



Stornoway Port Authority | www.stornowayportauthority.com | marketing@stornowayport.com | 01851 702688

British Ports Association conference week hailed a success

Over 200 delegates comprising a cross section of industry leaders from various port authorities, government departments, maritime consultants and various other agencies within the industry from all over the UK congregated in Stornoway for the British Ports Association conference in September. Stornoway Port Authority were overwhelmed with the feedback they received mostly regarding the warm hospitality and the lovely weather.

The conference was held in An Lanntair where speakers were heard throughout the day. Unfortunately and somewhat ironically, the Minister for Transport and Islands MSP Derek MacKay's flight was fogbound in Glasgow causing him and speakers, to miss their presentations.

On Wednesday evening, sponsored by CalMac, attendees



Chairman of Stornoway Port Authority, Murdo Murray, Chief Executive of SPA, Alex MacLeod, Chairman of British Port Association, David Whitehead and Chief Executive of BPA, Andrew Moffat.

were welcomed by Lord Lieutenant of the Isles, Sandy Matheson in the Cabarfeidh Hotel where everyone enjoyed a three course dinner, followed by an impressive performance by Lynn MacLean's School of Dancing – the appreciation of the crowd was obvious given the roar of applause the

girls received. The enthusiastic crowd were quick to fill the dance floor as the ceilidh got underway with Portrona Ceilidh Band.

The partners of those attending the conference enjoyed a tour of the island from the Butt of Lewis to Tarbert visiting various local attractions along the way. Both

attendees and their partners met at the Callanish Stones for a wee dram and some nibbles provided by the Calanais Centre on the Thursday afternoon.

Comhairle nan Eilean Siar funded the following night's social event in Stornoway's Town Hall which was
(continued on the following page)

Harris Tweed Authority Gift to Stornoway Port Authority



Chairman of Harris Tweed Authority Norman L. MacDonald and Chairman of Stornoway Port Authority Murdo Murray

The Harris Tweed Authority (HTA) have gifted Stornoway Port Authority a special birthday gift in the Port's 150th Anniversary year

A Mark 1 Hattersley Loom, once the work horse of the Harris Tweed Industry has been prepared and gifted to the Port Authority to mark the role of the port, in the history of the Harris Tweed industry. This latest piece of community art joins other items gifted to or commissioned by the Port Authority, such as the Herring girls, wooden seals and the carved fisherman who now live in and around Stornoway harbour.

The loom was previous operated by Mr Iain Macmillan of Upper Bayble and was gifted to the HTA by his family. Working weaver Andrew Hammacott of Back re-assembled, painted and preserved the loom back to its

original splendour in a way that safely allows it to be accessible to the public.

Chairman of the HTA, Norman L Macdonald said:

"Stornoway Harbour was once a hub of the Harris Tweed industry. I remember, as a young boy, when wool bales were landed to number 1 pier before being uplifted and taken to the mills for processing into Harris Tweed cloth. Whilst things are done differently today, raw materials coming in to the island by sea and finished cloth going off island twice or three times weekly by sea is still a key feature of our unique industry. Check-in at Stornoway harbour is just the first port of call in usually long and complex export journeys. The HTA enjoy a good working relationship with SPA and in particular we are working closely with them to improve the experience of cruise ship guests to the town.

We are very pleased also to be participating in the forthcoming British Ports Authority Conference being hosted in Stornoway by SPA. The Harris Tweed industry are keen to use this opportunity to network with some of the UK's largest shipping organisations, naval architects, interior designers etc. with the aim of their giving consideration to the use of Harris Tweed cloth in high quality ship and luxury yacht interior projects".

Mr Murdo Murray, Chairman of SPA added: "On behalf to the SPA I would like to thank the HTA for this most

generous gift. The Hattersley loom is a fitting reminder of the long and productive association of the Stornoway Harbour with the Harris Tweed industry. I would take this opportunity to congratulate the HTA and all associated with the resurgence of the industry for their stalwart efforts in recent years and look forward to our continued association for the economic benefit of the wider community."

The British Ports Association Conference takes place in Stornoway from the 29th sept - 2nd Oct 2015

BPA Conference

(continued from the front page)

filled to capacity. Christina and her team from the Caladh Inn wined and dined the guests who were later entertained by musical duo Tosh and Tonkan - performing together on their penultimate performance before Tonkan emigrates to Australia.

Stornoway Port Authority wish to express their sincere thanks to all those who contributed locally and making the BPA conference such a success. In no particular order thanks to:

Lynn MacLean's School of Dancing, Pipers - Larry Ferguson and Finlay Campbell, Portrona Ceilidh Band, Tosh and Tonkan, By Rosie, MacLeod & MacLeod Butchers, Hebridean Soap Company, Mairi Murray, Alison MacLeod of Tiger Textiles, The Harris Distillery, Isle of Harris Tweed shop, The Harris Hotel, Gearranan, CalMac, Comhairle nan Eilean Siar, The Caladh Inn staff, An Lanntair, Cabarfeidh Hotel, Calanais Centre, Town Hall staff, Harris Tweed Authority, Lochs Motor Transport, Western Isles Tour Guide Association.

Some of the feedback we received from attendees of the BPA...

Thank you, and the rest of your Board, for your hospitality last week. It was my first visit to the Western Isles and it was a lovely surprise to find it so welcoming.

Very glad I got time to buzz down to Harris and up around the west coast of Lewis. Stunning scenery and I have a bolt of tweed to make up into something, not sure what yet. Hope you're all enjoying the peace.

Lucy Grant

Raymond Brown Construction Co.

Just wanted to say thank you all for making our visit to Lewis, Stornoway and Stornoway Harbour such a memorable one and what great weather too!

You looked after us so well, we enjoyed every minute of our stay and were very sad to leave.

PS great Blsck Pudding by the way

Thank you all

David & Hilary Vaughan

Commander David Vaughan OBE BA FRIN MNI Royal Navy

A quick note of thanks from Calum and me at Lerwick for the excellent visit to Stornoway last week. The conference was well organised, the food was good and the weather was spectacular! It was also great to see the port so tidy, clean and well maintained. We thoroughly enjoyed our visit and meeting everyone.

Sandra Laurensen

Chief Executive of Lerwick Port

Just a short note to thank you and your team for an excellent conference.

The welcome, hospitality and weather was fantastic and made a truly memorable three days.

All your staff were great and very friendly, a real credit to the port.

Rodney Lunn

Chief Executive of Shoreham Port

Cruise ships from the past

SS Tuscania

by Colin Tucker

'There is but one Royal Route to the Hebrides, and the approaches are the channels and guidance marks of the mind. We go over the sea to Skye," or go farther to the Uists and the Lews, by luxurious liner or brown-sailed, herring scaled fishing boat; but unless we prepare ourselves with a knowledge of the lore of the people who inhabit those places so that our apperceptions may be swift to sense the impressions which the mysterious atmosphere of the Isles creates, we shall fail utterly to profit by the experience of having beheld the Hebrides.'

These are the opening words of a small book I recently came across entitled 'A Cruise to the Western Isles' by Hugh Munro. It was published in May 1937 by the Corporation of the City of Glasgow, and is headed 'Coronation Souvenir'. The book was clearly meant for passengers on a four day cruise to the Western Isles by the ss Tuscania. It was to be a whistle-stop tour as the accompanying timetable shows. Between Friday mid-day and Monday morning the cruise passenger would sail down the Clyde estuary and round the Mull of Kintyre before heading off to St Kilda, the Flannan Isles, then across to Cape Wrath before heading back across the Minch to pass Stornoway, the west coast of Skye, the Small Isles, Staffa, Iona, Mull, Lismore and Colonsay, before heading back to disembark at Glasgow. The timetable states 'pass' at all these places, and with that

schedule there would certainly have been no time to land anywhere. Perhaps that is why the book tells little about any of these places, but restricts itself to bits of history and lore about the people.

The cruise was made on board the ss Tuscania. She was built by Fairfield of Govan, her yard number being 595. After being launched on 4 October 1921, she was completed the following year and entered the fleet of the Anchor Line, owned by the Henderson brothers, becoming the third ship of that name in their fleet. She had a gross tonnage of 16,991, and she measured 552 feet in length and 70 feet breadth. Her six steam turbines and twin screws gave her a maximum speed of sixteen knots, adequate for her role as a passenger ship sailing on the Glasgow and Mediterranean to New York services. She had accommodation for 267-1st, 377-2nd and 1,818-3rd class passengers.

She made her maiden voyage from Glasgow to Moville and New York on 16 September 1922. Between then and 1925 she completed five New York - Mediterranean voyages and in May 1926 made her last Glasgow - New York - Plymouth - Havre - London voyage. She was then chartered to Cunard Line, being repainted in their colours. She commenced London

(continued on the following page)

SS Tuscania (continued from previous page)

- Havre - Southampton - New York crossings on 3 June 1926 with cabin and tourist class passengers. In December 1926 she was altered to cabin and 3rd class and in February 1927 was refitted to carry 206-cabin, 439-tourist and 485-3rd class. On 19 September 1930 she sailed on her last London - Havre - Southampton - New York voyage and in October of that year was laid up at Glasgow. In February of the following year she returned to service, this time sailing between Glasgow, Liverpool and Bombay; between 1931-37 the ship made thirteen autumn/winter voyages on this service. In May 1931 she made one Southampton - New York round voyage for Cunard.

The Tuscania then returned to the Anchor Line and resumed Glasgow - Merville - New York summer voyages and in September 1938 made her last voyage on this service. It was during this time that she made her cruise to the Western Isles, passing Stornoway. It is also recorded that she carried out a cruise from Yorkhill Quay in Glasgow to the Mediterranean in 1936.

In 1939 the ship was sold to the

Greek Line. She was renamed Nea Hellas and refitted to carry 200-cabin, 400-tourist and 500-3rd class passengers. She made nine round voyages between Piraeus and New York, and then in 1940 she transferred to the Lisbon - New York service where she made five round voyages. In 1941 she was requisitioned by the UK government and used as a British war transport until 1946. In 1947 the ship was reconditioned in the UK and Genoa to accommodate 300-1st, 310-cabin and 850-tourist passengers, and returned to the Greek Line. She started her first peacetime voyage between Genoa, Naples, Lisbon and New York on 25 July 1947 and continued to sail between Mediterranean ports and New York until early in 1955. She was again refitted and could now carry 80-1st and 1,300-tourist class passengers. She was given the new name New York and commenced to sail between

the UK, France, Ireland and New York. In 1959 her route was altered to operate between the Mediterranean and Quebec, but she only sailed on this service for one month. She was then laid up at Piraeus where she lay for two years before she was scrapped at Onimichi, Japan in 1961.



A Tribute to the late Malcolm MacFarlane

Malcolm Macfarlane, affectionately known as "Mally" was born within a stone's throw of Ceann a Baigh at 16 Scotland Street on 4th August 1922. Much of his boyhood was spent around the very busy fishing harbour with his best friend Donnie Murray who later in life was to serve for many years as Collector of Dues with the (then) Stornoway Pier & Harbour Commission.

Educated at the Nicolson Institute from 1927 to 1938 he commenced an apprenticeship as a surveyor with Sims Sons & Cooke, Civil Engineers constructing the aerodrome at Stornoway.

In 1942 at the age of 20 he enlisted with the Royal Artillery and saw active service in Iraq, Syria, Palestine and Egypt completing his war service in Dresden.

Following the war he resumed work with Sims Sons & Cooke in Nottingham for a couple of years before

returning to Stornoway in the early 1950s when he married Christina Maciver [1952] and commenced his career spanning over 30 years with the Meteorological Office based mostly at Stornoway Airport but also including overseas postings to Gan in the middle of the Pacific Ocean.

For a number of years the Macfarlanes lived at the Druim Dubh, sometimes called the Halfway House just south of the Grimshader road end. Mally thought nothing of the 8 mile cycle each way to the Airport in all weathers and often encountered contrary head winds going to and from work. He vividly recalled seeing a family of otters crossing Loch Lathamul on the frozen ice in the big freeze up in the mid-1950s. He remained very physically fit into his ninth decade and maintained a very keen interest in current

affairs until his passing on 10 September 2015.

On 11th July 1986 Mr Macfarlane attended his first meeting of the Stornoway Pier & Harbour Commission by virtue of his being elected as a Councillor for the Goathill Electoral Division. And so commenced a period of 24 years voluntary, dedicated and unpaid service to the Harbour Commission and its successor body (2004) of Stornoway Port Authority.

Malcolm Macfarlane possessed a wide range of administrative skills and was for many years Vice Chairman of the Commission and crucially Chairman of its Finance Committee. He played a major role in steering the organisation safely through the construction of the new Number 3 Pier and Ferry Terminal between 1995 - 1997 at a cost of some £9 Million, delivered on time and within 2% of budget. He was very conscious of the

need for prudence in the administration of Dues Payers money and was always anxious that best value be demonstrated. He did much to lay down a sound financial foundation and was one of the Key Players in the setting up of a Harbour Redevelopment Reserve Fund - some of the proceeds of which delivered the splendid new Marina in Bayhead in 2014 and contributed to the upgrading of Number 3 Pier in 2014/15.

He was a selfless man whose only motive was to serve the Island Community which he loved.

The Authority would like to publicly express its thanks for the significant contribution Malcolm Macfarlane made in the development of Stornoway Harbour and express its sincere condolences to his brother Pat, daughters Laura, Frances and Kate and their respective families.

JJM