

# THE CORNCRAKE

## Note from the Editor

Dear readers,

February 2016

Bliadhna Mhath Ùr, Happy New Year and best wishes to you all.

In an unfortunate case of ‘too many balls in the air’ you have been bereft of Corncrake for several months and the Editor would like to extend sincere apologies for this. As they say, however, we get by with a little help from our friends and we are most firmly back on track. A big thank you is due to Corncrake ‘old hand’, Mr Scott Weatherstone, for offering to write a few pieces and indeed to you all for being very kind and non-violent despite the Editor’s blatant failings.

This leads us smoothly to a reminder that, of course, contributions of articles, photos, lengthy essays on the subject of proper sponge cake consistency and reviews of small cafés on Dalmeir high street are always welcome. They will be featured at the Editor’s discretion...but they are very welcome.

Many thanks and all the best for 2016,

The Editor

## Ceòl Cholasa 2015



Image credit: Carol MacNeill

After a night spent preparing and wrapping rolls for 74 packed lunches it was a relief to finally finish work and get ready for the excitement to come.

The ferry trip to Colonsay is always where the Ceol Cholasa feeling begins and this year was no exception. There were lots of familiar faces and a blether about what lies in store in the next few days ensued over a pint or two.

After I had settled in, it was time for our first rehearsal session.

Running through a few songs and tune sets got us in the festival spirit. A

trip to the pub and a win in the quiz ended up with other spirits in us.

On Thursday another ferry load of festival goers arrived and it was time for the action to get under way. The Failte concert began with Pedie doing a selection of songs from his formative years that stirred the memories. Roberto Diana then entertained us with his exceptional guitar playing and sang a beautiful Sardinian song. As Pedie went off to rehearse for the comeback of Colonsay’s favourite boyband (Nae Direction?), Caitlin took over the proceedings for the second half and started things off with a song or two. She then introduced Ian Bruce & Ian Walker who gave us a preview of the evening show. ‘Ode to an Old Friend’ was my particular favourite. They were joined at various times by Mo Walker and Fraser Bruce. Fraser produced one of the most emotional

moments of the week with his song about the Ibrox Disaster which brought tears to the eyes of more than one member of the audience.

The first concert of the evening was the traditional Local Concert and it just keeps getting better each year. There were so many great moments but special mention has to go to Morna & Helen with their superb rendition of "Good Man's Wife". The concert was brought to an end by the long awaited return of Niall & Pedie to the Colonsay stage. Accompanied by Roberto, they produced a set of songs that all brought back memories of days gone by and were beautifully sung. The first spine-tingling moment of the festival came during their final song, David Francey's "Wonder". It was simply stunning

Ian Bruce & Ian Walker were they main act of the first evening and they put on a good show. They have a fine repertoire of songs and the audience joined in with gusto even on the difficult to learn songs such as "Hawks and Eagles". It was a great set (my own favourites being "Mary Button" and the anthemic "I Stand Tall") and a very enjoyable start to the festival.

The first night of the Festival Club is usually a gentle, easing into things, session but this is year it was full speed from minute one. A tune session was well under way in the bar and a few of us older codgers decided to start a session in the back room. It was great fun with Niall pulling out songs that we had forgotten we even knew. Ian Bruce joined in with a few songs too and it was a brilliant start to the weekend and a sign of things to come.

Pedie got day two under way with the first of the Lunchtime Sessions at the Hotel. After a couple of songs from him there was a queue of people waiting to perform. It was great to see some different acts from Wales and England joining in the fun.

We had to leave early to go and prepare for the Machrins McNeills concert. The sound check went well but turned out to be unnecessary. Due to the fantastic weather there were only a few people in the hall so Pedie made the inspired suggestion to move the concert into the garden. We sat at the picnic benches and played an acoustic set of songs and tunes to an ever-growing audience getting nicely sunburned as they watched. It turned into a magical afternoon and was great fun for us.

It was then time to move back inside for the next concert. Roberto Diana from Sardinia gave his usual polished and quite magnificent performance. "Empty Rooms" still pulls on the heart strings and Roberto's easy charm shines throughout the concert. The other highlights for me were the Sardinian folk song and the great "Airport Dance" which had the audience joining in with gusto. At this point I managed to sneak off for a quick sleep and was awakened by the magnificent sound of four pipers leading the cars off the ferry!

The first concert of the evening was Kris Drever & Ian Carr. Kris is a Colonsay regular and Ian's guitar work and quirky songs went very well with his laid back style. "Edinburgh" was a very popular number but my personal favourite was the reworking of "Harvest Gypsies". It was really nice set that was much appreciated by the audience in the ever-filling hall. The gap between concerts was filled, as ever, by great craic, great Colonsay Ale, great pies and burgers from the Pantry and amazing sales of raffle tickets.

Next up was the Ceol Cholasa debut of Jenn Butterworth and Laura-Beth Salter. This is a duo I have seen many times so I knew what was coming. A cracking set of tunes and songs, delivered with humour and an almost telepathic connection, wowed the audience and won them many new fans. "I Wish it Would Rain" was always one of my favourites but you could actually pick any song or tune from their set list and it would be a thing of beauty. It was a truly magic set.

The final act of Day Two (once the missing fiddler had been found) was Blazin' Fiddles, another of my favourite acts. The energy was there, the musicianship was undeniable and the craic was good but the whole thing was slightly let down for me by over-cranked sound. I struggled to pick up the tune changes and that took this from a possible brilliant gig to just a good one.

Off up the hill then to the Festival Club at the Hotel and it was another cracker. Canach (minus one) and Liam got things going with a great session that was joined by many (including myself). The session grew steadily as the pros joined in. Seeing Caitlin and Liam playing alongside Jenn, LB and Kris Drever left me feeling that the future of Colonsay traditional music was in safe hands. Again, a few of the older guard started a song session in the back room. I have vague memories of lying back on a sofa singing "Livin' Next Door to Alice" in the early hours and it was highly enjoyable. That should have been that but a trip to the cottage followed with a cup of tea and glass of Rose wine. Just what you need after a night on beer and whisky. At least it meant that I could walk home safely as it was daylight by then!

Seumas and I kicked off Day Three with the lunchtime session in the Hotel. Once again it only took a couple of songs before the queue of performers began to appear. A special moment in this session was when Stephen sang "If Tomorrow Never Comes" in a tribute to his Mum and Dad. It was good to see regulars like John & Hilary and Eugene performing among some of the great new talent at this year's sessions.

Canach were the first act at the hall today and they put on a very good set of songs and tunes. Caitlin on guitar and vocals, Alana on whistle, small pipes, bagpipes and very bad good jokes and Robbie on fiddle worked effortlessly together through a very enjoyable show. Caitlin's singing was as impressive as ever but the last set on the great highland bagpipe has to be the highlight. Here, I have to make a confession. Having spent my four hours in bed unable to sleep due to an extremely painful shoulder, I had to do something I haven't done in eight years of Ceol Cholasa and miss a concert. Thankfully my string of cub reporters informed me that Kris and Ian put on another very good set and I was then raring to go for the rest of the weekend.

The early evening concert was by Donald MacNeill & Friends and Donald (hereafter known as Pedie) put on an excellent show. With Jen on fiddle and vocals, Rory on drums and trumpet (yes, really), Susan on cello and bass and Roberto on guitars, Pedie's heartfelt songs were given a new and very interesting twist. "The Journey" is epic and "The Hall in 59" is already a Colonsay classic and both were given a new and vibrant feel. "Half Hebridean", backed with just the guitar was also the perfect encore.

Next it was time for an old Ceol Cholasa friend to make a triumphant return. Mischa wowed us a few years ago with 75% There and has gone from strength to strength since then. The Mischa MacPherson Trio are multi award winners and they showed us just how much these awards were deserved with a truly sumptuous concert. Mischa's voice is a joy to hear and the sensitive guitar work of Innes White and whistle of Ali Levack compliment her perfectly. It was set full of beautifully performed songs and the tune set with Ali on the pipes was brilliant. Again, it is hard to pick one moment from such a set but "Leonabh an Oir" was just perfect.

Another returning act for the final concert of the day but Breabach have gone through a few line-up changes since their last visit. The overall sound has probably moved towards the more experimental side but to me, that is no bad thing. James on Pipes and whistles, Calum on Pipes, whistles bouzouki and vocals and Megan on fiddle and vocals are all driven along by the guitar work of Ewen and bass of James L. This was a varied and very enjoyable set and they were joined onstage by Mischa and Kim Carnie for a song. The highlights for me were "Hi Ho Ro Tha Mi Duilich" and the absolutely cracking final set. Not forgetting (and how could we?) Megan's step-dancing!

It was then that time again when the chairs get cleared away and the Ceilidh can begin. The Jen MacNeill Ceilidh Band once again provided the music and, judging by the dancers' reaction, they made a very good job of it too. Jen on fiddle, Andrew on accordion, Pedie on Banjo and Seumas on bodhran picked some really cracking tunes to get the feet tapping and the dancers flying. When we got up to the Festival Club the "real musicians" were already well into what looked like a cracking session. After listening for a while we retired to the old fogies room for what turned out to be the greatest song session in Ceol Cholasa history. It was immense. Niall and Pedie were in cracking form and lots of others joined in with a wide variety of songs old, new and long forgotten. I

don't usually pick highlights from the sessions but singing "Sine Bhan" with Niall and Seumas and then having Jan round off the night (well, morning) with "The Parting Glass" will stay with me for a long time to come. By this stage we were well into the large hours of the morning so you would think it would be time to head home. Of course, this is Ceol Cholasa so we instead headed back to the cottage to see what happens when you mix crisps with raspberry vodka (they effervesce, don't you know?) and to sing a few more songs. After all, that's why I was there! Another great day and night ending with another daylight walk home.

So, (sorry Pedie) after an all too short sleep, it was time for the final day. The first event was the eagerly anticipated second concert by Jenn Butterworth & Laura-Beth Salter and boy did they deliver! Like most of us, the girls had been affected by the strains of the weekend but their grace and charm shone through on another cracking set. There were great, foot-tapping tunes and songs like "The Great Divide" had the audience singing along. This was another top set from the undoubted stars of Ceol Cholasa 2015. Their final rendition of "Come to Jesus" was the perfect end to a beautiful concert.

After a quick break to grab one of Gavin and Morag's delicious venison pies, it was time for the next act. Breabach were in fine form and produced a storming second set. The tune sets crackled along, the Gaelic songs were beautifully sung and "The Orangedale Whistle" is a lovely song. It was also great to hear Ewen sing "The Rolling Hills of the Borders" which has remained a Colonsay favourite since Breabach's Ceol Cholasa debut. The highlight for me was the stunning interpretation of the pibroch "Proud to Play a Pipe". It was simply a thing of magic and beauty. It was then time for the final act of the year. Blazin' Fiddles' first set was the only (very slight) disappointment of the event but this time, they got it spectacularly right! The sound was perfect, the energy was incredible, the craic was good and the solo sets from Rua and Kristan were beautiful. Hop-along Bruce was up and down from his chair throughout what was a terrific set of tunes and Angus and Anna powered the whole thing along with their keyboard and guitar backing (Anna even found time for a fiddle-plucking masterclass). The standard of fiddle playing was just amazing and this was a great final concert for a great festival.

That meant it was time for the Grand Finale and this year it was a cracker. Blazin' Fiddles, Breabach, Kris & Ian, Jenn & LB and Innes produced a great set of tunes. Then Mischa, Megan and Kim sang "Reul Alainn a Chuain" for Keith with the audience singing along heartily. That left time for one final raucous set by the assembled cast to bring down the curtain on Ceol Cholasa 2015.

The final glorious stramash. It has hard to compare with other festivals this close to the event but the phrase "best one ever" was heard more than once as we left the hall. Personally I still find I have to pinch myself to believe that we are sitting in the Colonsay Hall watching the cream of Scotland's folk talent perform. For that, and much more, Keith and Pedie deserve huge praise.

I will leave the final word this year to a young lady I love dearly. She said as she was waiting to board the boat "I don't mind going home, my heart has been re-filled with joy". That, ladies and gentlemen, is what Ceol Cholasa can do for you. Roll on 2016.

*Hughie*

*As always, thank you to Hughie for his unrivalled commitment to documenting every moment of the music festival no matter how late. Or early.*



### **Connect with Colonsay**

Another year, another beautiful October and another Connect with Colonsay; a multifarious, month-long extravaganza of arts, agriculture, history, food, felting...everything. With fantastic weather for the most part the festival's array of guided walks and outdoor activities were a success and cosy evenings spent in the hotel saw good attendance. The wine & cheese tasting hosted by Donald Paterson and the whisky tasting hosted by Rachel MacNeill both had people desperate to get in (but certainly not so desperate to get out - singing continued into the smallest of hours). Such was the buzz that BBC camera crews descended to get in on the action. A treat for locals and visitors alike.

The festival dates for next year are **Saturday 9th to Sunday 23rd October 2016**



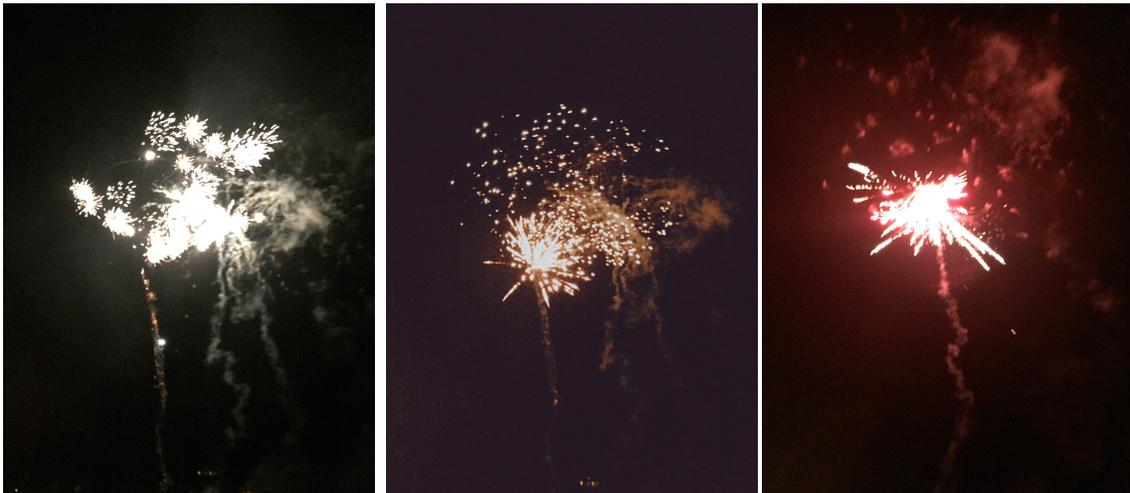
### **Arlo Arrives!**

We were all very excited to hear that on the 7th November 2015 Keir and Grace Johnston welcomed their baby boy, Arlo William Keir into the world. He was born at 6:44am weighing 8lbs 6.5oz. Congratulations to Grace, Keir and new big sister Izzy!

### **Bonfire Night**

Remember, remember...on the 5th November we had a lovely fireworks display and bonfire to celebrate Guy Fawkes Night. Donald and the fire brigade deftly handled the explosives and through the kindness of the community (overjoyed at the chance to get rid of those old palates that have been sitting beside the shed since potentially prehistoric times) a spectacular bonfire was constructed. Mulled cider was served with mulled apple juice for the children and sweeties were passed around the kids (and the not-so-kids).

Due to unforeseen costs in the running of the bonfire night, Caitlin is gratefully receiving donations which can be left in the shop or the service point.



### **CCDC Update**

In the months since the new Colonsay Community Development Company Board were elected, the main focus has been on 'getting the house in order'. The Board has worked not only to get to grips with the responsibilities of running the CCDC but also to do a bit of damage control from the admittedly tumultuous handover period. This could not have been successful without the experience and commitment of CCDC's Business Consultant, Hazel Smith, employed to work with the Board on governance, finance and general community development. In June CCDC employed Caitlin as a Development Assistant to support the board and to continue the work of Local Development Officer, Hannah. CCDC regrettably reports that Hannah will not be returning to her post as LDO after her maternity leave finishes in March.

The main projects that the Board have been working on in the last few months have been the Croft and Housing projects which are progressing steadily with great support from community volunteers. Smaller projects have included the successful Sports Day and Gaelic weekend and a number of funding applications and new ideas are in the works for the coming months.

If anyone wishes to offer support or raise an issue with the Board please contact Caitlin on her email address: [caitlin.ccdc@gmail.com](mailto:caitlin.ccdc@gmail.com)

### **Kilchattan Primary School**



Sheena Nisbet has been back in the principal's chair for the last few months as acting Head Teacher of Kilchattan Primary while Gill has been on leave. Gill has now returned and Sheena is off on a new adventure to do a few months relief in the primary school on Iona.

## A Nisbet Abroad

*Holly Nisbet recently jetted off for the ski slopes of Val d'Isère in France. Here's a wee recap from Holly of her first few months.*

After leaving Colonsay a week before my flight was due, due to the unpredictable ferry sailings, I began the first leg of my ski season in Val d'Isere, one of France's most popular ski resorts notorious for its great ski runs and home of Dicks Tea Bar and La Folie Douce. It's no lie when people say Colonsay is a small place but it's also no lie when they say 'it's a small world'. Working for a company with only 14 members of staff I coincidentally met one of my colleagues already and had gone to play group with another before my Colonsay time. I have, since being here met many people that I have met before or people who I have many mutual friends with.



My job for Mountain Rooms and Chalets involved cleaning chalets and apartments and serving guests breakfast daily and occasionally helping out with dinner.

The 6:45 morning starts are interesting especially when we have been testing out the multiple clubs and bars until the early hours of the morning which resulted in two of the staff members being three hours late for our first day of work! Needless to say I am enjoying it although it is becoming quite hard work. Our ski time is between 11 and 4 so a good five hours off of work a day is there for us. When we originally

arrived in Val it was pouring with rain and I had to question whether I was still in Scotland or not, however the following morning we woke up to multiple-feet deep snow and couldn't wait to test the slopes! Hopefully there will be many stories to tell on my arrival back to Scotland on the 5th of May!

*Thanks to Holly for this insight into the chic ski resort life! Enjoy your last couple of months.*

## Sober October/Mo-vember



A couple of Colonsay's residents recently took up the Sober October Challenge in which an individual is sponsored to stay off the booze for the whole of October to raise money for Macmillan Nurses. Quite a feat but one ably tackled by Donald MacAllister Jnr and Christopher Baker Jnr. In total they raised around £450. Christopher even took up the

next big challenge; Mo-vember (aka No-Shave November). So if you saw him around with some questionable facial hair just know it was all for a good cause!

## It's Show Time

In September we had the annual Root & Grain Show in the Village Hall. A good turn out with plenty of entries. Here's a recap of the winners - well done to all those who took part!

<u>Class</u>	<u>1st</u>		
3 Purple Top Swedes	Walter Williams	Best Lettuce	Jan Binnie
Heaviest Turnip	Walter Williams	Funniest Shaped Vegetable	Old Manse
6 Round Potatoes	Walter Williams		
6 Kidney Potatoes	Walter Williams	<u>Class</u>	<u>1st</u>
6 Salad Potatoes	Old Manse	3 Cheese Scones	Sarah Moss
Heaviest Potato	Walter Williams	3 Drop Scones	Morag Grant
Best Cabbage	Old Manse	3 Oven Scones	Dave Binnie
3 Carrots	Jan Binnie	3 Butterfly Cakes	Morag Grant
3 Beetroot Round	Esme Marshall	3 Ginger Nuts	Morag Grant
3 Leeks	Jan Binnie	Madeira Cake	Liz McNicholl
Best Marrow	Colonsay House	Victoria Sandwich	Annie Lawson
3 Parsnips	Jan Binnie	3 Fairy Cakes	Morag Grant
3 Onions	Esme Marshall	Plain Gingerbread	Liz McNicholl
3 Shallots	Jan Binnie	Date & Walnut Loaf	Diane Clark
3 Garden Swedes	Walter Williams	Clootie Dumpling	Carol McNeill
Bunch of Parsley	Esme Marshall	3 Empire Biscuits	Morag Grant
Best Cauliflower	Walter Williams	3 Sausage Rolls	Sarah Moss
3 Tomatoes	Esme Marshall	White Loaf (using Breadmaker)	Annie Lawson
3 Courgettes	Jan Binnie	Brown Loaf (using Breadmaker)	Margaret H-G
3 Runner Beans	Jan Binnie	White Loaf	Esme Marshall
3 Garden Pea Pods	Jan Binnie	Brown Loaf	Old Manse
1 Head Broccoli	Esme Marshall	3 White Rolls	Sarah Moss
Bunch of mixed herbs	Old Manse	Lemon Drizzle Cake	Morag Grant
Best of any other veg.	Jan Binnie	Quiche	Annie Lawson
3 Apples	Georgina H	Baking gone wrong	Felix Musgrave-Dance
Best of any other fruit	Jan Binnie		

<u>Class</u>	<u>1st</u>
1lb Marmalade	Dave Binnie
Any Variety Jam	Gill Graham-Stewart
Any Variety Jelly	Old Manse
Lemon Curd	Sarah Moss
Fruit Chutney	Sarah Moss
Pickled Beetroot	Old Manse
Any Other Pickle	Old Manse
Swiss Milk Tablet	Dave Binnie
3 Hen Eggs Brown	Barbara Hamilton
Snapshot	Chris Baker
Knitted Article	Sarah Hobhouse
Crochet Article	Carol MacNeill
Knitted Socks	Diane Clark
Christmas Gift	Old Manse
H M A Ladies	Annie Carrigan
Pot Plant	Old Manse
Flower Arrangement	Margaret Hall-Gardiner
Home made wine	Irene Campbell

<b>Junior Under 5</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
3 Chocolate Krispies			
3 Gingerbread men	Izzy Johnstone		
3 Flapjacks			
Drawing	Izzy Johnstone		
Painting	Izzy Johnstone		
HMA			
School Made Article	Izzy Johnstone		
Painted Pebble			

<b>Junior 5-8</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
3 Chocolate Krispies	Felix Musgrove-Dance	Rosie Musgraove-Dance	Eve Liddell
3 Gingerbread men	Felix M-D	Eve Liddell	Rosie M-D
3 Flapjacks	Felix M-D	Rosie M-D	
Drawing	Eve Liddell	Rosie M-D	Felix M-D
Painting	Eve Liddell	Rosie M-D	Felix M-D
HMA	Eve Liddell	Felix M-D	
School Made Article	Felix M-D	Rosie M-D	Eve Liddell
Painted Pebble	Felix M-D	Eve Liddell	Rosie M-D

<b>Junior 9 -11</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>
Chocolate Krispies	Ella Liddell		
Gingerbread men	Seamus Dady	Ella Liddell	Jamie Leppard
Flapjacks			
Drawing	Seamus Dady	Ella Liddell	Seamus Dady
Painting	Seamus Dady		
HMA	Seamus Dady		
School Made Article	Ella Liddell	Seamus Dady	Jamie Leppard
Painted Pebble	Seamus Dady	Jamie Leppard	

### **CUPS**

Root & Grain	Jan Binnie
Baking	Morag Grant
Homecraft	Old Manse
Junior Girls	Eve Liddell
Junior Boys	Felix Musgrove-Dance
Best Exhibit Root and Grain	Jan Binnie
Best Exhibit Baking	Carol MacNeill
Best Exhibit Homecraft	Carol MacNeill
Best Exhibit Junior	Seamus Dady
Ellen Kerr	Morag Grant



### **Jamie Wins MacMillan Jackpot**

Jamie Leppard was the lucky recipient of £30 prize money after correctly guessing the number of sweets on the cake in a fundraising competition for MacMillan Cancer Support. Don't spend it all at once young man!

## Hopes Raised For Port Mor Housing Project.



At an early December meeting on the island, community reps took the first steps on the road to building affordable social housing at Port Mor. If the project comes to fruition, the new houses will greatly alleviate the plight of several, mostly young islanders who are currently classified as “statutorily homeless” and living year-round in caravans or other unsuitable accommodation.

### BACKGROUND

The Sub-Group had examined the Council’s Development Plan, which lists the very limited zones on the island on which house-building would be permitted. The main “Settlement Area” encompasses Scalasaig and Glassard. CCDC had previously attempted to buy the land at the top of the kirk brae (on the left), but the funds they had managed to secure from the Scottish Government’s Land Fund had not proven sufficient to meet the Estate’s asking price. To cut a very, very long story short, negotiations had subsequently The second most desirable site within the Council’s “Settlement Area” was adjacent to the current social housing behind the brewery and bookshop. However, the Estate had advised the Sub-Group that the site’s price would reflect its favourable location, placing it firmly outwith the community’s budget. This meant that the community had to look for sites away from the amenities and central location of Scalasaig and outwith the approved housing zones. Plans to build in such areas are looked upon less favourably by Council Planners, therefore a much stronger case would have to be made.

### COUNCILLOR CURRIE’S INTERVENTION.

Our Argyll and Bute Councillor, Robin Currie, convened a meeting in October in Scalasaig Village Hall. He told community reps the excellent news that there may be Council funding available soon to support the development of affordable housing on Colonsay. He also assisted by putting us in touch with the relevant workers in the Council, the West Highland Housing Association (WHHA) and Rural Housing Scotland. Finally, he advised us to get the process started soon, so as not to miss the funding opportunity. Several years ago, CCDC had acquired land at Port Mor for the development of the crofts. However, Croft No. 4 remained vacant and the group decided to focus on that site. The community would ideally like to build eight houses, to meet current and anticipated future need, although it’s likely that Planning may limit this number. Hazel Smith, the Consultant currently working with CCDC, arranged a meeting of community reps in late November, to allow them to agree their position prior to the December meeting.

### THE DECEMBER DISCUSSIONS

On Tuesday, 1st December, Chairman Trevor Patrick welcomed Lesley McInnes of the West Highland Housing Association (3rd from left), Chris Read of Marine Harvest (4th from left) and Gregor Cameron (far left), a housing development consultant. He introduced them to Andrew,

Helen, Gavin, Liz and Scott, all members of CCDC's Housing Sub-Group. The meeting took place in Colonsay Pantry's Conference Suite and was expertly catered for by Mr Gavin Clark, Proprietor. Lesley set a welcome positive tone at the start, declaring that "WHHA is committed to helping the island to survive and thrive"; the Housing Association would bring experience, expertise and access to finance to the table. Chris Read added the support of Marine Harvest; having recently established the Colonsay Fish Farm (employing four islanders), accommodation for existing and future staff was needed. Marine Harvest was committed to supporting the project and could help financially in one significant outcome of the meeting was that it became clear that, in laying any new infrastructure for the new houses at Port Mor (mains water, electricity, phone-lines etc), we would also indirectly offer benefit to the hard-pressed new crofters there. Community reps agreed that a "Masterplan" be prepared, stressing the benefits both to the crofters and to the island's homeless. After the meeting, Lesley MacInnes issued this statement exclusively to the Colonsay Corncrake: "West Highland Housing Association was delighted to come and meet Marine Harvest and the Colonsay Development Group. There was a good discussion about the need for affordable housing on the island and WHHA outlined other projects they were looking at with community groups in Iona and Mull. All parties were positive about doing something as the jobs that Marine Harvest had introduced onto the island provided different opportunities that would benefit people. West Highland Housing Association wanted to work with the community to develop something that would be welcomed by the island."

#### WHAT NEXT?

Now that a suitable site has finally been identified, the community reps want to press ahead swiftly with the project. They will be in touch with the Planning Department to inform them that a concrete proposal is being prepared in conjunction with the appropriate organisations. They will also be liaising with Rhona and Les, who farm the croft adjacent to the planned development site, to keep them up to date with plans. WHHA will research and map the site and submit preliminary drawings

#### CAN YOU HELP?

CCDC realises that 2-4 units at Port Mor will not meet the community's housing need. They will be shortly be approaching crofters, householders and landowners to ask if they have any land that could be used for the construction of social housing. They stress that paying the market value is beyond their means; they could only afford to pay whatever the independent surveyor's valuation may be for a given piece of land.

If you are in a position to help CCDC in this way, please contact Scott on 014 or by e-mail at [weatherstonescott@btinternet.com](mailto:weatherstonescott@btinternet.com).

#### **Isle Of Colonsay Golf Club**

Club Captain Donald MacAllister chaired the Club's 16th January AGM in the island's fire station and reflected on a season that had included a successful Open competition and ceilidh and an enjoyable trip to The Machrie, on the Isle of Islay. Due to consistently adverse weather, there had been no Winter League, however members had squeezed a couple of Texas Scramble matches into the gaps between Abigail, Gertrude, Desmond and Henry.

A vote of thanks was made to Trevor for his work as Treasurer, but, with no forest of hands jostling to succeed him, he agreed to share the duties with Derek for the season. Davie will continue as



Secretary, with Dave B assuming a challenging new role of Merchandising Czar.

The Club expressed its gratitude to Phil for his work as Greenkeeper, but acknowledged that ours is not an easy course to maintain with the current equipment and on a tight budget. Normal green-mower blades take a battering from the sand and small stones amongst the grass; also, we don't have a suitable ride-on mower with which to cut the fairways. Liam volunteered to design a simple web-site for the club, both to promote golf on the island, and to seek donations through crowd-funding. We're also going to ask for the advice of Colonsay exile, Paul Summers, who has loads of experience with greenkeeping machinery. In order to raise further funds for course maintenance, the Club agreed to raise membership fees to £30 a year and £5 a round for visitors. Looking forward to the coming season, the club agreed that the Ceilidh should take place on Saturday, 6th August, followed by the Open on Saturday, 20th August.

### **Colonsay Man Steps Up To Scottish National Hockey Team**

Colonsay commuter Dannie Onn has been selected to play for the Scotland over 60s team at the 2016 Grand Masters Hockey World Cup in Australia. The world cup is being held in Newcastle, NSW and runs for the first two weeks of May. The competition is for national teams in the age



groups 60+, 65+ and 70+. Says Dannie; 'It is a great honour to be selected, but with less than 14 weeks to go I have a huge responsibility to get to peak fitness.'

There will be 13 teams competing in Dannie's age group, including the other home nations and teams from the rest of Europe, Australia, Africa and Asia. Dannie has played hockey for most of his life since taking it up at school. He is currently a member of Scottish veterans LX (a club for over 60's players) and Oban Hockey Club. Oban is a mixed club with around 30 active members of all ages and abilities.

They train twice a week and enter

tournaments across Scotland. Many of their members play for league teams in the central belt at weekends. Oban also has two internationalists in the Scotland over-65s team, one from Seil and the other from Mull. There is quite an amazing amount of hockey at Oban, despite there being no proper hockey pitch nearer than Helensburgh! Colonsay congratulates Dannie on his achievement; the Corncrake will keep you up-to-date with his progress and wishes him well with his preparations.

### **Moving On**

Sadly the last few months have seen a bit more going than coming - we were very sad to hear of Donald & Hannah MacAllister's decision to leave the island but wish them and wee Dougal all the best in their new adventure in Haddington!

We also, regretfully, said farewell to Community Nurse, Michelle, and senior Port Assistant, Cammy as they headed back to Michelle's native lands, Ormaclieit in South Uist. Michelle secured a nursing job and Cammy is back in the business as a port assistant in Lochboisdale. Best wishes to the pair (and of course the beautiful Bailey).

NB. The Editor really, *really* misses Bailey.