

As the nights draw in and the leaves change colour we look forward to another programme of talks in the Museum. Your new syllabus card is included in this envelope. The Society and the Museum continue to work hand in hand to ensure the wellbeing of both entities. Following the pattern of recent times, at the end of September the Museum will shift to opening just four afternoons a week (Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and Saturday), and rely entirely on volunteers from the society to staff the desk. If you feel inclined to do a stint the rota for October and November is now in the Museum. The Trustees want to give a big thank you to everyone who has helped over the summer months, without the volunteers the Museum would not be able to open as much as it does. There is also a plea to those who have not yet attempted a rota to give it a go. The more volunteers we have the better, and, with the lottery bid for a major refurbishment in process, every hour of volunteer time can be counted as an in-kind contribution to the project, thus enhancing our bid.

The project to put past Transactions onto the web, funded by the DBLPS, is now well underway. Paul Duffy, who is masterminding the task, is steadily uploading past Transactions, right back to volume 1. There will be a link from the Museum and Society website to the Transactions in due course. Now on the BNHS part of the Museum website is the guidance document for writing articles for the next Transactions. The publications committee have created this to help those thinking of writing something for the Transactions. Once an article is received and has been approved it will be published on-line so there is no lengthy delay between writing and publishing. This is a widely used practice and BNHS are falling in line with what is now seen as the norm. Should anyone wish to receive a physical copy of the guidance for authors please let Dawn Collis know and she will arrange for you to receive a printed copy.

The original of the Hostage Stone is currently on loan to Roskilde Museum (Denmark). Anne Speirs and Alison Sheridan delivered the stone in June and will return to collect it in January. In the meantime a replica stone paid for by the Friends of Bute Museum is on display.

Over the summer a group of volunteers have been surveying the deserted farms on Bute. The project will wind down over the winter while findings are written up and will start anew in the spring. If you wish to get involved in this project, contact Isabell McArthur. Some of the team will be attending a Community Heritage Conference in Crieff in November where they will give a poster presentation on progress so far.

The bird group have continued to hold regular outdoor meetings throughout the summer and the programme for the coming months is included later in this newsletter. In addition the bird group speaker programme is included on the syllabus card along with the BNHS winter programme. Remember that as a BNHS member you are automatically entitled to attend bird group events and vice versa. Unfortunately the 'damage to bird hides' alert system was put to the test this summer, fortunately it was shown to work effectively. The damage has been repaired and Bill Stein has added notices advising users of the hides to ensure they close the flaps before leaving.

The post of Membership Secretary has been taken on by Doug Menzies. I hope that everyone will be patient while he gets to grips with the membership tasks. We are currently trying to cross check details we hold on members. Often members move house or change details and forget to let us know. We may ask you to complete a small form to allow us to cross check your details when you renew your membership this autumn. If you pay by standing order the membership fee of £20 per person should be leaving your bank account at the start of October. If you do not currently pay by standing order we would strongly encourage you to consider this option. Unlike a direct debit a standing order is controlled completely by you, the account holder, the society can only receive what you decide, when you want it to be paid out, so there is

no danger of money being removed from your account without you knowing about it. Payment by standing order guarantees us memberships being paid and avoids the problems associated with forgetting because the first couple of meetings are missed.

Over the summer months Glyn Collis has been investigating the spread of the Australian landhopper on Bute. This little beastie, first described as new to science from Tresco (Scilly Isles) is a native of Australia, as the name implies. It probably got here in tree ferns brought here by plant collectors during the nineteenth century and been moved around in plant material. It likes a damp mild climate so is happy on Bute! Like woodlice, it is a recycler, eating dead and decaying vegetation, so is not expected to be a problem, unlike another alien, New Zealand flatworms. It is flattened sideways and dark shiny brown. It is a small, darker version of our familiar beach hopper, but found away from the shoreline in gardens, woodland etc. If you think you may have these in your garden Glyn would like to know as it is hoped to map their spread on the island.

Museum news: There was an incredibly well attended Open Day at the Museum shortly after the evening held for BNHS members to share the latest planning on the bid for money from the Heritage Lottery Fund. The Trustees have been delighted with the level of interest and support for this venture and will ensure members are kept up to date with developments. This autumn the Museum Trustees are applying for the renewal of accredited status. It is accreditation that permits the Museum to hold nationally (and internationally) important items, bid for treasure trove and receive support from Museums Galleries Scotland.

#### Bird Group outdoor programme

For all meetings please contact the leader or email [butebirdgroup@gmail.com](mailto:butebirdgroup@gmail.com)

Sunday 12<sup>th</sup> October, 2014: East Coast Twitch

Meet at Rothesay Harbour for 8.00 ferry. Leader: Doug Menzies

Saturday 15<sup>th</sup> November, 2014: Bute: Counting Waders & Wildfowl (Basic Survey Techniques)

Meet at Guildford Square at 10.00. Leader: Ron Forrester

Saturday 6<sup>th</sup> / Sunday 7<sup>th</sup> December, 2014: Caerlaverock

(Overnight on Saturday at the Nith Hotel, Glencaple) Leader: Bill Stein

Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> January, 2015: New Year Bird Race on Bute. Our 4th annual New Year bird race.

Meet at Guildford Square at 10.00 Leaders: Viv and Chris Shelley

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> February, 2015: Scone Palace and Loch Leven

Meet at Rothesay harbour for the 8.00 ferry. Leader: Doug Menzies

Sunday 15<sup>th</sup> March, 2015: A Walk from Cnocnicoll Wood to Kingarth

A look for some early migrants then lunch at Kingarth Hotel

Meet at Guildford Square at 10.00. Option for lunch at Kingarth Hotel. Leader: Billy Shields

Saturday 18<sup>th</sup> April, 2015: Isle of Gigha

A trip to the Sound of Gigha to see the Divers, Grebes and Sea Duck at this productive site.

Lunch at the Gigha Hotel optional.

Departure time and car-sharing to be agreed. Leader: Iona Gray