

The Ferry News

Issue 53

June 2006 - Sept 2006

visit us at www.ferrynews.co.uk



Gala Day 17th June

For anyone wishing to take part in the Forth Bridge Race please put their names forward to either Jill Price, Danny Howie or Myra McDavid as soon as possible.

Could everyone please make sure that any trophies they won at last years' gala have been engraved and returned by June 1st.

Separate posters will be going up around the Ferry advertising The Raft Race and Gala Night.

Volunteers are needed on Sunday 11th June to put up the Bunting round the village.

If anyone would like Bunting specifically for their street (especially in the lower part of the Village) please let The Committee know and we will supply it for you. However please note – any bunting is put up at your own risk, and must not cross over a road for safety reasons.

The Last Gala?

Anyone reading this Ferry News will be in no doubt that it's Gala time again. Come Gala Week, even a Martian beaming down into NQ will know how much effort has gone into Gala 2006. What a shame then that it could easily be the last.

Galas, like so many other village events, don't happen by accident. Next year's planning must start soon. It can't be left till next spring.

In some years, most of the committee members carry on. That's fine when it happens but you can't expect the same few to soldier on for year after year. This year, a number of the committee are standing down. As of now, there's no-one to replace them. No committee, no Gala 2007.

So, as you enjoy Gala Week & Gala Day, ask yourself if you could do a bit. Then let one of the organisers know. The more of you that share the load, the easier it'll be. And we'll have a Gala next year.



Devon Halliday and Shaun Prentice
Gala Queen and king

THE GALA DANCE



**SATURDAY 17TH JUNE
7.30PM ONWARDS**

**BAR
RAFFLE
2 GUEST BANDS**

**'COOL HAND LUKE'
'EDMONSTON DRIVE'**

DISCO

OVER 18'S ONLY

Please note that as there is a Bar being run on Gala Night, that bringing your own drink along as in previous years would be against Licensing Laws and is therefore Not Permitted

Ferry Birds -January to May 2006

The wintering birds around the village and coast have now nearly all left for their breeding grounds further north in Scotland or elsewhere. The **goldeneye** and **red-breasted mergansers** both winter on the sea and have mainly left although there was a single female **goldeneye** in Inverkeithing Bay off Cruickness on the 18th of April and about 6 **mergansers** practising their synchronised diving off the Railway Pier on the 25th. Other winter visitors were around until April. Up to 6 **little grebes** were spread along the coast between North Queensferry and Inverkeithing throughout the winter and a few **great-crested grebes** were seen as well. As is usual there were 3 or 4 **red-throated divers** to be seen in the autumn and early winter which seemed to disappear later on with just one seen occasionally thereafter in February and March. The **dunlin** which have wintered in recent years in considerable numbers were conspicuous by their absence. The only **dunlin** I saw was one in West Bay on the 21st of February and a small group of less than 10 also in the Bay in March.

This year the arrival of some of our summer visitors was, on the whole, later than last year. The first **chiffchaff** I heard at Port Laing was on the 12th of April which was a fortnight later than last year. March of course was colder in Scotland than December, January or February so this late arrival was perhaps not that surprising. Other warblers such as **blackcaps**, **lesser whitethroats** and **willow warblers** have also been heard and seen. Small numbers of **blackcaps** now spend the winter in the UK so the female seen from the coastal path near the Rail Bridge on 28th of March may have been a wintering bird, but the one at Jamestown on the 19th of April was probably a recent arrival from Africa. The **lesser whitethroat** at Carlingnose on the 5th of May was about a week later than last year, but hopefully it will stay and breed. I have seen more **lesser whitethroats** this year than ever with 2 along the coastal path near Kinghorn and one at Aberlady Bay in East Lothian at the beginning of May. **Willow warblers** are Scotland's most numerous warbler. They breed in many different habitats wherever there are trees so that at this time of year they can be heard singing throughout the countryside. The terns also arrived later than last year although the **common terns** appeared suddenly in large numbers on the 23rd of April and were seen feeding just off Carlingnose and I counted more than 100 near the Railway Pier at the beginning of May. The terns had started flying around and landing on Long Craig by the 12th of May. They have nested here over the last few years even though their nests are regularly threatened by a combination of high tides and strong winds. The Scottish Wildlife Trust has placed tyres on the ruined pier below Carlingnose to try and persuade them to use the pier for nesting, but they have so far not realised the potential benefit of moving home. The first **Sandwich tern** I positively identified was on the 11th of May although there was probably one with the **common terns** on the 23rd of April. A small group of **swallows** was seen by the coastal path on the 9th of April and I saw my first one at Carlingnose view point 2 days later. Earlier this month there were 4 **swallows** flying around in the lower part of the village and I'm hoping they will nest again this year. Another sighting of birds returning to our coast to breed was of **fulmars** on Inchgarvie in January. They did there usual trick of coming back to check out their nesting

ledges about the 12th staying until the 27th and then returning on the 6th of February. The overspill from Inchgarvie was prospecting the quarry face at Carlingnose later on in March.

I have had several sightings of more unusual birds in and around the village. I had **siskins** on my garden feeder on the 20th of February and a **raven** at Jamestown on the 19th of April was the first I have seen in the area. I saw a **peregrine** on the Rail Bridge on the 23rd and 24th of February and there were two **common sandpipers** in Inverkeithing Inner Bay on the 18th of April. These small waders are summer visitors to Scotland breeding by running water throughout upland Scotland and along the coast in the West. It is not surprising therefore to see them on the coast during their migration. Finally during a feeding frenzy off Port Laing on the 25th of April there were several groups of **razorbills** amongst the 2 or 3 hundred **herring gulls** and a lone **black guillemot**... This is only the second **black guillemot** I have seen from North Queensferry. The **herring gulls** were feeding on small eel-like fish which were grabbed from the surface by one of the gulls which was immediately mobbed by the adjacent gulls in an occasionally successful attempt to rob the original bird of it's catch.

Spring and early summer are, in my opinion, the best time of the year. Two things in particular make it so. The first is the start of the growing season. Most of our plants die back or shed their leaves in the autumn so that they can survive the dark and sometimes cold winter. Evergreen plants slow down their metabolism as well. Annual plants create seeds or underground tubers which again have evolved to withstand the winter weather. Spring and early summer is the time when things start happening and the evidence is all about us now at the beginning of May. The fresh foliage and flowers are confirmation that the annual cycle is in full flow.

The second event is connected to the first. The new foliage is available as food for the caterpillars and other insects which have also survived the winter as eggs, pupae or adults. The young hatch from the eggs and start feeding. The pupae become adults which feed on the nectar from the flowers and those that over-winter as adults also gain strength from the nectar and pollen. These adults then mate and lay eggs that hatch to give more plant-eating young. The abundance of insect life thus created is then the lure for many of the migrant birds such as **swallows**, **swifts** and the several kinds of **warbler** which return to Scotland from their wintering grounds in Africa to breed. The insect eating resident birds such as **wrens** of course also have to survive the winter and do so by finding some of the insect eggs or pupae produced by last year's adult insects. Other birds such as **chaffinches** and **house sparrows** feed mainly on natural seeds and bird food provided by us human beings.

This is part of the natural cycle that has been going on for millions of years, so remember this when you get annoyed by a swarm of insects or some caterpillars start devouring your garden plants. Encourage the birds and you might get respite from the plague and also see some attractive birds as well.

John Done

Greetings from North Queensferry Church.

I much appreciate the opportunity to contribute to the Ferry News and this month I would like to say a bit about what's been happening in the church. First, a big "thank you" to all who contributed to and supported our most recent church fete which raised about £850 for church funds (with 10% going to support the work of Chogoria Hospital in Kenya). As always it was a pleasure to see so many from the village dropping in and making it such a successful and enjoyable afternoon. Once again, I was struck by the sense of being part of a real community.

In recent years, the congregation have worked hard to keep the church and grounds in good repair and accessible to all. Work completed includes a new roof, a refitted kitchen and the installation of a disabled toilet and access ramp. The next project we are about to undertake is to fit new, much needed double glazed windows to the church and internal redecoration. If you would like to make a donation to help us, we would be glad to hear from you!

The church is, of course, primarily about people and I'm glad to say there is much going on that is very encouraging. I'd like to mention especially the work of our Boys Brigade company. The quality of the work going on quietly week by week is reflected in the good news that two of the senior members, Dougie Thoms and Paul Johnston, have just won the Queens Award, the highest BB award there is. To launch Christian Aid week, the Company helped to lead a service with an African theme, including an account of a visit Gillian, one of our adult helpers, made to Kenya. The boys also helpfully distributed the Christian Aid gift envelopes round the village, which last year raised around £1,000 for a range of projects in many parts of the world.

Regular Sunday worship and fellowship, including Children's Church, continue to be the heartbeat of the congregation's life. In recent months, our love of singing received a boost with the arrival of the new church hymn book which has a greater variety of musical styles than ever before. Our aim is to be a church in the community, for the community, and we extend a warm welcome to any who wish to come along to celebrate or explore the Christian faith which has for centuries played a significant part in the life of the village.

Rev Chris Park. (1 Dover Way, Dunfermline KY11 8HR Tel 432158)

Toddler Group

Our very active group meets every Thursday 10.11.30am in the Community Centre. All children and carers are welcome, our youngest member is just six weeks old! The group provides support and friendship for parents, grandparents, childminders and nannies as well as a wonderful array of toys

and activities for the little ones. There is a soft play room and on sunny days we take the children onto the fields for games and races! Even more importantly there are regular social nights for the adults - we all deserve a break! If you would like more information about our group please phone Sue Rankin on 419639 or just come along!

Community Council

When I moved to North Queensferry eight years ago from Edinburgh, I was hugely impressed by what a real sense of community there is here. This is a place which is not some kind of dormitory for other places, somewhere just to sleep and then move on, but, rather a place which is rooted in history, which is nourished by its setting, and, above all, which is defined by its people.

If you live here you want to contribute something to the village, to do what you can to make it better. Of course, sometimes different people have different visions of what that means, and there can be lively and vigorous debate over such things, yet, always underneath there is a feeling that what we share and have in common is so much more meaningful than what may seem to divide us.

This whole ethos of commitment to community combined with vigorous debate has a focus (but by no means its only focus) in the Community Council. Since I have been privileged to have joined it, I have been struck how, with virtually no financial resources, it is able to do so much for the community, whether promoting floral enhancement, the wells project, commenting on planning applications, helping find new uses for the railway station building, and even seeking a coat of arms for the village!

These are all things which have been on the agenda since the last issue of the Ferry News, though perhaps the greatest cause for concern for residents has been rising anxieties over levels of crime in the village, culminating in the organising by the Community Council of a special meeting with the police at which these concerns are to be shared.

In many of our activities we work with other organisations, notably Fife Council, and though our relations with the Council are reasonably good, there is the occasional sense of frustration at being the Junior party in the relationship with (hopefully) some measure of influence, but no real power. But then the frustration passes: it's not about having power; it's about working with and for the village.

You can see for yourself something of what I mean, and you can even take part in the discussions by coming along on the second Thursday of the month at the Community Centre at 7.30pm.

NQPS Says Thanks

The Primary School would like to thank everyone who handed in Tesco Computer vouchers.



North Queensferry Heritage Trust

Patron: Earl of Elgin and Kincardine

Community Project

Researching the history of North Queensferry over the past 250 years

Over the next few years it is expected that North Queensferry will be designated as a World Heritage site. The Forth Rail Bridge and surrounding community areas, both north and south of the bridge, are already placed on the official Unesco tentative list.

The number of visitors to this area is bound to increase as will the request for up to date and historic information. NQHT is probably the organisation best qualified to undertake the necessary research.

It is, therefore, very important that a number of enthusiastic volunteers, no previous experience required, is recruited to see the project through to its conclusion. Expert guidance is available to oversee research in order to compile a comprehensive record. Local libraries, museums, churches, housing records etc together with other government archive sources are all a source of relevant information. There are likely to be specific categories of interest such as railways, military defences, and local businesses.

Our aim must be to research the important aspects of North Queensferry's historic past and to produce a Community survey. From this survey an authoritative book may be written and published. This would highlight the historic importance the village has played in Scotland's story.

Funding will be required to properly undertake this project and work would be unable to start until this is in place. This would be required for volunteers'

expenses, research fees and a professional fee for an experienced author and other publication costs.

If you are interested, would like more details, and are able to devote some time in the future to this important project then we should be delighted to hear from you at this time.

You may note your interest by

1. email to jj.lawson@btinternet.com
2. Telephone 01383 414324
3. Post to James Lawson, 20 Carlingnose Point, North Queensferry, KY11 1ER.

Events Roundup

Since the last edition of the Ferry News the Trust has held two events both very different in their content. Firstly Peter Dean gave his very personal thoughts, supported by excellent pictures, on his lifetime in North Queensferry. There was no doubt that the evening was much enjoyed by the many present which was rounded off with a good question and answer session.

Our second event on Scotland's coinage, drew a similar crowd. Iain Whyte took the audience through a fascinating story on how the money chain developed throughout Scotland again supported by excellent pictorial images.

Many thanks to both speakers for giving us two very entertaining evenings.

As we go to press to advise those that perhaps missed the event. John Done again organised and led a walk into North Queensferry birdland. Another opportunity to hear and discuss 'birdmatters' with a real expert.

Heritage Trust Calendar of Events - 2006

- June **Beach Clean Ups**
Saturday 24th 10am at beach behind the Albert for village beaches
Sunday 25th 2pm at Port Laing.
- August **Village Show**
Sat 26th starting at 2pm. Admission 50p with children at 20p.
- September **Autumn Bird Walk** - John Done
- Beach Clean Up**
Saturday 16th 10am at beach behind the Albert for village beaches
Sunday 17th 2pm at Port Laing for Marine Conservation's Beachwatch
- Village Walk Celebrating Thomas Telford**
Sunday 24th 2pm at the Town Pier
- October **AGM**
- November **'Tartan for me'** A talk by Gertrude McAlpine
Tue 14th at 7.30pm, Admission £2 with refreshments

Community Centre

How is the Community Centre doing? Well many things are on the up. The youth club is back on every Thursday night. There are Jive classes every Tuesday – new or old Jivers are welcome. There is also Arts & Crafts, Dog training, Pilates classes, mother & toddlers, and dancing for the younger members of the community. The centre is there for your use so if your thinking of having a party or need a venue for a meeting or training you will find that the rates for hiring are very reasonable. Full details of these events and hiring are available from Phil, the caretaker, at the community centre. The management committee are taking a very serious look at installing an all weather football/sports pitch; this will be a long process and will require much chasing of funds from various sources.

On the down side there has been a couple of acts of vandalism which obviously wasn't your child but someone else's. What was damaged was your community centre that you may want to use one day.

After the previous successes we are putting on another **Ceilidh on Friday 30 June**. Tables of 8 will be available at a bargain cost of £15 per head. There will be a cold buffet, a bar and of course the band and dancing. Book your tickets early to save disappointment through a member of the management committee or Phil at the community centre.

Other events to note are the Community Centre AGM on Thursday 15th June at 19.00 all are welcome to come along.

Finally we are always on the lookout for new management committee members so if you feel you could spare a wee bit of time, and would like help out, please come along to the next meeting or contact one of the committee. Meetings are every 3rd Thursday of the month (except July) and start at 19.00.

Neighbourhood Watch

It has been a quiet period for the Neighbourhood Watch as there has been very little input from the police, but a new Community Officer has been appointed, Kenny Greig, and his inaugural meeting will be on the 13th June which is our next committee meeting. We hope that his appointment will lead to improved police communications.

Thanks to our co-ordinators for their continued support.

Next Issue

Articles to be with Dave & Mary by
Friday 15th September 2006
to 7 Carlingnose Park (415022)
or e-mail mary@ferrynews.co.uk.

Articles on disc or by e-mail if possible, failing which a paper copy is fine.

Small ads, items of interest, letters etc. all welcome

RAFT RACE

SUNDAY 11TH June
From 3pm onwards at the Marina



Teams of 4 Children Or Teams of 4 Adults
Or
Mixed Teams

Make your own Rafts and bring them along to the Marina for inspection
HALF AN HOUR before start time.

Let's see as many as possible taking part this year and some really fun
and ingenious rafts to float (or sink!!)

Any children taking part in the Raft Race must have an adult with them.

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www.fifejive.co.uk

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