

REPORT ON THE ANNUAL PRIZES GIVEN BY THE HIGHLAND SOCIETY OF LONDON

The Highland Society of London presents two awards to students at the University of the Highland and Islands – one for the best dissertation on a Highland theme, and one for the best creative writing portfolio.

The winner of the dissertation prize is Yvonne D’Cruz Noble (pictured receiving her degree from HRH The Princess Royal), who studied for BA (Hons) Culture & Heritage Studies. Her dissertation is titled “The North Ronaldsay breed of sheep that has evolved in shaping the unique cultural traditions of its island.”



The abstract from her dissertation reads as follows:

The background of the North Ronaldsay sheep is: a primitive and indigenous breed that was marginalized to the foreshore by the erection of a 13 mile, 6ft. high perimeter dyke, confining them to subsist almost exclusively, by foraging for seaweed in perilous seas. Their dilemma was to allow for the economic principles in farming and land grazing and livestock husbandry of the hinterland in order to sustain the imperative economic needs of the island’s community. These principles were also inextricably linked to the Island’s Crofting Tenure practices which prevailed from the early 1800s. Therefore, the aims and objectives of this study are to investigate through the basic principles of research by asking the question of how did this unique phenomenon of seaweed-eating take place? Accordingly, treading down the path of further knowledge, it would be valid to ask the following six questions? Firstly, what was the fundamental reason or circumstances that precipitated this change in diet, followed by who was instrumental followed by why, when and where did this take place? Lastly but not least, the all-important question of: How did this contribute to the shaping of the unique cultural traditions of the island?

The winner of the creative writing prize is Riven Peake (pictured receiving her award from UHI Head of Development, Alison Wilson).

Her portfolio is entitled “The Story of the Rain”, comprising a short story combined with interwoven poems, focusing on the passions of the human condition.

Copies of both prize winners’ work are available to Members of the Society by contacting info@highlandsocietyoflondon.org.

