section of the point, Daill, to John McDougall of Lunga, Craignish was gradually sold off culminating in today's patchwork of farmlands. In the 17th century, Ardforn, which means Alder Point emerged. There was already an inn where the Galley of Lorne is today, serving drovers from Islay and Jura who swam their herds across the Firth of Lorne then headed on to mainland markets like Crieff and Falkirk.

The land, which was originally part of the Lunga Estate was sold in 1983 and there is now a growing resident population and a flourishing marina and pub.

1700 Hrs through the Doris Mor with its tumbling tide into Loch Craignish and round close in by Eilean Macaskin, leaving it to the West. There's a line of skerries to weave through, but with the Antares charts they are easily avoided. Between Eilean Macaskin and Eilean Righ there's this little anchorage at Eilean nan Gabhar (Island of the Goats) that I've used on Lassiette, - shore's a bit swampy but the bottoms fine and it's never busy - having said that a French 40 footer fussily anchors further out. With the cockpit cover up I settled down with a glass of wine, some pasta and part baked bread to survey the drizzle.



Cuin Sound a short cut to and from Loch Melford.



A 9 knot current, reefs and shallows to port and starboard - the Cuin Sound's "bend" has caught this yacht out during its transit.



Summer 2019 was quite unpredictable, The southerly racing jet stream brought depressions and at times extremely poor weather.



West Coast weather - it's summer it could blow like "stink", then the weather takes a turn and it's all shorts and t-shirt time again. Billy Connolly on Scottish weather - "There are two seasons: June and Winter"

To the Mull of Kintyre
Wednesday 31 July
Eilean nan Gabhar to Scalasaig,
Colonsay via the Doris Mor and
Corryvreckan.

Well, the weather's to be Northwesterly 3-4 with thundery showers, but it's very bright this morning. The plan is to head South towards the Mull of Kintyre as the weather's to perk-up and be good for the trip round. However, last night, doing the tide calculations I had spotted that about 1000 hrs today it would be about slack water in the Corryvreckan, there's no pressure, and yes it would be interesting to have a look.

0750 Hrs anchor aweigh and motor sailed out to the South end of Eilean Macaskin.

0830 Hrs in the Doris Mor and heading out towards the North end of Jura - there still quite a bit of Southern current, so my intention is ferry glide across to Port an Tiobairt - likely to be Port of the Well or Port of the Sweetwater (tobar - a well) - I let Carraig drift Northward along the Jura coast. At Carraig Mhor there's a little eddie and I let Carraig circle awaiting the new tide.

1008 Hrs there's a defining but weak tide line right across the Corryvreckan and I think it's time to head West. 1020 Hrs I alter course South to go to Bagh Glenn nan Muc (bay at the glen of the pigs). 1036 Hrs Anchored at the head of Bagh Glenn nan Muc on clean sand with no sea or swell, the water was so clear, I can see the anchor's well dug in ahead. The Bay's delightfully quiet, then there are unexpected voices ashore, and from the North around the headland through a head height thicket of bracken appear three middle-aged hikers with oversized backpacks, who walk purposefully to the only big rock in the middle of the bay and plonk their gear down. People don't realise how sound carries over water and its clear there's a major divergence of opinion as to the route just travelled, the future route to be followed and just whose original idea was it of coming this way? From my position I can see right round the bay to the next headland and I'm not sure they're going to like the next section any better. It takes ages for them to "saddle up" again and finally they're off still squabbling and soon it all goes quiet again.

I have a beer and doze in the sun - in the cockpit I can scan the beach and hills, and now nothing stirs.

1212 Hrs Anchor aweigh and head out of the bay for Colonsay.

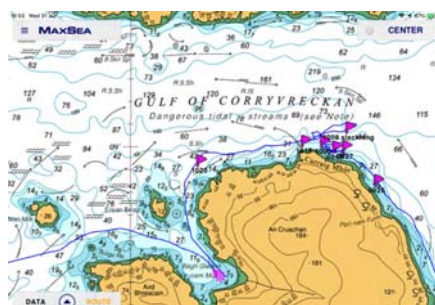
The course is West Southwest all the way and as we go the wind strengthens and veers a tad Northerly 5s and it's simply a glorious sail.



Awaiting the tide at the Corryvreckan



A back eddy at the Corryvreckan



Passage through Bagh Glenn nan Muc



"Of all the gin joints ..." Bagh Glenn nan Muc

1547 Hrs At the pier at Scalasaig - for once there's no boats in at all - there's a Calmac shoregang working on the railings and they help take my ropes, the Pier Master's in his box but his machine is down and he waves the fee - this is a good start. I go shopping and everyone's delightfully welcoming and chatty. Calmac have laid on a good length of water hose and new mooring cleats too. I shower on board and wander up to the Hotel at 1900 Hrs as you do - and yes, I can have a bar meal and the bar persons are happy to chat too. Great steak and back to Carraig and to my bunk - it's been a perfect day.

Thursday 1 August
Scalasaig towards Ornsay and then
Ardmore Point Islay.

I breakfast ashore at the cafe - Ah no chit chat this morning, I'm the only customer too - Oh well! I use their WiFi - It's to be a fine day Northwest 3-5 becoming calm or variable.

1100Hrs The Calmac Shore Gang let my ropes go and wish me Bon Voyage I haven't far to go as I motor round to Caolas Mor between Oronsay and the Skerries. There's a nice walk over the Strand to Oronsay, and I think I'll come back and do that. There's a fair bit of swell here and of course it wouldn't be great in a Southerly but I anchor between 1218 Hrs and 1536 Hrs awaiting the tide in the sound of Islay.

1727 Hrs Off Bunnahabhainn and the South going stream is building and I motorsail down Islay's East Coast. It's a ridiculous setting - here you have the pristine Paps and Jura glinting in the hot sun and on Islay? Well it's one industrial wriggly tin shed after distillery shed - whisky is indeed a major industrial process run by multinational companies each intent to hide their bulk behind the premise of one distiller, his expertise, generally a glass of golden nectar to hand - primped, posed and photographed against a fabulous Scottish background or in some pagoda style roasting floors with burnished copper stills glinting in the Scottish Highland sun - Aye right

So what's the value of all this alcohol? In simple terms - industry turnover is £5.5 billion annually - yes that sure builds many wriggly tin sheds.

1827 Hrs and off McAurthur head and its lighthouse. I'm just motoring down the 20 metre contour the winds gone and it's a fabulous summers evening.

1936 Hrs I have come inside the Ardmore Skerries using Antares charts - the location is stunning and I drop the anchor and lay out the chain - dog seals are showing off, but otherwise its silent and an idyllic location.

This is a veritable archipelago of little islands and skerries. The anchorages are quite far out from the land but I don't think you really need to go ashore to experience what this magical place offers. Just sit in the cockpit with binoculars, wait and watch. There are loads of seals around and you can watch oystercatchers, terns, eider duck, shell duck, swans, herons, deer feeding by the water's edge. Ardmore house up on the hill looks forbidding, and rather ugly.

To the Clyde

Friday 2 August

Ardmore Islands to Lochranza

0820 Hrs I've slept in - the alarm wasn't set - bugger. I'm really really late for the Mull of Kintyre and the weather's just perfect for it. I'm up and away, pushing the speed up and sorting myself out underway.

I recheck my calculations and I'm probably 1H30m to 2Hrs too late - every minute gained is precious, I can anchor temporarily in Machrihanish Bay, but that's less than ideal. 1130 Hrs I check the tables again the tide's still running Southerly but it will be touch and go for the Mull of Kintyre.

1200 Hrs Well now at the Mull, and going round - a couple of fast motor boats cruise round and are leaving me in their wake - I'm looking for a counter current as I'm seriously losing forward motion as the tide sets Westerly - I can push on or go back to Machrihanish.

1245 Hrs The winds getting up. The engine's on and a full set of sail all pulling and Carraig's making 2 Knots. I have to carefully weigh up the options the situation is not going to improve - I'm just burning fuel to no justifiable end.

130 Hrs Making for the Sound of Sanda is out, and I'm really just stemming the tide at Stron Uamha and a long way to go, and now breakers are beginning to form too. I'm far too close to the shore and turn South to ferry glide out towards the North Channel. At 1.7 miles off the Mull my speed begins to climb ticking up by 1/10 every so often - I throttle back the engine and head more Easterly and find that Carraig settles down to 3.7 Knots. I'm mindful that the overfalls are now more or less astern and that the clearer water is ahead. The Admiralty Tide Atlas shows just where and when the current and tide will slacken in the Firth of Clyde. If I keep this course well to the South of Sanda out of the current, rips, overfalls etc and build on my speed, I can elect to turn North into the Firth of Clyde when appropriate. I'll make another decision in an hour, I'll make a cuppa and get some food down me, The weather's good, I'm making progress and Carraig's doing her bit too and there's no time constraints, the worst that can happen is that I sail slowly East until the tide eases.

1400 Hrs we're making 4.7 Knots and I turn Northerly to the east of Sanda, but inside Patterson Rock. Should I go outside Patterson Rock the winds dropping a tad? I'm working the current and its direction manually from the chart's tide diamonds - haven't done this for yonks. Ok, will continue, but use the motor too to push up the speed and get clear.

1500 Hrs Alter course as we pass Patterson rock at +5 Knots. I had walked round Sanda Island last year so had a good idea of its Eastern coast shoreline and out and I furl the Jib.



The Mull of Kintyre



Carraig comes to a standstill



Avoiding the Sanda Channel, but inside Patterson Rock



Sanda Lighthouse on a beautiful afternoon

There's a good bit of turbulence in the water as it hits the uneven bottom - I have a strong suspicion that this is not a good place to be except in this weather as the only Admiralty charted anchor area, and that's probably for the Northern Lighthouse Board boat, is in the bay to the east of the Sanda Lt - and that beach is steep with boulders and reef fringed with kelp - I would say that it was a non starter. Best to avoid exciting times - I'll put this down to a steep learning curve and either set the alarm properly or just rollover and go back to sleep.

1600 Hrs Excitement over, the wind has gone and the sea's like mill pond and I'm motoring up towards the Kilbrandon Sound, I can see some overfalls and thread my way past them, but for now it's simply keeping to the course and avoiding boredom.

2135 Hrs Anchored in Lochranza Bay - It's rammed there are no spare buoys and I'm too knackered, besides sunset is at 2129 Hrs and it just goes dark as the sun sets behind the high hills. I'm using Antares charts and there are crap looking mooring just littering the designated anchor area like a rash. I find a spot and chuck out the anchor and chain and turn in.

Saturday

3 August

Lochranza to Portavadie

0645 Hrs I know it's wrong. I sleep aft in the Starboard bunk and I am woken by a tap tap tap - its not right - Otherwise it's too quiet. It's the dinghy on the hull - now why isn't that right. Oh hell we're dragging. I'm up - One look outside confirms it - Carraig is purposefully sailing down between two rows of moored boats - clearly we're not going to ground. I get the Engine started. The cockpit hoods battened down winds from the East about 4- 5 and she starboard quarter to it. I fire up the NavAids; jeans and clobber on. By now we are clear of the yachts in the bay and the sounder ticking down from 40 metres to 70 metres. It all happened so quietly and quickly I'm amazed at how far we have gone. Now I have time to go forward and I heave in 35 meters of chain that I put out in 6 metres. Ok, I'm possibly a bit light in the old anchor chain in the water department, that's clearly a problem and Lochranza a rotten anchorage too, that's an understatement for sure. Carraig has simply sailed off the bank in one of Lochranza's famed squalls, with her leash trailing behind her, perhaps, I hadn't dug the anchor in properly last night. I've been lucky and I thank my lucky star too. The chain needs better markings, that's an urgent spring job.

1000 Hrs On the way the engine revs drop a couple of times, we're needling diesel anyway. I moor her to the visitors pontoon at Portavadie and turn in again - a bit cowed and knackered. But then I got away with it so there's no need to beat myself up - Lochranza a crap anchorage be careful.

Sunday

4 August

Portavadie

I check the engine, and clear more weed from the raw water intake, this has been a regular occurrence all season. I also change the fuel filter, it's a bit mucky - the tank's down to under 15 Litres and I plan to top it right up.

1400 Hrs round to the fuel berth to take 140 Litres 1430 Hrs Let go and head for Kames 1636 Hrs back on home mooring and all shipshape for Alasdhair, Amy and Isla.

In the Clyde

Tuesday

20 August

Alasdhair Amy and Isla

Kames to Portavadie

1430 Hrs Alasdhair slips the mooring at Kames.

1645 Hrs Single handedly berthed at Portavadie - no problems

Although a bit of a concern that Isla's cot may not fit the cabin.

Wednesday

21 August

Isla's first sail. Alasdhair logs that she celebrates this momentous occasion with an explosive nappy change.

1000 Hrs out towards Tarbert

1130 Hrs alongside pontoon at Portavadie

Sunday 1 September

Kames Mooring to lamlash Bay

Hamish on Board

1334 Hrs Let go of buoy

Motorsailed down the West side of Inchmarnock - wind picks up in Bute Sound and Engine off and put a reef in the main.

General shout from Belfast Coastguard - call for reporting of fishing boat - vessel located in Brodick Bay - all OK

1624 Hrs all fast to a mooring Buoy in Lamlash Bay and dinghy ashore to meet Pamela and Sue who have travelled from Leeds in the Campervan and ferried over to Arran. We have dinner ashore in the camper van very good it is too. Hamish back on board for the night.

Monday 2 September

Lamlash Bay

Weather forecast isn't too good. To be South Westerly 4-6 increasing 6-8 in late afternoon with rain becoming heavier in the afternoon.

Before going ashore to meet Pamela and Sue I pack a change of clothes as the day was to be windy and wet. Pleasant breakfast with the "girls" in the pleasant cafe next to the RNLI slip. Plan A - bus

tour of the Island. The tour takes us South clockwise round the Island . At Kildonan we're able to look out at Pladda which is joined by a ridge, there were ripples where the East going tide was sweeping over it. At Blackwater foot there is a minuscule boat harbour. The Local hotel has a mooring so in calm weather it is feasible to come ashore. Then back on a bus to Brodick and the ferry terminal - only then did the rain give up. We all ate in the Pier Head Tavern (PHT) at Lamlash and very good it was too. The weather had deteriorated and we lifted the dingy into the sailing school compound - Live-a-boards out in the bay had offered assistance to see me onboard, but I declined - it was far too rough to venture out in the dinghy in a Westerly 8 and the Campsite owner had previously rung round to check me into a B&B. (£30 for the night).

Arran is the largest island in the Firth of Clyde and the seventh largest Scottish island, at 432 square kilometres (167 sq mi). In the 2011 census it had a resident population of 4,629. Though culturally and physically similar to the Hebrides, it is separated from them by the Kintyre peninsula. Often referred to as "Scotland in Miniature", the island is divided into highland and lowland areas by the Highland Boundary Fault and has been described as a "geologist's paradise".

Arran has been continuously inhabited since the early Neolithic period. Numerous prehistoric remains have been found. From the 6th century onwards, Goidelic-speaking peoples from Ireland colonised it and it became a centre of religious activity. In the troubled Viking Age, Arran became the property of the Norwegian crown, until formally absorbed by the kingdom of Scotland in the 13th century. The 19th-century "clearances" led to significant depopulation and the end of the Gaelic language and way of life. The economy and population have recovered in recent years, the main industry being tourism.

Most of the islands of Scotland have been occupied consecutively by speakers of at least four languages since the Iron Age. Many of the names of these islands have more than one possible meaning as a result. Arran is therefore not unusual in that the derivation of the name is far from clear. Mac an Teilleir (2003) states that "it is said to be unrelated to the name Aran in Ireland" (which means "kidney-shaped"). Unusually for a Scottish island, Haswell-Smith (2004) offers a Brythonic derivation and a meaning of "high place" which at least corresponds with the geography. Any other Brythonic place-names that may have existed were later replaced on Arran as the Gaels spread from Ireland, via their adjacent kingdom of D-I Riata. During the Viking Age it became, along with most Scottish islands, the property of the Norwegian crown, at which time it may

have been known as "Herrey" or "Hersey". As a result of this Norse influence, many current place-names on Arran are of Viking origin.

The division between the "Highland" and "Lowland" areas of Arran is marked by the Highland Boundary Fault which runs north east to south west across Scotland. Arran is a popular destination for geologists, who come to see intrusive igneous landforms such as sills and dykes, and sedimentary and meta-sedimentary rocks ranging in age from Precambrian to Mesozoic.

Most of the interior of the northern half of the island is taken up by a large granite batholith that was created by substantial magmatic activity around 58 million years ago in the Paleogene period. Sedimentary rocks dominate the southern half of the island, especially Old and New Red Sandstone. Some of these sandstones contain fulgurites —pitted marks that may have been created by Permian lightning strikes. Large aeolian sand dunes are preserved in Permian sandstones near Brodick, showing the presence of an ancient desert. Within the central complex are subsided blocks of Triassic sandstone and marl, Jurassic shale, and even a rare example of Cretaceous chalk. During the 19th century barytes was mined near Sannox. First discovered in 1840, nearly 5,000 tons were produced between 1853 and 1862. The mine was closed by the 11th Duke of Hamilton on the grounds that it "spoiled the solemn grandeur of the scene" but was reopened after the First World War and operated until 1938 when the vein ran out.

Visiting in 1787, the geologist James Hutton found his first example of an unconformity to the north of Newton Point near Lochranza, which provided evidence for his Plutonist theories of the age of the Earth. This spot is one of the most famous places in the study of geology.

Glaciations almost entirely covered Scotland in ice, and Arran's highest peaks may have been nunataks at this time. After the last retreat of the ice at the close of the Pleistocene epoch sea levels were up to 70 metres (230 ft) lower than at present and it is likely that circa 14,000 BP the island was connected to mainland Scotland. Sea level changes and the isostatic rise of land makes charting post-glacial coastlines a complex task, but it is evident that the island is ringed by post glacial raised beaches. King's Cave on the south west coast is an example of an emergent landform on such a raised beach, lies well above the present day sea level.

Tuesday 3 September

Lamlash Bay to the Mooring at Kames
The day starts with a fine penetrating drizzle as Pamela and Sue arrive to give me a hand with the dinghy. Sue falls

heavily on the seaweed greased slip, which is as slippery as smooth ice. Nevertheless the dinghy is launched and gear delivered to Carraig. All now is well and 1000Hrs I slip the mooring and head out under motor and reefed main.

The weather's Southwesterly 4-6 and the rain eases off. It's a fine sail until the wind dies off the Inner Passage at Inchmarnock, where there's quite a jumble of water passing Shearwater rock.

The engine splutters at Ardlamont point but continues to run until 1404 Hrs when Carraig is again on her mooring.

Saturday 7 September

Have been and purchased a fuel bug killer system 16. I drop down more than 7 Litres of a mixture of diesel, water and an emulsion of both. I then let the tank settle and pull down more "fresh" diesel. Clean all pipes and replace all filters. Prime the engine and it fires at the second go.

Sunday 8 September

Kames to Barmore Island

1538 Hrs Let go and Sue and I have a straightforward sail to Stonefield castle bay at Barmore Island. We have a problem identifying Sgeir Mahaola Cuin rocks (headaches rocks) and only when close abeam did we actually identify the Clyde Cruising Clubs Beacon - at least we now know what to look for. The weather then sets in and is abysmal - we eat aboard.

The original house of Barmore was constructed by the MacAlister family, who held nearby Tarbert Castle as tenants of the Duke of Argyll. They built the new house in the early 18th century.

The present baronial castle was commissioned by John Campbell (1788-1857). It was completed in 1837, replacing the earlier Barmore. Playfair designed a number of buildings in the grounds, including bridges and a folly. Campbell planted a number of species of Rhododendron and Magnolia, using seeds recently acquired on botanical expeditions by Archibald Campbell (his cousin) and Joseph Dalton Hooker in 1850. The plant collections were maintained and enhanced by later generations of Campbells. In 1948 the Campbells sold Stonefield, and it opened as a hotel in 1950. The castle is a category B listed building. The grounds of the house are included in the Inventory of Gardens and Designed Landscapes, as an "important example of a 'west coast' woodland estate landscape" of national importance, with an outstanding plant collection. There is a "weird" tree down by the beach festooned in plastic novelty balloons.

Monday 9 September

Stonefield to a mooring at Colintrave Hotel. Via Tarbert and Inchmarnock
1038 Hrs anchor aweigh motor down to

Tarbert Marina for a wash and brush up and a bit of shopping and lunch alongside.

1452 Hrs off pontoon and great sail out to East Side of Inchmarnock. The plan had been to go ashore, but the anchorage looks very uncomfortable and the winds just right for a sail up the Kyles, although there are sharp sudden showers.

1825 Hrs Pick up mooring at Colintrave and head for the hotel for a Gin and Tonic before eating aboard.

Tuesday 10 September

Colintrave to Portavadie sail round Bute

Weather: South or Southwesterly 3-4 inc 6 or 7 occ gale 8 for a time later. So what's it to be, well let's go sailing, there's lots of places we can pull in for shelter.

1000 Hrs off mooring and Carraig broad reaches downtown to Rothesay Bay before close hauling Bogany Point. We have to put in a couple of tacks to round Garroch Head at the Southern tip of Bute. The weather has been bright, but now there's invasive mackerel skies - the winds on its way —and we take the decision to reach more towards Loch Fyne. We clear Shearwater Rock and the South coast of Inchmarnock - the winds backs a tad more Southerly and increased in strength so we firm up to head to Portavadie.

1712 Hrs All fast portside to and both ashore for glorious showers and expensive G&Ts.

Wednesday 11 September

Portavadie

I drop down a tad more diesel out of the tank and on settling it looks clear and bright, an excellent result. We bus to Kames to pick up the camper van and Sue heads South to Skipton.

Thursday 12 September

Portavadie to Kames Mooring

1242 Hrs off the mooring, I'm motoring sailing into the wind and it rains hard at times. At Ardlamont Buoy the engine stops dead - it turns over but won't start - that really odd as yesterday's fuel sample is good. The Wind abruptly goes Westerly and increases to 5s and I sail up to the mooring. 1558 Hrs all fast. I can work in the engine compartment as the winds offshore in the shelter. Now's the time to be methodical. I drop down another fuel sample and all is good. Then I check every union. Bing, the oily water separator bleed screw is loose. I have just the thing I slip on a "o" ring and tighten it up and the engine roars into life. Ashore for tea.

Friday 13 September

Kames to Rothesay via Loch Striven

I'm going to give the engine a day's run. 1224 Hrs of the mooring and go to Colintrave through the Narrows. At Ardmaleish buoy I turn to Port and head

off up Loch Striven which is one of the Clyde's forgotten lochs. It's not too long, but very narrow surrounded by high hills, which are all squall inducing. It is a genuine fiord carved out at the last ice age. There's a fringe of muddy beach when the tides out then the water drops straight down a cliff from 2 meters to 23 meters then shelves again down to the loch's floor at 70 metres. There's a couple of big estates on either loch side and a road halfway up on the eastern side, but otherwise, there no hostelry or anchorage.

I have walked the Loch's Western shore - it is an area not to be trifled with. Here a hill walker went missing, her body discovered sometime later at Ardbeg Point in an abandoned shore side township shieling in plain sight of new houses on the Eastern shore.

A disturbing amount of mussel and salmon farm detritus is scooped up into the undergrowth - at one mussel farm I spot what I think are a couple of sunbathing seals, but realise that they have been shot and their gas filled bodies have been entangled in the lines.

Loch Striven; (Scottish Gaelic: Loch Sroigheann) extends off of the Firth of Clyde just north of the Isle of Bute, where it forms a narrow inlet about 8 miles (13 km) long extending North into the Cowal Peninsula. The road from Dunoon to Glendaruel wraps round the Northern end and is an original 18 century Military route authorised by an Act of Parliament. The Act's aim was to allow rapid military movement of the King's troops to brutally subjugate his enemies and if necessary his wayward friends too - mainly His Grace the Duke of Campbell's men at arms and his Militia. The road's original width was sufficient to allow military carts to travel along its entire length to Loch Fyne.

Most old churches on Highland Estates have a remarkable collections of wall tablets, plaques and memorials to Colonels, Majors, Captains, Lieutenants and Ensigns of circa the 18 - 20 century - the Church at Invercoalton on the Loch's East side is no exception, with tablets commemorating valiant Campbells. This is because Major landowners in the Highlands (for example His Grace the Duke of Argyll) formed Militia - These Militia were extremely important in the Napoleonic Wars and subsequent skirmishes til WWI - a form of early Dad's Army - and Scots, particularly in Argyll, joined in higher numbers than elsewhere. if a Troop or Regiment were raised with in the estate bounds then the Government agreed that Gentlemen of the Estate, both Senior and Junior were accorded a military rank and more importantly funded positions within that chosen Highland Regiment. It was a way of managing the "cadet" side of the Family - so an impoverished Cadet (junior) member of

Clan Campbell from the likes of the Cowal glens would see military service. Following the 1745 rebellion, the raising of these Highland Militia cleared able men off impoverished estates, and eventually freed land for sheep. It further reinforced the Military Regiment, where men fought for their comrades first, secondly, the Regiment and thirdly their Monarch and country. It was even better for some concerned if these "trusted" Highland Regiments were posted overseas, preferably to some far off fields of conflict, where if the actual enemy didn't see them off then disease, that constant scourge was more likely to. Unless a national hero then and until the recent Iraq conflict then British soldiers were buried in some foreign field and Highlands families, if they could, organised a plaque for the church. The Other Ranks were seldom accorded recognition or plaques until the first greatest monumental world clearance of able bodied men, that of the 1914-18 conflict.

At a time when Scotland seems on a road that leads ultimately out of the Union, it's worth remembering that Waterloo did much to create the British patriotism that is now disintegrating. "Scotland Forever!" was the battle cry, but they were not calling for independence. Rather they were proudly articulating a Scottish Regimental identity within the British army. Whole family septs fighting together, all local men from the glen - a single united band of disciplined soldiers.

The Dress Act 1746 was part of the Act of Proscription which came into force on 1 August 1746 and made wearing "the Highland Dress" - including the kilt illegal in Scotland as well as reiterating the Disarming Act. Exemption allowed the kilt to be worn in the army, continuing the tradition established by the Black Watch regiment. The law was repealed in 1782. The connection between kilts and courage would be a well worn cliché of British imperialism right through to the dreadful 1968 film Carry On Up the Khyber. The 3rd Foot and Mouth Regiment; the fictional Highland infantry regiment of the British Army so appallingly portrayed in this film.

Wellington called on his Highland Regiments and put them in certain mortal danger well before his Southern raised troops in Waterloo. The final defeat of Napoleon made the world safe for an ever enlarging British empire. Prussia, too, was a big winner and the road towards German unification was opened up, driven on by Bismark. Perhaps this was a defining day in Highland history too, all these strands laid the foundations for the diminution of the Highland Cadet Chief, their tacksmen, farming families and cotters - bairns, the able, old and infirm, to the benefit of their feudal superior landlord, further emptying the glens to the benefits of sheep and set the tone for a

faster more brutal Highland clearance and the eventual transformation of rough grazing to the green silent uniformity of subsidised but profitable Estate managed Sitka spruce forests, bought and sold by the likes of modern "Non Doms" such as golfing Australian Greg Coffey, Portugal based, Sir Cliff Richards and the money offshored by their countless ilk.

Loch Striven and Cowal: for sure, its bounds, peoples and history least likely to be visited by a modern narcissistic, New York born, Greek spouting, Eton and Oxbridge educated, Uxbridge and South Ruislip politician; First Lord of the Treasury; known for his vandalism, idleness, complacency and tardiness. One whose very long 2019 - 2020 winter Caribbean holidays were gifted by Von Bismarck's grandson. Von Bismarck, that visionary Prussian, whose, dreaming, scheming and conquering forged the makings of an embryonic European Union - and for which the men of the "Argylls" (the famous thin red line) with many others, have fought, won, given their all and kept the lasting European peace. Their motto - Ne Obliviscaris - Do not forget.

Half way down at Ardbeg point, I turn Carraig round to Starboard to cruise the Eastern shore, which has very new impressive houses on the shore line. Motor passed the NATO fuel berth with it's sinister "keep off notices". By Port Lamont, the old Ardyne construction yard has been renovated by Mowi as a supply base for its local fish farms. Then, it's a race to beat the Bute ferry to Rothesay, before the traffic signals turn red. I whizz in on green lights and find a vacant very short pontoon. The Marina's outside is tired and the inner harbours rammed with boats of all shapes and sizes on long term berths.

1710 Hrs Alongside side - the engine's run smoothly all day. Have dinner aboard and wander over to a rather empty Black Bull.

Saturday 14 September

Rothesay to Kames Mooring

1200 Hrs away from the Marina.

A simply magical sail, one where the wind "bends" through both Kyle to give a lift at just the right points - straight course through the Narrows

1430 Hrs on the Mooring.

The autopilot has just about had it for this year. The temporary engaging handle has finally broken and I'm down to using a pair of mole grips, but if this sees out the last few days of the season it's done well.

The engine is fine and has run well.

29-30 September and 1 October

Sunday to Tuesday

Sunday

Mooring to Otter ferry via Tarbert, then to Colintrave and back to the Mooring

1053 Hrs off the mooring for a sail towards Tarbert and a stop at the Marina for water. Lunch ashore at the Cafe. 1558 Hrs Let Go pontoon and sail towards Otter Ferry where the wind goes light. So motor to a mooring in the bay

1814 Hrs all fast and go ashore for mussels for tea - excellent.

Monday

1400 Hrs off mooring at Otter ferry and down Loch Fyne and into the Kyles.

The wind Backs Northwesterly and I scoot through the narrows.

1918 Hrs Aiming to pick up a Colintraive Hotel mooring just at sunset. Rounding up and ready to derig for approach for mooring - engine on. The engine stops abruptly - not fuel starvation. I check over the side and its immediately apparent that I have sailed over the dinghy painter as the dinghy's hard to the stern. All watched by a motor cruiser on the other hotel mooring. This is tricky, I need to round up across the tide, stall the main sail, pick up the mooring and not drop down on the cruiser. I do a trial run in the Kyles just to see how long Carraig will travel, then go for it - hey presto - thumbs up and cheers from the cruiser - all fast to the mooring.

I work to shift the dinghy painter off the propeller - it's just not for moving. I call Pamela to see if on her Kyles Facebook group she can rouse a local diver.

Pamela contacts Euan Sim who confirms that Hamish his engineer will dive first thing tomorrow morning.

Tuesday

0800 Hrs Hamish, the Colintraive ferry engineer's off the beach and swims to Carraig in all his diving tackle. He says the dinghy's painter is caught round just one blade of the prop but is badly twisted. With the Propeller out of gear Hamish is able to untangle the line and the painter is freed. The rope is frayed but otherwise OK and Hamish confirms that the propeller looks to be OK too. There's a fair tide running now so Hamish drops his diving gear in the dinghy and I rowed him ashore and I'm back on board for breakfast and Hamish is back engineering on the Colintraive ferry.

0834 Off the Colintraive Mooring and motor round to Kames. I circle the mooring as it's looking a bit out of position and only has 2.4 metres under the keel at low water. Looks like the mooring has dragged about 60 feet from its original position and the mooring buoy is riding very high in the water.

0942 Hrs I move Carraig to sit on Aja's vacant mooring for the time being.

Tidy up and go ashore.

18 October to 21 October

Kames to James Watt dock and sail up Loch Goil

Friday

1030 Hrs off Aja's Kames Mooring under sail and then tack out towards Rubhan Buoy. This leaves just one boat afloat in the bay the rest are off in yards. The wind drops and showers start - engine on for the rest of the trip.

1500 Hrs abeam of Cloch Lighthouse and now running up with the tide.

1600 Hrs At the tail of the bank waiting on shipping to exit the buoyed Clyde channel and for the MSC Mandy to go to her container berth. She's more or less alongside which lets Carraig slip by to James Watt Dock.

1640 Hrs Alongside stern to the berth - deck and hull washed down.

Saturday

There still a bit of tidying up to do and I want to wash down the hull in the water and check the Wind Turbine bolts. I also measure up some gear I want to fix in the spring. Not least there's all the stuff to sort for going ashore.

Sunday

Sue has driven up from Skipton in her car which can take a mountain of stuff.

We go for one last sail.

1000 Hrs off berth and head down river out towards Cove Loch Long. At Ardentinnny move over to the West side of the Loch to give way to a tanker from Finart. Entering Loch Goil we see at "twister" off Carraig an Ron (seal rock)

1336 Hrs pick up Carrick castle boat club boat mooring and pay £10 on line only to discover that it's free for the first couple of hours. We could go further up the loch, but it will be dark by 1807 Hrs and we need to watch the tide for going up the river. Sue proves bread.

1515 Hrs and have a great wee sail while the wind drops in the Gloaming.

1852 Hrs Alongside and secure

Monday

Engine drained of oil, deck gear stripped and soft furnishing moved to the for'd cabin, ready for the yard lifting Carriage out.

24 October

Thursday

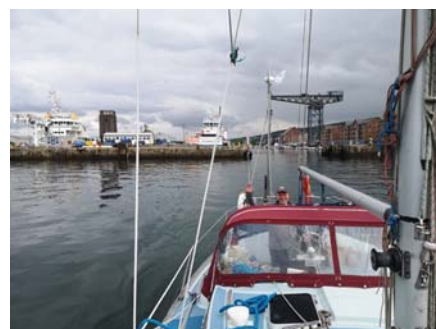
The season is over, Carraig is lifted out of the water and put on her cradle for the winter.



Puffer VIC 32, built 1943 Dunston's of Thorne, Yorkshire for the Admiralty as a victualling tender. Next year's Legislation will require her to make less smoke.



Sue's fabulous Carraig bread, proved at Loch Goil and eaten at James Watt Dock.



James Watt Dock - a busy place with it's dry-dock, lay-by berths and Marina. The hammer head crane and sugar sheds now reliquaries of recent history.

*Once again I have to thank family and friends for their magnificent contributions in particular: Pamela, Alasdhair, Graham and Sue.
And to Mum ever the keen sailor who passed over the bar.*