

THE GATLIFF TRUST

Trustees:

H. Gatliff (Chairman)
P. Harwood (Hon. Secretary)
B. Selwyn.

"Anglebury"
Kingsway Avenue,
Woking,
Surrey.

April 1964.

Dear

RAINIGADALE YOUTH HOSTEL

You visited this hostel in 1963 and may like to have news of its progress. As you may know already if you have seen our first report, it was found by a young YHA member from London on a visit to the North West Highlands and Hebrides, and made available to us by Mr. Roderick MacInnes (Roddy as we now all know him). The S.Y.H.A. owing to administrative difficulties, do not feel able to run or even recognise hostels in the Outer Isles, but they handed over to us a fund that they had been given for the purpose some years before but been unable to use, and this provides us with an income now slightly over £30 a year which we can use to help meet the expenses of running the hostel if receipts from the hostel itself are not enough to cover them.

In 1962 the hostel had 71 visitors with 161 bednights. In 1963 the number of visitors increased to 84 (with a few day visitors as well) and the number of bednights to 240; 14 of the visitors were from Scotland, 52 from England and Wales and 18 from overseas. The high proportion of visitors from outside Scotland may be due simply to the Hebrides having a high proportion of non-Scottish visitors generally, but in the absence of any official publicity we have little idea how visitors hear about the hostel, and it would be a help to know.

Receipts from the hostel itself were about £40; its accounts will be included in those of our Trust which will be sent to any hostellers who may wish to see them. They were slightly more than ordinary running expenses, and we were glad to be able to make Roddy a small allowance for his work as warden in addition to the agreed rent, etc. The income of the fund was used in part to pay for installing calor gas and some additional equipment. Four additional beds were also provided on loan by the English visitor to the Outer Isles, who originally equipped the hostel.

As in the first year the special attraction of the hostel was not merely the beauty of its surrounding hills and sea, but the welcome given by the people to hostellers. A number of visitors recorded their appreciation of both in the housebook. Perhaps the most striking are "This hostel is surely what the founders of the Youth hostel movement sought to provide" "The perfect small hostel - rooted in the soil with a sense of eternity about its surroundings." "I have never been made so welcome in the whole of my life as I have here, nor have I met with such kind-hearted and generous people." "We enjoyed a Sunday Service in the village chapel, having been specially invited ~~out~~ and having had the honour of having half the service in English just for us to understand the proceedings, and we are very grateful."

Our Trust, too, were very grateful, and glad to be able to make a small contribution to the funds of the church in 1963, which will be repeated this year. Allowing for this and some other incidental expenses, there should normally be a margin on the income

of our Fund, which is so invested that its income increases a little, and has been a little further increased by the addition over the last two years of some £10. of donations made at the hostel. We hope that it may be possible with the help of this margin to open another small hostel on somewhat similar lines probably in the Uists. Search was made for one there last summer, but without success: we hope to make a more thorough search in the coming summer. We should welcome help in this, both from anyone who may be going there and from any who have local contacts.

We would end by saying that the hostel has, we feel, continued to encourage in those who go there that spirit of independent adventure and sense of the value of wild and beautiful places that Keith Chambers in whose memory it was established, so greatly inspired among those who knew and worked with him ten years ago.

Yours sincerely,

Hon. Secretary.