

CURATOR'S REPORT from Bill Clegg

The Museum has had a busy season, particularly with the visiting cruise boats, on one occasion when we had 280 visitors in the day. It is a great credit to the quality of our volunteers that we have coped satisfactorily - this is frequently noted in the visitors' book. A few of the comments may be of interest and I will quote a few here, "Surprisingly good," "a bit old fashioned" [thank goodness for that one] "Worthwhile visit, thank-you," "Great to see a traditional museum," "An excellent museum and most helpful staff," "Good to knit again," "a lovely little museum for a lovely island," "an amazing place". A couple who had emigrated from Glasgow to Australia wrote "we should have come here before we emigrated"

The exhibit remains largely the same and despite the fact that the majority of our visitors enjoy it, we should endeavour to set up a new exhibit with some of the items from our large store. Some of the questions sent to the curator have given us pleasure in sorting them out and discovering unknown facts on the way to an answer.

Now that the visitors are much reduced, plans are in place to start the work on the restoration of the Cherub. This was given added impetus by the arrival of Barbara Lawes and her husband. Barbara is the great grand-daughter of Robert Strathern, the engineer in charge of Tobermory's first water supply. Her enquiry about the cherub led her to the Burgh Minutes (see TRANSCRIPTION PROGRAMME over)

COMINGS AND GOINGS

We have welcomed some new members of the Museum team recently - Dennis Broad has taken over from Mike Jordan as House Manager - so thank you to Mike for all his meticulous attention to the fabric and fittings over the years, and welcome to Dennis who has been helping the Curator with a multitude of tasks. The Librarian's duties have been accepted jointly by Rosalind and Andrew Read, leaving Jean Whittaker more time to concentrate on her work with the Archives. We are delighted to have these new faces in the team. We have also welcomed Fiona Langford with her knowledge of Mull who mans the desk for part of Thursday morning each week.

Our oldest attending members Chris Anderson has decided to retire from her slot on Friday afternoons. Chris's wide knowledge of the history of Mull and the people, and her enthusiastic welcome to visitors will be missed. Despite failing sight, Chris has continued to attend regularly all this summer.

And lastly we lost another of our early supporters, Jean Backus who died in June - Jean was a founder member of the original Mull & Iona Folklore Association in 1972.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL - due in April each year

Annual Subscription £5 single, £20 family
5-year membership £25, 5-year family £50
Payable at desk in Museum or to Membership Secretary
Mull Museum, Columba Buildings, Tobermory,
Isle of Mull, PA75 6NY or email secretary@mullmuseum.org.uk

OFFICE-BEARERS 2008-09

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WEBSITE

The Museum now has a website www.mullmuseum.org.uk which was created for us by Hazel Morris and launched online in May. The design is based on our printed leaflet and shows some of our treasures as well as giving useful information like when we are open and how to contact us. We will gradually add more material as time goes on. This is part of our general promotion which includes leaflets, and adverts on two visitor maps.

MULL MUSEUM IN THE MEDIA

In May, Chairman Olive Brown did a piece about the history of Tobermory for the BBC Radio 4 programme Open Country - there were two half-hour programmes about Mull and covered many aspects of island life. Despite going out at 6am on a Saturday the programmes were heard by an amazing number of people!

The new Gaelic channel BBC Alba is airing a series of 13 programmes about the museums of Scotland large and small, from Kelvingrove to Kilmartin. Mull Museum will be featured on Tuesday 9th December at 8.30pm (on Sky Channel 168 and FreeSat) and repeated on the following Saturday. The series, *Uladhean* (Treasures) has been produced by an independent company called Caledonia Television and all concerned at our Museum had great fun helping with the filming. The young presenters clearly enjoyed talking about our exhibits and their origins and uses. And don't worry if you don't speak Gaelic as there are subtitles throughout.

Another independent company, Mentorn TV, are doing the second series of programmes about the clans of Scotland, and Mull will again feature when they do the MacLean clan. Together with regular items on television and radio about the wildlife of Mull, this area gets more than its fair share of "free" publicity.

LOAN BOXES & SCHOOL VISITS

Schools are encouraged to use local resources and to ground much of their work in local culture and history. At the Mull Museum we are ideally placed to facilitate this. This year we have put together our first of a series of Loans Boxes. The box on Victorian Mull which included a large washtub, washboard, flat irons, Reckitt's Blue, carbolic soap and a carpet beater, was made up by Katharine Elwis and Hilary Garvie and sent, with teachers notes and activity ideas, to Salen Primary School who learned how hard mothers had to work in the days before washing machines and other modern appliances. This is just one of the helpful ideas we have had from our Curatorial Adviser, Joanne Howdle, for maintaining strong links with the schools.



JOINT SUPPER

Mull Museum will be hosting this year's annual Joint Supper with the MHAS. There will be a two course meal in the Tobermory Parish Church Hall at 7pm on Friday 14th November, followed by a talk by the eminent marine archaeologists Dr Paula Martin and Dr Colin Martin. Their illustrated talk is called *The Silent Shores Speak: investigating a maritime landscape in North Argyll*.

Tickets £12 from Anne MacGregor Tel 01688 302603

