

ISLAND INDUSTRIES – SKYE AND THE OUTER HEBRIDES

A 2-day event to examine some of the attempts to develop industries in the islands

Friday 9 - Saturday 10 May 2008

Columba 1400 Centre, Staffin, Skye

Organised by The Islands Book Trust

www.theislandsbooktrust.com

Following the success of the first event held in Skye by The Islands Book Trust in May 2007 entitled 'Crossing the Minch' and held at Sabhal Mor Ostaig, we have arranged a short event which will focus on and compare some of the attempts to promote industrial development in Skye and the Outer Hebrides.

Early travellers to the islands commented on the comparative absence of manufactures and towns, and even today there are few successful examples of large-scale commercial production in the Hebrides. But there have been several attempts at establishing such industries, usually based on the region's natural resources, from the manufacture of kelp, Sir James Matheson's pioneering attempts to extract oil from peat, Lord Leverhulme's ambitious plans for Lewis and Harris, to diatomite mining in Skye. In fact, it is easy to forget that some of the best scientific brains have been applied to issues of industrial development in the Hebrides. More recently, significant effort has been applied to developing information technology industries in Skye and the Outer Hebrides, and we take a look at the prospects for success in this different sphere.

This short conference brings together excellent speakers from both sides of the Minch – and beyond – to consider some of these attempts, and reflect on the reasons for the ultimate failure to sustain large-scale industry in the islands. Like all Islands Book Trust events, we aim to bring together people from different backgrounds in the belief that the mix of various perspectives promotes both greater enjoyment and learning. The event will be held in the relaxed surroundings of the Columba 1400 Centre in Staffin, Skye, close to the remains of the local diatomite mine and associated railway and ropeway – which we plan to visit.

The timing of the 2-day event has been organised to fit in with ferry services across the Minch, and overnight accommodation can be arranged in the Staffin area for those who wish this.

PROGRAMME

Columba 1400 Centre, Staffin, Skye

FRIDAY 9 MAY

6.30pm Registration

7.00pm Dinner

8.00pm FRED SILVER (Stornoway): Some Reflections on Industrial Development in Skye and the Outer Hebrides

SATURDAY 10 MAY

9.30am NORMAN MACDONALD (Skye): Science and Skye in the 19th Century

10.30am Coffee

11.00am RODDY MACDONALD (South Uist): The Sea-weed Industry in Uist

11.45am CAMPBELL GRANT (Skye): IT in the Hebrides – A Hotspot of Industry?

12.30pm Lunch

1.30pm ROGER MIKET (Northumberland): Diatomite – A Lost Skye Industry

2.15pm Visit to remains of Staffin diatomite mine and associated railway

4.30pm Tea and General Discussion

5.00pm Close of Conference

BOOKING FORM

ISLAND INDUSTRIES - Skye and the Outer Hebrides

2-day conference 9/10th May 2008

Name

Address

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Tel

Email

I wish to book for the conference as follows
(please circle as appropriate):

	Book Trust members £	Non-members £
All inclusive fee *	45	50
All conference sessions only	10	15
Individual conference sessions	3	5
Dinner on 9 May	10	10
Lunch on Saturday 10 May	5	5
Accommodation in local B and B per night	22	22

*All conference sessions, dinner and lunch, overnight accommodation on 9 May

PLEASE BOOK ASAP

PLEASE MAKE CHEQUES PAYABLE TO 'THE ISLANDS BOOK TRUST' AND
RETURN COMPLETED FORM WITH CHEQUE TO: Alayne Barton, Sealladh na
Mara, Coll, Back, Isle of Lewis, HS2 0JR. (tel 01851 820946)