CLAN CHISHOLM SOCIETY
UK BRANCH

An Cirean
Cean Cinnidh



NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 82

NOVEMBER 2025

Welcome to Issue No 82 - UK Branch Newsletter

Dear UK Branch members.

Unfortunately due to a medical appointment our planned branch AGM and meal together in Beauly in early September had to be cancelled. We were able to reschedule to the end of September but it meant holding an electronic meeting again as last year.
Minutes of the AGM are given in this newsletter.

Our Society keeps close links to many other bodies with similar and complementary activities and interests. A brief outline of some of these together with web addresses is given below.

The Strathglass Heritage Association with whom we have close contacts held its Annual General Meeting on Monday 3rd November and I was able to attend. The Association based at Marydale in Cannich holds many events and lectures over the year and I have been able to attend some of these, the most recent on 22nd September on the late Tomich resident Naïve artist Janet 'Jessie' Chisholm. A short piece is given in this newsletter on Jessie. I look forward to the programme for the next year. https://www.strathglass-heritage.co.uk

The SHA works closely with the North of Scotland Archaeological Society NOSAS. This body carries out an immense amount of work on sites across the North of Scotland and regularly gives lectures across various venues in the Highlands. Unfortunately I had to miss the recent AGM held on 6th November in Inverness. https://www.nosas.co.uk

Another organisation that Clan Chisholm links to is the Highland Family History Society. The Society produces regular journals covering Highland life, family history research and other activities such as mapping monumental inscriptions in graveyards and other places. The Clachan Comar Burial Ground in Cannich has previously been recorded by the Clan Chisholm Society and the now disbanded Kilmorack Heritage Association. The HFHS has now produced an updated publication. https://highlandfhs.org

The Highland Archive in Inverness is of course a good place to look into your Chisholm and Highlands roots – it has extensive collections. See https://www.highlifehighland.com/highland-archive-centre

As mentioned in our last newsletter the Charity 'Highland & Island Blood Bikes' got in touch regarding a naming ceremony for one of their new motorbikes. The name of our founder Mairi was chosen due to her WW1 nursing career and keen interest in motorbikes. Sadly I was not able to make the date fixed for this in July but my cousins who knew Mairi quite well (far better than I in fact) came to the rescue and the event went off brilliantly. A report by Kitty Chisholm is given in this newsletter.

My thanks as always to Juliette Chisholm-Broomfield in Beauly and Norman and Christina Chisholm for sending newspaper articles and items for inclusion in our newsletter.
Please do continue to send me items you think would be of interest to members; family news, newspaper cuttings or links to articles.

Wishing all our members a happy Christmas and New Year. 

Yours in clanship, Susan



CLAN CHISHOLM SOCIETY - UK BRANCH

Annual General Meeting. 24th Annual Report

Saturday,20th,September, 2025 – 10:00 BST.
11 Croyard Close, Beauly, by Inverness-shire IV4 7EE.

Pre Meeting notes: The AGM had originally been planned as a physical meeting on Friday 5th September at the Priory Hotel, Beauly. Unfortunately, due to an important medical appointment this had to be changed. It was decided that the 2025 AGM would be held electronically again. The meeting would follow electronic meeting procedure and Ben as Chairman would hold proxy votes for members not in attendance. The Secretary sent out a notice to members to that effect on 24th August 2025. The Agenda for the meeting had previously been circulated. The notice sent on 24th August included details of the proposed change to subscription levels.

Response was received from Dr Janet Eldred, York and Philip Chisholm, Redcar, Cleveland, North Yorks who approved the proposals and support the committee decisions. Janet sent best wishes to Ben and Juliette whom she met when we held our branch AGM at the Railway Museum in York some years ago. Ben and Juliette remember Janet well and the most enjoyable meeting we had in York in May 2015 and they returned their best wishes to her.

An email group list was set up for the meeting which included all the UK branch committee members. All communication within the meeting would be received by all committee members regardless of attendance on the day. Dr Margaret Collin advised of her new email address.

Present

Chairman Ben Chisholm-Broomfield

Secretary/Treasurer Susan Chisholm of Chisholm

Juliette Chisholm-Broomfield, Duncan F. Chisholm, Norman Chisholm, Christina Chisholm, Dr Margaret Collin, Martin Chisholm, Alastair Chisholm.

Chairman Ben Chisholm-Broomfield opened the meeting at 10:00 and apologised for having to change the date of the meeting and cancellation of the planned lunch. He indicated the AGM would be held open for one week to allow all to respond. He added that once all members had registered their attendance voting and comments on the agenda items would take place.

Committee Members confirmed their attendance and noted the meeting would be open for one week.

Most committee members had confirmed their attendance by 21st September, and the Secretary invited votes and comments on the Agenda items.

Agenda item 1 - MINUTES OF PREVIOUS MEETING

Being of the 23rd AGM of the UK Branch Clan Chisholm Society held on Saturday 19th October 2024, 10:00, 11, Croyard Drive, Beauly, Inverness IV4 7EE. Held Electronically.
The minutes had previously been published and sent to all members with the November 2024 Branch Newsletter No. 78.
There were no comments or matters arising and the minutes were accepted unanimously.

Agenda item 2 - HON. TREASURERS REPORT

UK Branch Financial reports were presented for the year ended 31st December 2024.
The accounts were prepared on 06/03/25 and audited by Mrs Katrina Smith on 14th March 2025.
There were no comments, and the reports were approved unanimously.

Agenda item 3 - MEMBERSHIP REPORT

Susan advised that our UK Branch total numbers (of households) had been included in the Annual Report for The Society previously circulated. A further detailed report on numbers was circulated during the meeting. There had been only one new member during 2024 and two so far in 2025, one from London & Spain and the other on the Isle of Wight.

Current Subscription Rates

Annual -	£12.00
Annual Over 60 -	£ 9.00
10 Year -	£65.00
10 Year family -	£74.00

Membership subscription rates were last reviewed and increased at branch AGM 2012.
NB. Life membership has not been offered since 1996. Honorary membership is awarded from time to time for exceptional service to the Society. Life member contribution to the Annual Journal is currently £5.00 per annum. There is no charge for the Branch Newsletters.

	at end 2017	at end 2018	at end 2019	at end 2020	at end 2021	at end 2022	at end 2023	at end 2024
New members	3	7	4	11	0	2	3	1
Deceased	3	1	7	5	3	5	3	3
Life & Hon Members	45	45	43	42	39	38	38	35
Annual	139	133	124	124	118	119	115	101
Total individuals	184	178	167	166	157	157	153	136
Number of Households	128	128	126	122	117	117	112	108

Annual (includes annual, annual over 60, 10 year and 10 year family)
Records for Annual Members unpaid for 3 years or more are moved to archive.
Juliette thanked Susan for providing the documents, she had read the membership report with the branch statistics. It was not easy to attract new members these days. The Society has an excellent website and the Forum which are free to access. The UK Branch membership brings additional benefits including the free of charge newsletters and office bearers willing to give help and advice.
*Agenda item 6a proposes to increase subscription levels.

Agenda item 4 - ELECTION OF OFFICERS

The following agreed to stand for a further year - Nominations for officers were as follows :-

Chairman – Ben Chisholm-Broomfield

Hon Secretary / Treasurer – Susan Chisholm

Vice Chairman 1 - Duncan Chisholm

Vice Chairman 2 - Norman Chisholm

No change to the slate of Officers was proposed and the nominations as shown were re-elected unanimously.

Agenda item 5 – CONFIRMATION OF APPOINTMENTS

Hon Genealogist (Acting) - Alastair Chisholm (CGI administrator)

Honorary Historian (Emeritus) – Dr Jean Munro

Honorary Historian - Dr Margaret Collin

Hon Auditor – Katrina Smith

Hon Committee member – Norman Chisholm

Hon Committee member – Juliette Chisholm-Broomfield

Hon Committee member – Mairi-Angela Foster

Alastair has previously indicated that he has had to step back from actively managing the Society genealogy database due to many other commitments although he continues to be able to engage with activity on the CGI Forum.
Susan thanked all those who give their time and commitment to these roles and keep the Society and the branch going.
No change to appointments/committee members was proposed and the list as shown was unanimously approved.

Agenda item 6 - AOB

6a – MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION LEVELS.

Susan had circulated the agenda and notification of the meeting together with the proposal to increase the subscription rates to:-

Annual -	£15.00
Annual Over 65 -	£12.00
10 Year -	£75.00
10 Year family -	£80.00

The new proposed rates had been determined following a review of similar societies and the reduced rate for pensionable age members moved to over 65.

The proposals were fully supported with Martin commenting that they are fair and reasonable and Margaret agreeing the levels were appropriate. Juliette noted that it had been many years since the subscription rates had been changed. Ben felt the Society has a lot to give members with the quality Journal produced by Martin and our branch newsletters from Susan.

– unanimously approved.

6b – PHOTOGRAPHIC ARCHIVE – International Project

Susan advised that this international project was linked to the Artefacts Register. It proposed using images of the many Chisholm artefacts and memorabilia found in private collections and museums and raised many questions around copyright and permissions. We do have many images within our genealogy database and these are only available to paid up members.
Margaret referred the meeting to a UK government website for further general guidance. https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/copyright-notice-digital-images-photographs-and-the-internet
She cautioned that this is a highly technical and often contentious area of the law and does require the advice of a qualified lawyer. Becoming entangled in contravention of copyright laws could, potentially, cost more than a lawyers fees for sound advice.
Juliette thanked Margaret for circulating the link. She agreed we should be very cautious. Juliette referred to the genealogy site and wondered if branches changed their passwords regularly. Norman pointed out that care must be taken when using images contained in the archive if prior permission has not been given in writing. There could be a claim of breach of copyright. His wife Christina had come across this problem when technical editor of a craft magazine.
Martin recognised the concerns on copyright. He felt we would need to emphasise the artefact element. The aim of the project currently is to have something similar to the artefacts register which identifies the item, where held and who owns it. This would allow a member to ask a question of the Society eg 'do we know of an image of a person, and if so where it is and who owns it'. In the research, once we identify an image, a question would be asked of the owner whether the Society may have permission to use it, should that be required, and the answer recorded in the image register.
Ben thanked everyone for their input and was pleased that our branch has active members willing to discuss this Society idea.

6c – Cannich Brae

Juliette confirmed that George Fraser would continue to keep the area at Cannich Brae overlooking Comar tidy for the UK branch. This is the site of the commemorative marker in Cannich and the Wilfrid Medlam bench.

There being no further business Ben formally closed the meeting at 10:00 on Saturday 27th September. He thanked all for their contribution to the Branch and the Society. He reminded members that Martin our Journal Editor is always looking for articles and he thanked Martin for the excellent Journals produced.
He thanked Susan for putting the minutes of the meeting together.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

A reminder that Annual Subscriptions are due on 1st January each year. **Note that subscription rates from 1st January 2026 will be changed to those shown below**. The rates have been unchanged since 2013 and at the recent Annual General Meeting on 20th September 2025 it was agreed they should be raised slightly.

If you pay your subscription by standing order with your bank please would you amend the instruction.

Annual membership - £15.00

Annual over 65 - £12.00

10 year membership - £75.00

10 year Family membership - £80.00

Payment by cheque to:- 'Clan Chisholm Society - UK Branch' and sent to Hon Secretary/Treasurer, Susan Chisholm. Or a bank transfer may be made to our bank - Natwest, Bury St Edmunds –

sort code 60-04-16, a/c 30250633. (IBAN GB55 NWBK 6004 1630 2506 33)

If you elect to pay by bank transfer please let me (Susan) know.

For **Life Members** who wish to continue to receive the Annual Clan Chisholm Journal - a payment of **£5.00** per annum is requested to help cover the cost of publication and postage. NB. Life membership ceased to be offered after 1996. *There is no charge for branch newsletters which are produced 3 - 4 times a year.*

HIGHLAND & ISLAND BLOOD BIKES

The Highland & Island Blood Bikes (HIABB) charity had decided to name a new motorbike after our founder Miss Mairi Chisholm of Chisholm. They hoped that a member of the Clan Chisholm Society could attend the naming ceremony on Thursday 25th September 2025 at the Waterside restaurant Ness Bank, Inverness.
Two great nephews of Mairi could attend – Robert Atkinson who lives nearby and Sir John Chisholm who with his wife Kitty travelled up to Inverness. Mairi's great nieces Mairi-Angela Foster, Jenni Atkinson and Susan Chisholm of Chisholm had hoped to be involved but were not able to attend.

Kitty has kindly written a few words on what she called the great naming ceremony.

We were very warmly greeted in the forecourt of the Glen Mhor Hotel, where we had various conversations and a photo opportunity before lunch. We met Neil Stewart and Ken Wiseman, two volunteer riders. By coincidence, Neil's daughter, also a Mhairi but with an H is a combat medic, and so it was very apt that he should be showing us the bike that he rode - the one named Mairi. Also there was Lynn Hignett and her husband Dave. Lynn is a volunteer controller. She receives the calls for help and makes all the arrangements for the responses. Lynn's day job is as a vaccine nurse - and it was her idea to name the bike Mairi. She had heard about Mairi Chisholm and Elsie Knocker's heroism as volunteer nurses on the front line, and she knew that Mairi was a motorcyclist, and thought that it would be great to have that tie with history and a highland heroine. So three points in common, nursing, volunteering and bikes!
We had a lovely lunch at the restaurant there and were immensely impressed by hearing about the work of the Highlands and Islands blood bikes.
First of all, they are all volunteers - over a hundred of them. They have 6 bikes, a van and a car and between them they cover a territory of 12,500 sq miles - larger than Belgium. Their volunteers work every day of the year, including Christmas and New Year, when they are the only way some samples can reach the labs for analysis. The work they do is very wide ranging - and not just in miles. They carry blood samples, medications, reagents, samples from GPs, breastmilk (raw and pasteurised) - essential for premature babies, and they deliver essential

medications to peoples' homes so they can be released earlier from hospitals, thus freeing beds. They work in relays, so that samples that are time critical can reach the right place at the right time.
Secondly they are a charity - and depend entirely on donations - for everything, bikes, other equipment, maintenance, fuel, admin, phone bills - everything!
Also at the lunch were Zac Gillan, Business Development Manager, who organised the event - and Gordon Scott, Head of Operations.
A great many photographs were taken which Zac hopes to use the continue the fund-raising efforts. The HAIBB are a charity and rely on donations every penny of which goes to the service See www.haibloodbikes.co.uk for more information on the organisation and how to donate to the charity.



Above - Kitty sitting on the Bike

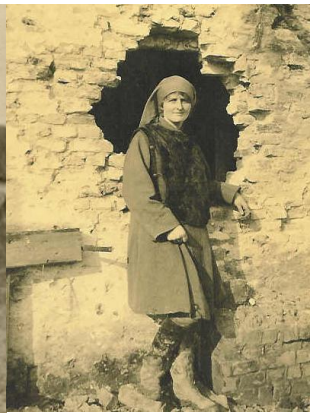


Above – Kitty on bike with to her left Sir John and Rob.

After the event Zac send a formal letter of thanks to John, Kitty and Rob for their support.

"Dear Sir John, Kitty & Rob,
On behalf of Highland and Islands Blood Bikes, I would like to extend our heartfelt thanks to you for joining us at the naming of our new motorbike, Mairi, in honour of Mairi Chisholm.
It was a privilege to learn more about Mairi's extraordinary story and the remarkable courage she showed as one of the "Angels of Pervyse" during the First World War. Her commitment to selfless service, compassion, and resilience in the face of great danger mirrors the very values that underpin our charity. Just as Mairi dedicated herself to saving lives, Highland and Islands Blood Bikes exists to provide a free, voluntary service delivering vital blood samples, medical supplies, and equipment across the Highlands and Islands — ensuring that patients and healthcare teams have what they need, when they need it most.
We were also delighted to invite Lynne, one of our volunteer controllers and a dedicated NHS nurse, who had suggested the name Mairi in our recent naming competition. It was a great honour for her to join us and have the opportunity to meet you, adding an even more personal touch to the occasion.
Gordon, Ken, Neil, and I were truly delighted to meet you, hear more about Mairi's life, and view the wonderful memorabilia you so kindly shared with us. These insights brought great depth and meaning to the naming of the bike and gave us all a stronger connection to the legacy of courage and care that Mairi represents."





Left.
Mairi in Flanders with motorbike.

Right.
by shell hole at Pervyse

QUERY – CHISHOLM BLEND WHISKY.

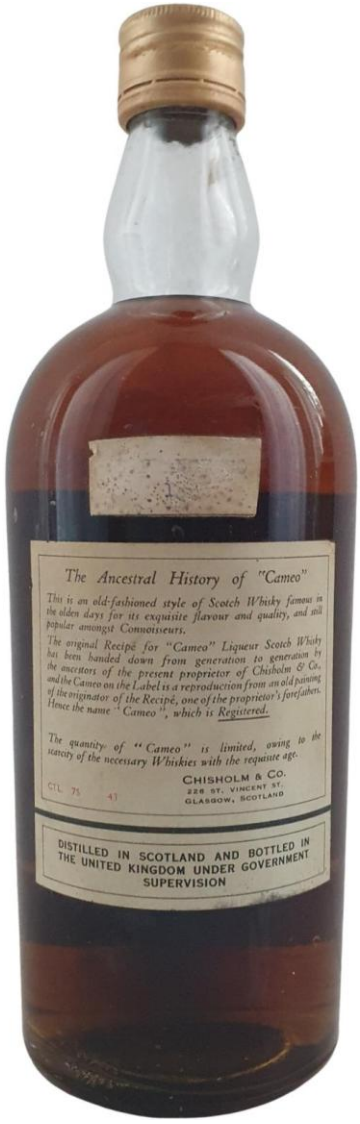
In August, Ben & Juliette received an email query from Germany requesting information on a whisky blend called 'Cameo'. Juliette replied to the enquirer and passed the email to me to see if I might have any ideas.

Peter Neibergall describes himself as a great fan of older Scottish whisky blends and is researching blending companies which no longer exist. He says Cameo is one of the more delicious blends and was produced in the 1960's and 1970's by a company Chisholm & Co which resided at 226 St Vincent Street, Glasgow. Peter had searched for more information in various places on-line, for instance the British Newspaper Archive, National Archives, Grace's Guide and company databases with no luck.

I searched through our Clan Chisholm Society records to see if I could find any reference to Chisholm & Co or Cameo whisky. Unfortunately I was unable to find anything. We did have around twenty members in parts of Glasgow at that time but I couldn't see any link to whisky blending and bottling.
I passed the query on to contacts in the Scottish Brewery Archive Association as many members of the SBAA are also whisky enthusiasts. They were also unable to discover anything more.

Images of the whisky are shown below.





If any member is able to help with this enquiry please do let me (Susan) know.

STRATHGLASS HERITAGE ASSOCIATION

The Strathglass Heritage Association talk held at Marydale on Monday 22nd September at 7:30pm was given by Alastair MacPherson a local artist. Titled "A Hidden Talent in our Midst – The Naïve Art of Jessie Chisholm" it discussed the life and artwork of the late Tomich resident.

Alastair had met Miss Janet 'Jessie' Chisholm at her remote home at Lilyoak, Tomich where she lived quite a spartan life and he viewed her artwork which was mainly in water colour pencil on thin paper. He gave her thicker paper to use as well as encouraging her to work in acrylics. Her work has been described as child-like and the subjects often wildlife she would see around her – deer, butterfly's, owls and birds of prey and the famous puma* captured in Cannich in October 1980. Jessie talked of and to the big cat which she had seen in her garden. Alastair helped to sell her works around the world, mainly to the USA.

Although she lived alone after the death of her father Jessie was not reclusive. She talks of being one of a family of eight and when still young learnt of the death of her brother** killed in Palestine in WW1. She travelled to the Holy Land to visit his grave site in Gaza more than once. She had also visited an aunt and uncle in Chester and later took holidays in the Lake District and Dumfries where it is thought she had relatives.

For twenty years she was a post lady in the Highlands and had many tales of those times. She had a love of wildlife and plant-life, enjoying gardening as well as knitting for soldiers. Jessie also talked of attending a Clan Chisholm Gathering at Mullardoch in 1959 for the inception of the Cairn there. She remembered Chisholm's from around the world and having a picnic lunch. She talked of placing a stone on the cairn after the clan chief had done so but this must have been the chief's younger brother Ruari who was president of the Society and who was present on the occasion.

* Many newspapers gave the story of the 'Glen Affric' puma. The following is from The Press & Journal.

On 29 Oct 1980 a puma was captured in a cage-trap near Cannich, Glen Affric, by farmer Donald 'Ted' Noble of Kerrow Farm. He had set the trap, baited with sheep's offal, in the hope of capturing firm evidence to back up years of big cat sightings in the area.

Ted's elderly neighbour, Jessie Chisholm of Tomich, had first reported an encounter with a big black cat in 1976. Over the following years she made several reports of having seen and heard different big cats around the forest near her cottage. Other witnesses' accounts also reported big cats being seen and heard in the area, and of livestock being killed, yet no conclusive evidence was found. Mr Noble had suffered livestock losses of his own and had even seen a big cat stalking his Shetland ponies. So he devised the plan to lay a trap on Miss Chisholm's grounds.

Almost immediately it was suspected that the captured puma was not the wild beast they were looking for but a pampered pet. Had she escaped or been abandoned, or even been planted in the trap as an elaborate hoax on Mr Noble? Experts estimated that the female puma had been roaming wild for less than 48 hours. She was obese, contented and unexpectedly tame. Furthermore, this puma did not match the descriptions given by Jessie Chisholm and the other eyewitnesses. Further sightings continued to be made.

Felicity finds a home

Following capture, the puma was given a home at the Highland Wildlife Park where staff named her Felicity. She became a popular attraction and the subject of many letters to Mr Eddie Orbell, the Park Director. Her behaviour was studied during her time at the Park and she was described by Mr Orbell as "very tame indeed". It is reported that within days she was playing with the children of one of the Keepers. Donald Mitchell, her Keeper, could often be seen walking round the Park with her slung across his shoulders. Keepers also found they had to prepare her food as she would not eat the unskinned rabbits offered. This provided further evidence that she had been hand-reared and was unlikely to be the cause of the livestock predation.

In January 1985, Felicity died peacefully in her sleep at the Highland Wildlife Park. She had taken ill the day before and vets had been called in, but there was nothing they could do. Following the autopsy, it was estimated that she was approximately 20 years old and had died of old age. In the wild a puma's lifespan is about 12 years. The autopsy findings also supported the theory that she had been raised as a pet and been overfed when young.

Becoming a Museum Celebrity

With authorisation from the Inverness District Council's Legal Department, Felicity was sent to Edinburgh to be studied and prepared by taxidermist Philip Howard. She is mounted in a relaxed reclining pose – the staff of Highland Wildlife Park had requested that she not be mounted in a snarling pose because she had been 'a loveable and gentle beast'. The Scottish Museums Council awarded a 50% grant to Inverness Museum towards the taxidermy costs. In 1986 she went on display in the museum's foyer, where she remained a star attraction for many years.

In 1995 she had a trip to Croydon, featuring in an exhibition entitled *Of Monsters and Miracles* which included a display on big cat sightings. The exhibition was a collaboration between Croydon Museums Services and *The Fortean Times*, the journal of strange phenomena. Across the length and breadth of the country there are records and stories of big cat sightings, but Felicity is probably the most famous big cat capture in the UK. The mystery has never been solved as to Felicity's real origins.



Felicity just after capture in 1980



Felicity now in a museum

** Volume 2 of The Clan Chisholm Society Centenary Project to record all Chisholm's who died during or from injuries sustained in WW1 covers The Middle East .

In Gaza War Cemetery there is a Donald Chisholm 1896 – 1917 recorded as born in Knockbain, killed in action at Wadi el Hesi on 8 Nov. 1917.
Perhaps he is Jessie's brother whose grave she visited.

Our genealogy database gives two sisters Rebecca 1894 – 1962 and Christina 1899 – 1976 with parents Jessie Fraser born 1868, died 1923 and William Chisholm born 1863, died 1955.
These are all shown on the gravestone in Tomnacross graveyard.
Jessie's short memoir 'My Life Story' mentions that her mother died very young. She also talks of a brother John close in age to herself and mentions her father and sister dying which left her alone. Jessie only occasionally gives dates in her memoir.

GLEN AFFRIC IN NOVEMBER

The Daily Telegraph of Saturday 1st November featured **Britains Best November Walks**. In the section 'Best for Wilderness and Escapism' the paper gave Glen Affric, Highlands.
The article recommended starting at Drumnadrochit and ending at Morvich. It suggested the walk was 44 miles and would be taken over 4 days. The Affric Kintail Way is a long-distance hiking trail - only suitable for experienced hikers – especially in November when there would be snow around. It suggested staying at the Glen Affric Youth Hostel – one of the remotest in Britain. It also gave suggestions for hotels at the other end of the scale at over £270 per night. The ten mile walk around Loch Affric is the most popular outing.
"A Beguiling mix of freshwater lochs, grand mountains and native pinewoods, Glen Affric is commonly cited as the glen above all other Highland glens. Amazing at any time of year but magical in Autumn."



Part of Glen Affric in high summer

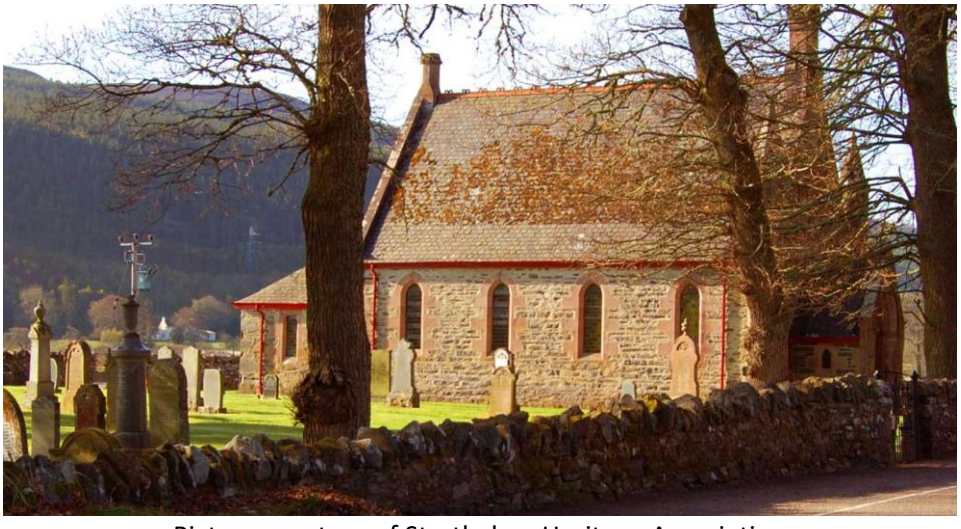


Alltbeithe youth hostel 2002 – picture taken on our stay during the Kintail to Affric Clan Chisholm walk previously featured in Branch Newsletters.

STRUY CHURCH OF SCOTLAND

In Newsletter number 75, February 2024 we gave the sad news that the Victorian Struy Church was set to close. The latest news is that the Highland Council has approved its use as an Art Gallery.
The following is taken from the Inverness Courier.25th October 2025.

A former kirk will find a new life as an art gallery after plans for its future use were approved.
Highland Council planners have signed off on proposals to convert the disused Struy Church in Strathglass into a "multi-used space specifically for an artist to live, work, and display art to the public".
Applicant Paul Boyle intends to convert the interior space to create a second floor within the roof of the kirk.
The newly revised interior would include a large "multi-use" space for use as the planned gallery, which would be accessed through the kirk's main doors. Beyond the gallery, the rear half of the kirk's ground floor would include stairs, a bathroom and an en-suite bedroom with desk area. There would also be another large room which is not labelled for any specific use within the plans.
The newly created upper floor, which will run the full length of the kirk's interior, will include a second en-suite bedroom, a toilet, a kitchen and a lounge.
Externally, the kirk building would remain mostly unaltered, with new dormer windows in the roof being the only notable modifications in the plans.
The grounds' entrance gate and part of its wall would also be removed to make space for vehicle access and four parking bays.
Granting approval under delegated powers, Highland Council planning officer Ross Mcateer, said: "This proposal is seeking to bring into use a vacant church which is not listed, and its re-use and habitation is welcome as it will protect the non-designated asset which is of value to its locality. Planning policies support the principle of the church's conversion to an art gallery space. He added that the proposal 'can be supported'.
The intent stated for the policy in national planning framework is to encourage, promote and facilitate development which reflects our diverse culture and creativity, and to support our culture and creative industries. This proposal would fit these criteria and therefore is compliant with this policy."
A mature oak tree is to be felled due to the proximity of the planned parking bays to its roots. But Mr Mcateer explained that forestry officers had inspected the tree and had no objection to its removal so long as three new trees are planted.
He explained: "The tree has a significant old wound at the base and three several large pruning wounds on the main stem, which are starting to decay. There are two proposed parking spaces at the very base of the tree which is apparently proposed for retention. This is completely unrealistic and excavation required to form car parking would require so much root removal that it would kill the tree. On this occasion the oak tree is not of sufficient quality or in good enough condition that it would be worthy of retention and protection."
Transport officers did not object to the planned road access or the plans for four parking bays.



Picture courtesy of Strathglass Heritage Association

OLD HIGH CHURCH INVERNESS

In previous newsletters we have featured the difficulties the Church owners have had in selling off the Old High in Inverness which was put up for sale in 2022. A Charity has now come forward with a plan for the building. *The following is taken from the Inverness Courier.7th August 2025.*

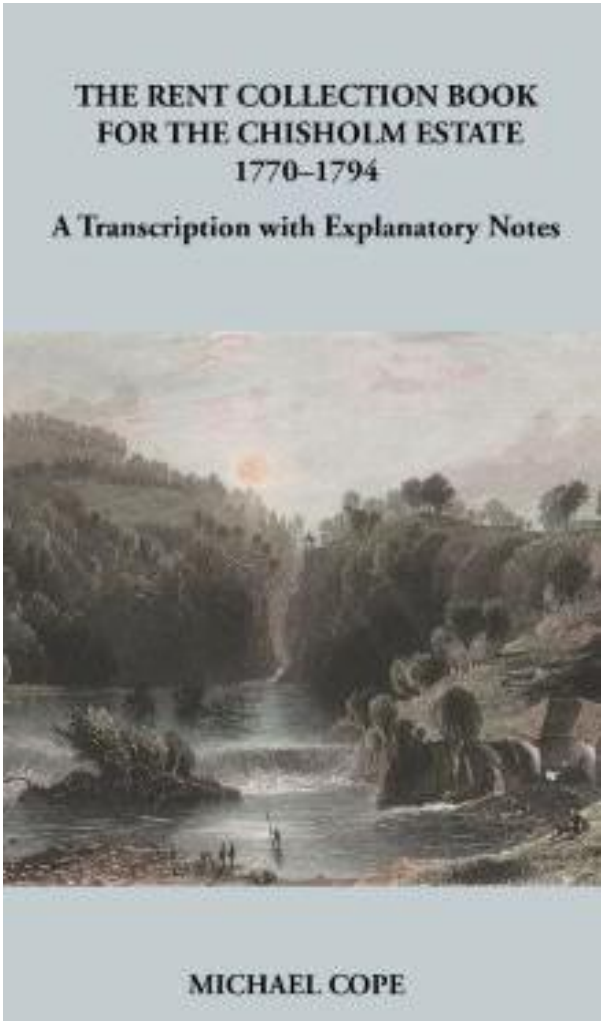
Charity set to take over Inverness' oldest church



Inverness' oldest church - Old High - is set to become a community hub and heritage centre under the ownership of a charity.

The Church of Scotland, which owns the kirk, put it on the market in 2022 for offers over £150,000 but it has now dropped the price to £99,500. A potential sale fell through last November following 12 months of negotiations. It has accepted an offer from the group, Save Old High Inverness.
A spokesperson for the Kirk said they hoped the sale would secure the future of the site, which was built using parts of a medieval church.
Save Old High Inverness plans to carry out studies into how the space could be used in the future. The mound on which the Old High was constructed is believed to be the site where Irish missionary St Columba converted King Brude to Christianity in 565.
The saint is also linked to the mythology of the Loch Ness Monster.
An account of the missionary's life thought to have been written in the 7th Century tells of him encountering a strange beast in the River Ness.
The oldest part of the Old High was used as a prison after Bonnie Prince Charlie's defeat at Culloden, and captured Jacobites were executed in the church grounds.
A bell believed to have been rung daily for more than 300 years forms part of the sale. The curfew bell dates back to 1703. According to the Church of Scotland it was originally rung at 17:00 to signal a night-time curfew before a later tradition started for ringing it at 20:00. The bell is listed in the sales schedule for the Old High, and the new owner would take responsibility for it.

The Rent Collection Book for the Chisholm Estate 1770-1794



This new publication records the fascinating activities of the Chisholm Estate at the end of the 18th century detailing the properties, collected rents, names and shares of tenants across twenty-five years.

The Chisholm Estate in the late 18th Century comprised more than one hundred separately identified lowland or valley farms and upland grazing areas distributed through Glen Affric, Glen Cannich, Glen Urquhart, Strathglass and the Beauly Firth littoral.

Known documents describing the estate have previously been limited to a few sett and rental manuscripts for the years 1775 to 1792 and these have now been supplemented by a recently re-discovered manuscript rent collection book for the estate from the period.

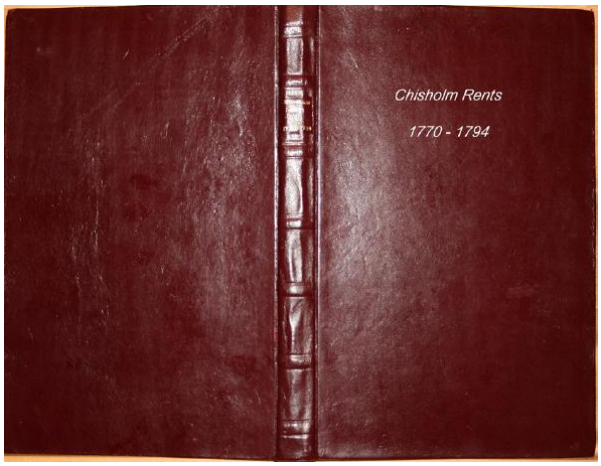
The rent book has been transcribed and its contents are presented here for the first time.

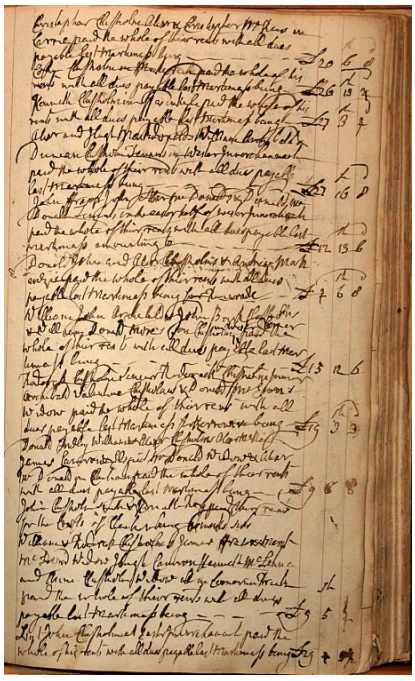
Michael Cope has previously published the well received books 'The Chisholm's of Lietry – Two centuries of a Highland Family' and 'The Photographs of Archie Chisholm – Life and Landscapes in the Outer Hebrides 1881 – 1913'

He has now completed a study of the Rent Collection Book for the Chisholm Estate (Erchless) 1770 – 1794.

Our UK branch archive holds a scanned copy of the complete record and the original ledger is now held in the Highland Archive in Inverness. Dr Margaret Collin carried out this work in 2014.

See image of outer cover (newly bound by Wilfrid & Virginia Medlam in the 1980's) and a page from the ledger showing the difficulty in transcribing.





The book can be ordered through a link from our website.

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