

Inhabitants (Killiemore Cottage – Seaview) (1963 – 1965)

By Betsy Ingram

1. Killiemore Cottage: Miss K. Robson, her uncle, retired Bishop, C of E.
- 2a. Mr & Mrs Brown, ploughman, tied house, Killiechronan Estate.
- 2b
3. Old Schoolhouse: Summer: Mrs Sutcliffe and Sarah (her daughter), Commander R. Sutcliffe, naval officer.
4. No. 1. Acharonich Cottages (Now Geadan Dubh): Holiday house of retired policeman from Glasgow: Mr Hughes and his daughter (Margaret/Peggy?).
5. No. 2. Acharonich Cottages (semi-detached with No. 1): Miss Jessie MacNeil, whose sister lived on Iona, with her youngest son Donald. They made contact using mirrors on sunny days.
6. Mrs Flora MacCormick and her brother Lachie, who worked on Ulva as gardener and relief ferryman.
7. Oskamull Farmhouse: (Holiday house), Mr Jonathan Ward.
8. Benvue: owned by the Howards of Gometra.
9. Corkamull (replica of 1 & 2 Acharonich Cottages) The four young men who had recently (1963) purchased it, camped out while working on alterations during holidays. Advertised for tradesmen, offering holiday accommodation in exchange for labour for quite a number of years.
10. Schoolhouse: Teacher: (Miss/Mrs) B. Macvicar.
11. Lagganulva Farmhouse: Mr & Mrs John Cameron, Duncan Cameron, Rosemary Cameron, Jessie Cameron and Willie Ramsay. Rosemary was postmistress, ran Bed Breakfast & Dinner – all without electricity! Tilley lamps, paraffin lamps, coal fires. Think of the laundry! She also managed school meals, milking cows and catering for the family.
12. Luard's house – hosted a large family in the summer and a number of lets.
13. Kilbrennan: Mr & Mrs J. MacLachlan and Mary. Jimmy, a shepherd on Torloisk Estate. Katie provided school transport.
14. Craigmore: small cottage, Mr Johnnie MacDonald.
15. Nah Fuaran – owned by Dr Robbie Campbell – used by family for holidays.
16. Dalmaclare: Owned by Mrs Henderson, twin sister of Captain Alwyne Farquharson whose father, Major Compton, owned Torloisk Estate Holidays.
17. Ballygowan: Mr Roddy MacRae and Katie-Mary, his wife and their daughter Mairi.
18. Croft No. 1 Fanmore: Hugh and Donald MacKinnon, local roadman and crofter.
19. Seaview: Mr & Mrs Neil MacColl, cattleman and dairy maid at Torloisk

Ulva School

The Schoolroom comprised half of the building. In the entrance porch, a Belfast sink, gas cylinders, gas water heater, cupboard for crockery and cutlery for school lunches. Cloakroom hooks lined the wall to the classroom door. Behind the door when it opened into the room was a board which stated 'Accommodation 30'.

There were two trestle tables, one on top of the other, with folded benches on top. At lunchtime desks were moved, tables and benches erected for school lunch to be served by Rosemary Cameron from Lagganulva Farm (the meals were transported from Salen School kitchen by Angus John MacColl who also, subcontracted by Royal Mail, carried the mail from Ulva Ferry PO. Since he used his own Dormobile this was invaluable as a means of transport. Every second Sunday he collected churchgoers from Lagganulva to Salen and back again.

The furniture was a mixture of old tubular flap-tops and individual desks and chairs. A piano, one cupboard – the ceiling soared to the slates – all wooden lined, as were the walls. Large solid-fuel stove in beige enamel on a cement base (still there under the carpet!) heated the room efficiently. Jessie Cameron stoked the monster night and morning, so it required little attention throughout the day. There was a high teacher's chair and desk.

The windows at both sides of the room were the main source of light – in the gloom of some winter days four gas lamps (piped from the cylinder) helped but had to be lit in order – the furthest from the supply first! (For the Christmas Party, enterprising dad, Iain (Dan) MacDonald, ferryman, brought a fully charged tractor battery, placed it outside and fed the wire through the window sill to the tree – absolutely splendid!). The window sills were about 15" (38.1 cms.) wide with cupboards below which held library books for the community, they were changed six-monthly.

A free-standing roller blackboard – thank goodness it was mobile! A brass hand-bell which was used to recall pupils after breaks.

The playground was grass with shore gravel from gate to door and around gable end – this was frequently under water – certainly no good for garaging a van! Mr Gideon Palmer was our handyman for small repairs and for all the other small schools.

First Impressions

Mid-June, 1964. Sheep on road, close cropped verges, few fences. Beautiful brisk blue day. Seilisdairs in bloom.

1. Killiemore Cottage – beautiful garden – a surprise after heather and bracken.
2. (a & b) Killiemore, another white house with red trim.
3. Old Schoolhouse: rhododendron hedge in bloom. 1/14 Acharonich Hill – what a panorama! No Armco! First sight of Ulva. Below the road a large ruined house beside a stone fank.
4. At the bottom of the hill, large (holiday) house.
5. & 6 Little semi-detached cottages on the right above the road.
7. Oskamull Farmhouse: cultivated fields, phone box. Corn below the road in the phone box field and field opposite school. Potatoes in Nick's (Mawhinney) field.
8. Benvue – almost hidden by shrubs, owned by the Howards of Gometra.
9. Corkamull – newly purchased as a holiday house (semi-detached houses, being redesigned as one, by four young post-graduates.
10. Ulva School and Schoolhouse: outside toilets at the far wall, garage and coal-shed abutting them. Three sided school shed on cement base. Sycamore trees and well-tended garden on a very windy corner.
11. Lagganulva Farmhouse amid more sycamores. Corn in field below house. Stack-yard on left. Post Office hut being erected on left at entrance to farmyard.
12. Kilbrennan – corn in field between house and road. Next field was being cut for hay.

Arrival at Ulva Ferry

5th August, 1964

I arrived off the 'Columba', side-loading car ferry, in its first week of operation. A big change from June when my van was slung on canvas 'bags' on to the deck of the 'Lochearn'.

This was the day of the auction sale of contents from the schoolhouse – Mrs Traill, departing teacher, had promised the community this sought after opportunity to buy everything from cutlery to carpets. I drove halfway down the ferry road before I was able to park. It was obviously a big event. Despite the rain, everyone was in good spirits and bidding was lively – there was obviously the intention of sending the teacher away well satisfied!

By 3pm the sale was over, people were leaving laden with purchases. The large items of furniture were moved into the school shed to be collected later. The cars, pick-ups and bicycles moved off. I retrieved my van and unpacked the essentials of camping in the Schoolhouse and prepared to welcome the removal van the next day.

Shops were redundant! Mail-order catalogues did well! Groceries: Co-Op and MacFarlane's (both Tobermory, both once a week). Butcher – twice a week (Johnson's, Tobermory). Bank – every Friday (would deliver goods from Tobermory). Clothes, carpets, lino, etc., - Alasdair Irvine (Tighnabruich) about 2 – 3 monthly or as required. Royal Mail – 2 deliveries each day.

Pupils 1964 – 66

15 years: Elizabeth MacKinnon, Burg Cottage. Third Year Seconds studied by correspondence tuition instead of attending high school in Tobermory or Oban.

Primary:

8. Isobel MacPhail, Old Manse, Ulva. Father – farm manager
Ishbel MacDonald, Ferry House, Ulva. Father – ferryman
7. Lilian MacKinnon, Bracadale, Ulva. Father – Archie Livingstone, shepherd, Torloisk Estate.
6. Anne Simpson, Fanmore. Father – Postman
5. Jamie Howard, Gometra House, Gometra. Father – owner/farmer
4. Colin MacDonald, Ferry House, Ulva. Father – ferryman
3. Mairi MacRae, Ballygowan. Father – gamekeeper, Torloisk
2. Johnny Howard, Gometra House, Gometra. Father – owner/farmer
1. Heather MacColl, 3 Achleck. Father – cattleman/shepherd