

THE CRUISGEAN WAS FOUND IN MY
GRANDMOTHER'S HOUSE (MRS MARY CAMPBELL
SNIABH COTTAGE, CORNAIG BEG) AND BEEN
IN MY POSSESSION SINCE 1996.
I KNOW VERY LITTLE ABOUT IT EXCEPT
IT WAS USED IN OLDER DAYS FOR
LIGHTING BY BURNING FISH OIL.

The cruisegean, or crusic lamp, burned fish oil.

An early 18th century Iron Hanging cruise lamp

Object: Chandelier

Description: An early 18th century iron Hanging cruise lamp, presented by the late Viscountess Gort.

Acc. No: 386

Item No: 386

Subject Type: Light

Object Type: Lighting accessory

Location: South Solar

Mediums / Material: Iron

NOOKS and CRANNIES: An Cruisgean

Professor Mackinnon wrote an entertaining account of a visit to the lighthouse keepers on Dubh Heartaich soon after it was built. That lighthouse was made famous through the apprenticeship of R.L. Stevenson and his subsequent "Kidnapped", and of course Rubha a' Mhail is another prominent landmark to remind us of that enterprising family of engineers. A lens from Rubha a' Mhail was used by Davy Sutherland as the focus of an outstanding feature within Colonsay House walled garden.



Colonsay boasts its own Stevenson light, a rather modest structure rejoicing in the name of An Cruisgean, "The Cruse". A cruse is a clay container which could be transformed into a lamp by being filled with oil and equipped with a simple wick - a rag would suffice, but a rush was more efficient and minimised the smoke. Perhaps the name was a wry comment on the power of the light, since it is deliberately of very limited range.

The original Stevenson lighthouse has been preserved by the Commissioners for Northern Lights and can be seen beside its modern but less romantic replacement. It would be interesting to know when it was installed - can any reader help? The structure is a tribute to the boiler-maker's art, with neat ventilation pieces around the base and near the top. The original brass hinges survive, although the doorhandle has evidently been renewed. The writer does not know what mechanism, if any, survives within.