

KENNY MATHESON TO GIVE 2019 ANGUS MACLEOD LECTURE ON LORD LEVERHULME THEME

Mr Kenny Matheson, the well-known Aberdeen-based businessman and broadcaster, and a native of Gravir, is to give this year's prestigious Angus Macleod Memorial Lecture on the evening of **Thursday 24th October at Pairc School, Gravir, South Lochs, Lewis.**

The title of the lecture will be: **'The Leverhulme Initiative – An Opportunity Lost or a Narrow Escape for Lewis and Harris?'**, an appropriate theme as we look back a century on from Lord Leverhulme's ambitious but ultimately unsuccessful attempts to transform the island economy.

In his lecture, which will be given in English, Kenny will reflect on the character and motives of Leverhulme, the challenging local and international circumstances in which he drew up his plans for the island in the aftermath of World War 1 and the Iolaire Disaster, his assumptions and way of working, and what lessons can be drawn from the experience.

Was Leverhulme unlucky in the timing of his venture? Was his strategy fundamentally flawed or might a more inclusive approach have led to a different outcome? How far are the historical controversies surrounding Leverhulme's ideas still relevant to more recent and current debates about the type of commercial activities which may or may not be compatible with the traditional ethos of the island?

These are some of the questions which Kenny will address in what promises to be a memorable and thought-provoking evening. All are welcome to attend what has become a highlight of the island's historical calendar. Admission is free and refreshments will be available. Please put a note of the date in your diary now.

Welcoming the announcement, Donnie Morrison, chair of Comunn Eachdraidh na Pairc, said: 'I am delighted that my distinguished friend and fellow former Gravir resident Kenny Matheson has agreed to give this year's lecture on a theme which still resonates in Lewis today. Kenny is well-placed to provide an informed perspective on one of the most controversial episodes in the island's history and to comment on the lessons it may hold for current-day economic development issues.'

This will be the 16th lecture in the series to commemorate the life and work of the late Angus 'Ease' Macleod of Calbost, South Lochs. The lectures are organised by Comunn Eachdraidh na Pairc in partnership with e-Sgoil, the Islands Book Trust, and Angus Macleod's family. It is planned to broadcast the lecture live over the internet.

Kenny Matheson has held various senior management positions in banking and is currently a management consultant providing business advisory and non-executive directorship services to many companies and other clients. He is a regular contributor to BBC Gaelic programmes on economic and financial affairs and football.

For further information, please contact John Randall, vice-chair of Comunn Eachdraidh na Pairc, at john673randall@btinternet.com