



Red House

Mountain Bothies Association

Annual Review 2022



Image: Bob Hedivan

What we do

Across Britain, we maintain 103 bothies and 2 emergency shelters (84 in Scotland, 12 in England and 9 in Wales), none of which is on a public road. Indeed most bothies are in highly demanding locations, surrounded by rough and mountainous terrain.

Only 2 of these buildings are owned by the MBA. 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 2022.

The MBA year

2022 has been a year of contrasts for our Association. Sadness at the passing of our founder, Bernard Heath, and of John Arnott whose long service included spells as Chairman and General Secretary. Pride at the achievement of our volunteers who set to with enthusiasm to catch up on the backlog of maintenance caused by the Covid-19 pandemic including the completion of the work to renovate our new Cairngorm bothy, Ruighe Ealasaid (the Red House) and the re-roofing of Greg's Hut in the Pennines. We also progressed the necessary preliminary work in respect of Druimnashallag, our new bothy in Argyll and Bute and for the demolition and replacement of Culra in the Central Highlands.

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 communications.

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. Very occasionally we have to use contractors for specialised work which is unable to be undertaken by volunteers.

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

Trustee updates

At the AGM at Boat of Garten in October, Alistair Wilson was re-elected as a Trustee for a further 3-year term. Insufficient nominations were received to fill the remaining vacant post. Colin Marshall was subsequently co-opted to the board to serve until the AGM 2023.



Image: Dominic Boyd

Red House comes back to life

A new bothy has joined the growing family of MBA-maintained shelters, rebuilt by dedicated and skilled volunteers.

The story of the Red House's transformation from a dilapidated shieling to a cosy bothy is one of perseverance in the face of considerable challenges.

The bothy stands at the junction of well-trodden routes through Glen Feshie, Glen Tilt, Glen Dee and the Lairig Ghru, ideally positioned to serve as a resting place for those seeking to explore the remote corners of the Cairngorms or summit the nearby

Munros Carn an Fhidhleir and An Sgarsoch.

Located on the Mar Lodge Estate, owned and managed by the National Trust for Scotland, the Red House is perched along the banks of the Geldie Burn. Also known as Ruighe Ealasaid (Elizabeth's Shiel), it was likely built in the late 1700s or early 1800s as a shepherd's house, later expanded to a family home and eventually designated as a protected historic monument.

Over the years, the stone shieling fell into disrepair. At some point its slate roof was replaced with corrugated iron, the rust red colour giving the structure its new name. Because of its increasingly derelict condition, the building was nearing collapse. "In 2016 the Mar Lodge Estate asked if we would be interested in taking on the Red House as a bothy," says Eastern Highlands AO Allan Moore.

With its prime location and potential to take pressure off of heavily-used Corrou bothy, the MBA took on the project, but construction didn't start for several years. A great deal of work was done before planning application approval and permissions were secured from several authorities to rebuild the historic structure and install adjacent toilet facilities.

Kenny Freeman was the driving force behind the project, joined by others who played essential roles. "The job itself was a full blown renovation,"

recalls Kenny. "It was classified as a derelict building with a National Trust danger sign in front, huge cracks in the walls and an enormous boulder missing from the gable end."

In 2019 the MBA received the green light to move forward with construction. Kenny and his team started digging out the toilet block to put in a new foundation in November. But winter soon arrived and the temperature dropped too low to pour concrete.

"So we built the toilet frames in my back garden," recalls Kenny. But two days before the wall frames were finished, the global pandemic came on the scene. "The building stood there for about 6 months until we got the go-ahead to go back on site."

When the volunteers were allowed back to the bothy, restrictions limited the work party to 6 people for only two days at a time with a three-day break in-between. Two different parties worked in shifts, moving forward as quickly as they could.

As soon as the toilet structure was weatherproof and before facilities were installed, it was used as a base at the construction site. "We spent many a night in the toilet," recalls Kenny. Work then moved into the main building.

"When we were allowed to get back together, everybody and their dog wanted to help with the Red House."

Once all restrictions lifted, the challenge was to assign the right folk to the right jobs, and accommodate everyone that wanted to contribute to the project.

The Red House opened at the end of 2022. It's a spacious, comfortable bothy, complete with a red roof, a porch and two rooms; one with a multi-fuel stove and the other with sleeping bunks. The adjacent toilet building houses the same type of facility used at Corrour Bothy.

By all measures, the project was a complete success. "Apart from a stonemason contractor all other work was done by MBA volunteers cutting the cost down considerably," says Allan Moore.

As Kenny reflects on the Red House and his experience over 20 years renovating bothies in the Eastern Highlands, he notes that this was the longest running project he has been involved in. "Many folk have put in a huge amount of effort," he says. "The Red House is one of the best. We have taken it from a ruin to a building that is fit for habitation, as good as you could probably get."

"We have taken Red House from a ruin to a building that is fit for habitation, as good as you could probably get."



Image: Fraser Mackie



Image: Dominic Boyd



Greg's Hut: A refuge restored

A significant renovation of Greg's Hut in Northern England has transformed the shelter from a leaky draughty shelter into a weathertight mountain refuge, fit for purpose for the next 50 years.

Located above the 700-metre contour line, Greg's Hut is the highest bothy maintained by the MBA in England, situated just below the summit of Cross Fell along the Pennine range. The small stone building is exposed to very strong winds which, because of the Hut's altitude blow at nearly three times greater than at sea-level. The nearby

Great Dun Fell weather station has recorded a wind speed of 134 mph.

The Greg's Hut Association (GHA) rebuilt the structure from ruin in the late 1960s as a memorial to their good friend and fellow mountaineer John "Greg" Gregory. Since then the Hut has been jointly maintained as an open shelter by the MBA and the GHA. But despite regular upgrades and repairs, weather had taken its toll.

"The major problem was the inability to keep out wind driven rain and snow entering the building through gaps in the roof and walls," recalls joint MO and Area Organiser David Moorat.

In this exposed setting, many people rely on the bothy as a safe haven.

Greg's Hut sits along what may be the toughest stage of the long-distance Pennine Way. Organisers of the ultra-marathon Montane Spine Race use it as a first aid station. Penrith Mountain Rescue uses the building for training, searches and rescues. Shepherds, gamekeepers and estate workers rely on it. And the bothy is used daily by hillwalkers.

A structural survey commissioned in 2020 recommended a complete overhaul totalling over £103,000, including a new roof, chimney stack and porch as well as replacement of all windows and interior fittings. Much of this work was beyond the capacity of volunteers as heavy materials needed to be hauled across 6 miles of difficult terrain. A specialist contractor was required.

At the time, this was the MBA's costliest ever restoration project. But it wasn't just the expense of the improvements that seemed daunting; navigating the necessary regulatory requirements and making the case that it was worth it would also prove challenging.

The bothy was built in the 19th century as a blacksmiths workshop and lodge to house miners working at the nearby Kate Lock lead mine. Because of its historical significance Natural England required that all changes maintain the character of the building, mandating that the heavyweight sandstone slab slates be replaced in their original form. Further approvals and wildlife surveys were necessary because of the bothy's location in a Site of Special Scientific Interest and an established Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty.



Image: David Moorat

David successfully demonstrated the importance of this project to the MBA and dispelled lingering doubts. With the MBA's help, he launched a public funding appeal; over £90,000 in donations and grant funds were raised from a broad range of sources, including £20,000 raised by the Montane Spine Race organisers. The remaining expenses were funded by the MBA.

After the project was put out to tender, members of the MBA and the GHA jointly selected a contractor and construction started in August for a period of 8 weeks. For local contractor Richard Hymers, the actual work was straight forward, but the high altitude and remote location brought other challenges.

Sixty tonnes of materials were transported across rough terrain on a tractor and a specialist vehicle.

"We must have had at least 15 punctures on the job, even three in one day," recalls Richard. "And we had to replace two sets of tyres." "Combatting the weather was the hardest part," he added. "Leaving Garrigill, the temperature could drop 8 degrees in the 40 minutes it took to get to the bothy."

The bothy reopened in November and the refuge was restored once again. "What was a patchwork of improvements and refurbishments to a derelict building is now an integrated coherent structure giving better protection from the hostile environment of Cross Fell," says Mike Graham, joint MO and chairman of the GHA.

"Greg's friends, the founding members of the GHA would have been pleased that the essential character of his, and their, memorial lives on."

Image: Richard Hymers





Youth engagement at Camban

Camban bothy was hopping with youthful energy over the Easter holiday.

A spirited group of eighteen students, ages 16 and 17, arrived with their teachers from Fettes College in Edinburgh to participate in a four-day work party arranged by joint MOs Sally Kershaw and Simon Birch.

The young volunteers painted a room and the entrance hall, dug and filled a drain around three sides of the bothy, cleared out the attic and built two new benches.

The bothy looks all the better for their efforts and the MOs were impressed.

“The kids were responsible, enthusiastic and their teamwork skills were absolutely superb,” says Sally.

The group of nine boys and nine girls stayed at the Glen Affric Youth Hostel along the Affric Kintail Way. They hiked back and forth between the bothy and the hostel each day, enjoying favourable weather, carrying in tools and equipment and hauling out rubbish.

For most of them, this was a completely new experience. “The hostel is located in one of the most beautiful places I have ever been,” recalls Louisa. “The jobs we had to do were really enjoyable and rewarding and the group of people I did it with was really fun and made the trip so fun.”

Photography: Sally Kershaw

A year of work parties

In 2022, numerous bothy renovation and maintenance projects moved forward after significant delays over the previous two years.

Diminished constraints imposed by governments allowed work parties to rebound and expand whilst project organisers continued to follow safe practices as needed since the threat of Covid-19 has not gone away.

Island ingenuity

A disintegrating old stove triggered the need for a work party at **Glengarrisdale bothy** in mid-June. The work required removal and replacement of the old Dowling stove and flue liner and a new chimney pot.

But Glengarrisdale is situated on a secluded bay along the far northwest coast of the island of Jura and there is no path to the bothy. The 4-mile walk from the nearest road traverses rough and boggy moorland. These are unfavourable conditions for hauling large appliances.

The complex logistics of the work party was orchestrated by Ian Mitchell, Glengarrisdale’s seasoned MO. The Ardlussa Estate had generously offered to receive the stove, flue liner and other heavy items at Ardlussa House and transport them overland by Argocat to the bothy. Meanwhile, a group of 5 volunteers sailed from Craobh Haven with tools and materials.

After a choppy ride through the Gulf of Corryvreckan, the group got to work. The stove and chimney pot were removed quickly. But the old flue liner was stubbornly encased in a solid mixture of vermiculite and cement and refused to budge.

“Working from above and below, various methods were tried with tools manufactured out of an old lobster creel, until a solid mass remained midway,” recalls Ian. “This was eventually dislodged with a trowel attached to the end of a long pole and we had a clear flue. The new liner dropped easily into place and we were done for the day.”

The new stove was pressed into service and passed with flying colours. Another “Operation Glengarrisdale” successfully completed.



Image: Ian Mitchell

Scaffolding by the sea



Image: Alison Hewitt

Uags bothy stands sentinel over the sea at the southern end of the Applecross peninsula in the northwest Highlands. Find your way to Uags, over land or water, and you will be rewarded with truly majestic views across the sound to the Cuillins on Skye. But in its exposed coastal perch, the bothy takes a beating from the weather.

The sea-facing gable end had started to leak, prompting joint MO Gregor Watson to organise a seven-day work party in July. Most of the eight participants stayed the full length of time, arriving by boat and kayak or by foot from Toscaig.

Room for more at Suileag

Rebuilt from ruin by the MBA in the 1980s, **Suileag bothy** has long served as welcome shelter for hill walkers wishing to scale the distinctive peaks of nearby Suilven and Canisp that rise abruptly from the wild landscape of Assynt in northern Scotland. A major work party took place here in early June to further enhance the bothy's renowned hospitality.

"The logistics of materials delivery was the major hurdle," recalls Gregor. "There is no track to the bothy which would allow transport by ATV. Therefore the services of a local fisherman was critical to success."

When heavy materials arrived by boat, the group set up the scaffolding and began to investigate and repair the leaking gable end and fireplace. They also dug around the structure lowering the surrounding ground level to improve drainage and reduce water ingress.

Local chef and joint MO Alison Hewitt fuelled the productive group of volunteers with a steady supply of hearty and healthy gourmet fare.

The volunteers also benefitted from the assistance of an expert who shared his knowledge and best practices for application of lime mortar and safe assembly of scaffold towers. "On the job learning and refresher training is always valuable and was well received," says Gregor.

Joint MOs Vanessa Ling, David Slator and Roger Muhl organised an 8-day work party, originally scheduled in 2020 but delayed due to Covid-19 closures. Six volunteers participated for varying lengths of time and Vanessa fed the group home-baked items, including DIY pavlovas.

The group was tasked with increasing the functionality and comfort of the

two-room bothy. Internal ceilings and insulation were installed in both rooms. Clear panels were fitted below the existing roof lights and insulation was laid above the plywood. In the right-hand room, three double bunks were built to sleep six people and a sitting platform was installed. An internal porch with a door and a three-metre long cooking bench were also built into the room.

"The internal porch, ceilings and insulation have made it much warmer and less draughty," says Vanessa. "The replacement of the recently vandalised sleeping platform by bunks has increased sleeping capacity."

Heat wave

The cherished warm glow of fire was restored in several bothies across the network. Fireplaces were constructed or rebuilt at **Achnanclach** (Northern Highlands), **Suardalan** (Western Highlands & Islands) and **Glenbuck** (Central Highlands) and new stoves were installed or refurbished at **Glengarrisdale** (Southwest Highlands & Islands), **Kershopehead** (Northern England & Borders), **Greg's Hut** (Northern England & Borders) and **Cae Amos** (Wales). At Suardalan, a young couple en route to Skye to celebrate their 4th wedding anniversary chipped in to help demolish the old fireplace.

At Kershopehead, a Fire Risk Assessment inspection discovered a crack in the rear of the firebox.

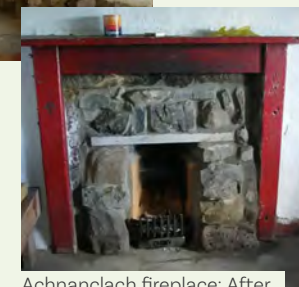
The bothy was closed to the public while the work was underway, but hill walkers continued to pass through the area. In true bothy spirit, the volunteers put down their tools and escorted them around the work site.



Image: Vanessa Ling

The old Dowling stove had served three bothies over 25 years and was needing replaced. "It will be sad to see the end of an old friend," says MO David Moorat.

Achnanclach fireplace: Before



Achnanclach fireplace: After
Images: Michael Stevens

New skills for Scouts

In September, AO Alan MacDonald arranged for an Edinburgh-based Explorer Scout group to participate in a trial work party at **Dryfehead bothy** in southern Scotland. Seven Scouts and 2 leaders spent a very productive weekend completing several necessary improvements to the bothy and the surrounding area. The Scouts repaired sections of nearby paths, sorted the timber store, painted doors and installed signs inside and outside the bothy directing users to the toilet located some 100 metres away. The work counted towards their Explorer Scout award scheme and the partnership was considered a huge success by all.



Photography: Dave Richards

Framing the view

The bothy window offers views of spectacular surroundings and it also performs an essential role in a weathertight bothy experience. Several bothies were in need of new windows this year. At **Dulyn** (Wales),



Dulyn bothy
Image: Tony Blackburn

three northern windows were replaced, funded by a bequest from Dave Hannan, who was joint MO for Nant Syddion and passed away after a short battle with illness in 2021. A work party was held at **Glenbuck** (Central Highlands) in mid-October. The downstairs windows were removed and new windows were installed: two front windows with opening tops and one in the middle room that also functions as a fire escape. At **Wainhope** (Northern England & Borders) a new window was installed before the annual arrival of nesting Ospreys.



First aid preparedness

Being out in wild and remote country is refreshing, exhilarating and in many ways a simple escape - most of the time.

But we all know there are risks, including when using tools, ladders and scaffolding on work parties. This is why the MBA has a very stringent Health and Safety policy which supports the goals of the Members and Volunteers Group.

In October, a group of Maintenance Officers and work party volunteers were guided through a first aid training course by the First Aid Training Cooperative. Topics included the basic principles of first aid: how to respond if something serious has happened; what to do about it (check the environment for risks to yourself,

check the casualty's Airway, if the casualty is Breathing and Circulation - ABC!); and how to do CPR.

"I feel much greater confidence in what I would need to do, and in what order, should I come across a casualty requiring first aid," recalls one of the participants. "The additional hints and tips regarding first aid in remote locations were also very helpful."

The course also covered topics less life threatening and more common, such as high temperatures and cuts and it provided recommendations for what to carry in an outdoor first aid kit.

We all sincerely hope these skills will never be needed, but the training is one way we can make the work we do safer and have the skills to care for each other. A course on working at heights (scaffolding and fall restraint) is to be organised soon.



Bothy Spotlight: Glenpean Bothy

It can't be that hard, can it? A long drive along Loch Arkaig, park at the road end, a good forestry track into Glen Pean, then just a few hundred metres along what Ordnance Survey says is a path, so it must be OK surely...

But Glenpean bothy in the western Highlands is not so easily won. "The last 500 metres through felled forestry can be hell," says joint MO Bill Ledingham. "The direct line crosses rotting root stumps, small invisible burns and brushwood." Things might be better by the river in summer drought; "Only then," says Bill, "will its swamps be more manageable."

What you get when you finally unlatch the door is a welcoming two-floor stone cottage sitting proudly above the River Pean. Through the window, the Munro of Sgùrr Thuilm rears boldly upwards. Take it direct, and that's 3000ft of climbing in barely a mile-and-a-half. No surprise most climb it from the Glenfinnan side.

And there's a through route of sorts, westwards to Oban bothy and hence the wonders of Knoydart; but the main variant of the Cape Wrath Trail in these parts takes Glen Dessarry, to the north, instead.

So you will be in Glenpean because you want to be in Glenpean, and nowhere else. It's only the second bothy to be in our ownership (after Over Phawhope in southern Scotland), acquired in 2019 from the Bothy Trust. They in turn had acquired the building in the early

2000s from the Balfour family; they had specifically excluded the bothy from the sale of local land so that it could remain an open shelter, with the Trust formed for the purpose.

We were busy at Glenpean for more than half a century before we took ownership. Indeed, this was one of the first significant MBA projects, from around 1968, with MBA founder Bernard Heath deeply involved; and under both the Balfours and the Trust, we have taken on regular maintenance ever since.

In recent years, former MO Steven Johnstone together with Jock Watson (MO for Invermallie) and Gaz Carter have been among the regulars on work parties. "Steven thought the bothy could do with a bit of TLC," says Jock, "so a plan was formed to renovate the bothy." This included a new Dowling stove. "Getting the heavy stove across the morass of bog and felled forestry was a herculean task," he remembers, "but when it was fitted, what a difference it made."

Inside the bothy, access upstairs still needs to be dealt with. Outside, it's one of many bothies that could benefit from toilet provision. The plan for 2023 is to deal with both, but this is only possible thanks to one of the legacies that the MBA receives – and for the staircase, support from a professional architect who is also an MBA member.

In the best MBA tradition, Glenpean would be a shadow of what it is now without the members.





Glenpean: History of a home

Like many of the bothies strung across the Highlands, Glenpean was once a family home, built about 1870 to house shepherd Hugh Campbell and his wife Jessie. When the family left in the 1920s, his son Ewan, and successor as shepherd, wrote a Gaelic lament 'Farewell to Loch Arkaig' in which he told of his lifetime's work on the hills he loved.

Originally just one storey, the upper floor was added as a bedroom for Hugh and Jessie's four sons; two were to perish in World War I. Stepping stones across the Pean, still in use, served the family's hay meadow; potatoes were grown outside the house. Livestock included a cow, fowl, and sometimes a pig.

Image: Neil Tait



AO Gerard Elliott

Area focus: Western Highlands & Islands

The MBA's Western Highlands & Islands area spans the region from Glen Shiel to Glenfinnan, taking in Knoydart and Morar as well as the Isle of Rum.

Framed by magnificent mountain landscapes, sea lochs and long glens, these are the "Rough Bounds", challenging terrain that lives up to its name. Just off the mainland is Rum, the largest of the so-called Small Isles and a designated National Nature Reserve.

This area is home to 10 bothies.

Gerard Elliott stepped into the role of AO in March. Recently retired from a career in banking, he wanted to use some of his free time on charitable work, with one requirement - that it not be in an office.

"I have always been a keen walker in the Scottish hills and very appreciative of the 'mysterious' bothies I came across," says Gerard. "I have enjoyed the welcome sight of a decent bothy or two during inclement weather!" He wondered who looked after them and how they managed to maintain them in such remote places. Now he plays a key role in this work.

"The MBA relies upon a superb bunch of enthusiastic members with a great set of skills and knowledge, and it is their enthusiasm which drives me on to do my best in the role."

A'Chuil

With panoramic views over Glen Dessarry, A'Chuil is a great stopping off point for the Knoydart munros. Two open fireplaces, recently replaced doors and new window frames create a cosy base for hillwalkers and long-distance backpackers.

Dibidil

Perched high above the shore on the Isle of Rum's south coast, it was first renovated by the MBA in 1970. Extensive improvements to the roof and fireplace were completed in May.

Gleann Dubh-lighe

Located east of Glenfinnan, the bothy serves as a good base to climb nearby Streap. It was rebuilt by the MBA in memory of Nicholas Randall after a devastating fire in 2011.

Glenpean

One of the earliest renovation projects undertaken by the MBA, this shelter has been maintained by us since 1968. In 2019 ownership was transferred to the MBA. (See bothy spotlight [p14](#).)

Guirdil

Nestled along the coast at the base of Bloodstone Hill, this isolated bothy on the Isle of Rum has enjoyed a long history of human habitation. It was renovated from near ruin by the MBA in 1982, and now shelters its visitors under a new roof.

Invermallie

Located on the River Mallie near Loch Arkaig, this structure was built in 1776 and taken on as a bothy in 1981. It is one of the largest MBA bothies, complete with a room for a solo sleeper fashioned from a cupboard in 2019.

Kinbreack

The stable building of a former shepherd's cottage in lonely Glen Kingie, the bothy was first renovated by the MBA in 1969 and is an excellent base for those climbing the surrounding high mountains.

Oban

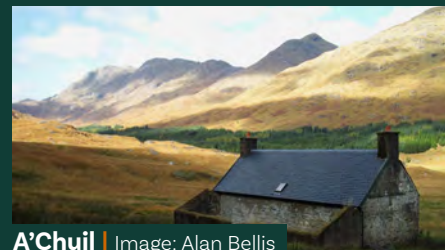
On the shore of Loch Morar, the bothy offers two open fires and a spacious loft as a base for hillwalking in this remote area. It is closed during the stalking season.

Sourlies

A beachfront bothy along the shores of Loch Nevis, this small shelter is nestled in the rough and remote terrain of Knoydart, perfect for breaking up the journey along the Cape Wrath Trail.

Suardalan

Located on the watershed between Gleann Beag and Glen More, this bothy was once a shepherd's cottage and is within close proximity to three iron age brochs.



A'Chuil | Image: Alan Bellis



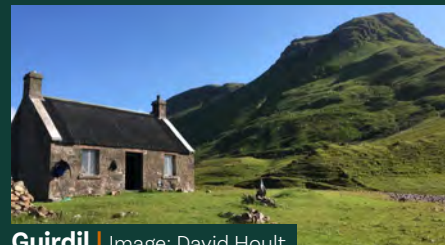
Dibidil | Image: Robert Patterson



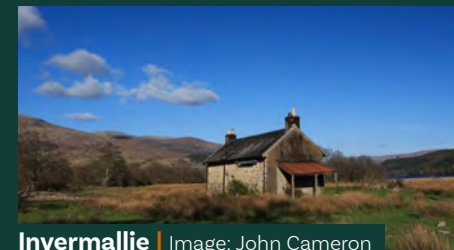
Gleann Dubh-lighe | Image: Paul Milligan



Glenpean | Image: G. Mackie



Guirdil | Image: David Hoult



Invermallie | Image: John Cameron



Kinbreack | Image: Alan McQuiston



Oban | Image: David Sinclair



Sourlies | Image: Rolf Godhes



Suardalan | Image: MBA Archives



In memoriam: Bernard Heath

We were saddened to learn of the passing of our founder, Bernard Heath, at the age of 93. Bernard was inspired by a comment in the bothy book in Backhill of Bush bothy suggesting that people get together to preserve bothies. He subsequently called a meeting of interested persons suggesting the formation of an Association to do just that, a meeting that turned out to be the founding meeting of the MBA.

Bernard was essentially a “get up and do” person. He organised and led the renovation of the ruin at Tunskeen in Galloway, the first MBA bothy. He was able to easily inspire others and to build good relations with bothy owners and those who worked the land and in the process smoothed the way to obtaining permission to renovate

many other ruined buildings which have become today’s bothies. Together with his wife Betty, whom he met at the inaugural meeting and who also sadly died recently, he organised or helped at numerous bothy renovation projects over the best part of the next half century. Both were awarded the British Empire Medal in 1991.

Among the many tributes paid to Bernard, perhaps his legacy is best summed up by that paid by our former Chairman, Denis Mollison, who said “without Bernard it’s unlikely that there would have been anything like the MBA and without him it could easily have petered out in the first few years. All those who love the wild and lonely places and especially those who Bernard called ‘outdoor enthusiasts’ owe him a huge debt of gratitude.”



Image: D. Mollison

In memoriam: John Arnott

Helpful, supportive, friendly, knowledgeable, a central figure in the MBA for more than 30 years. Just some of the descriptions applied to John Arnott who died suddenly in June.

He held a number of posts during his long period of service to the Association, Chairman from 2001 to 2013, Trustee, General Secretary, elected member of the Management Committee, Minutes Secretary. As Chairman, he attended many Area meetings where his presence and insight were greatly appreciated.

Not content with working on the administrative side of the Association, John attended a large number of work parties. He was Maintenance Organiser for Kearvaig bothy for a short period. In more recent years as his mobility decreased, John became a sought-after work party chef, producing excellent meals for the volunteers.

John’s family organised a memorial gathering in Perth in August. Several MBA members attended together with people from the many other organisations which John supported. He is a huge loss to the MBA and will be sadly missed.



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.

Donations, both unrestricted and restricted to spend on individual bothies and projects increased significantly over those received in 2021. Donations came from a number of sources, through our website, in response to our Greg's Hut re-roofing appeal where we also benefitted from separate fund raising by the organisers of the Spine Race UK, and through our on-line shop.

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. We also benefitted from legacies and donations received "in memory" and these are noted below.

Legacies and donations in memory of:

Scott Anderson
Colin Walter Banks
Roy Dyckhoff
Mark Fitton
Betty Heath
Bernard Heath
John Desmond Hewitt
David Ian Jackson
Martin McKay
Francis Scott Weston
Michael Whalley



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. If you are a UK tax-payer, please Gift Aid your donation. In 2022 this added £15,000 to our income.

Full audited financial information will be provided in our Annual Report distributed to members and others later in the year.

Slight rise in membership

As of 31 December 2022, we had 3,665 members, **nearly 3% up** on last year.

Ongoing work

Information about our ongoing work can be found on our website **www.mountainbothies.org.uk/** and on our Facebook page.

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/HM King Charles III
Gelder Shiel Stable, Glas Allt Shiel

Aberchalder & Glengarry Estates Ltd
Glenbuck

Anonymous
Brattleburn

Applecross Estate Trust
Uags

Ardtornish Estate Co Ltd
Leacraithnaich

Assynt Foundation
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Greg's Hut

Credits

Editor: Laura Thompson

Text: Peter Aylmer, Lyndsey McLellan, Neil Stewart, Laura Thompson

Design: Emily Willing

Front cover image: Fraser Mackie

Back cover image: David Moorat

Scottish Charity No: SC008685

Company No: SC191425, limited by Guarantee

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

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