

Dunfermline - A Story to Weave

New Museum & Gallery

Issue 1 - July 2012

Flagship Museum for Dunfermline

The project to bring a new museum and gallery to Dunfermline is making steady progress. You wouldn't believe how complex the process is and for those of us working on it, sometimes it feels as if we've been at it for a very long time indeed!

Dunfermline has a lot of heritage. It has one of the best surviving medieval townscapes in Scotland. The Abbey and Palace were founded in the 11th century when King Malcolm III established Dunfermline as a new seat for royal power. The nearby Abbey Church contains the tomb of Robert the Bruce. Abbot House provides a unique visitor experience in the town's oldest house and the Andrew Carnegie Birthplace Museum tells the story of the great philanthropist. So why, then, are we working on a project to bring a new flagship museum to the city? Well, Dunfermline also has an important collection of industrial heritage relating to its once thriving textile and coal industries as well as much local history material that isn't currently on display. The aim of this project is to display the best artefacts held in Fife Council's collections but also to bring the story of Dunfermline – from Kings – to linen – to coal – right up to the present day.

The world's first Carnegie Library and the adjacent former bank building will come together with a brand new extension which will house a new main entrance, café, and children's library as well as two museum display floors and three temporary exhibition galleries.



www.fifedirect.org.uk/futureheritage

HLF D Day approaches

The £10.7 million project is part funded by £6.8m from Fife Council's capital budget. The final stage of our application for £2.8 million will arrive at the Heritage Lottery Fund's Scottish HQ in mid October 2012. Such a simple sentence but there's such a lot of work to make it happen.



A nerve-wracking wait follows until the end of January next year when HLF announces the grant awards. We will submit the best possible application for what's already been acknowledged by HLF as an exciting and worthwhile project, but we are in competition with other great projects too. The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust has agreed in principle to make a significant contribution, and there will also be a public appeal.



Curator to work full time on the project

Lesley Botten has been appointed to work full time on the project to see the development of the museum displays, exhibitions and events programmes through to 2016. Lesley came to Fife in 1999 to work in the old Dunfermline Museum in Viewfield Terrace where she learned about the museum collections and got to know the town and its citizens. Lesley is delighted to be working on such an important project and will be based in The Abbey Room, Dunfermline Carnegie Library.

Library users asked what they think

If you are visiting Dunfermline Carnegie Library in August or September you may be asked to fill in a questionnaire telling us what you think of current library services. Questions about the new museum and gallery project will be included too. By taking 10 minutes of your very valuable time you will be helping us ensure that you get the services you want in the future.



Pre-schoolers and their parents being consulted at a Bookbug session

What will be in the Museum?

The main Museum display will cover six main themes:- industry, transport, recreation and culture, homes, two world wars and Dunfermline as a centre of royal and religious power. These themes have been chosen after lots of consultation with groups and individuals and also reflect the strengths of the museum collections.

Large items which haven't been seen for many years will be displayed throughout the new and existing buildings. The temporary exhibition programme will include other aspects of Dunfermline's history and that of nearby towns and villages. Star items from the George Reid collection of manuscripts and early printed books and the Murison Burns collection will be displayed in the research and local history area.



Beat the drum for Dunfermline! Town drum used by the town crier when announcing the news

Dunfermline at War

The search for local stories of wartime Dunfermline has already unearthed a lost connection. Harry Hogg took part in the themes on-line survey and came to one of the planning consultation events. He gave Lesley the story of how his great uncle, Alexander Malcolm McNeill from Carnock, lost his life at the Battle of the Somme in 1916. What Harry didn't know was that a relative had donated McNeill's medals to Dunfermline Museum. Now the family is planning a visit to be reunited with these poignant mementoes and the Museum has the full story behind them.

Memories and stories of World War2

Do you remember Dunfermline during the Second World War?

Do you have stories from that time about Dunfermline people?

What was Pittencreiff Park like then?

Watch out for news of a special wartime memories event or contact Lesley Botten on 08455 55 55 55 Ext 492276.
Email lesley.botten@ffe.gov.uk



Each newsletter will focus on one of the new museum's six display themes. The next issue will feature Dunfermline's connections with Her Majesty The Queen.

Drinking fountain mystery

This cast iron drinking fountain has stood in the former downstairs display area at Dunfermline Museum in Viewfield Terrace ever since staff can remember.

During a recent inventory it was closely examined for anything that could give a clue to where it came from. Sadly no labels or reference numbers were found so we are appealing to the public to tell us where in the town this fountain used to stand.

It has the words "Keep the pavement dry" cast around the top.

Please contact Lesley Botten (details below) if you think you can help.



Get involved ... Find out more

For the next 3 years there will be lots of ways that you can help make the new Dunfermline Museum into something to be proud of. More information will be issued in quarterly newsletters which you can download from the website or receive by post if you send in a request to join a newsletter mailing list. (email libraries.museums@fife.gov.uk or pick up a mailing list request form at a Dunfermline library) or go to:

www.fifedirect.org.uk/futureheritage

You are also welcome to contact any of the following people involved in the project:

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Funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and Fife Council with The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, Royal Dunfermline – A Story to Weave will develop a new and accessible museum and art gallery in the heart of Dunfermline's heritage quarter, adjacent to and integrating with the world's first Carnegie Library.



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