

Friends of the Book of Deer

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Our Programme over the coming months.

April 27th

Opening of Project Room.

May 18th

Rangers visit to Project Room.

May 31st AGM at Aden Park.

June 21st

Pilgrimage—In the Steps of St. Ternan and St. Adamnan.

August 16th

Fourth and last Seminar of the Season : Revd. Angus Haddow - "Dowsing the Stone Circles"

TBA

End of season event and closing of Project Room.

PROJECT ROOM

During the course of this year we will be developing a new presentation to be ready for July 2009 when the Room will be a focal point in the "Homecoming Scotland" celebrations. We are inviting input from the volunteers whose help over the past few years has been invaluable and much appreciated. Preliminary guidelines have been prepared and will be put to the test during the next few months. In the meanwhile the Room will open on Sundays only during May and June between 1.30 and 4pm. Bunty has handed over the organisation of the Rota and details will be issued soon.

The **Newsletter** to keep those who take an interest in "that splendid little book", the *Book of Deer*, up to date. Prepared by Cecilia Penny and Andrew Kellock.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

The Meetings will be held on the 31st May. 2008 in the Theatre at Aden Park. Registration and refreshments at 1.15pm, followed by the A.G.M. of both the Project and Friends 1.45 to 2.45.

This year our guest speaker will be Mr. Fred Crawford who will give a talk on the "Harrying of Buchan". Fred was a teacher at El-lon Academy and is a graduate in English and History, specialising in the medieval period. This exciting episode in our local history should be better known as it was significant in its detrimental effect on the development of Buchan. This year is the 700th anniversary of what was Robert the Bruce's revenge on Comyn, the Earl of Buchan, and his supporters. This will be our third Seminar of the season.

PILGRIMAGE

Entitled "In the Footsteps of St. Ternan and Adamnan", it takes place on Saturday 21st. June. The pilgrims will leave Slains at 8am after a blessing and journey over the Buchan countryside to Aden Park, arriving at approximately 3.30pm. There will be breaks at the remains of St. Adamnan's chapel at Pitlurg and Muirtack School, then on to Skelmuir and Kinnadie, past Crichtie House on the way to Stuartfield and finally Aden Park.

There is parking at Mintlaw Academy and a bus will leave for Slains at 7am, cost £4. Pilgrims can join at any convenient point along the route. More details can be had by phoning 01771613666 or email

bookofdeer@yahoo.co.uk.

MORE ON HOMECOMING 2009

The Book of Deer Project, together with Aberdeen University is hosting a one-day seminar at Kings College in July 2009. This seminar will coincide with Homecoming 2009 and the North East clan fortnight. The theme of the conference will focus on the Book of Deer itself and its context in Medieval Scotland. The format will comprise 8 half hour talks on a variety of subjects and given by leading authorities in that particular field. In line with the Homecoming, the topics will relate to the North East. The conference is being jointly co-ordinated by Alan Cameron and Dr Clare Downham of the Celtic Department.

FRIENDS OF THE BOOK OF DEER SMINARS.



Our first seminar of the 2007/8 season, "**Rattray and Strathbeg - a History**", given by Derek Jennings, Chairman of the Buchan Tourism Group, was well attended by an appreciative audience. He made good use of his extensive knowledge of the area and surprised even those from the area with his findings. For example the wreckage of Royal Navy Beaufort torpedo bombers which can still be seen in the loch after over-shooting the landing strips at Crimond.

In a well illustrated talk at our March seminar, Dr Jane Geddes took us through the Pictish settlement at St Vigeans showing the location and the topography of the site. We looked at different stones and the range of symbols on the stones. One of the amazing observations made by Dr Geddes was that she had come across similar symbols in Egypt. What is the connection? It is interesting to speculate on the possible explanation. This talk was well received by the members and illustrated the continuing mystery which surrounds the Picts and their symbols.



GRAND SCOTTISH CONCERT

Pictured on the left is long serving Project worker, Sandy Ritchie with Nicola Auchnie, Geordie Smith and friends during a break in the excellent entertainment they provided on the evening. Geordie kept us amused with his pawky humour and homely stories, whilst his friends had our feet tapping with their lively tunes. They were joined for the evening by guest star fiddler Nicola Auchnie, a truly exciting talent with a great future ahead of her.

The evening raised a much needed £502 for the work of the Project, for which we are grateful, and really can't thank Sandy enough!

the Book of Deer website

The website has attracted 35,000 sessions since it was revamped last May. To all accounts this is good news and is apparently the envy of other websites. There has been considerable praise for its layout and content, but our main purpose is to take the Book of Deer and all it means to the widest possible audience.

We will continue to inform the world of our activities and hopefully we will have more interesting historical material to add as time goes on.

Book of Deer Project Management Structure

Patron Jack Webster **Hon President** George Smart

Directors: Sandy Ritchie, Bill Cruickshank, George Smart, Denis McHugh, Cecilia Penny, Alan Cameron, Andrew Kellock, Lynda McGuigan, Timothy Curtis.

Project: Alan Cameron (Chairman), Denis McHugh (Vice Chairman) Peter Elrick (Secretary), Maureen Stephen (Treasurer), Andrew Kellock (Project Manager): Cllr. Albert Howie, Betty Campbell, Sandy Ritchie, Sandy Cowie, Bill Johnston, Sheila Johnston and Cecilia Penny.

Friends: Andrew Kellock (Convener), Bill Johnston (Vice Convener), Maureen Stephen (Treasurer), Cecilia Penny (Membership Secretary), Peter Elrick (Minute Secretary), Betty Campbell (Social hostess): Elizabeth Pirie, Sandy Cowie, Sheila Johnston.

Friends.

We are now 80 in number; and again there has been a widespread interest shown in the Book of Deer. **Subscriptions are now due for the 2008–2009 season; and new members are always welcome. You can sign up using the enclosed slip.** There are also questionnaires for new members which should be returned to Bunty.

We are always on the lookout for more volunteers for the centre at Aden Park. Duties are not at all onerous, in fact, good fun, and training will be given. This year we will be developing the presentation for "Homecoming Scotland". (See previous item in this Newsletter.) Volunteers will have to apply for "Enhanced Disclosure." This is required by anyone operating on Aberdeenshire Council premises and who is likely to come into contact with children and vulnerable adults. The Project will facilitate any application. Friends are also reminded that we are always willing to take suggestions, particularly on subjects for our Seminars. It would be appreciated that any or all of our readers could e-mail us at

bookofdeer@yahoo.co.uk