



T h e F e r r y N e w s

Community Council

The festive season already seemed in the distant past as your Community Council and one resident braved the ice to attend the meeting on 12th January.

This article refers to some of the activities of the community council at meetings held since September 2016. As usual, agenda items included opportunities to comment on planning applications and to receive reports from the community police, village community groups, the Community Council's treasurer and a local councillor who (in January) advised that plans for the pontoon at the Town Pier are currently shelved since the current funding is only available until 1 April 2017. In addition meetings receive community councillor reports from the Forth Replacement Crossing meetings concerning community issues and preparations for celebrations for opening the Queensferry Crossing later this year. We worked with local residents to organise the village Remembrance Service on 13 November

At the October meeting concerns were raised about safety in Brock Street around the primary school. The January Police Report noted that two members of Fife Constabulary would be attending the primary school to work with their Junior

Road Safety Officers as well as with the school staff to improve road safety at drop-off and pick-up times.

In November and December planting in the village tubs and at the Brae took an upward turn with the effective work of two volunteers making significant improvements to the appearance of the village. December also saw the results of much negotiation: a village Christmas tree at the War Memorial.

The issue of where to place the Beamer Light House featured in all four meetings. It has been the subject of a public consultation and many discussions, meetings and reports.

For more information about the community council and the latest draft minutes please look at www.nqcc.co.uk

The next meeting of your community council is Thursday 9 February in the Community Centre at 7.30pm.



Putting up the Christmas tree: members of the community council and a Slovak friend

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Ferry Birds –October 2016 to January 2017

Comparing the Ferry News at this time last year with my notes for this year shows almost identical sightings of the regular birds in our area. More or less the same number of **redshank** is wintering in West Bay along with the usual **curlews** and **oystercatchers**. This year there have been more **dunlins** and they seem to be always there spread out over the mud as the tide ebbs and flows. Up to 7 **shelducks** have also been in the bay with up to 3 joining the **redshanks** on the floating mooring. A **grey heron** drops in for a feed occasionally as well.

The ducks which winter around our coast have also been seen as last year. There have been up to 40 **goldeneyes** in Inverkeithing Inner Bay and about the same number of **red-breasted mergansers** off Cruickness Point. The latter were joined on 15th of November by a **black-throated diver** and 2 **red-throated divers**. A few **eider** can also usually be spotted from Port Laing and a female **long-tailed duck** was seen from there during November. **Little grebes** regularly winter on the sea round here and with luck up to 4 can be spotted between Carlingnose Point and Cruickness Point.

As to the less common local birds, I saw a **peregrine** cavorting with a **crow** over the quarry on the 1st of January and I have seen or heard a **raven** a couple of times in the same place. I also heard and saw a **raven** over The Brae on the 12th of December. Other local sightings have included a **kingfisher** at the mouth of the Keithing burn on the 9th November and a small flock of **waxwings** in a tree by the coastal path near the Carlingnose Reserve on the 20th December. Every now and then **waxings** appear in large numbers on the east coast of the United Kingdom. They have appeared

this winter and they have been spotted in East Lothian and Edinburgh as well as various places in Fife. Finally an amazing sight I had from the coastal path near Seafield Tower near Kirkcaldy on the 25th of November. I was walking along when a bird flew past me. It was a **swallow**! I couldn't quite believe my eyes. Fortunately it had been seen by 2 or 3 other people to confirm its identity. It should have been well on the way to South Africa by then. A bit of research then told me that the latest ever seen in Scotland was at St Andrews on the 25th December 2000.

As far as I know the **fulmars** have not yet appeared on Inchgarvie although, similarly to last year, there were some on the cliffs at Kinghorn Bay on the 14th and 15th of January.

Redwings and **fieldfares** are members of the thrush family which breed in very small numbers in the UK but are mainly winter visitors to the United Kingdom. They breed in Scandinavia and can appear in large numbers depending on the berry crop and the weather in their breeding grounds. The first I saw this winter were flying quite high over the lower village on the 13th of November. Later in December the woodland around the Jamestown pond seemed to be a favourite spot for them. I had several sightings of **mistle thrushes** there as well.

Maintenance work on the Carlingnose Reserve was carried out last September. The grass round the rocky knoll was cut. Further cotoneaster removal has been done by local volunteers.

As usual a plea to leave some areas in your garden wild so that our resident birds and winter visitors have good places where they can scavenge for food in relative safety.

John Done

COMMUTER CONUNDRUM

As commuter I was delighted when the empty train station building began to be renovated. For years I've used the train station and stood by as the building was underused, thinking how it was a shame we had such a great building there standing empty especially when there were no other facilities at the station. I watched with anticipation as the waiting room and then cafe was renovated, thinking this would bring some much needed facilities to the station. It was great to see the station reopen after such a long time. Not only is it a fantastic building historically, it was a great welcome for visitors and brought some much needed waiting space for the station.

I was extremely disappointed to later find out that the station building is now closed at least half of the year. I understand the cafe's decision to only open in the tourist season, but it's highly frustrating to see how the waiting room is kept closed from October until at least March or even later in the following year. I believe the renovation of the building was funded by public money, so it's disappoint-

ing to now have a facility that only caters for visitors in certain times of the year and doesn't factor in the needs of us who live in the village and use the station day in and day out. After enquiring with multiple sources about how to have the waiting room open for use year round, no one seems to want to take responsibility for either the building or providing the services it's meant to provide. As with recent weeks, this leads to waiting times at the station stood in freezing cold temperatures. It is then particularly frustrating to stand and see a prominent sign for a waiting room that never seems to be open. When the train services are also often late and can be very unreliable, it becomes even more frustrating to know when your train ends up 10 or 15 minutes late or even more, you're forced to stand outside in the freezing cold when the facilities are now in the station - just closed to us who live in the village and use the station regularly. It seems that, contrary to talk at the time, the facilities were never made with the village in mind. After having a station lie empty for so long, it's so sad to see it empty for so many months of the year even now.

Boat Club

Are you ready to Launch into spring 2017? Please come and join us.

North Queensferry Boat Club is located at the old railway pier in the village and welcomes anyone who has an interest in all things nautical.

If you would like to know more, please visit our website:

www.northqueensferryboatclub.co.uk

where details and prices are listed. New 2017 Memberships will be available from March, and members moorings will be available between April - October.

You can also contact the club directly by emailing:

secretary@northqueensferryboatclub.co.uk or

membership-secretary@northqueensferryboatclub.co.uk

or pop down to the club at the weekend for a blether and a cuppa!



West Bay Moorings

Village Show 2017 - Saturday 9th September

Not yet joined the North Queensferry Heritage Trust for 2016?

£10 for a family / £6 for an individual Email: sam@ethicsgirls.co.uk

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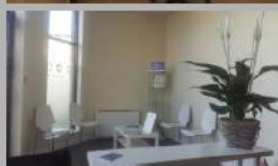
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Heritage Trust

This year the Heritage Trust presents an interesting and diverse calendar of events. We start the year with a talk by the Fife Food Ambassador Christopher Trotter on 7th February. Christopher has done a terrific job in raising the profile of Fife food and will be giving a talk on the history of Kale in Scotland.

One month later, on 7th March, local historian and author Andrew Kerr will be talking about the "Grand Fleet in the Forth". Andrew has a lifetime interest in naval matters and saw the importance of highlighting the hugely important part played by Rosyth Dockyard and the Forth estuary as a base for the Grand Fleet, especially towards the end of the war, when Admiral Beatty abandoned Scapa Flow and brought the whole fleet south. In April we are delighted to welcome Professor Geoff Palmer to present a talk on slavery and its Scottish context.

Later in the year we will be hearing from our local speakers, with talks from NQHT chairman James Lawson on some of his recent travels and Jim Todd and John Clemmens will present a joint evening on the theme of the country India. Jim will talk about growing up in India as a child and John will bring us right up to the present day as he regularly visits India, and this talk will include some information and beautiful photography.

This year the village will be busy with events that are local and national, such as the first movements of HMS Queen Elizabeth in the Forth as this new aircraft carrier sets off for sea trials in March. In May the Queensferry Crossing is due to be opened.

We will also be organising a members' trip to Cultybraggen Camp, near Crieff. Cultybraggen lies close to the village of Comrie, in west Perthshire. It was first used as a prisoner of war (PoW) camp during World War II, and then became an Army training area. It later housed a Royal Observer Corps (ROC) nuclear monitoring post, and a Regional Government Headquarters (RGHQ).

The Village Show will be held on the **9th September** so make a note of it in your diary. Also, John Done will lead us on our regular nature walks throughout the year.

Our news and updates are posted onto Facebook and our 2017 membership renewal requests will be posted out within the next few weeks. We expect 2017 to be a busy and enjoyable year which will include a couple of historic events, so we are looking forward in anticipation of an interesting year ahead.

Primary School Parent Council

The Parent Council of the Primary School wish to say a big thank you to everyone who helped make the recent Christmas Fayre a tremendous success. Once again, the local community came out in support to make it another enjoyable day and surpass last year's fundraising total! The money raised will go towards additional resources and learning opportunities for pupils. Thank you.

The Parent Council meets monthly during term time and any parent or carer of a child at the school is welcome to attend. The dates for the first half of the year are (all Wednesdays): [22nd February](#); [22nd March](#); [26th April](#); [24th May](#); [21st June](#). All meetings take place at the school [between 7.00pm and 8.30pm](#).

This year we will be looking closely at the school curriculum and aiming to understand better what role the Parent Council can play in making the school as excellent as it can be. The meeting in February will focus on homework policy: whether it needs to increase, reduce or change format in some way (I know what my kids would suggest!).

The school has a lot to offer the village and the village has a lot to offer the school - so if anyone has any ideas, skills, or knowledge that will help improving the learning experience for the pupils then please let me know. You can contact me at mylesfitt@yahoo.co.uk

Myles Fitt, Chair, North Queensferry Primary School Parent Council.

North Queensferry Toddlers...

...are looking for new parents to join our friendly and fun group! We meet every Thursday morning up at the Community Centre, and with loads of toys and a small soft play there's plenty to keep babies and toddlers amused while parents have a well-earned cup of tea and coffee. It is a small group, so it's a great way for you and your child to make friends and find out what is going on locally. There's also a Facebook page and WhatsApp group for arranging playdates at the beach, and events like Easter crafts and the annual summer sports day.

The group meets between 9.30 and 11.15am every week, and we are also open during school holidays. Even if you can't make it along regularly do pop by whenever you can, and do let us know if you'd like to be kept up to date on special events.

Babies are welcome, and mums with bumps who want company too. Your first week is free, and after that it's just £1.50 each week, to cover the cost of tea, coffee and a healthy snack for your child.

Everyone is welcome, and we look forward to seeing you there!

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Wednesday	10.00-11.00am	Davidsons Mains Parish Church
Thursday	9.55-10.55am	Dalgety Parish Church
Thursday	11.05am-12.05pm	Dalgety Parish Church
Friday	10.00-11.00am	NQ Community Centre

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to:

7 Carlingnose Park

E:

mary@ferrynews.org.uk

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SCOTTISH WOMEN'S RURAL INSTITUTES

North Queensferry

"Genealogy"

Talk by Lloyd Pitcairn
on
Thursday 26th January 2017
At 7.15pm

"Cake Decoration"

Demonstration by June McAleece
on
Thursday 23rd February 2017
At 7.15pm

For further information regarding our meetings, which are held in the Church Hall, Ferryhills Road, North Queensferry, please contact Kate Condie, Secretary
01383 824813

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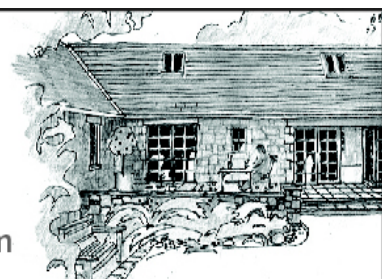
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