

The Ferry News



Issue 61

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Community Council



This is the Coat of Arms which has been granted by the Lord Lyon, King of Arms to North Queensferry Community Council. It commemorates the Queensferry passage by showing Queen Margaret in her galley surmounted by three lozenges which bear more than a passing resemblance to the Forth Bridge.

Historically, North Queensferry was never a burgh, unlike neighbouring Inverkeithing, and, indeed, for several centuries the villagers attended church in Inverkeithing. It was only in the nineteenth century that, for the first time since the Reformation, it had its own parish church.

So, the new coat of arms is a first for the village, and though relating to the Community Council, rather than the village as such, it is hoped that it will soon grace new signs at the entry to the village, and no doubt you will all see it being used more frequently around the area.



NORTH QUEENSFERRY WALKING GROUP

The group meet on **alternate Wednesdays** in the Church car park at **10am**. Car-share is then organised depending on numbers – you do not need to be a car driver. Walks vary in length from 3 to 5 miles. They also vary in difficulty but most can be adapted to suit all levels. The route may be changed at the last minute depending on the weather. Strong shoes/ boots, waterproofs, possibly a stick plus a snack/drink are all you need. We are a friendly group and enjoy chatting as much as we enjoy walking! Ring Janet on 416734 if you need more information.

4 February	Water of Leith - lateral - 3 to 5 miles (to Haymarket by train)
18 February	Shiresmill to High Valleyfield - lateral 2 ½ miles
4 March	Aberdour - St Bridget's - Hound Point - circular - 3 or 5 miles
18 March	Corstorphine Hill - circular - 4 ½ miles
1 April	Loch Ore - circular - 4 miles
15 April	Tetley Trail - Circular - 4 miles
29 April	Torduff & Cubbiedean Reservoirs, Pentlands - circular - 5 miles
13 May	Loch Leven from Burleigh Sands - lateral - 4 miles
27 May	Moncreiffe Hill Wood - circular - 3 ½ miles
10 June	Breich Water - circular - 4 miles
24 June	Cramond - Cramond Island - lateral - 3 or 5 miles

Is There Anything in the Village for the Boys?

Let's deal with the bad news first. As many of you will be aware, The Boy's Brigade in North Queensferry is no more. There's no other way to say it. Another part of our community has gone. But this article is not intended as an obituary, far from it. This is a tribute, by one former BB member, but on behalf of all of us, to Pauline and Brian, and a thank you to them, and all the others that helped run the company over the years. No other organisation has contributed anywhere near as much to the advancement of this village's youngsters than the BB. As another ex-member sagely put it; you went to school to learn sums and how to read. You went to the BB for everything else.

Many of you in the village will know, and be hugely appreciative of, the work that Pauline Robertson and Brian Clark put in over the years to make the 1st North Queensferry BB company the massive success it was. That's no idle claim. That one small company punched above its weight consistently for many years. It won numerous competitions in football, athletics, cross country running, scripture knowledge and numerous other disciplines, despite usually being up against much larger companies.

If the BB ran a competition in anything, no matter when or where it took place, you could rest assured that a team of eager Ferry boys would be taking part. They didn't go to make up the numbers, they went there to win, and time and time again, they did.

Maybe it was down to the team spirit that comes naturally from being part of a small community, or maybe it's testament to the work Pauline and Brian put in, but the Ferry BBs were winners. Most Ferry boys of a certain age will have medals or trophies sitting on mantelpieces as proof.

At the beginning of every new school year, for over twenty years, dozens of Ferry boys would make the short trip to the Church hall to join the BBs. Some would join because their mates were already members, some had elder brothers that had served before them, and others went because their parents simply wanted them out of the house for a few hours.

It's no exaggeration to say that at one time not so long ago, every single boy of school age who lived in the Ferry was a member of the BB. Sure, some of them attended more regularly than others, but all of them were made welcome, regardless of age or ability.

Many of the boys might have been shy when they first went, but you could bet they would be running around and eagerly taking part in whatever game was being played within five minutes of arriving. They might have never played table-tennis or vaulted a gymnastics horse before, but you could be sure that Mr Clark would make them masters at

both within months.

No matter how unruly a kid, or how shy, or how hyperactive, Pauline and Brian would soon have them settled into the company. Before they knew it, the boys would be experts at everything from orienteering to marching. But it wasn't all fun and games; the BB was regularly involved in charity work and various community projects. For many years the BB delivered Christian Aid envelopes the length of the village, and helped in various coastal path and beach cleanups. These weren't always the most popular of activities amongst the boys, but Pauline and Brian would ensure they were carried out with enthusiasm (usually with the promise of a visit to Inverkeithing chippie after).

When it closed, the Ferry BB had been going just short of 25 years. It was founded on October 4, 1983, exactly a century to the day that the Boy's Brigade was originally started by Sir William Smith in Glasgow. It owes its foundation to a simple question that Helen Leitch asked at a church meeting – is there anything in the village for the boys? The answer was no, and the wheels were set in motion. Before long a company had been founded, with Jim Kelly, a Dalgety Bay resident, the first captain. Donald Murray of Inchcolm Drive was next to take over, who was in turn replaced by Dave Almond of Carlingnose, followed eventually by Pauline Robertson, the longest serving (and some might say suffering!) of the lot. They were ably assisted over the years by John Leitch, Mike Lowe, Greta Dyce, Keith Belford, Dave Dempsey and many others who are too numerous to recount.

However, in recent years the BB was very much a two-man (sorry, a one man and one woman) band. It's fair to say that one of the reasons that Pauline and Brian kept going as long as they did was that they knew the company would be likely to fold without them.

Across the country it's the same story, there's no shortage of kids wanting to join, but there's a very real shortage of adults willing to give up their spare time and act as leaders. This isn't a problem confined to the BB either; it's the same with all youth organisations. We complain when kids loiter on the streets, we moan that they aren't as active as they used to be, but the fact is that opportunities for kids to join constructive, well-organised youth groups like the BBs are getting fewer and fewer. In many ways we should be grateful that North Queensferry had a BB for as long as it did. Nearby towns such as Rosyth, Inverkeithing, and Dalgety Bay all lost their companies years ago.

So Pauline and Brian, a massive thank you on behalf of all the boys you helped and inspired over the years, and all the parents that you helped keep sane by taking their unruly offspring off their hands for a few hours each week. That you kept

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Primary School

This term all classes at North Queensferry Primary School from Nursery to P7 will be involved in a Scottish topic looking at and learning about different historical, geographical and cultural aspects of our country. We will hold our annual Scots verse speaking competition at the end of the January and parents will be invited into assembly on the 30th of January 2009 to hear the finalists. To celebrate the 250th anniversary of Robert Burns we are planning a school Burns Lunch on Monday the 26th of January

We have big Eco plans this term in school with the continued development of our vegetable garden. As you may have noticed we have had some of our parents in working with the children to build a willow fence around the area where we plan to have our vegetable garden and we are hoping to get our greenhouse built this term – thanks to everyone for sending in their 2 litre bottles. We are also hoping to make a start to layout out our raised borders for growing our vegetables in.

We were all very sad to hear of the death of Mr Ireland who was the Head Teacher here at North Queensferry Primary School from 1984 – 1995. We are thinking of putting a bench in the playground in his memory. If anyone would like to make a contribution towards this please send your donations into school.

Sally Hourston
Headteacher – North Queensferry Primary School
northqueensferryyps.headteacher@fife.co.uk
01383 602425

Dear Supporter,

A short note to express thanks to all those who contributed to or participated in this year's North Queensferry Primary School Christmas Fayre.

This year you surpassed all previous years and have raised a clear profit of £3070 all of which will be used

to directly benefit the pupils at North Queensferry Primary School and Nursery. Thank you.

You should be proud of your contribution. The day was a resounding success thanks to the generosity of those who gave up their time, those who sought donations, those who donated, those who collected the prizes, those who sold the raffle tickets, those who bought the raffle tickets. Thanks to everyone for co-ordinating the event, for volunteering to help and support on the day and in the days and weeks leading up to the Fayre, for turning up and putting on the Fayre and for coming along and spending your hard earned cash. It's a real demonstration of what can be achieved when the Headteacher and her staff, the pupils, parents and carers, the local and wider community and businesses pull together and get right behind a deserving institution.

Another Newsletter will follow shortly after the New Year, when we'll let you know the dates of the next meetings and how you can get involved in the discussion around some of the possible good uses for the funds raised.

Heartfelt thanks on behalf of all at the school.

Dave Hair
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School Council Members

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the company going as long as you did is remarkable. It might have felt like a thankless task at times, but hopefully the sight of all our grinning wee faces was enough reward! And a thank you to everyone else involved in running the company over the years. There was a whole team of volunteers who helped out over the years and your contributions won't be forgotten.

North Queensferry is definitely a poorer place without its BB. Hopefully, its demise is only temporary. It wasn't a lack of eager boys willing to attend that folded the company. It was a lack of volunteers. The question is, who will step up to the mantle, and provide the Ferry boys of today and tomorrow with the opportunities that we had? As Lloyd Grossman might have said, it's over to you.

Yoga in the Ferry

Yoga is well known as the ultimate body, mind and spirit workout. It eases stiff joints, and brings a sense of health and vitality. Regular classes help you tone, relax and de-stress for a focused and peaceful outlook on life.

At present there are 2 yoga classes offered in North Queensferry:

Adults on Wednesday from 6-7.10pm (Community Centre), and Parent and child yoga on Thursdays from 2-3pm (Church Hall).

Contact Susannah on

01383 413121 for further details, or see website for more classes theyoga.co.uk

Heritage Trust

The Trust wishes its members and all readers of the Ferry News a very happy New Year. The new year starts with a busy programme of events which began with our usual very informative 'Winter Bird Walk' with John Done. In November by 'popular demand' we have arranged another 'Antiques Road Show' with Edinburgh auction house Lyon & Turnbull. Details on starting time and venue for all of our events can be found on our website www.nqht.org, the Ferry News information service, or posters which will appear on village noticeboards prior to each event.

The Town Pier Harbour Light

All the paperwork is now in place and we expect to start the restoration process and production of the replica lamp shortly. Once completed, it is our intention to open the tower as a visitor attraction emphasising the unique historical importance of the 'Queensferry Passage' and the educational value of the design and engineering work undertaken at the beginning of the 19th century. We have already started to collect some artefacts which reflect the work and way of life of the light keeper.

Anyone who might know of a suitable item for the collection please do not hesitate to contact any member of our committee.

The Research group of the Trust has had a very busy year with a considerable amount of work being undertaken by individual members. The objective has been to obtain more information on the Town Pier and Harbour Light and its context as part of the 'Queensferry Passage'. The coming of the new Forth crossing has prompted the update and republishing of the CD 'History Bridged' the story of

the crossing of the Forth at the 'Queensferry Passage' including many new photographs. Work on the valuation rolls and land registry records continues.

Information is required for two recent visitors to our website.

Firstly from Julian Hicks who is trying to trace the history of his late uncle James McKenzie who worked on the ferry out of North Queensferry from approx 1922 – 39 and may have been an engineer.

Secondly Alan Dowsett has sent an early picture of activity on the Railway Pier and asks for any information on the date. As this picture will almost certainly go into our archive any other information for the caption would be most welcome.



The Trust would like to encourage new members. Support from within the village and beyond is always welcome, particularly from those willing to serve on the committee and in doing so, help in the long term development of this community.

Details on how to become involved are on our website: www.nqht.org

VILLAGE COFFEE MORNING

This was a new venture which started up in November and has proved to be very successful with an average of 25 attending.

Everyone is welcome regardless of age.

We meet in the Church on alternate Wednesday mornings from 10.30 to 12 noon.

Cost 50p

Dates to June as follows:

February 11th 25th
March 11th 25th April 8th 22nd
May 6th 20th June 3rd 17th

Ring Christine on 413372 if you need further info. or would like to help.

Contributions for the next issue

are to be with us by

Friday 8th May

to

7 Carlingnose Park

or

mary@ferrynews.co.uk.



Yoga
Classes

General ...Mon 7-8pm

Tues 1-2pm

Wed 6-7.10pm

Pregnancy ...Tues 6-8pm

Wed 7.40-9.40pm

Parent & Child ...Thurs 2-3pm

Inverkeithing

Dalgety Bay

N. Queensferry

Inverkeithing

Dunfermline

N. Queensferry

Other classes including baby massage in the area. £30-48: 6 week block.

Call Susannah on:

01383 413121

theyoga.co.uk

Ferry Birds

The waders have been using West Bay as their wintering area as usual. I counted 50 **redshanks**, 3 **curlews** and 15 **oystercatchers** on the mud in West Bay on January 7th. These counts are lower than last year, but there were probably more **oystercatchers** and **curlews** on Long Craig. There have also been several **turnstones** throughout the autumn and winter with one on the floating pontoon on December 20th and at least 5 in West Bay on January 7th. West Bay also hosted 2 **herons** on October 14th and the usual pair of **mute swans** has been around for much of the past 4 months. The latter were joined by 5 immature **swans** on November 4th. The resident pair probably chased this group away to protect their feeding area. One or 2 **shelducks** have been seen several times in West Bay, but the best place to see them is in Inverkeithing Inner Bay where there are more than 20 scattered around feeding on the mud. Here is also the favoured spot for **herons**. I have seen a maximum of 9 perched on the sea wall close to the old paper mill. This winter a **grey wagtail** has been frequenting the shore in West Bay and often flies up The Brae to visit the well. Despite its name its distinguishing feature is the yellow underneath its tail which can be seen as it flies away from you.

Other winter visitors have appeared as usual. Numbers are still not as high as they have been, but small groups of **goldeneyes** and **red-breasted mergansers** can be seen from the coastal path along with **little grebes** and often further out to sea, **great-crested grebes**. I saw one **red-throated diver** from Carlingnose on November 11th, but none since then and had also not seen any elsewhere in the firth until I saw 2 at Musselburgh on January 8th.

Other winter visitors such as **redwings** and **fieldfares** have been in short supply locally. This doesn't mean there are fewer in Scotland this year as I have seen them elsewhere. I've seen large flocks of **fieldfares** in East Lothian and near Kelty, but none in our area while I have seen a few **redwings** near Jamestown, but not in the usual numbers. These birds arrive from Scandinavia in September and October and gorge themselves on, for example, hawthorn berries and then move on to find more. We have, however had a visit from a flock of **waxwings**. It has been a 'waxwing winter' with large flocks being seen in eastern Scotland from the end of October. These attractive birds are also from Scandinavia and, when local conditions are harsh they come to the east coast of the UK for food and relative warmth. A flock was seen near Ferryhills loch at the end of October and I saw a single bird in Dunfermline on November 4th. You may have seen reports in the press of flocks of **waxwings** in Edinburgh and I was lucky enough to see about 50 near the Water of Leith on November 21st and a similar number in the Merchiston area on December

15th. Keep your eyes peeled and ears open. They are quite noisy birds and the trilling call is distinctive. Look for them where there are lots of shrubs covered with berries. If the berries have gone the **waxwings** have probably been and moved on!

My sightings of the less common birds have been of **peregrine falcons** on and around the working quarry particularly in November, a pair of **ravens** perched on the large crane in the scrap yard on the 13th of October and more sightings near the quarry in November and one at Cruickness Point on December 7th. One or 2 **sparrowhawks**, have been around; one soaring over the quarry on October 28th and then one scaring the feral pigeons off the roof of the school on November 1st. In fact I saw 3 sparrowhawks on my walk over the hill and back along the coastal path on that day. On September 23rd there were 5 **buzzards** circling over the upper part of the village strongly suggesting that they breed locally. I have also seen a **kestrel** from Ferryhills Road north of the village. Birds of prey seem to be doing pretty well in North Queensferry. I have only seen one **kingfisher** in Inverkeithing Inner Bay recently, but I have seen them from the coastal path near Kirkcaldy and at Lochore Meadows Country Park. I had reports of a **tawny owl** calling near Whinneyknowe and heard one myself there early on December 6th. There was also one calling near the Railbridge on November 29th.

Most of the birds which come to Scotland from Africa to breed leave during the early autumn so 2 **swallows** at Cruickness Point on the 22nd of October were unexpected. **Sandwich terns** do tend to leave later than our other summer visitors and occasionally spend the winter in the Firth of Forth, so several flying round Inverkeithing Bay on the 7th of October was, perhaps, not that unusual.

Of course our resident birds should not be forgotten. There has been a small flock of **goldfinches** in the trees on The Brae several times recently and I counted about 60 **finches** (**green** and **gold** versions) in a group of trees by Ferryhills Road on the 7th of January. Before the recent cold spell I seemed to hear and/or see groups of **long-tailed-tits** wherever I was walking, suggesting that they had had a good breeding season. In the autumn I also saw **goldcrests** several times in the bushes along the coastal path. More recently I have seen far fewer of these two species which are probably the most vulnerable to long cold spells of weather. So please keep the bird feeders well stocked to increase their chances of survival and, as ever, leave at least some corner of your garden covered with fallen leaves so that the **blackbirds** and **song thrushes** can feed off the slugs and snails and other invertebrates that are all part of the natural recycling system of the planet.

John Done

Boys Brigade

Well I'm afraid the Boys Brigade is no more ... in North Queensferry I mean!

Brian and I have finally hung up the whistles and are now sitting every Wednesday with our feet up ... knitting and stuff like that.

Seriously, we would both like to say a big thank you to the church, congregation, friends and boys who gave us a great send off back in October.

We were able to share some of the many happy (and some of the sad) memories of our times with "ra lads" by showing a short film and slide show which seemed to go down well with everyone who attended.

Thanks to Chris for being so brave and allowing us free reign on a Sunday morning..we hope the congregation returned the following week!

It was marvelous to see so many young men in the congregation that morning - boys past and present.some of them with families themselves now and it was for both of us a very special and moving time. Brian and I were truly humbled by the many thoughts and messages of thanks that were relayed to us by so many.

I have to say that neither of us miss the weekends, week days and nights of meetings, preparations, rules and regulations that sometimes made it hard

going for us BUT we do miss the boys..without exception.

It has been a privilege to have been in such a trusted position for so many years and we thank all of you - boys and parents alike.

We also must thank all those who contributed to our Christmas gift which was a great surprise and no doubt will be a great experience! (I think!) We will NOT be telling anyone when we will be "going Ape" but the video footage might be worth a lot of money on "You've Been Framed" one day!

WATCH THIS SPACE!

Once again thanks for all the support over the years Over and out for the last time..(maybe)

Pauline and Brian



Pilates Classes

Would you like to:

- Improve your posture?
- Strengthen your back?
- Flatten your tummy?
- Improve your flexibility
- Learn to relax?
- Improve your self esteem?

Realistic Pilates is a safe method of exercise which can help you achieve all of the above.

- Suitable for all fitness levels
- Block booking of 6 classes to ensure continuity
- £7 per class (£42 for 6 x 1 hour classes)
- Mats provided.
- Limited Places

Pilates Class Timetable

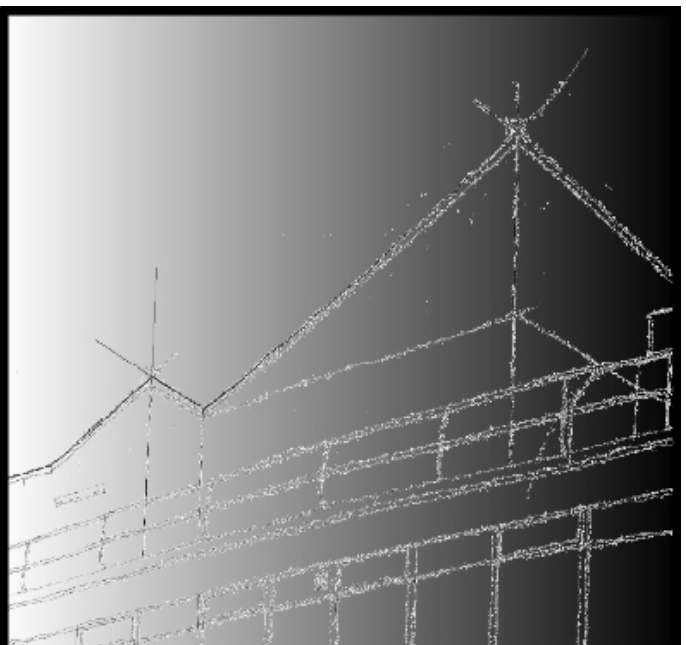
Tuesday	10:30 - 11:30 am	SQ Rosebery Hall
Wednesday	7:30 - 8:30 pm	NQ Community Centre
	8:30 - 9:30 pm	NQ Community Centre
Thursday	10:30 - 11:30 am	Dalgety Bay Parish Church
Friday	10:30 - 11:30 am	NQ Community Centre

Contact: **Amanda Johnstone**

07787 321571

Or Email: JohAman@aol.com

One to One Consultations also available.



cls centreline solutions
architects

initial consultation free

01383 417 509
www.cls.info