

The Friends of St Ninian's Deerness



As from 12 noon on Monday 30th June 2008, St Ninian's Church, also known as The Lower Kirk, belonged to Deerness again! Its history, tradition and heritage can now be kept in trust for the generations to come! To all who contributed to this outcome, we have very much appreciated your patience and generosity throughout the sensitive negotiations. The Friends of St Ninian's would like to say to you all - THANKYOU!

Successfully acquiring the building is only the first chapter of our story and a great deal of forward planning is now necessary to promote the long-term viability of the project. Immediately on the schedule is urgent fund-raising, as the purchase price stretched financial resources considerably! Fundraising events are given overleaf.

The first phase of the way forward will involve the transition from the elected and constituted steering group to a company limited by guarantee and registered charity. This is the direction that the North Church on Hoy decided to take and it seems to be the best one for us too, giving us democracy and flexibility. *Voluntary Action Orkney* will assist in this process, and there'll have to be one or two public meetings, so that everyone may have an opportunity to voice their opinion. By the way - all the minutes of the meetings of the steering group are open to inspection - please contact the Secretary on 01856 741307.

A business plan will be worked on for the next phase i.e. to provide a 'revenue stream', without which no grant will be available. Annual subscription to membership of the Friends of St Ninian's will bring in some income, but we have to have more than this. Since having the building open as a museum is not

practical, we wish to set up a 'virtual' heritage centre based on a website for Deerness. Just think of all the 'ologies' we could put on it; the advertising, the links to other websites, not to mention photographs of this wonderful place and its people! The concept has great potential, and there is so much talent in Deerness, and it's a technology that will involve the younger generation too! Grants should be available to set up such a community project.

Can't you just see the web-cam, and yes even the t-shirt.....and we've already got the postcard on the go - details overleaf! Any extra monies raised by the web-site, which are surplus to requirements for the fabric and upkeep of St Ninian's will be ploughed back into the community. There are all sorts of possibilities here, from supporting local organisations to investing in any future community projects such as wind power development.

On first inspection the building is not in as bad condition as had been feared, considering it's been unheated for so long. There will be a long-term plan for essential maintenance. Being a Category 'B' listed building means there will be grants available to assist with this.

We plan to have an 'open day' or 'open afternoon' some time soon, and we'd like to put a display together for the occasion. It would be great to get any old photographs connected with St Ninian's and any memorabilia. If you have anything of interest you'd be happy to lend for the day, please contact members of the steering group - details at the end of the newsletter.

Whatever we do, we want to do it really well, and involve everyone in the community. The North Church, and St John's Kirk on Hoy, and the St Magnus Church in Birsay have already gone down this path, and they have all been extremely helpful, supportive and encouraging.

The site of St Ninian's at Skail has thousands of years of heritage behind it and we want to see that continue into the future. Please join us! ⇔

FOR THE DIARY!

Thursday 24th July - Deerness Community Hall 7.30p.m.

Dr James Barrett of Cambridge University is giving a talk on the dig he and his team have been conducting on the Brough of Deerness over the last few weeks. Please come along and hear about our own 'Time Team' and our Deerness ancestors! There will be an admission fee of £2, which Dr Barrett is kindly donating to the Friends of St Ninian's, tea & biscuits will be served afterwards.

Sunday 3rd August - Deerness Community Hall 3 - 6p.m

Savoury Buffet Teas. Same afternoon as the Deerness Boat Show at the Geo, and of course there's a raffle. **Star prize donated by Sheila Fleet**

If you wish to offer help with the above events; especially the buffet teas; it will be very much appreciated ! Evelyn Irvine, Symbister is at the helm of this particular boat, and any offers of baking, etc. will be gratefully received! Tel: 741304

February & March 2009 -The Blue Door Charity Shop, Kirkwall

Mrs. Jamieson of The Blue Door Charity Shop, Victoria Street, Kirkwall, has very kindly allotted us the last week in February, the first week in March 2009 to raise funds. She says the better the standard of goods we have on sale, the more we'll take in, so we'd like to start collecting. All contributions will be very gratefully received. If you would like to sort out items that you'd like to donate and want to pass them on sooner rather than waiting till next February - we can arrange safe storage, just contact. . . . yes, members of the steering group!

Please note We now have a postcard of an ink & wash drawing of St Ninian's, price 50p, available at these fundraising events.

If you wish to join us and become a friend of St Ninian's, please fill in the form at the bottom of this page and return it in an envelope with your subscription and/or donation, to the box in the Deerness store, or post it to the people listed below, or hand it to any member of the Steering Group [listed overleaf].

We welcome membership from Deerness folk, Deerness-connected folk and folk who simply want to support The Friends of St Ninian's because it's a worthwhile endeavour.

Please give the form below, with your subscription, to any member of the steering group above, or post it to

the Secretary: Isobel Gardner, Newark, Deerness, Orkney KW17 2QH
or the Treasurer: Anne Billing , Park House, Deerness, Orkney KW17 2QH

Membership: Friends of St Ninian's Annual Subscription £10

Name: _____

Address: _____

Post Code: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

Other Donation: £ _____

NB. Once we are a recognized charity, subscriptions will be eligible for Gift Aid



The FOSN Steering Group Contact List

- Anne Billing, Park House gallusbisom@aol.com (741360) [Treasurer]
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