

PAIRC NEWSLETTER

PAIRCTRUST.CO.UK



August 2025



The Pairc Estate – August 2025

Summer seems to be reaching its end in Pairc, and we hope that residents haven't been too inconvenienced by the wind and rain!

The Pairc Trust are pleased to bring news of further plans for gunnera treatment across the estate; updates from this year's Lochs Show; a new publication from the Islands Book Trust and Urras nan Tursachan; summer time activities at the Kinloch Hub, and more.

Read on for information on upcoming events, items of interest, and other opportunities across the Pairc community

Top News

**Gunnera Treatment
Update**

**Crofting for the Future
Event with the SCF**

**New Islands Book Trust
Publication**

Submit & Subscribe

If there is anything that you would like to submit to the newsletter, or if you would like to receive a copy digitally via email, please contact info@pairctrust.co.uk



Gunnera Update

The Trust are pleased to note that many of the gunnera plants treated in June have now died back, indicating successful treatment. We have applied for additional funding through Community Land Outer Hebrides to cover a follow-up round of treatment, targeting both areas of new growth noted around the estate and also those plants which resisted the initial treatment.

Pairc Trust staff will be conducting further surveys of the estate to ensure that we have areas of gunnera growth tracked and earmarked for further work. We ask residents to please be vigilant and, if they notice any sites with gunnera growing on them, please contact the Trust providing the following information:

- The village/area
- Croft/feu number (if known)

- Number of gunnera plants present
- A what3words reference for the site
- Contact details for the crofter/feu owner of the site (if known)

Please send this information via email to info@pairctrust.co.uk

Continued co-operation between the Trust and estate residents will be vital in keeping any instances of gunnera growth under control.

Gunnera is an invasive non-native species which is capable of rapid growth and spread. As it thrives in moist, mild environments it is well-suited to the Western Isles' climate and its heavy growth smothers out native vegetation, reducing biodiversity and leaving bare earth patches which are prone to erosion.





"I feel the course has proved a valuable insight for me - I would be struggling to find similar elsewhere that would match the quality & quantity of knowledge imparted over just two days"
(Feb 2025, Carloway)

Crofting for the Future

A two-day in-person training course

Friday 12th - Saturday 13th September 2025
Pairc Trust Resource Centre, Kershader, Lewis

With a visit to Croft 17, Lemreway

SCF Event

The Scottish Crofting Federation are holding a 'Crofting for the Future' 2-day course at the Resource Centre on 12th/13th September.

If you are interested in making your croft more economically & environmentally sustainable and want support in doing so, this event features planning sessions, meetings with RPID officials, and talks on croft diversification methods, and more.

Tickets are available via:
<https://www.tickettailor.com/events/scottishcroftingfederation/1764611>

MCWCFT Support Local Festival

Muaitheabhal Community Wind Farm Trust are proud to have a continued association with Stramash Festival stretching back to 2015.

Paul Matheson, who is the driving force behind the Festival (alongside a team of volunteers) said *"Back in 2015 when we decided that we were going to step things up with Stramash and get our own marquee, it was Muaitheabhal Community Wind Farm Trust that were the first to contribute toward the purchase of the marquee. This gave us a real push knowing that there were others out there who could see what we were wanting to do. Once again our thanks go to MCWFT for their support."*

Hundreds of people from across Lewis & Harris attended this weekends Festival and enjoyed live music, food, bouncy castles and goody bags. During the rest of the year, the Stramash team support a range of other charitable and community organisations with their kit and experience.

Well done to the team for another outstanding event.



Credit: Ralph Tonge Photography

Ralph
PHOTOGRAPHY



Donald Montgomery, Garyvard, won the D Montgomery (Butcher) Cup for Male Calf born before 1st April



Jessica McDowall, Habost, won the Lewis & Harris Young Crofter award

Lochs Show 2025

This year's Lochs Show was a great success, seeing visitors attend from all over the Western Isles.

Thanks were given to the event's main sponsor, RWE, and to Eurowind, the Coastal Communities fund, and Muaitheabhal Community Wind Farm Trust for their contributions to showground improvements and a new marquee. The Western Isles Development Trust were also thanked for their contribution, which allowed free access to the inflatables this year.

Thanks were also given to Stuart from SDM joinery, Lee Gray builders, Don, Alan and Joe Wilson, Dougie at NFU Mutual, Polycrub, Kirsty & Eilidh Doig, John A Maciver, Donnie Morrison, John Wood Photography, Macaulay Askernish, Breedons, Peels, Heb Plant, Lochs Gaelic

Choir, Pursuit Hebrides, Iain Begg, Mr Kershaw and Soval Estate, Hebrides Haulage, David John McLaughlin, Cuidhig and Bochie, Peter & Alda MacIennan and Roddy Macdonald for the bus services, 1st Battalion The Highlander CAA Army Cadet force, Tosh & Friends, and to Donna, Alda and Mark for their combined contributions of time and/or donations.

The various categories were judged as follows: *Fruit & Veg* - Ruaridh Ferguson; *Flowers* - Jo Carrington; *Baking* - Rowanne Griffiths; *Art* - Emma Mackenzie; *Photography* - Ralph Tonge; *Knitting & Crochet* - Margaret Finlayson; *Sewing & Embroidery* - Sallie Avis; *Crafts* - David Broadbent; *Children's section* - Angela Macmillan; *Cattle* - Kenny MacIennan; *Blackface Sheep* - Eoin Blackwood (Dalblair Blackface); *All other Sheep* - Neil Mackenzie. The show wouldn't be possible without their time



Billy Campbell, Seaforth Head, won the Bain & Morrison Shield for Best Exhibit in Craft Section.



Harry McDowall, Habost, won the Macleod & Macleod Butchers Shield for Highest Points in all sheep section

and effort, and without the great efforts of all the other show volunteers - well done and thank you all!

Prizes were won as follows:

- **Willowglen Cup for Highest Points by Local Exhibitor:** Gerald Macdonald, New Holdings, Leurbost
- **DHM Maciver Cup for Highest Points in Cattle Section:** David & Gordon Maciver, Laxay
- **Bank of Scotland Cup for Supreme Champion in Cattle Section:** David & Gordon Maciver, Laxay
- **Polycrub Shield for Highest Points in Veg & Fruit Grown in Polycrub:** Iain Macleod, Grimshader
- **Stolt Cup for Highest Points in Craft Section:** Billy Campbell, Seaforth Head
- **Crobeg Cup for Best Animal Bred by Local Exhibitor:** Fiona Maciver, Balallan
- **L&H Young Crofter Award:** Jessica McDowall, Habost
- **MAL Civils Cup for Best Gimmer (Any Breed), Bred by Local Exhibitor:** Fiona Maciver, Balallan
- **Harbro Shield for Best Animal Bred by Exhibitor:** Fiona Kennedy, Balallan
- **Roineabhal Cup for Best Tup Bred by Local Exhibitor:** Fiona Maciver, Balallan
- **D Montgomery (Butcher) Cup for Male Calf Born Before 1st April:** Donald Montgomery, Garyvard
- **Bain & Morrison Shield for Best Exhibit in Craft Section:** Billy Campbell, Seaforth Head
- **Stag Bakeries Cup for Best Exhibit in Baking:** Lindsey Mackenzie, Crossbost
- **Lochs Gaelic Choir Cup for Highest Points in Cattle & Sheep Sections:** David & Gordon Maciver, Laxay
- **Shiant Isles Trophy for Best North Country Cheviot:** Lauren Howard, Coll



Credit: John Woods Photography, johnwoodsphotography.co.uk



Credit: John Woods Photography, johnwoodsphotography.co.uk



- **A Macdonald Stoneyfield Cup for Supreme Sheep Champion:** Fiona Mackenzie, Strond
- **Sandra McLaughlin Memorial Quaich for Best Exhibit in Flowers Section:** Liz Harty, Leurbost
- **Claitair Shield for Male Calf born after 1st April:** David & Gordon Maciver, Laxay

Congratulations to all the winners, especially the young folk from South Lochs who acquitted themselves so well!

It was great to see a well-attended show enjoyed by Lochs residents, with entertainment provided by Drakes of Hazard; Chainsaw Pete; Bubbles the Clown; Ross Brown, Football Freestyler; the Lewis & Harris Youth Pipe Band; and Harris Gun Club; as well as Highland dancing, quad rides, zorb balls, face painting, and delicious BBQ food and home baking served up by dedicated volunteers.

Also available were a number of auction items, including a lavish dinner for twelve at Soval Estate, and a handmade wooden bench crafted by Joe Wilson, Habost. Raffle prizes were won as follows:

- **1st Prize - £1500:** Joan Mackenzie, Stornoway
- **2nd Prize - £500 Co-Op Voucher:** Mrs Mackenzie, Glen Leverburgh
- **3rd Prize - Children's Electric Car:** Donna Mackinnon, Bakers Road

To cap things off, Piotsa set up in the evening to provide wood-fired pizza while guests enjoyed music and dancing into the late hours.

It was very encouraging to see a continued strong turnout at the Show, both in general attendance and in the competitions, and the continued support of the show's sponsors and volunteers is invaluable. Thanks to all who helped make this year a success!

Archaeological
Adventures in the
Outer Hebrides

GERALD
PONTING

08/15

Islands Book Trust & Urras nan Tursachan: Unearthing the Past

A major new publication, *Archaeological Adventures in the Outer Hebrides* by Gerald Ponting, will be launched in Stornoway Town Hall at 7pm on Thursday 4th September. It offers a vivid and richly illustrated account of one couple's extraordinary contribution to the understanding of Scotland's prehistoric past.

When Gerald and Margaret Ponting moved to the Isle of Lewis in the 1970s, their fascination with the Callanish Stones sparked a decade of discovery. Their fieldwork led to the re-identification and restoration of key stones, the rediscovery of lost features, and the promotion of the awe-inspiring Major Southern Lunar Standstill phenomenon. Their efforts earned national recognition and helped shape how the site is understood today.

But the story doesn't end at Callanish. Through his regular column in the Stornoway Gazette, Gerald championed the preservation of local artefacts—most notably the Shulishader axe—and helped bridge the gap between academic archaeology and community engagement. With over 110 photographs and a foreword by Archaeologist and Urras nan Tursachan board member Dr Alison Sheridan, this book is both a personal memoir and a vital record of Hebridean heritage.

'It was only in the Seventies, when two spirited incomers – Gerald and Margaret Ponting – began to make serious, serious study of the Callanish Stones that there was a real advance in scholarship' –author and journalist John Macleod

'The book is a cracking read... Gerald's work demonstrates how vital it is to bridge the gap between "academic" and professional archaeology... and the local communities' –Dr. Alison Sheridan, FRSE, Vice President of Archaeology Scotland

The launch will be held in partnership with Urras nan Tursachan. Gerald Ponting will be present to introduce and sign copies of the book. All are welcome, and refreshments will be available. The event will be the latest in a series of events hosted by Urras nan Tursachan as part of their ongoing Heritage programme in the run up to the opening of the new Calanais Visitor Centre in 2026.

About the Author

Originally from Hampshire, Gerald Ponting is a writer and photographer. Living on the Isle of Lewis in the 1970s, he became fascinated by the local archaeology. While teaching at the Nicolson Institute, he and his wife Margaret began exploring the Callanish Stones—work that would earn national recognition and spark a lifelong commitment to community archaeology. Now based back in southern England, Gerald continues to write and speak about the Outer Hebrides' ancient heritage, drawing on decades of research and field experience.

Balallan Switching Station & Muaitheabhal (Uisenis) Wind Farm Connection

SSEN Transmission would like to invite you to attend our Feedback Event.

We are holding the first of our statutory pre-application consultation (PAC) events for our proposed new Switching Station at Balallan and connection for the consented Muaitheabhal (Uisenis) Wind Farm. The pre-application process is a key first step in the Town and Country planning process for national planning applications.

To support the growth in renewable energy developments across the north of Scotland, that are supporting the drive towards Net Zero, investment in our network infrastructure is needed to connect this power and transport it to areas of demand.

As part of the investment, a new Switching Station at Balallan has been proposed and a 132kV overhead line connection between the new Balallan Switching Station and Muaitheabhal Wind Farm is planned. This is to allow the consented 150MW Muaitheabhal (Uisenis) Wind Farm to export renewable energy generation to the transmission network.

At these events we will be sharing information about the projects, including, layout details, visualisations and Environmental & cultural considerations taken into account within our planning. The project teams will be available to answer questions and discuss our proposals to which we are seeking and welcome feedback.

The feedback event will take place on:

Wednesday 27 August, 3–7pm

The Kinloch Historical Society
Community Hub, Balallan, HS2 9PN

Thursday 28 August, 3–7pm

The Resource Centre, Kershader, HS2 9QA

**If you have any questions,
please do not hesitate to contact
our Community Liaison Managers:**

Kevin Morrison

Battery Point, Stornoway, Isle of Lewis, HS1 2RT

Tel: 07586 237 814

Email: kevin.morrison@sse.com

If you are unable to attend this PAC event or wish to view the consultation materials these will be on display and available to download from the project webpages from **14 August 2024**.



To find out more about the Balallan Switching Station and register for project updates, visit the project website by scanning the QR code, or use the following URL:
ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/balallan-switching-station/



To find out more about the Muaitheabhal Wind Farm Connection and register for project updates, visit the project website by scanning the QR code, or use the following URL:
ssen-transmission.co.uk/projects/project-map/muaitheabhal-wind-farm-connection/



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LOCH SOVAL WALK

Join the North Lochs & Kinloch Historical Societies for a guided walk at Loch Soval
Learn about the different species of flora, how they were used in traditional healing practices, and the history of Soval Well

SAT 16 AUGUST

Meet at layby at the Soval Bends
what3words: ///curated.market.unclaimed

☎ 01851 830 778

✉ gemma@kinlochhistoricalsociety.co.uk



DOORS OPEN DAYS 2025

FREE

The Outer Hebrides Doors Open Days Festival

An annual nation-wide festival which offers free access to over a thousand venues across Scotland

Join the Pairc Historical, Kinloch Historical and North Lochs Historical Societies over the first September weekend for a variety of FREE events and engagement

For more information, check out the events programme on the Doors Open Days website



UNLOCK SCOTLAND THIS SEPTEMBER

WWW.DOORSOPENDAYS.ORG.UK

DOORS
OPEN
DAYS 2025



HISTORIC
ENVIRONMENT
SCOTLAND

ÀRAINNEACHD
EACHDRAIDHEIL
ALBA



European Heritage Days
Journées européennes
du patrimoine



SCOTTISH
CIVIC
TRUST



WHAT'S ON THIS AUTUMN...

at the North Lochs Community Centre?

15 th Aug - 12 th Sept	An Lanntair Youth Art Lab Sessions
23 rd Aug	Cancer Research Soup & Pudding
6 th Sept	North Lochs Historical Society Open Day
13 th Sept	Adam Holmes Gig
15 th - 19 th Sept	North Lochs Youth Art Festival Week
20 th Sept	North Lochs Community Youth Arts open day and exhibition
27 th Sept	Macmillan Coffee Morning
31 st Oct	Kids Halloween Activities
1 st Nov	Adults Halloween Party
5 th Nov	North Lochs Bonfire Night

AND MUCH
MORE!





STORM express
the restaurant



No. 10

OPEN TO ALL

HORTICULTURAL SHOW AND COMPETITION

Including Youth Section

Sat 30th Aug 2025 Stornoway Town Hall

Entries set up: 9am -11am Judging: Peter Harlington 11.30am -12.30am

OPEN TO PUBLIC: 1pm - 4 pm

Prizes & Raffle presentation: Mairi Gilles (Mairi's Hebridean Garden) 3 pm

CLOSE: 4pm

To enter: email LHHPSY@gmail.com

Pairc & Kinloch Calendar

Friday 15th August

- North Lochs Youth Art Lab, An Lanntair (7-8:30pm)

Saturday 16th August

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)
- North Lochs & Kinloch Historical Society Loch Soval Walk, [///curated.market.unclaimed](http://curated.market.unclaimed)

Monday 18th August

- Dance Class, Resource Centre (7pm)

Wednesday 20th August

- **Household waste collection**
- Pairc Social Club lunch, Ravenspoint (1pm)

Thursday 21st August

- **Glass waste collection**

Friday 22nd August

- Maritime Art Youth Workshop, North Lochs Community Centre (6:30-8:30pm)

Saturday 23rd August

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)
- Cancer Research Soup & Pudding, North Lochs Community Centre (Time TBC)

Monday 25th August

- Dance Class, Resource Centre (7pm)

Wednesday 27th August

- **Organic waste & mixed recycling collection**
- SSEN Community Feedback event, Kinloch Hub (3-7pm)

Thursday 28th August

- SSEN Community Feedback event, Resource Centre (3-7pm)

Saturday 30th August

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)
- LHHP Show & Competition, Stornoway Town Hall (1-4pm)

Monday 1st September

- Dance Class, Resource Centre (7pm)

What's on in Pairc?



Wednesday 3rd September

- Pairc Social Club lunch, Ravenspoint (1pm)

Thursday 4th September

- IBT Book Launch, Stornoway Town Hall (7pm)

Saturday 6th September

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)
- North Lochs Historical Society Open Day, North Lochs Community Centre (Time TBC)

Monday 8th September

- Dance Class, Resource Centre (7pm)

Wednesday 10th September

- **Household waste collection**

Friday 12th September

- SCF Crofting for the Future event (Day 1), Resource Centre

Saturday 13th September

- Pairc Social Walk, Location TBC (11am)
- SCF Crofting for the Future event (Day 2), Resource Centre
- Adam Holmes Gig, North Lochs Community Centre (Time TBC)