



HEBRIDEAN ISLAND CRUISES

ISSUE FORTY FOUR • SPRING 2024

# THE HEBRIDEAN TIMES

SOUVENIR EDITION





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Cover Image: HRH The Princess Royal unveils a commemorative plaque on the 60th Anniversary of *Hebridean Princess*

## Welcome to the Spring 2024 edition of THE HEBRIDEAN TIMES

This special anniversary issue of The Hebridean Times focuses mainly on our Diamond Anniversary Celebrations, marking 60 years since the launch of *Hebridean Princess*, formerly *Columba*.

We are delighted that our celebration luncheon, on 12th March, was attended by HRH The Princess Royal and Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence. You can read all about this momentous occasion and enjoy the photographs of the day on pages 8 and 9.

Also in attendance was Mr Tony Binns, original owner of Hebridean Princess. Tony, and his late wife Susan, dreamt up the idea of a small, luxury cruise ship around the Western isles of Scotland back in 1986 whilst storm bound in Loch Scresort on their Fisher 34 sailing boat. Tony tells the story of 'The Birth of a Princess' on pages 6 and 7, where you can also find a brief history of the transformation of the vessel from *Columba* to the delightful 'HP' we all know and love today. To think that the conversion from a Cal Mac ferry to luxury cruise ship took only 6 months is nothing short of miraculous!

After almost ten years with the company and two at the helm, we say a sad farewell to Captain Caz Palmer. We wish Caz all the best in her new role. Read her final 'View from the Bridge' article on pages 4 and 5.

Farewell also to Chief Purser, Lyndsey Milne, who will be sadly missed - refer to page 14 for all our crew news.

Another milestone recently celebrated was 25 years of service for Sales and Marketing Manager, Jonathan Moffatt. See pages 12 and 13 for Jonathan's Hebridean story.

I should like to thank regular guest, John Noorani, for devising the competition in this edition - a quiz all about *Hebridean Princess* and her history. Why not test your grey cells to be in with a chance of winning a special commemorative prize? A little hint - if you have a copy of John's book, '*M.V. Hebridean Princess - The History of the Ship*', I think you might find some of the answers contained within its pages!

I do hope that you enjoy this issue of The Hebridean Times and that we have the opportunity to welcome you on board one of our small and intimate ships in 2024.

*Louise.*

**Louise Pratt**  
Editor



Diamond Anniversary Celebrations



12-13

25 Years of Service



# VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE

## Farewell from Captain Caz Palmer



Captain Caz Palmer



Captain Richard Heaton and Captain Caz Palmer

**A**s I am writing this, another winter refit is nearing completion and we are getting ready to welcome our first guests of the season. We have some exciting itineraries in store this year, not least the return to Ireland in the summer.

This winter, as with most, has not been without its challenges. There have been some long days, some unexpected problems, but the ship and the crew are coming together. One of the biggest projects this winter has been the conversion of a space on deck 2 into a pastry and bakery section. I am sure that I am not alone in looking forward to sampling what our chefs can come up with from this new dedicated area.



*It has been my privilege to be your captain*

The ship has an important anniversary coming up, as the 12th March 2024 marks 60 years to the day since Lady Craigton launched her and she began her life as the CalMac ferry *MV Columba*, before being purchased and converted into *Hebridean Princess* in 1989. The 12th March will be a special day for us all on board *Hebridean Princess* as there are not many ships still operating after 60 years and I personally know of no other quite like her. She has made an impact on all of us and it is only fitting that we celebrate her birthday in style.

The 12th March will also mark a milestone for my professional career as it will be my last day on board after nearly ten years. Many of you have heard the story about how I became interested in seafaring at the age of 2 (I wanted to drive the ship that I could see from a beach). It has become more than a career. Being on and around ships is my vocation and it is where I am meant to be. I am excited to announce that I have been offered a position as a trainee pilot with the Port of London (the biggest commercial port in the UK). This is a career transition that will see me (once I have completed seven months of intense training) pilot some of the largest ships in the world along one of the most iconic waterways, whilst giving me the opportunity, for perhaps the first time, to live at home. Leaving the Hebridean family was not something I envisaged at this time; however, the opportunity arose, and as always, the Hebridean family has supported me. It was one of the hardest decisions I have had to make, whether to accept the new role or continue with Hebridean, but I feel that the time is right.

I find myself reflecting on my time on board *Hebridean Princess* (with occasional periods on board the *Lord of the Highlands* and *Lord of the Glens*) and in many ways I do not recognise myself from when I stepped on board in Norway in 2014. My skills, knowledge and confidence have grown beyond measure, and I have made friendships that I hope will last a lifetime. We have had





Training On Board *Lord of the Highlands*



Ice Bucket Challenge in Norway

crew come and go in that time, new regulations come into force that the ship must comply with and many guests cruise with us coming back time and again for that truly inclusive feeling. There have been challenges, there have been the best days and I have seen more sunrises than I can count. One of my earliest experiences on board *Hebridean Princess* was completing the ice bucket challenge on the bank of a glacial fjord in Norway. That day, I was also introduced to the infamous David Indge, neither of which I will ever forget!

After eight years as Chief Officer and some time as Fleet Safety Officer, I had the privilege of being promoted to Captain on board this iconic ship and, being the first female ever to do so, made it even sweeter. Whilst I expected challenges, I never anticipated how much it would change me as a person, nor how my skills would develop. The end of 2023 brought a series of storms to the area. One memorable day saw us berthing in Largs. It took everything that I had skill-wise to get the ship safely alongside that day and looking back, it is not something I could even have attempted 12 months prior. *Hebridean Princess* has taught me that my own limits are boundless.

I should like to personally thank all those who have made my time with Hebridean Island Cruises such a pleasure and in leaving, I know it will be a decision I may regret (many people go their whole lives without finding what I have had here). It has been an honour to know you all and my privilege to be your Captain.



*Hebridean Princess* in Dry Dock



M.V. COLUMBA



1964



Commissioned by the Secretary of State for Scotland, and registered to the Department of Transport, *M.V. Columba* was built by Hall Russell in Aberdeen and launched on 12th March 1964.

1968

Initially, *M.V. Columba* could carry 600 passengers and 50 cars with cabins for 50 guests below the car deck. Passenger capacity increased to 870 in 1968.



1970-72



From 1970, *M.V. Columba* carried out special livestock runs from the Outer Isles in the autumn. In 1972 she became the first ferry to work Sunday services. These were combined with short cruises.

1983-84

In 1983-84 welding was used on the hull to outline large letters spelling Caledonian MacBrayne.



1988



*M.V. Columba's* last 'Sacred Isle' cruise to Iona departed on 22nd September 1988, before she was retired from service by Caledonian MacBrayne.

At the close of her 1988 season, she was bought by Mr and Mrs Binns. She was dry docked, shot-blasted and extensively rebuilt to accommodate up to 67 guests and 6 cars.



1989



*M.V. Columba* was renamed *M.V. Hebridean Princess* by HRH The Duchess of York on 26th April 1989 and was registered in Glasgow.

THE BIRTH O

The ship was originally commissioned in 1962 at the height of the cold war. She was one of three sister ships to be commissioned by the Secretary of State for Scotland. They were *Hebrides*, *Clansman* and *Columba* which were to become known as the three fat ladies. They were the first drive on drive off ferries to operate in the Western Isles.

*Columba* was the last of the three sisters to be launched on 12th March 1964. She was indistinguishable from her sisters, save for tiny touches to her livery; mainly a small Iona cross on the bow jackstaff.

She entered service as a car ferry with David MacBrayne on 30th July 1964. Initially she could carry 600 passengers and 50 cars with cabins for 50 guests below the car deck.

The service proved extremely popular and by December 1964 *Columba* had carried 7200 cars to and from Mull.

In 1968 extra seating and buoyancy was added to increase her capacity to 870 passengers

Cars were loaded via a hoist. Cars would drive on to the hoist with the first two turned on a turntable, before being lowered to the level of the car deck where they drove off and were turned again on a turntable.

She made her first trip to the Outer Isles in 1970, carrying cattle on the car deck.

In 1979, she made her first trip to St. Kilda, somewhere she still visits twice a year as *Hebridean Princess*.

*Columba* was withdrawn from service in 1988, making her last trip for MacBraynes in their "Sacred Isles Cruise" to Iona on 22nd September.

FROM COLUMBA TO HEBRIDEAN PRINCESS

A couple from Yorkshire, Tony and Susan Binns, who operated canal boats on the Leeds/Liverpool Canal, and enjoyed sailing their own boat around the West coast of Scotland, had an idea of sharing their experience and enjoyment with others.

Tony says "During our many sailing forays on our Fisher 34, we had realised that the level of hospitality offered on many of the islands was, shall we say, rather limited, but Country House Hotels were booming on the mainland. Caledonian MacBrayne offered reasonable services to the islands, but often the timings were not appealing and their ships were designed to be functional rather than provide luxury.

# F A PRINCESS

*The scenery was magnificent, but how could it be experienced in a degree of luxury? Yachts could be chartered, but that is only suitable for those with experience, and anyway, that did not really pass the luxury test.*

*The notion of creating Hebridean Princess was dreamt up in Loch Scresort, Rum whilst "Gale Bound" on our Fisher 34.*

*We listened to the 12.55 pm shipping forecast, to learn there was still no possibility of getting back home - "Gale 8 continuing, possibly 9 later". We continued to listen to the news - there was an oversupply of oil at the time and the oil price had dropped to the degree that North Sea production was being paused and ships were being laid up.*

*Really, ships going cheap?*

*And that's it, Hebridean Princess was conceived. But the gestation period was to be quite lengthy and very fraught.*

*Susan and I decided on the name "Hebridean Island Cruises" because it seemed to say it all in just three words."*

When they discovered that *Columba* was up for sale, Mr and Mrs Binns purchased her and had her sailed to George Prior's yard in Great Yarmouth, where she was transformed into *Hebridean Princess*.

She was renamed by HRH Duchess of York in Great Yarmouth on 26th April 1989 and set sail on her maiden voyage as *Hebridean Princess* on 27th May 1989, cruising from Oban around the Western Isles and west coast of Scotland.

Initially, she retained a car-carrying capability and carried up to 67 passengers and a crew of 27, giving the option of leaving at intermediate ports. In 1993, the car-carrying capacity was removed and additional cabins constructed to allow a dramatic increase in the crew-to-guest ratio, with a crew of 37 now serving just 49 passengers in considerable luxury.

The late Queen Elizabeth II chartered *Hebridean Princess* in 2006 to celebrate her 80th birthday with her family.

At Hebridean, we have always boasted about the high number of repeat guests we have and in 2010, we had the pleasure of again hosting the late Queen Elizabeth II and the Royal Family for a private holiday.

Hebridean Island Cruises was granted a Royal Warrant for the provision of cruise holidays on *Hebridean Princess* in January 2012.

## M.V. HEBRIDEAN PRINCESS



1989



*M.V. Hebridean Princess* departed from Oban on 27th May 1989. Her first cruise was titled 'The Islands of the Inner and Outer Hebrides'.

1993-94

The winter refit saw the removal of the ship's vehicle carrying capacity and the installation of the Well Deck. This now stores two Hardy tenders and two beach landing craft, which are launched using cranes.



1996



*M.V. Hebridean Princess* sails on her first cruise outside of British waters to the Norwegian Fjords.

2006

The late Queen Elizabeth II charts *M.V. Hebridean Princess* for a private holiday to celebrate her 80th birthday.



2010



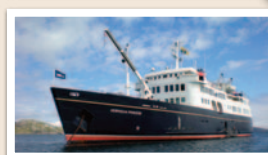
The late Queen Elizabeth II charts *M.V. Hebridean Princess* for a second private holiday.

2012

Owners of *M.V. Hebridean Princess*, are granted a Royal Warrant by appointment to the late Queen Elizabeth II for provision of cruise holidays.



2024



Today, *M.V. Hebridean Princess* carries just 48 guests with a crew of 38 and continues to cruise the waters of Scotland's west coast and Western Isles.





# DIAMOND ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS



Captain Richard Heaton welcomes HRH on board

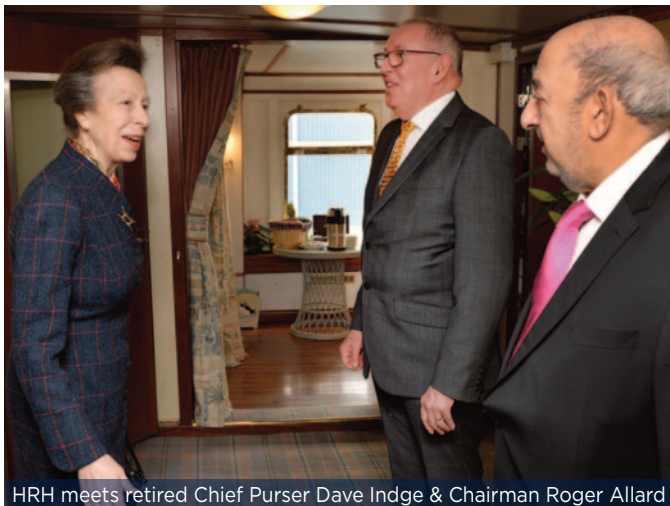
On 12th March 2024, we celebrated the 60th anniversary of the launch of our flagship vessel, *Hebridean Princess*, formerly *MV Columba*, with a formal lunch attended by HRH The Princess Royal.

Of the anniversary, Managing Director, Ken Charleson, said:

*"We were delighted to welcome HRH The Princess Royal back on board Hebridean Princess to help us celebrate such a momentous occasion. Since 1989, Hebridean Princess has established herself as the epitome of luxury, small-ship Scottish cruising, earning an enviable reputation for her renowned level of service and attention to detail. It is testament to her design and build quality that Hebridean Princess is still sailing the waters for which she was designed and built."*

Tony Binns, original owner of *Hebridean Princess*, commented:

*"It is comforting to know that the "conception" of Hebridean Princess, in Loch Scresort back in 1986 is still very much a part of the scene around Scotland's Western Isles in 2024. Thirty eight years – thus meaning Hebridean Princess has outlived MV Columba."*



HRH meets retired Chief Purser Dave Indge & Chairman Roger Allard



Vice Admiral Sir Tim Laurence, Mr Tony Binns and HRH





Senior Purser Louise Campbell, HRH The Princess Royal and Steward Andrej Jegorvov



HRH meets Senior Officers and Regular Guests



# FOLLOW IN THE WAKE OF ROYALTY ON SCOTLAND'S NEWEST CRUISE

Robin McKelvie



**The bagpipes skirl the haggis into the restaurant; outside hulking Highland mountains brood as an otter splashes by the bow. Afterwards an endless array of single malts – and Taittinger – tempt in the lounge, toasting starry Hebridean skies. This is the *Lord of the Highlands*, Scotland's new small luxury cruise ship. It is a voyage fit for Royalty, nevermind a Lord, that sweeps just 38 guests through the epic Caledonian Canal and – uniquely – into the Hebrides too.**

Boarding in the Highland capital of Inverness, this level of luxury came as no surprise to me. I have sailed on Hebridean Island Cruises' other vessel, *Hebridean Princess*, which the late Queen Elizabeth II chartered twice as a more than capable stand-in for her beloved *Britannia*. *Lord of the Highlands* is cut from the same sumptuous tartan cloth; like an ultra-exclusive Scottish country house party that gloriously rollicks on for an entire week.

The difference with this house party – and to all the other small ships cruising Scotland – is *Lord of the Highlands* has its dram-soaked cake and eats it. The first part of our week was spent working our way through Thomas Telford's remarkable 200-year-old, 60-mile Caledonian Canal through the Great Glen from Inverness to Fort

William, then pushing into the isles. The former is no lazy river-style cruise: we had to tackle 28 hulking locks, including the two great lock flights at Fort Augustus and Corpach, as well as a quartet of lochs – Dochfour, Ness, Oich and Lochy.

Our first target was Loch Ness, sailing under the weight of history after a morning visit – there were excursions every day – to Culloden, the site of the battle in 1746 that frames the lands we sail through and secured the Royal dynasty, a blood line that runs directly to King Charles III.

Loch Ness, though, feels more Scandinavian than British, a fjord that all the water in all the lakes in England could not fill. Swirl in Wales too and Nessie's home is still not sated. Captain Tony Reading respects Loch Ness, calling it, "an inland sea you have to take seriously." It is a deeply dramatic sail, cutting between those kilometre-high hills, a heron feasting on an eel on the banks adding to the sense of special occasion.

We lost the best part of three days to this world of vaulting mountains, ruined castles with a romance Disney can only dream of and trim whitewashed canal-side stone buildings. Fort Augustus is a village woven together with the latter, an old British garrison town, where we were a tourist attraction as we worked our way up the half dozen locks. Hopping ashore for a pint in one of the canal-side pubs – being moored alongside every night is a joy as often cruising in Scotland you are at anchor, making shore visits trickier – the barman was incredulous that we would be heading out into the open sea as well. The uniqueness of *Lord of the Highlands* continued to draw attention wherever we went.

Our arrival into Atlantic waters was a spectacular one at Corpach. We sneaked through the morning mists past the sleeping hulk of Ben Nevis – at 1,343m the UK's highest mountain – into Loch Linnhe. I had packed my binoculars away for the wildlife-rich Sea of the Hebrides so had to borrow one of the ship's pairs when our expert Scottish guide Jean Blair spotted a herd of red deer on the shore. Then another guest spotted an otter. Then another otter and an unlikely third to go with the porpoises and sea eagles. *Lord of the Highlands* is not billed as a wildlife cruise, but it is a glorious bonus that would have Sir David Attenborough purring.

We stopped long enough in Oban to grab ultra-fresh seafood from a shack on the pier and a dram at the distillery, before we were westward-bound, rounding Castle Duart, the ancestral home of the Macleans. Sir Fitzroy Maclean bought the castle for the clan in 1911, restoring it and planting a rowan here for good luck on his





Lord of the Highlands

100th birthday. In this land of mountains, castles and tall tales, the lines between history and myth, between fact and fiction, constantly become blurred. I half expected to find Vikings sailing in the Sound of Mull.

Instead of Vikings and super spies, Mull's capital of Tobermory welcomed us with sunshine and half a day of walks, cafes and seabird spotting. Sightseeing is so much more civilised when you can nip back aboard for a wee tippie in the lounge between attractions. A fortifying smile too - I never spotted bar staff Ashley and Alissa succumb to a frown all week no matter the weather; no matter how poor the patter.

Looking at the charts on the bridge - all passengers are welcome to have a nose around - day six was our toughest sea day. Many a ship has struggled to negotiate the wild waters of rugged Ardnamurchan Head, the UK mainland's most westerly point. It proved a breeze: literally. A gentle wind and slight seas took us into Attenborough territory again as a fellow guest yelled "whale ahoy!" when the smooth, grey hulk of a minke whale broke the surface. It proved the first of three minkes that day.

The Sea of the Hebrides is another world to the Great Glen. If you thought Mendelssohn's Hebridean Overture is spirit-soaring, wait until you experience the real thing. To the south beach-kissed Coll sparkled, but the real jewel lay north with Skye and the quartet of Small Isles. Our target was the unmistakable volcanic outline of the Isle of Eigg.

Eigg is the Hebrides in wondrous microcosm: An Sgùrr soars 393m-high in all its pitchstone lava glory, Scotland's Sugar Loaf; cliffs vault along a rocky coast where dinosaur footprints have been found; starched white beaches welcomed us along with gannets, arctic terns and guillemots as we pushed into Galmisdale. We were welcomed too by a community who bought out their own island in 1997 and have not looked back. The gleaming new An Laimhrig community hub could not be better set up for us, with a brace of shops and a waterside café where guide Blair vanished bills away on the ship's credit card. The Royal treatment is unstinting, but Eigg also offers a window into another world few passengers would otherwise ever experience.

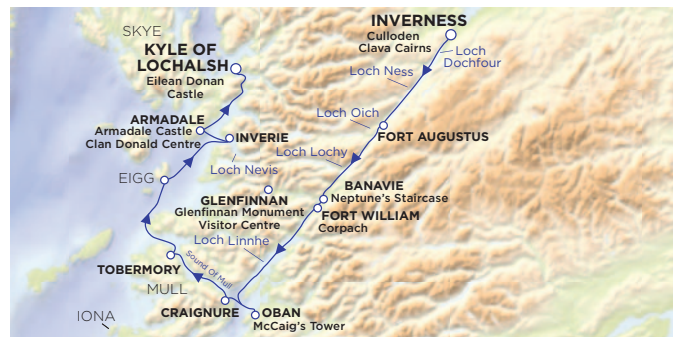


Drinks Reception, Panorama Lounge Bar

Another extraordinary experience came across the water in Inverie on the Knoydart Peninsula. The local community (who again run their own affairs) disliked the owner of the Old Forge, the UK mainland's most remote pub - it is a 15 mile hike to the bar from Kinloch Hourn - so much that they bought him out following an appeal that drew in cash from all over the world. They joyously re-opened in summer 2023. You can savour an IPA (Inverie Pale Ale) from the local brewery as you toast the success with the clearly delighted community.

The last day on a cruise can be tinged with sadness as you limp back to port. Not here. It was filled with more joy: the morning brought Scotland's most photographed castle, Eilean Donan (think Highlander and James Bond); the afternoon Plockton, arguably the prettiest village in the Highlands. And the evening saw our second gala dinner.

The food all week was stellar, digging deep into Scotland's lobster, lamb and beef filled larder. That haggis was piped in and Hotel Manager Andy Allan did the honours, turning the Scottishness dial up to 11 with his recital of Robbie Burns' 'Address to a Haggis'. It was a fitting conclusion to a voyage fit not just for a Lord, but a King, one that allows those not quite able to afford to charter their own ship the unique experience of cruising not only the epic Caledonian Canal, but also the beguiling world of the Hebrides.



**HIGHLAND WATERWAYS DISCOVERY**  
**Inverness to Kyle of Lochalsh**  
**Monday 20th to Monday 27th May 2024**  
**7 nights including 2 Gala Dinners**  
**Prices start from £4,010 per person**  
 based on 2 people sharing a deluxe twin bedded cabin

# 25 YEARS OF SERVICE

Jonathan Moffatt, Sales and Marketing Manager



***“So, what’s your plan after A Levels, Paul?”***

**I quizzed as we sat in the rather featureless sixth form common room, munching through savoury treats from Greggs.**

***“A course in Travel and Tourism” he replied.***

My own plan was to study and become a teacher, but Paul’s answer made me think hard. Travel and Tourism was something I liked the sound of – it felt new, fresh and something not a lot of people were talking about. I set about researching courses...

In the end, I opted for the historic cathedral city of Durham and enrolled on a course in Business and Finance, but with the travel and tourism electives I liked the sound of so much.

It was here in Durham I met a young Yorkshire lass named Emma - from near a place called Skipton. I’d never heard of it, but pretended I had.

We studied together throughout our time at university, both graduating in the mid-1990s with honours degrees in Business and Finance.

But now was the time to put university life behind us. We had to find work. I’d heard of an upcoming and expanding tour operator recruiting in York. I applied and got the job - creating itineraries for groups of overseas tourists travelling to Britain – corporate clients, incentive groups, students, and the like. I loved it – and it was just what I wanted.

With the Millennium fast approaching, it was time to move on. So, Emma and I moved to the village in West Yorkshire where Emma had grown up, but I needed to find a job closer to our new home, rather than having the daily commute to York which was such a bore.

*“A luxury Scottish cruise company based in Skipton – are you sure?”* I asked with a puzzled look.

Emma’s sister handed me the Skipton newspaper.

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**Due to expansion, luxury cruise operator,  
HEBRIDEAN ISLAND CRUISES  
is looking to recruit a  
Sales and Reservations Consultant.**

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It’s got to be worth a shot, I thought. I applied, and a couple of days later a package landed on the door mat with a great thud. It was my invitation to attend an interview, accompanied by one of the most impressive holiday brochures I’d ever seen. It was a copy of the 1999 *Hebridean Princess* Cruise Directory, which truly showcased what I could only imagine was one the most wonderful holiday experiences available to anyone.

From the gold foiling on the front cover, to the amazing photography used inside, everything about this brochure and the company itself was designed to impress.

The interview was long – and left me, not only exhausted, but with a much greater understanding of what this company aimed to deliver to its guests – the best holiday they are ever likely to take. I needed to be one of its employees, and to my pleasure I was offered the position.





Collecting a Food and Travel Award



Royal Crown in Amsterdam

I started on 1st March 1999, at the company's then head office on The Broughton Hall Estate just outside of Skipton (home to Mrs Pumphrey in the reincarnated Channel 5 TV series of *All Creatures Great and Small!*). Twenty-five years later I'm still here – although we now occupy different premises closer to the centre of the pretty market town of Skipton, and which are not subject to any TV filming!

People question why I have stayed here so long.

*“Do you fancy a change?”*

*“Is there something else you'd like to try?”*

*“Are you bored?”*

The answer to all of these questions is simply *“No”*. Naturally, as with anything, there have been challenging times, most recently the coronavirus pandemic ending our cruising operation for 18 months, but on the whole, it's been an amazing 25 years and a wonderful journey.

Of course, I've witnessed many changes – we now have a computerised reservation system, replacing the large cardboard reservations charts and sequence of colour coded symbols we used to have in 1999.

**YOU CAN NOW EVEN CHECK AVAILABILITY AND BOOK ONLINE VIA OUR WEBSITE SHOULD YOU WISH!**

Ships have come and gone – *Hebridean Spirit* – and her exotic itineraries to the Mediterranean, Indian Ocean, South Africa and South America; *Royal Crown* with her European river cruises along the Rhine, Danube and Dutch waterways.

And now, we welcome *Lord of the Glens* and *Lord of the Highlands* to the Hebridean fleet alongside *Hebridean Princess*.

There have also been major highlights, none so more significant than the chartering of *Hebridean Princess* by the late Queen Elizabeth II for private holidays – twice.

All of these things have ensured a role that has constantly evolved, but what makes it most enjoyable is the team of wonderful people I share my experience with every day – both on board and ashore. This is what makes Hebridean so special – whether you are an employee or a guest boarding one of ships – thank you all so much for making 25 years so pleasurable.

1999 was a great year for me – a milestone – not only since I embarked on a fascinating career path, but also because I married the young Yorkshire lass I met all of those years ago at university – so 2024 will witness a silver wedding anniversary too.

Now with two teenage sons, one at university studying to be a teacher, and the other at sixth form, sat in the common room munching savoury treats from Greggs, I wonder what path they will take – but whatever it is – I hope it is as enjoyable as mine.

With warmest wishes

*Jonathan*

## CREW NEWS

### A FOND FAREWELL TO CHIEF PURSER LYNDSEY MILNE

Chief Purser, Lyndsey Milne, will shortly be finding her land legs again after accepting a shore based role in Wales. Lyndsey has been working as Chief Purser on board *Hebridean Princess* since 2021 and has enjoyed building family-like relationships with guests and fellow crew members alike.

Lyndsey had been previously employed as Food and Beverage Manager on board both *Hebridean Spirit* and *Hebridean Princess* so has been part of the Hebridean family since 2001.

Lyndsey will be greatly missed and we wish her all the very best for the future.



### A NEW SHIP AND A NEW ROLE FOR ANDY ALLAN

Andy Allan will be a familiar face to many having worked on board all three ships in the Hebridean fleet.

Andy has been employed as Hotel Manager on *Lord of the Highlands* since its launch in 2022, and will be taking over from Lyndsey Milne as Chief Purser on board *Hebridean Princess*, working opposite Jim Fraser.

Andy loves sailing the beautiful Scottish Highlands and Island and looks forward to sharing the magic and wonder of a Hebridean cruise with all our guests. We are sure that you will all welcome Andy back on board *Hebridean Princess* as he settles into his new role.

### WELCOME TO CAPTAIN MAGNUS DAVIDSON

We are delighted to welcome Captain Magnus Davidson to the Hebridean family. Captain Davidson will work alongside Captain Richard Heaton and take command of *Hebridean Princess* in April.

Captain Davidson, from the Shetland Isles, joins Hebridean after a long cruise career sailing all over the globe.

*"I'm delighted to be joining the iconic Hebridean Princess and to be sailing in home waters again, showcasing the unique beauty, history and natural environments of Scotland and Ireland."*



### WELCOME BACK TO NEW HEAD CHEF MARC CALDERBANK

New Head Chef, Marc Calderbank, first joined *Hebridean Princess* as Sous Chef in 2004. One of the highlights of his two years on board was cooking for the late Queen Elizabeth II when she chartered the ship for a family holiday in 2006.

After working as a private chef and estate manager for a number of high profile clients, Marc is finding his sea legs once again as he joined the ship at the start of the season in March.

We hope you all enjoy Marc's delicious new menus, along with some more familiar, classic Hebridean dishes.

### CONGRATULATIONS TO KIRSTY BUTLER

Kirsty has recently been promoted from Assistant Hotel Manager to Hotel Manager on board *Lord of the Highlands*. Kirsty has been with *Lord of the Highlands* since before the launch of the vessel and has been instrumental in its set up and success.

Having previously worked on both *Lord of the Glens* and *Hebridean Princess*, Kirsty has an in-depth knowledge of the ships and how they operate from the hotel side. We wish her all the very best in her new role and know that she will continue to strive to create a perfect cruise experience for all our guests.





# HEBRIDEAN ISLAND CRUISE'S CHARITY PARTNER



## sea-changers



Hebridean Island Cruises and our guests have been supporting the marine conservation charity Sea-Changers for over a decade and have contributed well over £40,000 in that time, to support the charity's varied community based marine conservation activities, including many projects in and around the islands of Scotland. The partnership continues and as Hebridean is introducing online booking, guests now have an opportunity to donate £10 as part of the booking process. If you would like to support the marine environment further, you can make an online Gift Aided donation here: [cafdonate.cafonline.org/24698](https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/24698) or scan the unique QR code above.

## WHERE GUESTS' DONATIONS GO

Sea-Changers supports community based marine conservation projects all around the British Isles. They enable communities to take action to protect and enhance their local marine and coastal environments and / or the flora and fauna that share those habitats.

Some recent examples of projects they have enabled in Scotland include:

- The Hebridean Whale and Dolphin Trust's floating classroom, which is sparking passion for marine conservation and giving children a unique and immersive experience onboard a Scottish whale research yacht. The floating classroom sails to remote schools in Wester Ross and Gairloch on the west coast of Scotland to provide fantastic outdoor learning opportunities and inspire future ocean advocates. The recent Sea-Changers grant has enabled 125 children to take part in a floating classroom and around 50 adults from surrounding local communities also joined up for open boat evenings.
- Sea-Changers supports many projects to enable communities to remove pollutants and take direct action to reduce the amount of plastic in our oceans. One example is our funding to support Journey Blue to set up their fourth container at Eyemouth Harbour on the East coast of Scotland to add to their current collection sites on the North Yorkshire Coast. These containers are set up to provide local fishermen with easy access to a free fishnet waste disposal facility. The project partners directly with harbours and ports to provide a positive solution for end of life fishing gear, which previously was all too often discarded at sea.



Sea-Changers would like to thank Hebridean Island Cruises and their guests for their continued support.

# HEBRIDEAN PRINCESS QUIZ

TO MARK THE SIXTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF THE LAUNCHING OF HULL NUMBER 912, THIS QUIZ IS ALL ABOUT THE HISTORY AND CAREER OF M.V. COLUMBA WHICH BECAME M.V. HEBRIDEAN PRINCESS.

The initial letter for the answer will, when re-arranged, spell the name of her builder.

Our thanks to regular guest, John Noorani, for devising this testing quiz.

- 1 What is the name of the Suite on board *Hebridean Princess*?
- 2 In 1973, M.V. Columba operated an overnight service to this island port, now, often in connection with a visit to Eriskay, M.V. *Hebridean Princess* calls.
- 3 M.V. *Columba* visited the Loch Kishorn Fabrication Yard, conveying a party visiting the oil platform Maureen being constructed there. What was the Ducal name of the Principle in the party?
- 4 What was R.M.S. *Columba*'s original port of registry?
- 5 In 1975, M.V. *Columba* took over T.S. *King George V*'s cruises from Oban. These cruises were known as The \*\*\*\*\* Isle Cruise. Fill in the blank.
- 6 What mainland port did M.V. *Columba* operate from for a week in 1973?
- 7 In Caledonian MacBrayne service, what is the collective name of the most westerly group of islands visited?
- 8 What is the name of the flag flown at the stern of a ship?
- 9 What was the surname of the brothers who founded the company which would later become David MacBrayne Ltd.? There is a memorial to one of the sons, David, on Kerrera
- 10 This class of cabin is located on the Hebridean Deck of M.V. *Hebridean Princess*.
- 11 In her initial timetable, this was one of her ports of call.

To enter, please email the answers to each of the 11 questions, re-arranged with the first letter of each answer spelling the name of her builder, together with your name and address to [louise.pratt@hebridean.co.uk](mailto:louise.pratt@hebridean.co.uk) by Tuesday 30th April 2024.

One lucky winner will be randomly chosen from all the correct entries and will receive a bottle of our *Hebridean Princess* blended Scotch whisky, a pair of 60th Anniversary Glencairn Glasses and a brand new Crossley Bear as presented to HRH The Princess Royal.



Please note email addresses may be used for marketing purposes.  
If you would prefer not to receive email communications from Hebridean Island Cruises, please state this in your entry.

## CROSSWORD COMPETITION in ISSUE 42

Our thanks to all who entered the Emerald Isle Anagram Competition in the last issue. The answers are shown below.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| 1. RECTANGLE SLAM (GLENARM CASTLE)       | 6. CHECKLISTS DART APART (ST PATRICK'S CATHEDRAL) |
| 2. CABINS AFT TITLE (TITANIC BELFAST)    | 7. JOSTLE NOW SNATCH (JOHNSTOWN CASTLE)           |
| 3. SHABBY EYE ROUGE (GREY ABBEY HOUSE)   | 8. SHRIEKED DULY OUR (KILRUDDERY HOUSE)           |
| 4. AGENCY USA WAITS (GIANT'S CAUSEWAY)   | 9. HINTS DRAIN ALL (RATHLIN ISLAND)               |
| 5. RECTORY DAFTS LAW (WATERFORD CRYSTAL) | 10. BETTERING COACH HERE (COBH HERITAGE CENTRE)   |

The two lucky winners were Anna Donnelly and John Cawthorne who have both received a voucher to the value of £500 per person to be redeemed against any of the 4 Irish cruises on board *Hebridean Princess* in 2024.



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