



All Aboard!!

February 2009

Royal Patron HRH The Princess Royal

Kirkintilloch Welcomes HRH the Princess Royal



Royal Patronage for Seagull Trust Cruises

In late December, Seagull Trust Cruises was deeply honoured when HRH The Princess Royal accepted an invitation to become the Royal Patron for the charity.

The Princess Royal who was appointed to the Order of the Thistle in 2000, recognising her work for charities had already attended the opening of the new boathouse in Kirkintilloch has already expressed a desire to stay in regular contact with us and we hope to welcome her to future events in the months and years ahead as we continue to expand our charitable work across Scotland.

When we spend all of our time on water, a little bit of rain was certainly not going to stop the celebrations as HRH The Princess Royal flew in to formally open the stunning new boat house in Kirkintilloch at the new Southbank Marina, although there were a few anxious moments as news filtered through that the weather was making



the landing of her helicopter nearby somewhat complicated, but thankfully that potential problem soon abated!

It was the 30th September and the local Kirkintilloch branch, members from other branches and guests assembled to greet the Princess Royal. It was to prove a fabulous day, which will long live in the memory,

perhaps most especially as her Royal Highness broke protocol and allowed James Mackay from Erskine to hold her hand and gave him a little support as the Marjorie Seagull pulled out of the boathouse to the sound of claxons. Another favourite memory has to be the assembled children waiting patiently in the rain to greet the dignitaries whilst furiously waving their flags - great stuff!

The rain may have been falling but still we waited, then her HRH arrived, to the sound

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sound of pipes from 1st Battalion The Royal Regiment of Scotland and she took time to talk to some of the onlookers, before moving through to meet representatives of the charity, the marina and British Waterways.

Among the invited guests attending the event were MP David Whitton, Provost Alex Hannah, Council Leader Rhondda Geekie and Acting Lord-Lieutenant of Dunbartonshire Gill Aitkenhead.

After a dedication by Reverend Mark Johnstone, from St Mary's Parish Church, the Princess Royal was invited to formally open the new boathouse by Ronnie Rusack and unveil a plaque to commemorate the occasion, before being presented with flowers by Campsie View pupil Katy McIlveney. Those waiting outside heard the ceremony from speakers, but it was not long before Her Royal Highness came back into view with a short trip out of the boathouse and onto the marina (nervous moment for all those crewing!) . As she came round the corner the small collection of boats in the marina sounded their horns including a small puffer vessel who smoked proudly.

And then Her Royal Highness was on her way and the various guests moved inside for a welcome heat and a lovely buffet lunch and speeches.

Everyone at Kirkintilloch did the charity proud and thoroughly enjoyed the day. Hamish Nicoll, Chair of Seagull Trust Cruises in Kirkintilloch, reflected on the visit; *"The Princess Royal took a tremendous interest in our work and was very generous with her time. She was full of enthusiasm for the Seagull Trust and really made the day"*. Whilst the ever hard working Jen Biggan, said: *"It was so nice to have her here. She was great and didn't even seem to mind the weather. Her visit really brought the whole branch together and made the day a real community event."*

Nationwide Award

In October 2008 Ronnie Rusack was invited to Dynamic Earth in Edinburgh for the Nationwide Community & Heritage Awards (in partnership with the Heritage Lottery Fund). As Ronnie said later he went to the event not expecting to win anything as the Awards covered the whole of Scotland. Oh Ye of little faith Ronnie! Seagull Trust Cruises received a Community Award and then went on to win a further award of Regional Finalist for Scotland and an invitation to the Tower of London in November for the National Award Ceremony.



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We are now the proud winners of two splendid glass trophies and also received a cheque for £500 and shopping and leisure vouchers for £250. Unfortunately we did not win the National Final however just as important was the opportunity to network with executives from the National Lottery and hopefully now when we put an application in they will know who we are.

30th Anniversary Gala Dinner

Many years have passed since Rev McKay first had the vision for the Seagull Trust; thirty years in fact and it seemed wholly appropriate to celebrate the landmark - and that is exactly what happened on November 8th at the Falkirk Wheel.

The night was wet and windy but this didn't stop everyone having a great evening. The Camelon Pipe Band were playing as people arrived. Whilst in the marina basin guests passed by various members of the Seagull fleet and an old friend, the now re-named Bluebell, our very first boat.

The evening started with Master of Ceremonies Peter Hammond opening proceedings. After dinner Lord Gill, the guest speaker spoke then it was back to Peter Hammond in his role as auctioneer to get a charity auction underway; well every excuse to make money to extend our work has to be taken!! There certainly were plenty of items for auction and with Peter Hammond's selective hearing lots attained good prices and a lot of money was raised for the Trust. Our grateful thanks for the tremendous support we had from many companies and individuals, too numerous to mention. Let's hope that the next gala dinner is as successful. Roll on the next 30 years. *If anyone has any photographs of this great evening we would be delighted to feature them in the next issue.*

Seagull Tails - stories from the past

Every volunteer probably has a favourite story, an anecdote about a passenger, a fellow crew member, or volunteer. Some are funny, some are simply moving. These stories are a big part of why so many people give their time freely and illustrate just why the efforts of every single person make such a difference. The exact accuracy of every tale, who knows, but fondly re-told we thought they were worthy of inclusion.

Aboard the Janet Telford

During a spell when the Janet Telford's engine were not working and she was being towed by the Mackay Seagull, on one trip her passengers were from a school for blind children. One of the crew exclaimed "There's a Kingfisher!" One of the children asked "What's a Kingfisher?" The crew member described the bird as well as they could and the child then said, "Please can you describe it again so that I can really see it."

Aboard the Govan Seagull

A party of children from a special school near Falkirk were on a cruise aboard the Govan Seagull. One of the passengers was aged about nine. When she was six, she had been strapped into her seat in the back of the car when the car was involved in an accident and sadly both her parents were killed, she hadn't spoken since then. On leaving the boat at the end of the trip, half way down the gangway she turned round and said to a crew member "Thank you very much, I really enjoyed that." Apparently she didn't stop talking for weeks.

Kirkintilloch boathouse opening



A wonderful day was had by all

Volunteers always needed – we are always looking for more volunteers to help us to extend our work and to help the disabled and disadvantaged in our communities; if you can help please contact us . For more information please go to www.seagulltrust.org.uk— every hour you can give can make a real difference.

We are also always seeking new funds so if you can't help us with your time your donations are always welcome!!

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