

As we are all still affected by the Covid 19 pandemic the Museum and Society have had a mixed, but not unreasonable year. We are all desperate to get 'back to normal', but are frequently reminded that things cannot yet return to how they were. Congratulations are due to Anne Bissell who took on running the speaker programme at what was an incredibly difficult time and succeeded in finding speakers and running a fairly complete programme despite the virus. The last scheduled meeting should have been the AGM, but with the fairly major flare up of cases on the island it was decided to postpone the meeting so that, when it takes place we can enjoy the traditional social event that follows the business meeting.

The AGM will now take place on Tuesday 17th May at 7.30pm in the Museum with the customary social event with wine, nibbles and soft drinks. Let's try and make it a very pleasant evening for everyone.

As there were no committees where the number of nominees exceeded the spaces available everyone nominated has been brought onto the committees in anticipation of the AGM. The paperwork for the AGM remains as it was for the original date.

Society news

Two new groups are in the process of being formed, a sure sign that the organisation is healthy. The principle has always been that if members wish to set up a group within the society to undertake a specific interest they are encouraged to do so. Several years ago the Bird group became such a group and now we are launching two more.

Florilegium group

Brian Large and Anne Bissell are creating a Florilegium group which will meet in the museum library. The initial dates are:

Tuesday 26 April at 2.30pm
Tuesday 3rd May at 2.30pm

It is hoped to model the group on the very successful used by the bird group so the members of the group decide they want to run it. It is likely that a few trips will be involved as well as the expert guidance of Brian. For the first session could anyone wanting to take part in Brian's teaching session bring some basic art materials:

- A pencil, rubber and pen
- Some paper
- Any water based painting medium
- Fine brushes

All of these can be obtained from Print Point though there will be some spare materials available.

Red Squirrel Project

A group has been formed to investigate the current status of red squirrels on Bute and to work towards supporting and/or re-introducing red squirrels on Bute as appropriate. The group have had a small number of meetings and aim to undertake investigative work starting this spring. If you wish to become involved please contact Malcolm Newdick by email. (mnewdick@gmail.com)

There is a programme of summer activities planned and organised by Ron Forrester. The list of events is at the end of the newsletter.

Museum News

School visits have restarted at the Museum, albeit not without short notice cancellations as waves of infections hit our population. Nonetheless it is good to see an attempt at returning to normality.

Bute Noir

I know many of you will be delighted that Bute Noir will return this summer after the hiatus of the past two years. The Museum will, as in the past be a key venue for the weekend. More details will follow but mark the first weekend in August in your diaries.

Book launches

There are three book launches to be held in the Museum in the near future and we hope that many of you will be able to find time to fit them into your schedule.



You are invited to attend the
BOOK LAUNCH
of
**A Very
Byzantine Journey**
by
J Richard Smith
on
Tuesday, 12th April, 2022
Bute Museum
7.00 p.m.

Tickets £3.50
available from Print Point
(Supporting Womb Transplant UK)

New Book Launch Saturday 30th April at 2.30pm in the Museum Library

Isle of Bute's World War I Dead - The Stories Behind the Names by Jean McMillan (£14)



Bute Museum and Natural History Society are publishing a new book. "Isle of Bute's World War I Dead - The Stories Behind the Names" by Jean McMillan, the Museum Archivist. It is the result of eight years of research into the stories of the men and woman with local connections, some of whom are commemorated on the various memorials on Bute and others who are not. The research started in 2014 when it was felt that there should be some lasting memorial to commemorate the centenary of the end of World War I and it seemed like a good idea to develop the superb book "Burgh of Rothesay and Island of Bute War Memorial Volume – The Great War 1914-1919", published by the Rothesay War Memorial Committee in 1922. This book gives bare information but in many cases a photograph of the serviceman lost during the conflict was

included, making each entry more poignant. This new book gives details of the men's history, their parents, jobs, interests as well as a bit of military history, where they died, are buried or commemorated, both abroad and at home and includes photographs. Names were obtained from the original book as well as from the various memorials on and in some cases off the island, gravestones and local newspapers. This is not a military history publication but deals with the social history of the time giving a flavour of the people who lost their lives due to this conflict. It is hoped that this will be a fitting tribute to all those with Bute

connections who perished though it is probable that more names and information will be discovered in the future.

And finally:



We are holding another book event on Thursday 12 May but as yet we don't have a time. This is for a book called *Snow Widows* written by Katherine MacInnes and tells the story of the wives and mothers of Robert Scott and the men who perished with him in the Antarctic in 1912. It has been very well reviewed in many newspapers including *The Times* and promises to be a fascinating read. The Museum had some input, providing photographs taken from the copy of the *South Polar Times* held in the Museum Library. This copy has special significance as it was presented to Birdie Bowers mother personally by Apsley Cherry Gerrard, a member of the *Terra Nova* expedition. There will be a charge for tickets though as yet this has not been decided.

Film Club

Bute Film Club has been unable to meet since the start of the pandemic as the cinema has been closed. Despite most such venues being open again Rothesay is still without its cinema. The Film Club are therefore using the Library as a temporary home, first screening Sunday 10th April at 7.30pm will be "Yesterday". See the Club's facebook page for more information.

Volunteers

With an attempt to approach a more normal life the Museum will be open every day except Mondays over the summer period so we are needing members to volunteer to help for Sundays and on days when Eugene, our custodian, is on holiday. If you can help either call in at the Museum to put yourself down on the rota or contact Dawn (504429 or email dawncollis@hotmail.com) to offer your services. Remember that without your help we cannot open the Museum to the public.

Bird Group Programme

Summer Outings 2022

Sat 7th May Birding on Bute

Meet Guildford Square 10.00 a.m.

Leader Liz McKirdy (504687)

Tue 7th – Fri 10th June trip to Fife (and surrounds) Leader Ray Eddie (500636)

staying at Premier Inn, Dundee West

The itinerary will centre around a day trip to the Isle of May (boat cost £34 adults, £30 concessions), other possible places being visited include Fife Ness, Kilconquhar Loch, Tentsmuir, Eden Estuary, Loch of Kinnordy (Perthshire) and a 'hill walk', possibly in Glen Esk (Angus).

Current room rates (as at 2nd February) for the three night stay at Premier Inn, Dundee West (excluding food) :-

Standard (pay now), non-refundable (amendable up to 1pm on day of arrival) - £115.50

Advance (pay now), fully refundable up to 28 days before arrival - £157.00

Flex (pay now or on arrival) fully refundable up to 1pm on day of arrival - £195.00

Members should book their own accommodation (please make sure that you do so at Premier Inn, Dundee West, as there are four different Premier Inns at Dundee). Please contact Ray before booking.

Ray will also provide information about booking a seat for the boat trip to the Isle of May and answer any other questions. [for booking Premier Inn, Dundee West – www.premierinn.com Tel: 03330 038101]

Wed 13th July evening birding on Bute

Meet Guildford Square 7 p.m.

Leader Ian Hopkins (504042)

(We intend continuing after it gets dark to look for night birds.)

Sat 6th August Upper Clyde shore - Port Glasgow to Newshot Island (possibly including Ardmore)

Meet Rothesay Harbour for 08.05 ferry: Leader (to be confirmed) contact Liz McKirdy (504687).

Sat 10th September Birding on Bute

Meet Guildford Square 10.00 a.m.

Leader Dougie Menzies (505732)

For all outings, please let the leader know in advance if you wish to attend.

Summer Events -2022

Unfortunately it was necessary to cancel our 2020 summer programme due to Covid-19, however last year things went ahead, more or less as planned. Restrictions are now almost fully lifted so it looks promising that we will be able to hold this year's outdoor activities as normal. We have therefore arranged a set of summer events.

However, we are not yet free of covid and if you wish to join any of our planned events, please contact the leader in advance to book a place, particularly as numbers may be restricted. Once you've booked a place, the leader will then also be able to let you know should an event be cancelled or altered in any way.

Wednesday 11th May 2022

Moth morning

At Rhoda House, Hydro Road, Port Bannatyne (courtesy of Patrick and Janet O'Sullivan) at 10.00 when overnight traps will be opened – Leader Ron Forrester (505352).

Wednesday 8th June 2022

Wild Flowers

An afternoon walk from the 'Seal View' Car Park at Scalpsie Bay to the raised beach at Clachan Ard in search of wild flowers. Meet at the 'Seal View' Car Park at 14.00. Leader Angus Hannah (504023).

Saturday 2nd July 2022

Wild Flowers

A morning walk in the Port Bannatyne area to look for wild flowers. Meet at the bus turning circle car park at 10.00. Leader Roger Connard (500390).

Saturday 9th July 2022

Archaeology

A morning walk at St Blane's. There is much to see at St Blane's a 12th century church and graveyard. If time and weather permit there will also be a short walk from St Blane's to visit Kingaven deserted settlement. Meet at the St Blane's road end car park at 10.00. Leader Sue Hothersall (503835).

Tuesday 9th August 2022

Bat evening

An evening visit to a bat roost. The location has not been finalised to allow the leader, Billy Shields, to choose a bat roost that is in active use. Contact Billy nearer to the event taking place, when he will be able to provide details about time, location and meeting place. Leader Billy Shields (504931).

Saturday 3rd September 2022

Archaeology

A morning walk to view Glecknabae and Cairn Ban Neolithic Cairns on the road north of Ettrick Bay with a possible extension to St Michael's grave (another Neolithic site) further along the road if the weather is good. Meet at Glecknabae Car Park at 10.00. Leader Sue Hothersall (503835).