

NEWSLETTER

Friends of the Book of Deer

Www.bookofdeer.co.uk

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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

The Annual General Meetings of the Friends and the Project will take place on Saturday the 26th of June 2010 in the Stuartfield Village Hall. The doors will be open at 1 30 pm, when there will be light refreshments and the opportunity for a chat and browse through the information on what we've been up to this past year. Business will start at 2, followed as soon as possible by a talk by Alan Cameron on the "Book of Deer", which will make us even more appreciative of this famous and important manuscript.

Stuartfield is not far from Aden Park, on the B9030 which is off the A950 via Old Deer ; or the A948 turning off at Auchnagatt. If anyone needs more details, phone Andrew or Bunty at the numbers above.

ARCHAEOLOGY (The search for the Columban Monastery)



Establishing the location of the Columban Monastery is an important element in the Project's work. The second phase of the search was carried out on the 8th, 9th and 10th of June by members of the Glasgow University Archaeology Division, helped to a great extent by Derek Jennings. This involved examining the area of the churchyard and burial ground close to the Old Deer Parish church in a non-intrusive way with ground-penetrating radar (GPR) and a gradiometer, methods which can provide excellent resolution of many types of archaeological features. The recordings are now in the laboratory for interpretation and we should know the results in a short time.

Seen here are Christine Rennie (field worker) and Olivia Lelong (Project Manager) of GUARD setting the baseline on the GPR equipment at the start of operations.

Also important to the Project, is contact with the schools. So to complement the geophysical survey, Derek and Alison Cameron of Cameron Archaeology gave pupils from New Pitsligo, Stuartfield, Pitfour and Fetterangus schools a conducted tour of the old church and graveyard pointing out the interesting features such as the carvings with the coats of arms and the symbolism on the gravestones—skull and crossbones and gravediggers' spades. The children watched the GPR taking place and Alison explained how the technique worked and what we were hoping to find.

They were then taken over to the Kemp Hall, where digging boxes had been prepared for them to excavate replicas of a medieval hearth and wall foundation. In the earth they were able to find pottery fragments, bones and daub—a mixture of clay, straw and animal manure. This gave them a real sense of the archaeologists' life and an inkling of how unpleasant living in Medieval times might have been.

For the last part of their visit, the children and teachers dressed up in medieval clothes and after making a vow of silence, viewed Derek's informational film on the Book of Deer.



Courtesy of Alison Cameron

FRIENDS MEMBERSHIP.

"Friends" and those wishing to become Friends can use this form to sign up, or if they prefer, do so at the AGM.

"FRIENDS OF THE BOOK OF DEER" SUBSCRIPTIONS

I enclose my subscription of £5 for May 2010 until May 2011 *

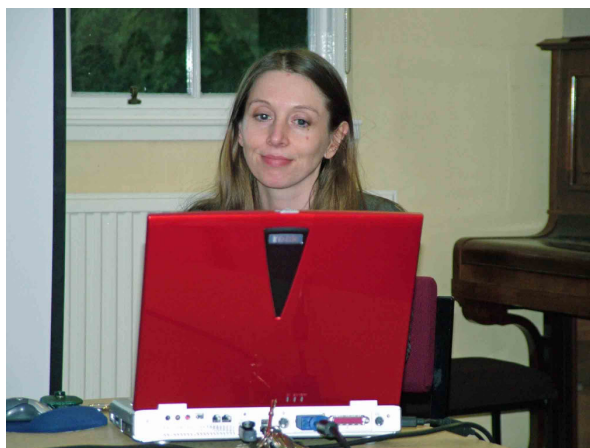
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SEMINARS

Dr. Clare Downham giving her talk " 18th Century Perceptions of Vikings in the North East of Scotland" in February. There was a particularly lively question and answer session after Clare's talk. Alan Cameron took the opportunity to thank Clare for the work she did in organising the "Cultural Icons" Conference last July and to wish her well in her new post in Liverpool. The "Friends" now look forward to next seasons' Seminars, and arrangements are underway to have an authoritative speaker on "Medieval Church Music." In the meanwhile we would welcome comments and suggestion from any quarter. We also look forward to another of Sandy's excellent concerts in October



PROJECT ROOM

A series of Special events has been organised for this summer. Posters have been put up in the Buchan area to publicise them. They will take place on Sunday between 2 and 4pm and are:

MONKS AND THE USE OF QUILLS with Bill Johnson on the 2nd May;

CALLIGRAPHY with Denis McHugh on the 20th June;

A RANGER'S VIEW OF ADEN with Pam Ross on the 18th of July;

PLACE NAMES AND THE BOOK OF DEER with Mary Melville on the 25th July;

MYSTERY OF THE MONASTERY with Derek Jennings on the 22nd August and

WOOD CARVINGS with Sandy Ritchie on the 5th September.

PILGRIMAGE



This year we are walking in the Footsteps of St. Peter from the links in Peterhead to Aden Park on the 19th of June. There may still be time for you to consider joining in this most pleasant of events.

WEBSITE.

The viewing figures continue to rise—57,253, sessions for the 12 months ending mid April 2010. Last year at this time it was 43,000.