



# DUNNET HEAD EDUCATIONAL TRUST

October to December 2009

## **BROUGH BAY**

The Bay has been the site of much activity this year. Walks with walks organised by the Ranger Service and local botanist, kayaking, fishing, diving as well as being a great place for barbecues and general relaxation. The seal viewing point has proved popular with local people and visitors alike, whales were seen off-shore and otters in the Bay. All in all, it has been very active. Visitors to Brough are always fascinated by the Bay, and its delights. The information shelter in Brough has local information, including walks around Brough Bay as well as Dunnet Head. With so many holiday cottages in the village now, Brough is an up and coming place for tourism, bringing much needed wealth to the County. Brough Bay is part owned by the Trust's trading arm and is mentioned in UK Villages web site - see <http://www.ukvillages.co.uk/>

## **SEABED SURVEYS IN THE PENTLAND FIRTH AND ORKNEY AREAS 2009**

Following initial surveys conducted by Marine Scotland (formerly Fisheries Research Services) in 2008, an 18-day cruise was undertaken during 18th July - 5th August 2009 to extend the original bathymetric survey work. The sites surveyed included areas identified by The Crown Estate as being of particular importance in relation to the seabed leasing of the Pentland Firth and waters adjacent to Orkney. The areas were primarily of interest with regard to tidal stream power generation.

Nine blocks of seabed were surveyed, amounting to approximately 280km<sup>2</sup>, with 85% of the survey area located within the Pentland Firth.

The multi-beam and single-beam echosounder systems provided detailed information on the depth, shape, hardness and roughness of the seabed while the digital video provided images of the seabed and a CTD (conductivity/temperature/depth) profiler recorded vertical and spatial variability in the sea water.

Approximately 18 hrs of current data were collected using the vessel mounted Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) which was also used during the surveys to gauge tidal current speeds and direction.

A spokesperson for Marine Scotland said "We are surveying sites in connection with offshore wet renewables development within the Pentland Firth and areas adjacent to Orkney. So far the survey work has been very successful. We have collected some excellent seabed information using our newly acquired sonar and underwater television equipment, the information being gathered could be used to guide potential future deployments of renewable devices."

The data will be worked up and the results made available through a workshop to be towards the end of 2009. Video clips from the survey are available on [www.youtube.com/user/MarineLaboratory](http://www.youtube.com/user/MarineLaboratory)



Source: Marine Scotland

Marine Scotland is the lead marine management organisation in Scotland. It was established on April 1 2009 as a Directorate of the Scottish Government (SG), to integrate core marine functions involving scientific research, compliance monitoring, policy and management of Scotland's seas.  
<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/About/Directorates/Wealthier-and-Fairer/marine-scotland>

The survey vessel the "Scotia" came very close to Brough Bay. The Trust works with a number of other organisations to raise the profile of Dunnet Head, including Wild Scotland who were delighted to receive information about minke whales spotted at the Head in July.

### **DVD - "Dunnet Head – the most northerly point of Mainland Britain"**

The DVD is now available and can be purchased locally in Caithness - email us at [info@dunnethead.co.uk](mailto:info@dunnethead.co.uk) and we will provide the latest list of outlets. Alternatively you can send a cheque to our administration office at Monlettie Croft, Street of Monteath, Methlick, Aberdeenshire, AB41 7JS. Cost is £8.50 + £1 postage and packing - and includes a free guide book. Please make cheques payable to the Dunnet Head Educational Trust. You can also order the DVD from our web site at <http://www.dunnethead.co.uk>. The DVD was filmed by Raw Format of Aberdeen and gives information about the Seadrift Centre (Dunnet), Dunnet Forest, Caithness Horizons and Mary Ann's Cottage as well as the wildlife and birdlife at Dunnet Head. Music is by the Wick Pipe Band and the Thurso band, Estrella. Voice over is provided by Denny Morrison of Murkle. A shortened version of the DVD can be seen on You Tube at [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PCP1mcG\\_\\_o](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PCP1mcG__o)

### **EXHIBITIONS**

The first exhibition of the plans of the military installations at Dunnet Head and Burifa Hill took place from 17-31 July in Stromness library, with a poster display at Kirkwall library. The exhibition coincided with Stromness Shopping week to maximise exposure and was well attended. This was followed by a display at the Orkney Science Fair when participants were asked to bring along artefacts from WWII. The next full exhibition will take place in Caithness Horizons, Thurso, from 28 September to 12 October. The exhibitions are part of a communications programme part funded by Awards for all and follow on from general exhibitions which took place in the VisitScotland offices in London (2001) and the Wick Heritage Fair (2003). The Trust also has an exhibition in Wick Tourist Information Centre.

### **WWII AIRCRAFT SITES - Search for wartime aircraft wrecks**

Over the summer, a group of museum volunteers was attempting to find the crash sites of several wartime aircraft in Scotland. Mark Evans visited Castletown in July and was helped by local people. Eye-witnesses recounted their memories of Hurricane fighters colliding at Forss and near Castletown airfield.

One resident told how his father had rescued the pilot of another Hurricane that came down in a peat bog at Broubster, in what is now a nature reserve. Surrounded by water, the airman stood on the wing until help arrived. An RAF recovery crew had to winch the aircraft for half a mile, because the ground was so soft. A Whitley bomber crashed near Castletown airfield at night and an elderly farmer described seeing the fuselage lit up by the flames before the impact. Many of the witnesses were children at the time.

Their memories can be particularly valuable, because they often took more interest in crashes and wartime salvage work than adults. The position where a Spitfire crashed on Dunnet Head was pointed out by a man who, as a schoolboy, had noted the fuselage and engine being recovered on a cart.

The volunteers are from the Dumfries and Galloway Aviation Museum and the Midland Aircraft Recovery Group. The two organisations have worked together in Scotland for many years, recording local memories and recovering aircraft remains for public display. Wartime records are researched, but these seldom give precise locations, so local knowledge is essential. The aircraft parts that can sometimes be found on crash sites are at risk of being lost. Left in situ, they are now corroding rapidly. The aluminium alloys have a high magnesium content and are not stable. Steel parts have lost their protective surfaces and are also corroding. Peat and other acid soils can accelerate the decay. Working

with licences from the Ministry of Defence, the volunteer groups are attempting to record the locations of crash sites and recover particularly rare items. Once conserved, they should still be there for future generations to appreciate. Source: Mark Evans

Mark Evans would like to thank the local people who were able to help. Anyone with knowledge of other sites is asked to call Mark on 01926 512264.

An interesting web site for air crash sites on Orkney and Shetland is Aviation Research Group Orkney Shetland <http://www.crashsiteorkney.com/index.htm>

### **NEW WEB SITE**

The Trust's new web site has been launched at <http://www.dunnethead.co.uk> and has been structured to enable our Aberdeenshire activities to be added as appropriate. The web site includes information about past projects, current projects, a downloadable version of this newsletter and much more ..... with useful links to our partners Everyclick and WalkingWorld.

### **PROJECTS FOR 2010**

The Trustees are now considering projects for 2010 and have already agreed with the Forestry Commission, the RSPB and the Highland Council Ranger Service that they will lead walks on the Caithness & Sutherland Walking Festival 2010. The event will take place from 1-8 May. The North Highland Tourism Group will assist the Trust with marketing and PR of the event and will be linked from the Active section of their web site at <http://www.northhighlandsscotland.co.uk/>. Coordination, publication of the Active Caithness booklet and the web site will continue to be managed by the Trust.

The Active Caithness book will be updated with more self guided walks. If you would like to sponsor the walking festival, please complete and tear off the slip on page 4 of the newsletter and send to our administration office at Monlettie Croft, Street of Monteach, Methlick, Aberdeenshire, AB41 7JS.

### **VIEWS SOUGHT ON NEW PLAN TO HELP HIGHLAND WILDLIFE**

Views are being sought on a new plan to help wildlife across Highland. The draft Highland Biodiversity Action Plan was drawn up by the Highland Biodiversity Partnership, and went out to public consultation on Monday 21 September 2009. Comments are sought by 31 October 2009. The draft Plan can be viewed by visiting [www.highlandbiodiversity.com](http://www.highlandbiodiversity.com) and clicking on the Highland Biodiversity Partnership tab. Paper copies are available at Council Service Points, Museums and Libraries, or by contacting Biodiversity Officers Jonathan Willet and Janet Bromham, tel 01463 702274 e-mail [janet.bromham@highland.gov.uk](mailto:janet.bromham@highland.gov.uk)

### **DUNNET HEAD TO BE PROTECTED FROM POLLUTION**

Scottish Water has started work on a £1m upgrade of a waste water treatment works near the UK's most northerly mainland beach, Dunnet Head, according to the BBC. The work on the treatment plant in Caithness, near Dunnet Bay and Dunnet Head, will ensure that treated water will be dispersed away from the beach, giving added protection against pollution. Sandy Reid, Scottish Water's team leader for Caithness, said: "The cleanliness of the bathing waters at Dunnet is very important for the community as the beach attracts many summer visitors. "It's pleasing to see this work starting as it will ensure we can continue to protect the local environment." Source: <http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/> 10 Sep 2009

### **PUBLICATIONS**

A guide to Dunnet Head is available on our web site at <http://www.iberacal.com> under "Publications" – cost £4.50. The publication includes the plans of the WWII installations at Dunnet Head and Burifa Hill. If you would like a copy of the guide, or any of the other publications listed below, please send SAE to Windhaven, Brough, Thurso, Caithness, KW14 8YE. Cheques should be made payable to the Dunnet Head Educational Trust. Alternatively you can download them from the site.

There are a number of self guided walks in the area on <http://www.walkingworld.com> which take in Mary Ann's Cottage, Dunnet Forest and other local attractions and they also include information about the geology, geography, archaeology and wildlife of the area. There is a whole Caithness section.

Another guide is 10 Tours of Caithness & Sutherland by Public Transport which can also be found at <http://www.iberacal.com/publications.shtml>.

### SOME USEFUL LINKS FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE DUNNET AREA

Geography - <http://www.geograph.org.uk/>

Archaeology - <http://canmore.rcahms.gov.uk/>

Birdlife - <http://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves/guide/d/dunnethead/index.asp>

Accommodation - <http://www.dunnethead.iberacal.com>

Coastal defences - [http://www.subbrit.org.uk/sb-sites/sites/d/dunnet\\_head/index.shtml](http://www.subbrit.org.uk/sb-sites/sites/d/dunnet_head/index.shtml)

Lighthouse - <http://www.nlb.org.uk/ourlights/history/dunnethead.htm>

SSSI - <http://www.snh.org.uk/scottish/nhighland/specialPlaces/places12.asp>

All of these are accessible through our blogspot at <http://dunnethead.blogspot.com/>

**Dunnet & Canisbay Community Council** - The community council meet once per month to discuss items of local interest. You can see their web site at <http://www.dunnetandcanisbaycc.org/> for further information.

Thank you to those people who have recently donated funds to the Trust. If you would like to support the Trust, please complete the form below and send it to us with your cheque.

Name:.....  
(Please print)

Date: .....

Address:  
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.....

Send to: Dunnet Head Educational Trust, Monlettie Croft, Street of Monteach, Methlick, Aberdeen, AB41 7JS



Registered Scottish Charity No. SC035021  
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