

BOAT CLUB
of
THE WICK SOCIETY
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The Wick Society Charity Number
SC 016927

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Dear Sir

Isabella Fortuna – school visits in Moray Firth
Final Report 2008.

The inspiration to promote the project came about after hosting the local schools in Wick & Caithness, area. Over the past number of years the local schools have shown a great interest in the fishing industry and heritage Wick Harbour. The schools have carried out related projects and have joined ranks with the Wick Society and especially the Boat Section to help them promote and develop their projects, the interaction with the schools have been inspirational for all concerned.

The schools visit the Isabella Fortuna, Lifeboat shed, Herring Mart and the Heritage Museum and the information on the towns heritage was promoted through their projects and reached wider audiences through the enthusiasm of the Children.

The Isabella Fortuna and members of the Boat Section attend the Portsoy Boat Festival every year, and it was suggested at one of the Boat Section meetings that we could volunteer to carry out similar interactive meetings with schools in and around the Banff area.

The Boat section committee contacted Schools in Portsoy, Whitehills, Banff and Macduff had fishing / heritage projects as part of the school work and the teachers were all delighted with the initial suggestions.

A programme of activities were drawn up by the committee and the final projects put forward to develop when we visited these schools were as follows:

- Traditional fishing methods (herring drift net, Sailing & Steam drifters)
- Knot Art (teaching knot making using old twine, nets and beach materials to create pictures)
- Visit Isabella Fortuna, hear Yarns (story telling), living conditions and hoisting the sails

These suggested activities were sent to all the schools for approval and were accepted in principal as the chosen format for delivery of our project.

Timetables, programmes and risk assessments were exchanged between ourselves and the participating schools and all aspects of the project delivery was finalised well in advance of the Isabella Fortuna leaving Wick for the annual Portsoy boat festival.

There was great excitement within the ranks, especially with the handful of crew who were chosen to complete the final delivery.

The boat berthed in Portsoy for the Traditional Boat festival and stayed on so that Portsoy Primary school could visit, in their own harbour. The classes were split into 3 groups with approximately 10 in each group.

The first delivery went very well and the participation of the children overwhelmed us. Members of the public who were still hanging on after the festival gave us a huge round of applause and equally enjoyed the presentation. This gave us tremendous encouragement and we were looking forward to the next phase of the project.

On Monday afternoon boat departed Portsoy and berthed on Whitehills harbour pontoons. We were given exclusive use of the Whitehills marina and part of the harbour buildings which provided a perfect location for delivery of the project.

Whitehills, Banff and Macduff schools visited over a 3 day period and the timing and content of the delivery was tailored to meet the differing age groups attending

Also at night the children who visited the boat during the day came back with their parents which again was encouraging for our crew as this gave us a very positive slant to what we were trying to achieve.

Framed prints of the Isabella Fortuna, history booklets were presented to all participating schools.

New lasting friendships were forged with school teachers and helpers along with the Harbour employees of Portsoy, Whitehills, Banff and Macduff. And we feel that the total benefit of the project was immeasurable.

Feed back Letters and questionnaires from the schools show the success of the project and these returns are included in this submission as part of the Final report.

We only have permission to publish a few of the school photos, although each class was photographed by the teacher for their project. I attach copies of the photographs for your perusal.

The comments varied, but the most interest was shown to the working of the boat and the rope art, due to the children having Hands on rather than sitting watching a DVD.

The overall trip was a great success but spirits were dampened on our return voyage when gearbox problems crippled the boat 3 miles from Wick . This has been temporarily repaired and we are now entering into a project to replace the gearbox and refurbish a spare engine also train volunteers on the skills of continuing engine restoration.

Even with this setback we managed to have a review meeting on how we could improve / adjust delivery of our project. Some modifications were introduced and we look forward to continued interaction with schools / local groups in the Moray Firth area when the opportunity arises.

Yours faithfully



Malcolm Bremner

Encls. Disc photographs. Feedback letters / questionnaires, sample drawing / letters from the children. Receipted invoices with breakdown of expenses

