

Ronnan Cottage at Altbea

Inauguration April 2017



Ronnan Cottage, the 'new' LSCC hut is situated in Aultbea, facing the sea, in an area of outstanding scenery with opportunities for mountaineering and climbing.

The official inauguration on Easter Saturday 15th April 2017

Miracles don't happen. I must disagree-
We're seeing one right here, overlooking the sea!
And this was the start. On a cold winter's day,
When a club was basking on shores far away,
A text to the Prezzie on sunny Greek rocks
"You won't believe this-think out of the box!
The gift of a hut has come out of the blue
From a mystery donor, no-one knows who!"

"Buy us a cottage? A mere fantasy,
An impossible dream" as they all did agree
Perhaps it's a cover to launder a crime
As owners, we're guilty – the Prezzie'd do time!
But the lawyer said "No, it's a genuine fact;
Just go out and find one and then I can act"

So deciding criteria was taken in hand
How far? Large or small? By the sea or inland?
After meetings, long searches and trawling the net,
This place was the choice, as good as it gets.

You all know the club when there's something to do-
No stopping the action for what, how and who!
Nothing escaped between chimney and drains-
Heavy duty or detail-you could see all the gains,
Whether painting or digging or needing repaired
All just pitched in – no hubbies were spared!
And for aged club members there was even a glimmer
I know – I have checked- they could come with a zimmer!

So thanks to the work squads, their long tiring days,
But to our secret donor, the highest of praise.
Without them, we never would be here today.
So raise up your glass- and shout "Hip, Hip, Hooray"

Pat Brown

Background

The Ladies Scottish Climbing really had no notion of acquiring a third club hut but in October 2012 the Club was contacted by a solicitor acting on behalf of an anonymous female benefactor offering us £125,000 to buy a new hut.

After many deliberations and an EGM it was decided to look for a property in the NW Highlands within one and a half hours drive of Inverness, preferably near a community from where we would be able to source services.

The final choice was the Post Office House known as Belmont House in Aultbea. Our benefactor influenced us as she thought it would make a good club hut. The purchase was completed in October 2014. The building was very run down and damp as it had stood empty for several years. Roof repairs, wood worm work and damp repairs needed to be urgently carried out before we could even start planning renovations to turn it into a club hut.

Over the next two years it was gradually converted. In order to let it out to groups of members and other clubs we had to meet Highland Council planning and fire regulations. Money was donated from Club funds and many members generously donated money. We converted the heating system, the bathroom and kitchen to suit a club hut, decorated and simplified the garden.

Bedroom – before



Bedroom – after



Some of this work was carried out by local contractors but much by members and their partners, to whom we give our sincere thanks.

Later in October 2017 we successfully applied for and received a grant of £4000 from the SMT towards completing further drainage work required.

Before



After



Before



After



This brief summary does not do justice to the many hours and planning that our hut custodian, Alison Higham, Club members and husbands contributed to this project.

Official Opening

The official opening of Ronnan was held on Easter Saturday April 15th and attended by 30 members and 18 guests. Sarah, our President, made a great speech, cut the ribbon at the front door and unveiled the plaque. Pat Brown read out her poem, above, especially written for the occasion. The success of the new hut was well toasted and followed by lots of eating and drinking.

The hut was already being well used by members and other clubs with positive feedback.



*Adapted from articles written by Alison Higham
- our hut custodian at the time*