



Lluest Cwmbach, Elan Valley, Mid-Wales

Mountain Bothies Association

# Annual Review 2020

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Uags, Applecross peninsula, NW Highlands

## What we do

Across Britain, we maintain more than 100 bothies, none of which is on a public road. Indeed most bothies are in highly demanding locations, surrounded by rough and mountainous terrain.

During 2020, the MBA owned only two bothies. Elsewhere, we work with the bothy owner – such as an individual, trust or public body – to keep the building in good order, and open for public use.

In this Annual Review, we show how we went about our work in 2020.

### A difficult year

The nature of the response to the Covid-19 epidemic meant that 2020 was an exceptionally difficult year for almost every organisation in Britain, and the MBA was by no means immune.

Early in the year, the difficult but necessary decision was taken, by the MBA and owners jointly, to close all bothies; some were locked. Very little bothy maintenance has been possible, with projects large and small put on hold, even with strict guidelines being drawn up for Covid-secure working practices.

### How we work

The MBA is a membership organisation, registered in Scotland as a charity. We have no paid staff. The board of Trustees meets regularly during the year to set priorities, monitor finance and ensure good governance. Much day-to-day work is overseen by our three committees, covering renovation and maintenance, members and volunteers, and communication.

Since the first lockdown, face-to-face meetings have been replaced by virtual meetings using online platforms such as Zoom. This extended to the AGM, at which all members of the MBA can attend and vote – indeed, perhaps because of this, we recorded one of our highest ever AGM attendances, of 80.

Bothies are organised into nine geographical areas, each of which has an area organiser and committee. Each bothy has a maintenance organiser (or two joint MOs); aided by reports from users, they monitor the condition of their bothy, and effect minor repairs. Larger-scale work, such as installing a new hearth or roof, falls to work parties, often of several days' duration.

For certain aspects of our administration, such as the maintenance of our membership list, we work closely alongside Henderson Black & Co, chartered accountants of Cupar in Fife.

### Trustee updates

At the AGM, Jamie Johnston was elected to the Trustees, and Neil Reid was re-elected after a few months' absence. Alastair Wilson was co-opted last year and is now an elected Trustee.

### Credits

**Editor:** Peter Aylmer

**Text:** Peter Aylmer and  
Lyndsey McLellan

**Design:** Emily Willing

**Photographs:** Peter Aylmer, Michael Barnard, Alan Bellis, Scotty Fleming, Nick Hamilton, Pavol Horváth, Andy MacArthur, MBA photo library, Allan Moore, Michael Parker, James Ross, Peter Rowell, Gina Tawn



Simon Birch

## Pandemic forces bothy closures

As the Covid-19 pandemic took hold in early 2020, the governments of the nations of the UK took stern measures to control the spread of infection. Simon Birch, chair of Trustees for the MBA, explains how the decision to close all bothies was taken.

“It was clear early on that bothies could not be exempt from controls. There was no easy decision to take. We knew that people were using bothies, but in their enclosed spaces the risk of transmission would be very high.

“Early in the pandemic, a small working group of trustees, representatives of the Renovation & Maintenance Group and the Press Officer, was formed to discuss what we should do.

“One of the beauties of being in a bothy, of course, is that no-one is in charge – so different to a pub or café, for example – but that means that

anyone in a bothy who did not take precautions such as social distancing, regular sanitising and wearing of face coverings would put other people at risk of illness and indeed death.

“No responsible charity could take that risk,” Simon stressed, “so in March we announced that all bothies would be closed. They should only be entered in emergency, to prevent a risk to life.”

The decision was regularly reviewed throughout the year, but even during the periods of relatively lower infection during the summer the risks were still too high.

Few bothies were locked – a decision for owners, not the MBA. Some were locked because of ill-use, but in general it seems that the fabric of bothies has been well-respected during this difficult year, and for that we thank lovers of wild places across Britain.



### Work parties under Covid

Once Covid-19 struck, the outlook for work parties was bleak. But were small and carefully controlled work parties possible? Peter Rowell, Area Organiser for the South West Highlands and Islands, started thinking about how this might happen.

“I started with the British Mountaineering Council’s June document about re-opening club huts”, Peter recalls. “In July, I checked a lot of other advice, until I could start to draft risk assessments, with the blessing of our operations manager Roger Hammond.

“I was fortunate to find a few people within our MBA ranks who were happy to read and critically review what I had produced and help me to strengthen these documents where this was needed.

“Then in August, my colleagues on the renovation and maintenance group

critically reviewed the documents. This led to six documents, each with a distinct purpose. One is devoted to Domestos thick bleach, selected for its anti-viral properties. In another, mandatory NHS-grade FFP3 face masks are specified.”

Even so, larger projects, and projects with a large indoor element, have had to wait. For example, in Peter’s own area, the store room door at Abyssinia was replaced in September, followed by chimney work at Resourie. But inevitably, the area’s volunteer days dipped – from 553 in 2019 to 102 in 2020.

“We’ve put many new controls in place and we keep them there throughout every work party,” says Peter. “It’s not something that will appeal to all of us, but our continuing health relies on a safe work site.

“We have made the best go at achieving some of our works, as we strive to maintain our simple shelters in remote country.”



## Work party updates

The coronavirus lockdown led to a halt in work parties - though as we report on p3, protocols were quickly drawn up to ensure they could restart in a Covid-safe way.

But restrictions on travel meant that large parties of volunteers from across Britain and indeed beyond could no longer gather. And outdoor working was far more practical than indoor.

Nevertheless, as you'll read over the next few pages, good progress was made on some of the most pressing projects.

### Delay at Dibidil

Works to the roof and fireplace of Dibidil bothy on Rum were among the first to be postponed because of Covid-19 - but not before three tons of materials had been moved to the bothy, a complex task in itself.

The plan was to take the materials over by ferry in February, and then transfer them by the helicopter a week later. Storm Ciara and other bad weather cancelled the ferries, leading to a month's delay - and that was only possible with the co-operation of Scottish Natural Heritage, for it's important not to disturb the sea eagles as they prepare their nest nearby.

Everything was in place at the bothy after a helicopter lift on 13th March, a perfect spring day - food and equipment in the bothy lofts, building materials secured with polythene and tarpaulins.

A week later, lockdown was declared and with it any hope of the planned mid-May work party. But what to do with the materials?

"We knew that the protection on the building materials wouldn't survive the winter" said Jim Ross, AO for the SW Highlands & Islands. "Indeed in August we had a report that the covers were failing on the building materials."

"In mid-October two of us managed to get across to Rum to move most of the materials into the bothy and dispose of some time-expired food."

Dibidil is just one of the MBA's projects that will have to wait until the pandemic is controlled before it starts - hopefully not too far into 2021.

See more:  
**Dibidil fine art print p21**



The Dibidil team ready for lift-off at Kinloch Castle

## Window of opportunity at Schoolhouse

Once, the timber-framed building at Duag Bridge on the Corriemulzie estate served the children of the scattered families south of Oykel Bridge. Since 2008, it's been an MBA bothy, a frequent stopping-off place for Cape Wrath Trail walkers.

When it was converted to bothy use, sealed timber windows with no casements were put in. But by 2019, despite repeated painting and replacement of rotten wood with polymer filler, the two east-facing windows were in such poor state that it was essential to prevent water penetration damaging the surrounding timber structure. (The west-facing windows are in a much better condition.)

The estate favoured replacement by uPVC frames, which they put in whenever windows and doors need renewal. They asked us to make sure that the new windows should match, as closely as possible, the appearance of the old windows.



"Northern Area MBA agreed that this was a job for a specialist contractor," says Schoolhouse MO Nick Hamilton. "ERG of Invergordon provided the most attractive offer and replaced the two east-facing windows on one day in August. I was on site too, representing the MBA in a hands-off supervisory role.

"One slightly alarming moment occurred when on arrival the operatives enquired about the location of the power socket outlets in the building. It appeared that their employer had not told them that the building was without a power supply. Luckily they carried an adequate range of battery-powered tools that enabled them to complete the installation.

"Covid-19 protocols were strictly observed by myself and the operatives throughout the work. Not so the midges! They were appalling until a breeze arrived mid-morning."

The work was well justified, for when the old windows came out there were signs that water penetration had started to take place. Another North-West Highland winter might well have led to a more complicated project and greater expense.



## Red House challenge

The project to develop a new bothy at Red House, in Glen Geldie west of Braemar, was put on hold in late 2019 due to a cold snap which prevented the pouring of the toilet block foundations. Then the lockdown led to inevitable further delays.

But a temporary easing of restrictions enabled work to start again in early September.

"We hope that the toilet structure will be wind and watertight before the worst of the winter weather sets in," says Allan Moore, AO for the Eastern Highlands. "Work has also been done inside the bothy and the wallhead concrete foundations have been completed.

"This has been challenging as the work parties have been restricted to a maximum of six people and full Covid PPE is kept on site at all times.

"And due to the Covid restrictions, tents have been used for accommodation with each volunteer using their own tent along with self-catering."

The next stage in this exciting project is masonry work. It will follow after a bat survey, scheduled for May 2021.

## Greg's Hut report

Last year's feature on the Northern Pennine bothy of Greg's Hut mentioned the future challenge of securing the bothy roof from the vicious winds scouring the slopes of Cross Fell.

The MBA's Northern England area used 2020 to commission a full condition and structural survey of the roof. It indicates, as feared, a failing roof with heavy slab slates resting

on thin and rotting slate laths. It recommends removal of the entire roof covering, replacement of the slab slates, and installation of a waterproof membrane. A programme of major work will follow.



## Ryvoan clean up

The early summer relaxation in Covid-19 restrictions led many people to flock to the hills. Alas not everybody treated their surroundings with respect, extending to the bothies themselves.

Ryvoan bothy in the Cairngorms, not far from the popular outdoor centre at Glenmore, was one which suffered. A graffiti writer tagged its stonework. That's bad enough, but it's an invitation to others to make matters even worse.

Thankfully help was at hand in the person of Scotty Fleming of the Pine Marten bar and shop at Glenmore.

"I saw a picture of the graffiti and read online that the sooner you try to clean it the easier it is to get it off," says Scotty.

"I spoke to the team and my partner Katie and they let me go up to the Bothy on a busy Saturday to clean it off. It was really a team effort! If it wasn't for the whole team working harder at the bar and cafe I wouldn't have had the time to go up and do it."

The job turned out to be a labour of love, as the midges were out in force that day. "Thankfully I had a midge net on, but didn't realise how sneaky

they can be," remembers Scotty. "They managed to get under my hoody and T-shirt and I had hundreds of wee bites."



Before



After

We're very grateful to Scotty for his hard work, prompted only by a love of the bothy.

This wasn't the only work at Ryvoan. There was also a small work party to paint inside, along some external pointing, all carried out according to the MBA's Covid-19 protocols.



## Bothies in Slovakia

Though many mountain and wild areas have a well-established system of huts for lovers of the outdoors, there are few equivalents to the free-to-use, unlocked shelters of the MBA. One network now establishing itself is in Slovakia in eastern Europe.

During 2020, a small group of lovers of the outdoors set up Sloboda Pohybu – the name means 'freedom to roam'. They approached the MBA with a view to friendly, informal and voluntary co-operation, to help keep the spirit of bothies alive in our nations. We've been happy to make a start, although the pandemic has limited what we can do – it would be good to arrange exchange visits, for example.

Already Sloboda Pohybu directly maintain three shelters: Obrubovanec and Cabanka in the centre of the nation, and Drina near the Polish border in the north.

They don't own the shelters, indeed some have no known owner. The shelters used to be shepherd's huts, storage buildings and similar.

Sloboda Pohybu help out at a few more, so there's every chance the network will grow.

A little bit of fundraising secured 1,000 euros for their first work party, at Obrubovanec. Over the four days devoted mostly to roof repairs, the expected eight volunteers grew to 16! A good sign for the future – and even the local Mayor chipped in, bringing along a fantastic goulash for the hungry workers. Now, that's one bit of official co-operation that the MBA hasn't enjoyed – yet, at least.



## Dogs in bothies

There's a dog in one in three UK households, so it's no surprise that they are a big part of mountain life. Many hillwalkers find that a dog is a great companion – and they find that the dog loves the bothy at the end of the day as much as the human does.

As Tom Bell, joint AO for the Central Highlands, puts it, “Dogs with well-behaved owners are always welcome in a bothy.” And that's the point – it's the owner's responsibility to make sure the dog is OK in the bothy.

Whether with dog or not, the bothy information on the MBA website is a great place to start before making a bothy trip. Not all bothies have a stove for example – if it's a cold night, will your dog be warm enough? Wooden sleeping platforms and stone floors aren't ideal for a dog, so some form of bedding will help.

While most bothy users will be delighted for canine companionship as well as human, some might be nervous of dogs, so be considerate of them

too. And bothies on working farms, especially with sheep or cattle in the vicinity, will need special care. A lead of course is essential.

But any good dog owner will anticipate all of these needs without consciously thinking of them.

There's great advice about dogs in hills in the hillwalking section of the Mountaineering Scotland website, **mountaineering.scot**. It covers areas such as when a dog should be kept on a lead and how it's useful to introduce them to the hills slowly – an over-excited dog may lose its sense of direction, and then its owner. A lost walker can navigate to a bothy – a dog can't.

### Duke the bothy dog

Andy MacArthur, joint MO for Essan bothy in the SW Highlands, has worked with Scottish Springer Rescue to re-home Duke, now nearing ten years old.

“Scottish Springer Rescue suggested that our circumstances and lifestyle could provide the ideal home for Duke,” says Andy. “We readily adopted him and they weren't wrong.

“He's still a live wire. His front legs are arthritic and bowed, but we manage the condition and it doesn't hold him back or hinder him in any way in his bothy adventures.

“Duke is a happy wee soul. He loves meeting folk in bothies, and hogging the fire place once the drams start to flow.”

It's when the dog starts to hog the whisky that you have to worry.



# Beneath the mighty forge

Shenavall is a popular bothy, no surprise given its stunning location beneath An Teallach (The Forge), one of Scotland's most enticing Munros. But the hill that takes the gaze from the bothy is the 'big red mountain' of Beinn Dearg Mor, 'merely' a Corbett at 2973ft, but what a Corbett!

Shenavall started life in 1891 with Colin Macdonald and his family. They improved the house hugely in the time they lived there, brought up four children, and tended to four cows and many sheep. They were virtually self-sufficient apart from the six-monthly delivery of tea, sugar and paraffin. A school mistress stayed for a month at a time to educate the youngsters.

In the harsh winter of 1895-96, so much snow fell that no-one could leave the glen until late March. More than 500 sheep were starving at Loch an Voir when three men and numerous dogs set out on a rescue bid. In single file and alternately taking the lead the three men broke trail, with the sheep following in tow, until they reached Loch na Sealga, where the snow was less deep and grazing was possible.



This stunning springtime view by photographer Alan Bellis looks over Shenavall bothy and across Strath na Sealga to Beinn Dearg Mor. It's a detail from a limited edition A3 print available on the MBA website. Two more in the series show Uisinis on South Uist and Warnscale Head in the Lake District.

Buy the print here



During the twelve years that Colin and his family lived there, the services of a doctor were needed only once, probably a relief to the family given their isolation – and that to treat Colin’s brother for an abscess on his gum. More frequent were the midwife’s visits by pony to Mrs. Macdonald, one for each of the three children born there.

These days, Shenavall – a relatively straightforward 7km walk from Corrie Hallie on the A832 – is almost a victim of its own success. Some users, or passers-by, aren’t as considerate about litter and cleanliness as they might be. We thank the owners, the Gruinard Estate, for their co-operation in making the bothy available.

Shenavall has been an MBA bothy since 1966, before which the Inverness Mountaineering Club used it as an unofficial club hut. They continued to look after it for some time but by the 2010s the ground floor needed some serious attention, as MO at the time Peter Aikman remembers.

“The first time I went there I sat and almost cried,” remembers Peter.

“It was called ‘A bothy in danger of disappearing up its own lum’. Anyway I had a flash of inspiration and found I could solve a lot of the problems just by moving an internal wall.” Major work parties in 2013 and 2014 dealt with this and other issues and since then only minor repairs have been needed.

Peter even used the bothy’s location as a spur to the work parties. “I soon realised that wistful eyes were often dwelling on Beinn Dearg Mor, and that some members of the work party were never going to be there again,” he recalls.

“So, after I was happy that things were going well, and that the next day was likely to be dry, I would announce ‘Day off tomorrow, off you young folk go and climb your hill’. It always went down well, and we never failed to complete our week’s tasks.”

When you see the view from Shenavall, you’ll appreciate what an incentive that was.

**To find out more about the history of Shenavall, see the article by Alex Sutherland on the bothy’s MBA website page. →**



Michael Parker, AO

## Area focus: Southern Scotland

The MBA’s Southern Scotland area covers the vast tract of territory between the central belt and the border with England.

There are currently 11 bothies in the area. In the longer term, this might become 12 if a building at Glenmuirshaw in Ayrshire can come into bothy use. The project is very much in the “design phase” but would need considerable commitment in terms of volunteer time.

Michael Parker became AO for Southern Scotland in June 2020. Retired since 2012, his career was anything but hills-based – ten years in the Navy and later an international fisheries expert. “It’s important that younger generations become aware of the role bothies play in the environment,” says Michael. “Getting them involved will ensure bothies survive well into the future.”

His introduction to the world of bothies came at the non-MBA Backhill of Bush in the Galloway Hills. He became a joint MO at Greensykes in 2015 and feels that focussing on the bothy and its environment greatly assisted his recovery from prostate cancer. He became AO in 2020.



Brattleburn



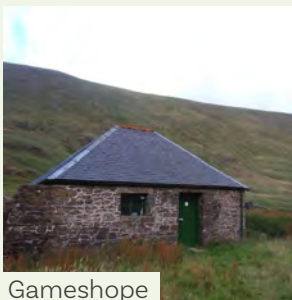
Burleywhag



Clennoch



Dryfehead



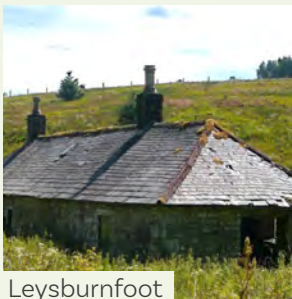
Gameshope



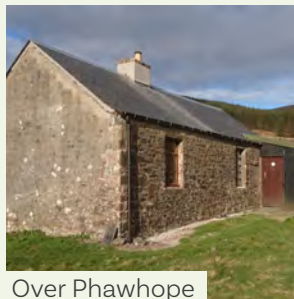
Greensykes



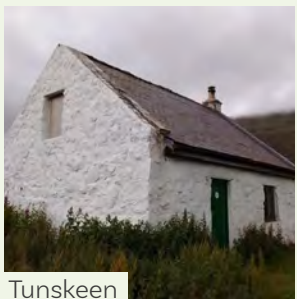
Kettleton Byre



Leysburnfoot



Over Phawhope



Tunskeen



White Laggan

### **Brattleburn**

In the Lowther Hills, near the Southern Upland Way. It became an MBA bothy in 1984, the same year as the Way opened.

### **Burleywhag**

The adjacent sheep pens are still in active use. The bothy is at the southern end of the Lowther Hills.

### **Clennoch**

Tucked below Cairnsmore of Carsphairn, one of the highest hills of Dumfriesshire.

### **Dryfehead**

On the edge of the Eskdalemuir Forest. The bothy's name is believed to derive from a Norse personal name, Drifr, after whom the river is named.

### **Gameshope**

Owners the Borders Forest Trust are undertaking an ambitious long term habitat restoration project in the area. The bothy is well placed for the Moffat hills.

### **Greensykes**

Provides shelter for walkers tackling the hills and through routes around Langholm and Eskdalemuir.

### **Kettleton Byre**

Another bothy well-placed to give access to the southern end of the Lowther Hills such as Wedder Law.

### **Leysburnfoot**

Also known as Will's bothy, in memory of hill runner and climber Will Ramsbotham. As well as its human users, the bothy is home to pipistrelle bats.

### **Over Phawhope**

The first bothy to be owned by the MBA, it's directly on the route of the Southern Upland Way, beneath Ettrick Head.

### **Tunskeen**

The MBA's first project, in 1965. It's three miles north of Merrick, the highest hill in the Southern Uplands.

### **White Laggan**

Another bothy close to the Southern Upland Way. It proudly displays the Scottish saltire from a gable end.

**Image:** Dennis Tracey, one of the joint MOs for Peanmeanach, closes the bothy door for the last time.

## Farewell Peanmeanach

One of the MBA's most popular bothies closed its doors as an open access shelter maintained by the MBA in October 2020.

Peanmeanach was once a fishing village boasting a population of 150 and its own school. But when the railway to Mallaig was built in 1901, the fish trade was concentrated there and the village declined.

The building was once the school mistress's house, and the bothy books record a visit from the daughters of perhaps the last of these, who left in 1936.

The bothy had been in use since 1975. Beautifully sited on the Ardnish peninsula on the shores of Loch Ailort between Fort William and Mallaig, it's been popular with sea-kayakers and other water-borne folk as well as walkers and cyclists.

The bothy even saw an engagement, between Paul and Amanda. "What a beautiful place – I will never forget it," wrote one.

Essentially, the bothy was a victim of its own popularity. Its owners the Ardnish Estate plan to renovate the building and reopen it as a keyed bookable bothy on a not-for-profit basis. The MBA thanks the estate for allowing us to maintain Peanmeanach as an open access shelter for over 40 years.

"Sunshine, the song of the skylark and a frogs' chorus from the swamp at dusk. To crown it all, two hinds on their back legs boxing – a magical place that draws me back year after year."

**Peanmeanach bothy book entry**



# Some sad farewells

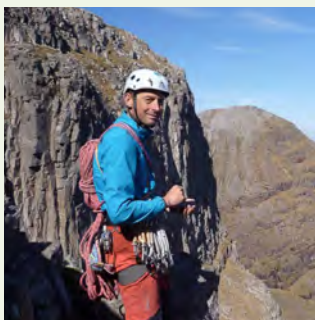
Alas several key members of the MBA passed away during the year. We send our condolences to their family and friends.



**Mark Fitton** was one of the most prolific and enthusiastic of bothy maintainers for the past 30 years; seemingly away almost every weekend to help at both MBA and non-MBA bothies, especially around the West and SW Highlands. By day he helped out at the local Oxfam shop and from there he was able to supply many bothies with reading books - so, if you come across a well-stocked bothy library, there's a fair chance that Mark put it there. He probably also built the shelves. And the bench.



**David Macleod** had been MO for Bearnais bothy in Wester Ross since 1994, and before that helped at Culra. David, who was born in Sutherland, died on a walking and cycling trip in the Achfary area. His career was in physical education both as a school teacher and also privately including swimming sessions and lessons at local hotel pools. He was known as a quiet chap who really loved the outdoors, especially his time at the bothy and socialising with his peers at area meetings.



**Ewan Lyons**, MO at Knockdampf bothy in the Northern Highlands, died in a climbing accident on Beinn Dearg near Ullapool in March. As an architectural technology lecturer at Inverness College UHI, his skills on work parties were invaluable, and he was passionate about building conservation. He was not only involved with his own bothy but willingly assisted his colleagues at Suileag and Camban, and was the first to volunteer for a vacancy as area rep for the Northern Highlands.

## Bothy study

Keen bothy user Kieran Watts from Caithness has found a way to combine his studies with pleasure. What better for his BSc dissertation at the University of Stirling than an examination of how bothies are used.

Kieran first discovered bothies when helping to run a water station at Camban bothy for his scout group. He's now a regular hillwalker thanks to the University's hillwalking club, and bothies overnight on longer trips.

His study will explore the current use of Scottish bothies and discuss their potential future.

Keen to involve regular bothy-goers, Kieran posted a link to the survey on the MBA Facebook page - in return, he received 121 responses from MBA members, which represented 40% of those who answered.

## Dibidil fine art print

Yorkshire-based artist Gina Tawn shows her love for bothies in a limited-edition print of Dibidil bothy on Rum - and part of the purchase price goes to the MBA. She works in conservation on two historic houses in Cumbria, so she understands how much labour and dedication is needed to maintain older buildings.

"Bothies are an integral part of the community and landscape," says Gina. "With this in mind I decided to make an edition of prints based on an MBA bothy, using the traditional technique of wood engraving."

"I would love to take my project further and make more prints of bothies. Any bothy commissions will be considered, with a percentage going to the MBA."

The Dibidil print measures 7.3cm by 5cm and is mounted onto ivory card. It is priced at £33 including p&p, with £5 from each sale going towards MBA. Gina can be contacted at [gina.tawn@btinternet.com](mailto:gina.tawn@btinternet.com)



## Donors to the MBA

Every year we benefit from the generosity of individuals, their friends, and various funds who provide substantial donations for specific projects or for our general expenditure.

We regret that space doesn't allow us to list each and every donor, but we are delighted to record our sincere appreciation to all our donors. Following is a list of those making significant donations in 2020; it includes all legacies and donations that we received 'in memory'. In addition we received donations through the BTMyDonate website and a number of anonymous donations.

During 2020, we received £27,000 in unrestricted donations and £40,000 in restricted donations (that is, donations to be spent on specific projects or bothies).

HM The Queen  
Erez Agami  
Geoff Allen  
Austrian Alpine Club  
Richard Bareham  
Philipp Batereau  
Dave E A Brown  
Graham Burgess  
Guy Burnier  
Jonathan Cargill  
Scott Cartlidge  
David Chambers  
Charities Trust  
Benedict Churchhouse  
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David Sands  
Christl Schoenheit  
Iain Skett  
Duncan Stoddart  
Gina Tawn  
Chris Todhunter  
J H Williamson  
Ultimate Navigation School

### **Legacies and donations in memory of:**

Irving Butterfield  
Richard Cooper  
Ian Dickson  
Roy Dyckhoff  
Coll Findlay  
Andrew Jensen  
Ken Livesey  
Gordon Mackenzie  
John Maclaren  
Kenny Monk  
Nigel Thackrah

### **Supporting the MBA**

Almost all the MBA's income is from membership fees, donations and legacies.

Donations can be made online through the MBA website or by post to our registered office.

The website also shows how to remember the MBA in your will.

## Bothy owners

It is common for people to ask MBA officers where all the money for the work we do comes from; much less often we are asked about the bothies themselves.

Each bothy is the property of an individual, trust, company or public body which has decided to make it available for public use. In the following list we express our thanks to the very generous owners of the bothies we maintain.

### HM Queen Elizabeth II

Gelder Shiel Stable, GlasAllt Shiel

### Aberchalder Estate

Glenbuck

### Andras Ltd

Faindouran

### Anonymous

Brattleburn

### Applecross Estate Trust

Uags

### Ardtornish Estate Co Ltd

Leacraithnaich

### Assynt Foundation

Suileag

### Trustees of Atholl Estates

Allt Scheicheachan, Tarf Hotel

### The Bacon Trustees

Craig

### BenAlder, Dalwhinnie and Strathmashie Estates

Ben Alder Cottage, Culra

### The Block and Fooks Families

Coire Fionnaraich

### Borders Forest Trust

Gameshope

### Scott Bremner

Blackburn of Corrieyairack

### The Buccleuch Estates Ltd

Burleywhag, Kettleton Byre

### The Trustees of Lindsay CN Bury

Cruib

### Donald Angus Cameron of Lochiel

Invermaillie, Kinbreack

### The Corriemulzie Trust

Coiremor, The Schoolhouse

### Dalemain Estate

Great Lingy Hut

### Dalhousie 2006 Trust

Shielin of Mark

### Mark Z de Ferranti

Oban

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Land in the ownership of the Scottish Ministers is managed by the Scottish Government Rural Payments and Inspections Directorate (SGRPID), the Forestry Commission Scotland (FCS), and NatureScot. Land in the ownership of the Forestry Ministers is managed by the Forestry Commission England (FCE). Land in the ownership of the Welsh Ministers is managed by Natural Resources Wales (NRW).

# In 2020

As of 31 December 2020, we had 3,437 members. Though a decline on previous years, membership income was stable, implying that many of those who ceased to hold membership were inactive to the extent that they had not paid membership fees for some time. No doubt the difficulty in accessing let alone using bothies during the pandemic would also impinge on our ability to attract new users into membership.

Fewer large legacies meant that our income declined to £177,000. This was still higher than anticipated and greater than our income in 2018. Total expenditure was nearly £124,000, so another contribution to reserves was made –

not the intended outcome; indeed, but for the pandemic, it had been planned to reduce the Association's reserves during 2020 in favour of a higher level of bothy maintenance.

The almost complete cessation of work parties meant that maintenance spend was £75,000, only 28% of the budgeted figure.

Please note that the financial data above are based on the unaudited accounts. Once the audit has taken place, audited figures will be available in the Annual Report distributed to members and others in the summer.

## 2021 update

At the time of going to press (March 2021), the coronavirus lockdown was still in force in Britain. Bothies remain closed and work parties severely curtailed. If matters improve as hoped, then it will be a busy summer for work parties, with a very large maintenance programme planned. Full details appear in the newsletter and the MBA website. If work parties can run, then we will need more volunteers than ever, both skilled and unskilled – there's plenty of work for everyone, and great company too!

Our dear colleague Betty Heath passed away in February 2021. Betty was a very early member of the MBA, and was married to our founder Bernard. Betty and Bernard were both life members of the MBA and were awarded the British Empire Medal. A full appreciation of Betty and her contribution to the MBA will appear in the 2021 Review.

**Scottish Charity No:** SC008685

**Company No:** SC191425, limited by Guarantee

**Registered office:** Henderson Black & Co,  
Eden House, 22 Crossgate, Cupar, KY15 5HW

**mountainbothies.org.uk**



**OSCR**  
Scottish Charity Regulator