



**HIGHLAND MG OWNERS' CLUB
SPRING SAUNTER TO BUTE
5 - 8 MAY 2026 INCLUSIVE**

WELCOME!

Welcome to the Highland MG Owners' Spring Saunter 2026. I hope you have an enjoyable time. If you need to contact me, I am on 07777 641436 (not hands free though!).

Richard Jenner
Highland MGOC Events Coordinator

GENERAL:

SOME GENERAL POINTERS:

The plan is to visit Mount Stuart on Wednesday followed by a short drive to Kilchattan Bay before returning to Rothesay for a wander around the town. On Thursday, the plan is for a longer drive around the island with an option to shorten the route if desired. As always, the programme is flexible and it is up to you what you do or don't do. There is some information on things to see and do below.

WHO IS GOING?

Margaret & Stuart Brock
Malcolm Hope
Richard Jenner
Jean & Nick Simpson
Tony Smith
Vivienne & Nick Rickets
Chris Moore (plus Brandy)
Moirra & Jim Mould (arriving evening of 6 May)
Patsy & Nick Thompson (plus Archie)

(9 cars, 14 people)

FERRIES

Colintraive – Rhubodach (Inverness to Colintraive, 177 miles, 4 hours 15 minutes notional). 5-minute crossing, ferries every 30 mins (sometimes 20 mins or 40 mins), 5-minute check-in. See:

<https://www.calmac.co.uk/en-gb/route-information/colintraive-rhubodach/#/>

Wemyss Bay – Rothesay (Inverness to Wemyss Bay, 179 miles, 4 hours 20 minutes notional). 35-minute crossing, ferries every 45 – 60 minutes, 20-minute check-in. See: <https://www.calmac.co.uk/en-gb/route-information/wemyss-bay-rothesay/#/>

Note, ferries cannot be pre-booked but can be pre-paid.

FUEL

First, there are only 2 garages on Bute, both in Rothesay, and neither has E5. So, the aim should be to tank-up with E5 if you need it as close to the ferries as you can manage. We will not be driving long distances on Bute.

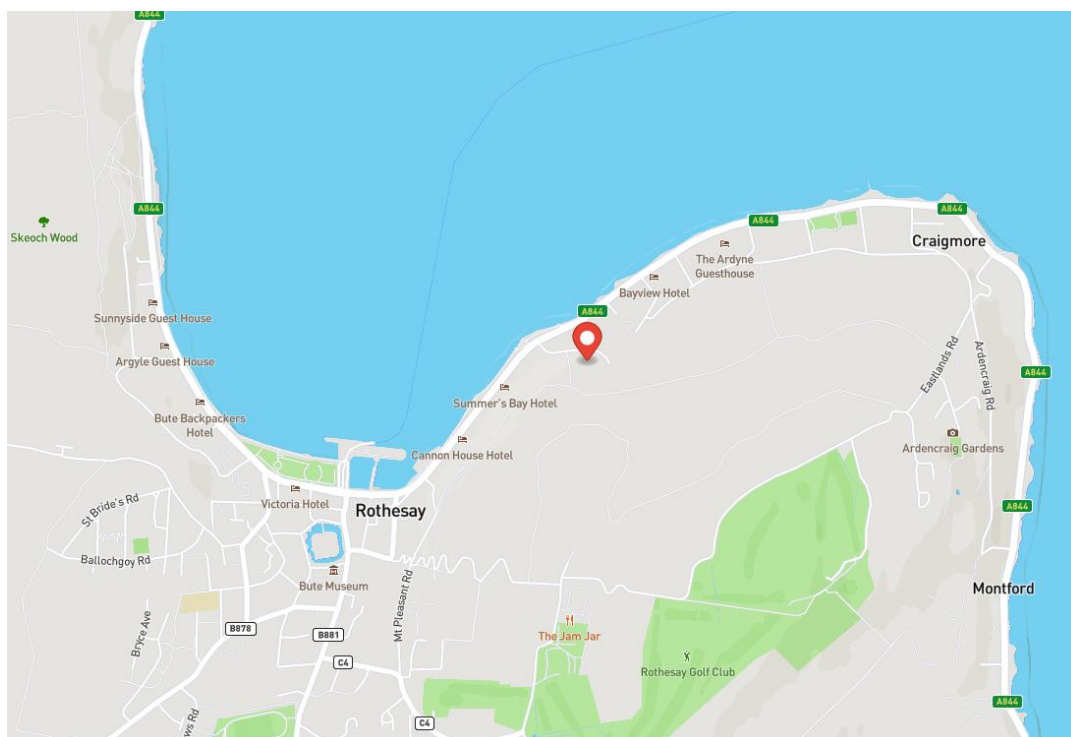
For those going via Wemyss Bay, there are several filling stations with E5 in Greenock and the last chance before the ferry is the BP garage on the A78 to the southwest of Greenock at PA16 0PX (5 road miles from Rothesay)

For those taking the Colintraive ferry, the choice is somewhat limited. If you are planning to go via the A82/A83 (Rest & Be Thankful), the last E5 is at Onich (Gleaner, PH33 6RZ); this is around 110 miles from Rothesay so will be a stretch for cars with smaller tanks or higher consumption especially if you plan to return on the same route. Alternatively, if you route A82 then A828 to Connel and then along the A85, there is a BP garage with E5 at Karan Awe, Taynuilt, PA35 1HT; this is 75 miles from Rothesay via Inveraray.

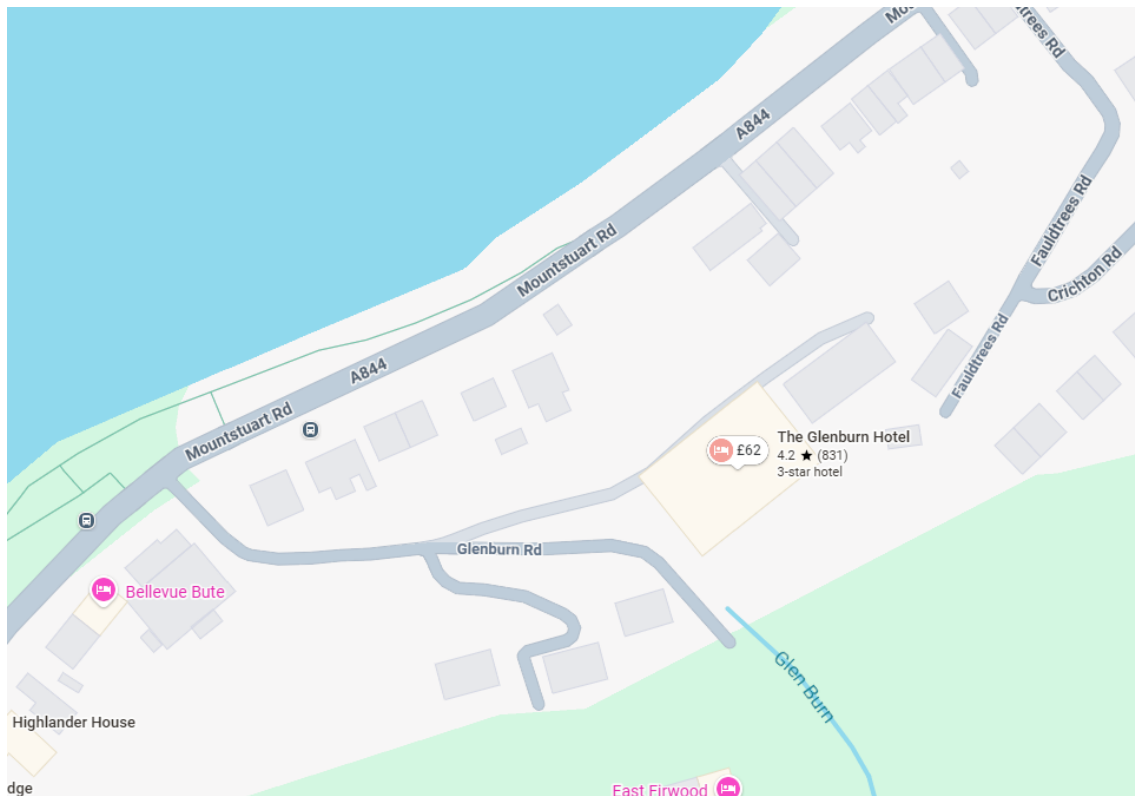
I hope everyone is carrying some fuel additive, just in case you have to use E10.

WHERE ARE WE STAYING?

The hotel is the Glenburn, Mount Stuart Road, Rothesay, PA20 9JP. Stuart has asked the hotel to cone off some parking spaces for us. Stuart has also booked dinner for us as a group at 7:30 pm on each day. The hotel is marked with the red pin below.



For the hotel, turn off the A844/Mountstuart Road to go uphill on the Glenburn Road (red post-box on corner), the hotel entrance is on the left (gates with name plate) as the road forks to the right and has a no through road sign.



THINGS TO DO AND SEE ON BUTE

In addition to Mount Stuart (see below), you may want to visit some of the following attractions.

ROTHESAY

Rothesay Castle, Castlehill Street, PA20 0DA. Historic Environment Scotland. Open 9:30 am to 5 pm (last entry 4:30 pm), closed noon to 1 pm. Concession £6, HES members free.

Bute Museum, by castle on Stuart Street. Open 10:30 am to 3:30 pm, concessions £4.

Victorian Toilets, on Ardbeg Road.

Winter Garden on the esplanade is an interesting Grade A listed building that now functions as the island's cinema.

AROUND THE ISLAND

St Blane's Church, at the southern end of the island, Historic Environment Scotland. Open all year, free to visit.

Ardencraig Gardens High Craigmore, PA20 9EZ, from Mount Stuart Road heading east then south, go uphill to Albany Road, signposted. Open 9 am to 4 pm.

Beaches:

Ettrick Bay On the north-west coast of the island. It's a mile-long stretch of golden sand with stunning views over to Arran. Ettrick Bay Tearoom serves up ice cream, tasty meals and mouth-watering cakes. The tearoom is dog friendly. Beach facilities are good with car parking, toilets, picnic areas and a small children's play area.

St Ninian's Bay also known as The Straad, is a small horseshoe-shaped bay covered with white cockle shells. Just further south than Ettrick Bay, it is protected by a spit of land called St Ninian's point. It's well worth taking a wander out along the point for the fantastic views of Inchmarnock and to see the ruined 6th-century Ninian's Chapel. Beware though – it gets cut off from the mainland at spring tides but we will be visiting at neaps with High Water approximately 4pm on Wednesday and 4:45 pm on Thursday. The bay, the surrounding fields and the saltmarsh to the northwest are home to a wealth of birdlife. Look out for waders including ringed plover, dunlin, oystercatcher and curlew. Shelduck, greylag and Canada geese all breed in the area and white-tailed eagles have also been spotted here.

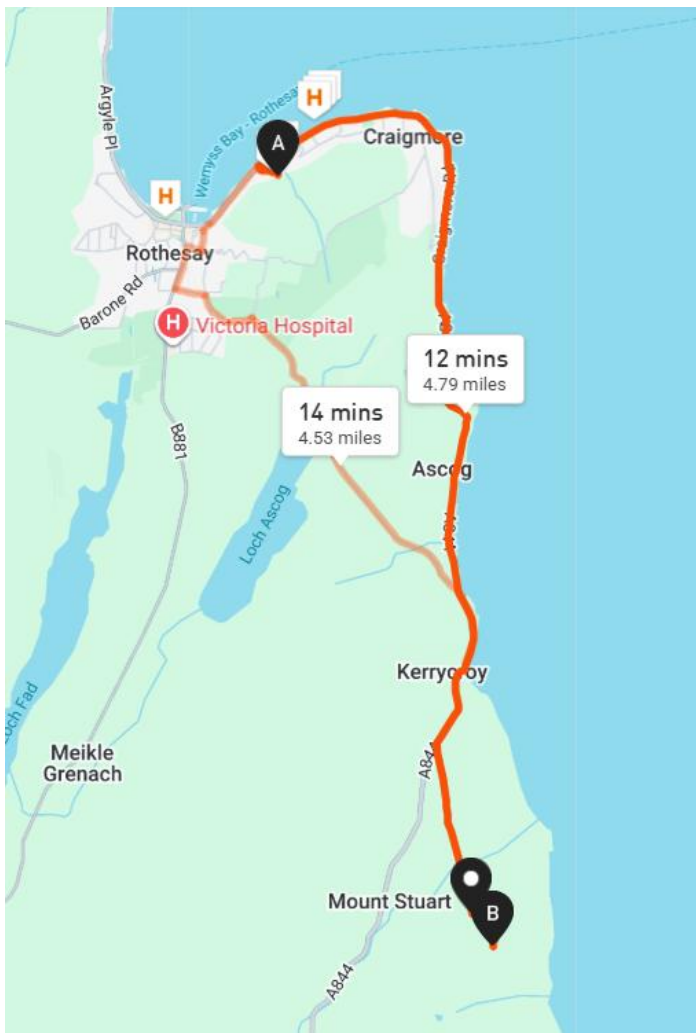
Scalpsie Bay. Further south is secluded Scalpsie Bay, a beautiful stretch of reddish sand. It's just a five-minute walk from the road along a signposted path. This is the place on Bute to spot seals. Head to Seal View viewpoint where you can watch the large colony of seals, both Common and Grey, on their rocky perches. This tranquil beach is a great place to relax, soak up the scenery of Bute and admire the views to Kintyre and Arran.

Kilchattan Bay sits near the southern tip of Bute on the east coast. It offers wonderful views across the water to Great Cumbrae. Known locally as the 'Wee Bay' it sweeps around to the north, while to the south is the start of the West Island Way. It leads along the rocky shore and past the lighthouse which marks the southern end of the island. I suggest Kilchattan Bay links well with the Mount Stuart visit.

PROGRAMME

WEDNESDAY

The guided tour of Mount Stuart (pre-paid) is booked for 10:15 am and we will be allowed to park in the forecourt for photo opportunities (this means we will avoid the £4 parking fee for the main carpark!). We should therefore aim to be at Mount Stuart by 10 am. The journey is just under 5 miles to the main house (post code PA20 9LR) and should take around 15 minutes so we should be leaving the hotel at 09:45 am. Look out for the brown signs when on the A84 (the turn off is at the end of a stone wall on your left).



I would like to arrange the cars for the photo with the 2 TFs side by side, flanked on either side by the Sprite and the MGA and Nick Rickett's car (model unknown) and the MG3 (and any non-MG/Spridgets well to one side please).

Following the guided tour which takes around an hour, we will be able to self-guide and visit the grounds. I suggest you take lunch in Courtyard café.

Following the Mount Stuart visit and depending upon the weather, my suggestion is to visit Kilchattan Bay then return to Rothesay. Ideally, I would like to exit Mount Stuart to the south on to the Bruchag Road but this may not be possible. If we have to back track to the A844, I suggest following that southwards to the left fork for the Bruchag Road (just past a bus stop). This has an old-fashioned signpost pointing to Kingarth via Bruchag. At Kingarth, turn left in front of the Kingarth Hotel and drive to the bay – I suggest parking near the stone pier.

For the return to Rothesay, I suggest driving back to Kingarth and turning left on to the A844 and following this to the B881 (if you follow the course of the road you are on the B881, the A844 is a left turn off) – this junction is close to Scalpsie Bay so you could turn off left to the bay parking (A844) then backtrack to the B881. The B881 will take you back to the centre of Rothesay. The total journey is about 30 miles.

THURSDAY

The suggestion for Thursday is to follow the A844 through Rothesay, Ardbeg and Port Bannatyne then continue west along the A844 to the junction with the B875 (if you follow the course of the road, you are on the B875, the A844 is a left turn off). Follow the B875 to parking and a café on the left at Ettrick Bay. If you want, you could continue northwards along the coast on the single-track road which is a dead end. There is a small parking place 2 miles from the beach café. Otherwise, back track to the A844 junction and turn right and head south to Ballianlay and turn right as the A844 takes a sharp left turn on to a no through road sign posted to Straad; this will take you to St Ninian's Bay.

After Straad, your options are to return to Rothesay via the A884 and B878 (in this case the A884 bends off to the right and the B878 is straight ahead and technically a turn off to the left) or to carry on the A884 past Scalpsie Bay to the T-junction with the B881 which is a left turn back to Rothesay. The full route is about 32 miles and about 24 miles if you take the B878 back to Rothesay.

Let's hope for fair weather!

Richard