

DORNOCH HERITAGE SOCIETY

August 2005

It is with great regret that we acknowledge the passing of Jimmy Henderson, Littleferry, who has entertained the Society so many times during the years.

For a full appreciation of him, please consult the Golspie community website:

www.golspie.org.uk.

AGM

The Society is holding its AGM on Thursday **September 1** at **7.30 pm** in the West Church Hall, Dornoch.

The present committee of the Society is:

Joint chairpersons: *Jimmy Melville & Ken Bromage*

Secretary and Treasurer: *Robin Ashby*

Membership Secretary: *Ullabritt Ashby*

Members: *John Barnes, Jean Birkett, Rena Oman, Ian*

Ross-Harper

Regretfully Jimmy Melville has tendered his resignation as of the next AGM. We thank him wholeheartedly for all he has done over the past years.

This situation leaves four vacancies on the committee and new members are welcome. Nominations to Jimmy, Ken or Robin before the meeting would be appreciated.

EXCURSIONS

Dunbeath

Unfortunately this arrangement was supported by too few members and was cancelled.

Highland Archaeology Fortnight

Sat 1st Oct - Sun. 16th Oct

1) New exhibition at Historylinks '*Dornoch People*' with many previously unseen objects from the area showing evidence of the people who lived here and the life they led. Usual opening times.

2) '*Weird and Wonderful*'; a workshop for children from 8 upwards to work with professional artist Sally Orr making and painting gargoyles and other things. **Sat 1st Oct** and **Tue 11th Oct**, 10 am - noon. £2.50

3) *Guided walk* with Anne Coombs of Historic Scotland from Dornoch to Embo passing a variety of different sites. **Sun 2nd Oct**. Meet Station Take-away at 2pm. with suitable shoes and clothing.

COMING EVENTS

2005

September 1 **AGM** - Dornoch Heritage Society WEST CHURCH HALL

October 1 - 16 *Highland Archaeology Fortnight*

October 13 Professor James Hunter *History at UHI* WEST CHURCH HALL

All further meetings in ROYAL GOLF HOTEL

November 12 *Coffee Morning*

November 24 Anne Coombs *Looking for the First Herring Lassies*

December 15 David Hutchinson *219 Rossal, Rogart - an Abandoned Croft*

2006

January 19 *Burns Celebration*

February 16 Ian Mackay *125 Years of Dornoch Curling Club*

March 16 John Muir *Education, Education - Education?*

April *Annual Lunch* Date and venue to be announced

MEMBERSHIP

Paid-up members of the Society are invited to attend lectures free of charge. Free admission to Historylinks is also included in membership. Non-members will be required to pay for both activities. Please have your membership-card with you when attending lectures.

NB Those members who have already signed a Standing Order for membership fees will receive their membership card for 2005/2006 with this newsletter. All other members will find a reminder enclosed if they have not paid by other means.

FUND-RAISING

As usual, our traditional activities have both drawn attention to the Society and raised satisfactory funds. We held our Spring Coffee Morning and had a stall at the Sutherland County Show.

Our summer series of well-attended lectures at the West Church Hall was given this year by John Macdonald on the Clearances, Jamie Stone MSP on local politicians and Manish Basu on the connection between Scotland and India



OPENING TIMES

The museum is currently open daily 10am to 4pm until October 1, then Mondays to Fridays until 14 October. Thereafter it will be open two days a week, usually Tuesdays and Wednesdays, but it is best to check before visiting (01862 811275).

Peter Wild, the assistant curator, has been assisted by Sue Higgins 'front of house' during the summer, an arrangement that has fallen out well. Disappointedly admission numbers are down 20% on last year, but that is better than at most similar visitor attractions.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

With the arrival of the display case for the Volunteer's uniform, one of the prides of the collection is at last properly protected. The other case can now house items loaned from collections like the Ospisdale brooch from Edinburgh and various artefacts from Inverness Museum.

But the most striking (at least metaphorically) acquisition is the large clock from the old club house of the Royal Dornoch Golf Club which dominates the entrance area. Another large item is one of the two original sets of winding gear from the Mound (the other is at Heriot Watt University). Cliff Reddin, Michael Banks and John Gall have collaborated to give it its only little 'house' outside.

Inside a dedicated space for children's exhibitions has been created. The first exhibition was models of famous WW2 leaders by the children of Bonar Bridge Primary School.

Computer capacity has been vastly improved and a there is now a dedicated computer for visitors who can access the collection catalogue. It can also be used to run slide shows of collection items.

NEW LITERATURE

The shop is continually adding to its publications. It can now offer *The Gentleman Usher* a comprehensive history of George Dempster by John Evans priced £25. The museum's own works include a new edition of *The Vikings of East Sutherland* by Bridget Mackenzie with illustrations by Sally Orr (£1.99) and *A Brief History of Dornoch*, the richly illustrated guide to the Historylinks Trail (£4.99).

WEBSITE

The museum is greatly indebted to John Barnes who has designed a proper website, www.historylinks.org.uk. Apart from offering a potted structured history of Dornoch, it has information about coming events and offers literature for sale. Dornoch Heritage Society has its own section, so check it out for the latest information about lectures and other events.

PLANS

The long-awaited history of Dornoch is receiving its final editing. It is comprehensive and will no doubt be compared with Bentinck's iconic work. Hopefully it will be judged its equal in scholarship.

Children are to be engaged, not only through the gargoyle workshop (see above) but also by getting pupils from the primary school to interview local folk about their experiences during WW2.

Other ideas being considered include a 'sequel' to the railway film with a more historical/technical bias and the re-siting of the sea-mine.

Finally, any old books about Dornoch that people wish to donate to the museum will receive a new and loving home in its reference library.