

2011 - SCOTLAND

14-15 May 2011

Ullapool - a football match and a celebration

The road signs were simple - either North or South.

STAYING PUT

The weather improved once we arrived in Ullapool. The rain stopped and the overcast conditions eased with the sun shining through occasionally. We disembarked around 5pm and, as soon as we set up our van in the caravan park, we jumped on our bikes to check the town out. The place looked very interesting with a reasonable port area and lots of shops. The internet access and TV reception were excellent. There were even three hotels, one of which was reviewed positively in the Lonely Planet book. We decided to stay for two nights.

The morning saw rain start up again so we donned our coats and walked around checking out the gift shops. After lots of earlier research Heather finally purchased a scarf after which we settled down to read newspapers as the rain bucketed down and the wind buffeted our van. I decided to join the locals in the nearest pub to enjoy the FA Cup Final at 3pm. Back home he would have been up early morning to watch. Not surprisingly I found all the people in the bar were as expert as I was about the players, the teams and even some of the football politics.

Later that evening, in the only pub that had live music, we celebrated our 40 year wedding anniversary with a lovely dinner.



Married to the same person for 40 years.



Very high tidal range



Which way? N or S?



Its very surprising to us that even in the remotest parts of Scotland internet access continues to be quite reasonable.



Despite the overcast, rainy conditions our trip through this area was memorable



Ardvreck Castle ruins

ULLAPOOL TO NORTHERN COAST

The road from Ullapool to Durness, a distance of 69 miles, is described as “a scenic feast”. We drove through very wide heath-covered valleys that gave way to rockier country studded with small lochs. In a number of valleys we came across large areas of gorse bushes in full bright yellow bloom while in the distance the rugged glacier-scoured ridges were misted over by clouds. Absolutely wonderful scenery.



The 15th Century Ardvreck Castle, on Loch Assynt, was fascinating. We got a glimpse of it from the road and stopped to walk to it and take some photos.

We arrived at the northern coastal town of Durness (where John Lennon lived for some years) but did not stop. We did





though take time to marvel at the cavernous Smoo Cave, a place inhabited by man since time immemorial. It was time then to turn south and inland down to Lairg. The drive was through remote and desolate high moor land - with very few farm houses or sheep.

