

Trumpan Church

Ruined Trumpan Church was the scene of a bloody incident in the Clan's history. A group of Clanranald MacDonalds crossed from South Uist and surprised folk in church and, setting fire to the thatched roof, burned them to death. The MacLeods gathered from all round Loch Follart and retaliated, defeating the MacDonalds and burying the dead under a stone wall, or dyke. This gave the incident the name of the Battle of the Spoiled Dyke.

Later a second battle was fought in Waternish and on this occasion the MacLeod champion defeated the MacDonald Champion. A piobaireachd was composed to commemorate the victory.

The soldier and Gaelic poet, Major Neil MacLeod is buried at Trumpan.

Map of Waternish

Waternish is the middle of the three peninsulas that reach out north from Skye into the Minch.



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The 15th Clan MacLeod Jubilee Parliament

Lewis ✨ Harris ✨ Skye ✨ Raasay
26 July ~ 5 August 2006

Tour of Waternish, Monday 31 July

Please arrive at the Dunvegan Village Hall at 13.45 and be ready to get on the bus. The Tour of Waternish will depart from the Hall promptly at 14.00. The bus is free, and you can sign up at registration. **PLEASE TAKE THE BUS!** We will return to the Dunvegan Village Hall by 17.00, in time for "An Introduction to the Piobaireachd".

MacLeods and Waternish

Waternish came into the possession of Leod in the 13th century and he gave it to his son, or grandson, Torcall, who was later to acquire Lewis. So, despite being so close to Dunvegan Castle, Waternish belonged to the MacLeods of Lewis for over 300 years.

When the MacLeod chief lost his lands in Lewis, in the late 1590s, Waternish was granted by King James VI to the Fife Adventurers, a group of Lowland Scots gentlemen who went off to colonise the Isle of Lewis. Unish House, at the northern tip of Waternish, may have been built about this time by one of the Fife Lairds. On the collapse of the colonisation, due to stiff resistance from the MacLeods in Lewis, the Isle of Lewis and Waternish were granted to the MacKenzies. It was only in 1610 that Sir Rory Mor MacLeod, 15th Chief of Dunvegan, received a charter for Waternish in exchange for his claim to the MacDonald lands in Trotternish.

The Fairy Bridge

The Fairy Bridge is at the only access point, by road, from Dunvegan. According to one traditional it was here that the MacLeod chief parted from his fairy wife and was given the Fairy Flag. After the Disruption of the Church of Scotland, in 1843, Fairy Bridge became a preaching station for members of the Free Church.

Lochbay and Stein

In an attempt to improve the fishings in the Islands, Stein was established as a fishing station in the 1780s, though it never prospered. A few of the 18th century houses can still be seen down on the shore.