



The Friends of St. Ninian's, Deerness, Orkney

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Reg Charity No. SC040794

Company Ref. SC 357794

FOSN's AGM—Thursday 20th March, 7.30pm

NEWSLETTER
MARCH 2014
PAGE 1

***We hope you can join us at Deerness Community Hall.
As well as wine and nibbles, there will be a presentation on the
excavation of the recently unearthed remains at Newark—
see back page for details***

We're sending out this Friends of St Ninian's newsletter to existing friends and to lots more of you who we hope will find it interesting to know what we're doing in Deerness. We hope too you might want to get involved in one or the other of our projects and fund-raising, but whatever, please enjoy this catch-up on what's happening with the Friends.

WORK ON THE KIRK

Over the past winter, the weather has not been kind to the fabric of the kirk, neither internally nor externally, what with long periods of wind and excessive rainfall causing flooding around the building and in the kirkyard. However due to the sterling efforts of Innes Wylie, Laurence Irvine, Sidney Foubister, Robert Skea and a number of other folk who helped to fill sand bags, the worst effects of the flooding were kept at bay with only a little ingress of water into the kirk itself. On a more positive note the Council are now progressing works to improve the drainage along the main road ditches approaching Skail, and in along towards the Kirk and the kirkyard and we are hopeful this will solve the problem with flooding.

The original small dehumidifiers, purchased a few years ago to help dry out the building over the damp winter months and following the effects of flooding, have gradually given up the ghost. This has resulted in us having to hire an industrial dehumidifier on a couple of occasions over this past year, which dried out the kirk really well. Following this experience we have decided to purchase a small industrial dehumidifier, to be on hand as and when required.

Work continues on improving the fabric inside the kirk as well, with new carpet tiles being purchased with part funding from the St Andrews & Deerness Community Council. They have been fitted up on the dais, replacing the rather worn and faded carpet. Removal of the old carpet revealed bonny, wooden steps onto the dais and it was decided to sand and varnish them, which has resulted in a nice feature being restored once more for all to see. Over the coming months a small multi fuelled stove is to be installed in the Session Room which will keep this end of the kirk a lot drier, for it suffers badly in wet conditions.

Moving to the outside of the building again, a piece of work which we hope to get completed when weather permits, is the installation of guttering around the Session Room and the Vestry. The new guttering was purchased quite a few months back and has been painted by Innes Wylie and Laurence Irvine and is to be erected by Grant Bryan.

A huge thank you to all those involved in undertaking the aforementioned work in keeping the fabric of St Ninian's in good condition.

That's the final date for submission of photos taken between 1 May 2013 to 30 April 2014 with the general theme Images of Deerness. Could be sea, land, folk, eventsThe plan is a 2015 Deerness Calendar to go on sale in late June 2014, as a Friends' fund-raiser.

PHOTO COMPETITION

deadline 30th april 2014!!

We aim to hold an exhibition of all the competition entries over a weekend in late May 2014, for folk to vote for the images to be included in the calendar. There are prizes for the 3 most popular photographs. The rules are enclosed with this newsletter. Please also spread the word about the competition – rules are on the website and Facebook for your photography friends. Any queries? Phone Anne 741300.



Deerness Boat Show

We'd discussed FOSN having a presence at the shows in order to publicise memberships, projects etc, and with the Boat Show at the Geo on the day following the East Mainland Show on 3 August 2013 this was the ideal time to hire a tent and do it! We managed to gather together a great display of all the current projects, Places and Names, World War 1, the Photographic competition for our 2015 calendar, etc. A lot of interest was the result and we also made a great start to flagging up *Something Different Something Deerness*, with the selling of Prize Draw tickets.

Above all both events gave us invaluable experience and the message that we should always have tablet for sale! Willie Kirkness's prowess in the tablet making stakes is now legendary!

FOSN FUNDRAISING

THE BLUE DOOR

Deerness attics and cupboards were well and truly redded out again for the FOSN week at The Blue Door in February. What a great institution this is for so many organisations in Orkney. FOSN made over £2,720 in our six days, though it was more like five, since the Wednesday was extremely stormy and wet with few folk about in the street. There aren't words enough to describe what a wonder Mrs Rita Jamieson and her dedicated staff have in The Blue Door. We are very grateful indeed.

The Charity, The Friends of St Ninian's, bought St Ninian's Kirk in May 2008, to keep it for Deerness, with the financial support of many Deerness folk. Since then it's seen a wedding (and another this summer), many events and the funerals of too many Deerness folk.

Membership of The Friends of St Ninian's helps with the costs of upkeep of the Kirk. We need approximately £2000 a year to insure it, heat it when needed and keep it dry. The other costs of repairs, upkeep and improvement are over and above that. The Friends have been very generously supported since the Kirk was bought; at events, by membership fees and funeral collections with the latter kept separate, to be used for specific improvement projects and not for running costs.

The more members we have, the more we can do and we are enclosing a membership form in case you'd like to become a Friend.

We also wonder if you or you and your family would like to speak to us about funding a specific project e.g. a new outer door, replacement windows, weather vane, display cabinet? If you would, please contact Ernie Skea, 741203 or email info@deernessorkney.co.uk

Whatever support you'd like to give, we'll be very pleased to hear from you.

Likewise if you think you'd like to be involved on the committee of The Friends of St Ninian's, please get in touch.

WORLD WAR I

Deerness lost men during WWI and their names are on the War Memorial in the Kirkyard. Leslie Foubister has been working hard on compiling information about the men who died and we have much to share as the next 4 years of World War I commemoration go past. Deerness men also served and survived their experiences, on land and sea. We'd like to commemorate them all and to think about how WWI affected Deerness and Deerness folk.

If you have family who served during World War I and want them remembered, we'll be glad to hear from you.

If you'd like to join the research or have ideas about how to commemorate World War I for Deerness, please ring Anne Mitchell 741300 or Ernie Skea 741203 or email info@deernessorkney.co.uk

This past year FOSN has also been taking part in the attempts to prevent any more of the Newark cemetery eroding into the sea. Over 240 skeletons have been removed from the site with subsequent limited carbon dating indicating the medieval and earlier cemetery was in use from before 700 until roughly 1400AD. You can imagine what an invaluable resource of information this is on the people of Deerness over a 700 year period of which at present little is known, particularly as DnA testing and other techniques develop.

Newark Archaeology

Want to learn more? Then please come along to our AGM on 20 March 2014 when Dave Reay of ORCA and Julie Gibson will be giving a talk on the recent work on the Newark site.



**ST. MAGNUS FESTIVAL.....ST NINIAN'S KIRK WILL BE HOSTING A
MUSICAL EVENT ON TUESDAY 24TH JUNE,
DETAILS TO BE CONFIRMED.
KEEP THIS FREE IN YOUR DIARIES!**

Deerness Names & Places

We're a group in Deerness, working to map and record Deerness names e.g. of old houses, fields, shore-names, new names, and also places e.g. wells, roads, quarries, watering holes. We reckon now's the time to do this with so much changing in the parish.

We're holding small gatherings this Winter and Spring with folk who know the various parts of Deerness to go over your detailed knowledge of your bit of the parish, so if you'd enjoy an afternoon poring over maps and aerial photos, please phone **Mabel Eunson on 741325 or Anne Mitchell 741300**, or email info@deernessorkney.co.uk

If you have written information you'd like to share with us e.g. old maps, photographs about your land/ house/bit of Deerness, we'll be pleased to hear from you too.

If you'd like to be involved in any way, please get in touch!

- We're also looking for someone with I.T knowledge to help map all the information we gather in. It's a job you don't need to be in Deerness to do, just be happy to help.
- Note also that we hold a complete set of Ordnance Survey First and Second edition maps of Deerness and an almost complete set of aerial photos. If you want to refer to these get in touch.



Information Gathering Session

something different - something deerness

**16th & 17th
november**

Well, our Christmas Art and Craft Fair was certainly different and it was certainly Deerness. What an array of talent was on show and it was a great hit with customers and stallholders alike.



The Mermaid Café was a winner again and did really well.

All the hard work was so worth while – the feedback was great, and yes Deerness does it better than London's Covent Garden Craft Market, according to one visitor!

We made over £1800 for FOSN, including £1000 from the Prize Draw tickets. We're very grateful to all who contributed prizes, and so generously gave of their time to assist in any way.

BUILDING THE DEERNESS COMMUNITY.....NEAR & FAR

www.deernessorkney.co.uk is the website of the Friends of St Ninian's. We also have a Facebook page which you can get to from the  on the website.

Let your Facebook friends know about us, "like" and "share" what you see on Facebook – the more the merrier!

BUT the website and Facebook are not just for FOSN. They're there for you to post Deerness news and events, reports & photos of events, swap stuff, find stuff, family history, family photos.

Are you far away, or not so far away, with lots of old

Deerness photos and you don't know who's in them? Get in touch and we'll get them on the website and see who can help name the folk or places in the photos.

Is there anyone out there who'd like to volunteer to help with the website? We need some help with www.deernessorkney.co.uk. If you'd like to be involved, wherever you are, email

info@deernessorkney.co.uk or phone Ernie Skea on 741203

Nonnie Dingwall on 741423 is Facebook contact. Get in touch with her or via info@deernessorkney.co.uk if you want to post onto the page, or help with it.



Summer Songs of Praise—18th August 2013

We had a lovely evening in St Ninian's with great singing from the newly re-formed Men of Orkney. Favourite hymns and choruses new and old rang out emphasising just how good the acoustics are in our kirk. Marion Dicken kindly topped and tailed the programme, with Cameron Stout and Kay Gordon leading the praise with interesting anecdotes about the composers of the hymns and also the times of revival in Deerness. Many of the audience returned to the Hall for refreshments and more impromptu, wonderful music from The Men of Orkney. Haste ye back!

Yuletide Concert—29th December 2013

A really bonny afternoon after a grim spell of wind and rain saw St Ninian's brightly decorated for a great concert with local folk young and old. Again a great array of talent on show, and it must make their families so proud. It was thoroughly enjoyed and appreciated by all there. Every time there's something on in the old kirk, it underlines how important it was to keep it and its heritage for future generations.

And on that subject, St Ninian's lost out on a christening due to the flooding and really wild weather in December, but we have a wedding to look forward to in the summer.



FRIENDS OF ST. NINIAN'S AGM

Thursday, 20 March 2014

7.30p.m

Deerness Community Hall

Including a talk by

Julie Gibson, County Archaeologist & Dave Reay, ORCA

Newark Bay: Recent Work by ORCA