

DORNOCH HERITAGE SOCIETY

August 2006

WHO OWNS SKELBO?

Skelbo Castle & Skelbo House need preserving. DHS has approached Historic Scotland and the site has been briefly inspected. Before any work can be commissioned, permission has to be received from the site owner. But who is he? A nameless Russian by some accounts. Anyone who has definite information, or even a clue about the owner, please get in touch with Peter Wild or Robin Ashby.

Please also reserve **14th December** for a special evening about Skelbo - its present condition and what we can do to improve it. Malcolm Bangor-Jones will talk on one period of its history.



SKELBO CASTLE

COMING EVENTS

2006

September 14

AGM - an illustrated review of 25 DHS years

WEST CHURCH HALL

Sep 30 - Oct 15

Highland Archaeology Fortnight

See overleaf

October 19

Tom Tew

"Donald Ross"

ROYAL DORNOCH GOLF CLUB

All further meetings in ROYAL GOLF HOTEL

November 11

Coffee Morning

November 16

Alistair McIver

"Local Crofting History"

December 14

Malcolm Bangor-Jones

An evening about Skelbo - its past and its future

2007

January 18

Our traditional Taste of Burns

February 15

Ian Paterson

"Local Wildlife"

March 15

Allan Kilpatrick

"Archaeology of War"

April

Annual Lunch

Date and venue to be announced

AGM (25 Years)

Thursday 14 September at 7.30 pm
West Church Hall, Dornoch

We have four vacancies on the committee and new members are welcome.

It is 25 years since the group that was to become the Society started their work. We will be reviewing these years at the AGM over refreshments.

The present committee of the Society is:

Chair: *Ken Bromage*

Vice-chair: *John Barnes*

Sec & Tr: *Robin Ashby* Membership: *Ullabritt Ashby*

Members: *Jean Birkett, Rena Oman, Ian Ross-Harper*

MEMBERSHIP

Paid-up members of the Society may attend lectures free of charge. Free admission to Historylinks is also included in membership. Non-members are 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 2006/2007 with this newsletter. All other members will find a renewal reminder enclosed if they have not already 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.



HISTORYLINKS

Latest news can always be found on our website: www.historylinks.org.uk.

OPENING TIMES

The museum is currently open 10am to 4pm daily until September 30, then Mondays to Fridays until 31 October. Thereafter it will be open two days a week, usually Wednesdays and Thursdays, but it is best to check before visiting (01862 811275).

WORKING WITH CHILDREN

Cliff and Christine have been involved in a successful project at the local primary school with selected children interviewing an older generation about their memories of living and working in Dornoch during WW2. To help us develop activities like this the trust has taken on **Jacquie Aitken** 2 days a month with considerable experience in these fields from her work with Timespan and Clyne Heritage. Future plans include preparing resource boxes for schools, running a presentation competition for secondary students and running a project linked with the out-of-school group, Allsorts.

NEW ACQUISITIONS

We have a new display based on the cups and medals won by Robert Mackay. As many of you will know he was born at Cyderhall, Dornoch in 1850.

Enamoured with the Sutherland Volunteers, he joined the Dornoch Company at 14, having faked his age to 17. He was soon promoted to Colour Sergeant. By 21 he had become an excellent shot and over the next 60 years won a great number of cups, medals and badges at Scottish and international competitions including 'The Queen's Prize' at Bisley in 1883. He was still shooting straight and strong at 69 when he competed for the King's prize.

In fact the flow of new additions to the collection continues steadily. A snuff horn belonging to a miller at Evelix, a very nice quern stone from Sunnybank, a 1912 curling medal won by J. J. Johnstone and a pair of rare 200 year old curling stones are just a few recent additions.

And if you have not seen the medieval matrix yet, note it is now on permanent display.

Finally, please remember we are building up a reference library which might interest you.

ARCHAEOLOGY COURSE

North Highland College hopes to start an evening course starting mid September. When going to press the details had not been finalised. So anybody interested should contact the College directly on 01862 811855.

HIGHLAND ARCHAEOLOGY FORTNIGHT

Mon 2 October 1.30 - 4.30 pm

Guided walk through upper Evelix valley with Anne Coombs, start from Historylinks

Sun 8 October 1.30 - 4.30 pm

Guided walk round prehistoric Loch Migdale with Anne Coombs, start from Old Spinningdale shop.

RAILWAY FILM

The new film concentrates on the history of the line and is intended as part of a comprehensive DVD package. Half of the shooting has been completed by Brian Anderson who will be editing it during the winter. Premiere in the spring.

ORAL HISTORY GROUP

Historylinks is keen to set up a group co-ordinated by Jacquie Aitken consisting of people interested in recording the rich seam of memories 'out there' that needs to be collected and preserved for future generations.

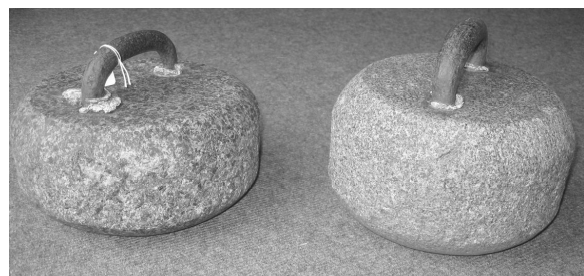
An informal meeting will take place in Historylinks on Thursday **21st September** at **2.00pm**. Come along and learn about how to record the past. No experience is required. Or come and tell your tale. Or do both. Whichever, it will be a very rewarding experience.

For more information call 01862 811275

NEW ACQUISITIONS



QUERN STONE FROM SUNNYBANK



OLD CURLING STONES