

## Welcome

Welcome to this latest edition of "Now and Then".

In July of last year, Anne Bennet was appointed Museum Officer for the Falconer Museum and she has been instrumental in bringing forward a fresh approach to our exhibition programme.

During the past year several events have been arranged in the Museum by 'The Friends' and details of these together with news of future plans are listed elsewhere in this issue.

Our team of 'Volunteers' continues to carry out excellent support work and we are indebted to them for their efforts.

We continue to see good attendances at our evening gatherings but new members are always welcome.

**Ray Smith**  
Chairman

## Farewell and Hello

After 12 years working in the Falconer Museum Kris Sangster retired in June, 2003. To commemorate her retirement and thank her for her assistance over the years, the Friends Committee presented her with book tokens at her retiral.

Replacing Kris is Anne Bennet who takes up the position of Interpretation and Outreach Officer.

Anne was born in Edinburgh and graduated from the University of Edinburgh in 1997 with a 2.1 General Arts (hons) degree. She then attended Robert Gordon University in Aberdeen for a Post Graduate Degree in Heritage Management. Her first foray into museums work was in East Lothian in 1999 writing for a SCRAN project (Scottish Cultural Resources Access Network) doing oral history recordings and documentation and collections. Following that contract she went on to work with Professor Alexander Fenton of the European Ethnological Research Centre based at the National Museum of Scotland and then worked on another SCRAN project with the Scottish Life Archive in the National Museum of Scotland. Anne says that her current job is a dream come true as it is a perfect combination of location and museum work and she hopes to remain here for a long time.



Left: Anne is seen here putting the finishing touches to one of the displays in the Toys From Christmas Past Exhibition.

## Programme of Events

Unfortunately only three talks were able to be arranged last year. The first of these was a talk on the Moray Oral History Group given by Susan Bennett and Anne Oliver of The Elgin Museum. Although the talk was plagued by technical difficulties, the topic has inspired the committee to go forward with our own Oral History Project.

Sadly, our Guest Speaker for November, Col Graham Davies who was to speak on Nepal had to cancel the event due to illness.

Fortunately, Ken Smith, Editor of The Forres Gazette stepped in and gave an extremely interesting and amusing talk on his life in journalism. Though there was a small turnout to this evening, those who did attend felt it was one of the best evenings we have ever hosted.

In February of this year Glyn Dodwell gave an enthralling illustrated talk on Kinloss Abbey and the work of the Kinloss Abbey Trust. This group was instigated by the Findhorn & Kinloss Community Council, to look at ways of raising public awareness of the existence of the Abbey; to look at the general condition of the Abbey ruins and consider ways to preserve the monument for posterity.

## "Toys From Christmas Past" Exhibition

The Museum's first "Christmas" Exhibition - **Toys From**

**Christmas Past** - was held in

December 2003 and was a great success with over 800 visitors.

The exhibition featured toys donated by Friends' Members such as Board Games, Train Sets, Teddy Bears, Puppets, pull-along "Flintstones" characters and model

cars including "Chitty Chitty Bang Bang". The Christmas theme was continued with a variety of Christmas Cards, some of which dated from World War 1.

Primary 3 pupils of Andersons Primary School, Forres painted posters of toys and these were also be on display during the exhibition.



Left: Some of the guests who attended the opening night of the exhibition on 29<sup>th</sup> November which co-incided with the Christmas Lights Switch on.

## Forthcoming Exhibitions

It is hoped to hold four mini-exhibitions in the coming year. The first of these, an exhibition on the **Forres Footpaths Trust**, will be launched on 26<sup>th</sup> March. In June, the Museum will be hosting an exhibition on **Plasmon Mill** showing the work of Forres Academy Pupils who are investigating the history of the Mill.

In October a somewhat unusual exhibition will be held showing what can be done with **recycled materials** and rubbish. This is being run in conjunction with the Moray Wastebusters Project and artist Janet McEwan, well known for her work with recycled materials.

Finally, plans are underway to hold another exhibition over the Christmas period.

## Falconer Museum Development

An application is currently in the hands of the Heritage Lottery Fun for redevelopment of the museum.

It is hoped to preserve and restore the interior of the building to tell the story of the museum and its benefactors and enhance its educational capacity; improve public access and physical aspects of the building; develop the educational role of the collections and the building and provide flexible display space and equipment.

## Subscriptions

The current subscriptions are:-

Concessions, OAP, Unemployed & Under 16	£	4.50
Individual Adult	£	7.50
Family	£	15.00
Corporate	£	25.00

Membership Applications are available at the museum or from our Secretary.

## Membership

To boost our funds the Committee recommend that you use the **Gift Aid Declaration Scheme** whereby the Friends can reclaim income tax on each £1.00 donated by way of gift or subscription. Members need only sign a simple declaration form for us to benefit from the scheme.

## Oral History Project

Our Secretary has long been interested in forming our own Oral History Project and the scheme finally got off the ground earlier this year with the purchase of a digital recorder to record reminiscences of local people.

It is planned to store a digital record of Forresians' memories to give future generations an idea of what life was like in the Royal Burgh in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. People will be able to listen to snippets from the recordings on the Friends' Website and hear the full recordings at the Museum.

Costs have been kept to an absolute minimum with the digital recorder costing only £140.00 and the software needed to edit the recordings downloaded for free from the internet.

A limited number of sample recordings are available on the Friends website [www.falconermuseum.co.uk](http://www.falconermuseum.co.uk).

If you are interested in being interviewed for this project please get in touch with our Secretary.

## Nelson 200

Next year sees the bicentennial of the Battle of Trafalgar. As we are fortunate to have one of the country's foremost memorials to Lord Nelson in Nelson Tower, the Friends together with the Moray Council Museum's Service, are looking at ways to commemorate this event.

Plans are at an early stage but we have already been in touch with national media for coverage of the celebrations and are hoping to host a ceremony at Nelson Tower with sailors from HMS Penzance in September 2004. We have also written to the Post Office in the hope that Nelson's Tower will be featured on a special stamp issue. We will be encouraging other local groups to commemorate the occasion and will be holding a special exhibition in the museum.

## Contacting The Friends

You can obtain more information about the Friends from:-

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**The Friends web site**  
at  
[www.falconermuseum.co.uk](http://www.falconermuseum.co.uk)