



Introduction

I would like to extend my gratitude to each and every one of your beautiful eyes. My assumption is that you have bought Skye Stories Volume 2 because you read and enjoyed Volume 1. This warms the heart of my cockles. So, as we say here in the desert of Saudi Arabia, Shokran Jazeelan (Tapadh Leat for Gaelic speakers. 'Thank You' for English speakers).

Before I begin, I've been asked by my editor Steve, who, through no fault of his own is English and wants to know how to pronounce Uig. Many of you who have worked in the Skye service industries no doubt has had to hear Uig being pronounced You-Ig. I know that I heard this many, many times. Rather than seem rude and correct the You-Ig say(er). My ploy was to repeat what they had just said but pronounce Uig the correct way...which is Ooh-Ig. Uig means 'bay'. When I worked at Ooh-Ig Hotel, there was one Eastern Scottish coach driver who would slow down at the top of Uig, by the Earlish cliffs so that his passengers could get a right good look at the stunning view – Ooh-Ig in all its finery. Those of you who have stopped there know what I'm talking about. Those of you that have not, need to get yourselves there ASAP (ish). It's spectacular, especially if you're lucky enough to have blue skies overhead and a hot sun beating down on your napper. Anyway, this driver would always say: 'And here is Uig. Notice I don't say... and here is Uig bay because if I did, I would be saying here is Bay bay. Uig is Norse for bay you see.' The driver said that every effin' time...and got a laugh.

It boggles my mind that I'm writing an introduction to my second book. Those of you who know me are familiar with my medical condition, chronic laziness. The fact that I've managed to get up off my backside and write two volumes is purely down to the support and encouragement I've received on social media for my stories and poems. You all know who you are.

Skye Stories Volume 2 sees me older but not much wiser. My Linicro time is coming to a close and fate has something else up its sleeve for me. What it didn't have was the likelihood of getting a girlfriend, but I could always daydream. The ever-present threat of having to return to Glasgow hung heavy over me and I'd resigned myself to the fact that I would be Springburn bound at 16 years old. Through a series of fortunate events, things didn't quite play out that way.

Entering fourth year at school in Portree, I was a mass of hormones and spots. This would be the year when I realised that I'd better actually do some work and try to get a couple of O Levels. Thoughts of a career in Nursing had yet to enter my head and the most important things in my life were music, friends, fun and trying to find love. Walking the corridors of Portree High I was no longer the squeaky voiced Weegie with black flares and a threadbare grey jumper. My voice had lowered and my Glaswegian accent softened.

I invite you to join me on the second part of my journey on the Isle of Skye. Read on to discover what new music I found. What new clothes I wore, and did I ever find a girl to kiss? Through my wee stories and poems, I hope to convey how important my time on the Island was and how those five years continue to impact my life today. As I sit here in Dammam, Saudi Arabia, typing these words during a pandemic, I find that my memories of Skye offer me a great deal of comfort and a certain number of chuckles. My goal, as always, is to entertain and hopefully give you a wee laugh. For those readers who have yet to set foot on Skye, I hope these pages spark a desire for you to visit my spiritual home. If you ever make it to the North End and pass Linicro will you have a look for my bike? I'm sure it's there, somewhere.

Last Night

Last night I had a dream that I was back on the Isle of Skye
Soaring across the Linicro rocks on an eagle's breath so high.

Last night I dreamt I heard my Granny sing in the corner of my
bedroom
The sound of Gillean mo rùin as clear and crystal to vanquish
the Saudi gloom.

Last night I dreamt of my Aunt Margaret's scones all treacle
sweet and butter melted
In my dream her face was kind and happy and I spoke of what
we left unsaid.

Last night I dreamt I was in the living room of the family
Macinnes in Totescore
The old man in his chair his wife in the pantry and all of us
were young once more.

Last night I dreamt of a high school dance and my eyes were
glued to Christine
No longer unavailable and out of reach just waiting to kiss
this boy of sixteen.

Last night I dreamt of a drunken night of fun staggering out of
the Ferry Inn
In the morning light of Uig we awoke with no hangover as we
let our shift begin.

Last night I held the hand of a summer love and a Pernod kiss
so sweet
And for a moment a lifetime passed as my last summer
became complete.

Last night I dreamt of a life I led and my heart and soul filled
with pride
For a moment I swear I was on the hill with my wife and kids by
my side.