



# ***THE CARNYX***

*Volume 1 Issue 2 November 2007*

The name Carnyx was suggested by Helen Chavez, our Documentation Assistant, as the carnyx was a musical instrument used by many Northern European tribes, they were sounded to announce the tribe's presence in battle or as part of a procession.

The image in the header is of part of a carnyx found here in the North East of Scotland in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. It is in the form of a boar's head and is in the style typical of the late bronze-age to early iron-age.



Q. How does Good King Wenceslas like his pizza?

A. Deep pan, crisp and even!

## **From Lorraine Grant – Cultural Services Manager**

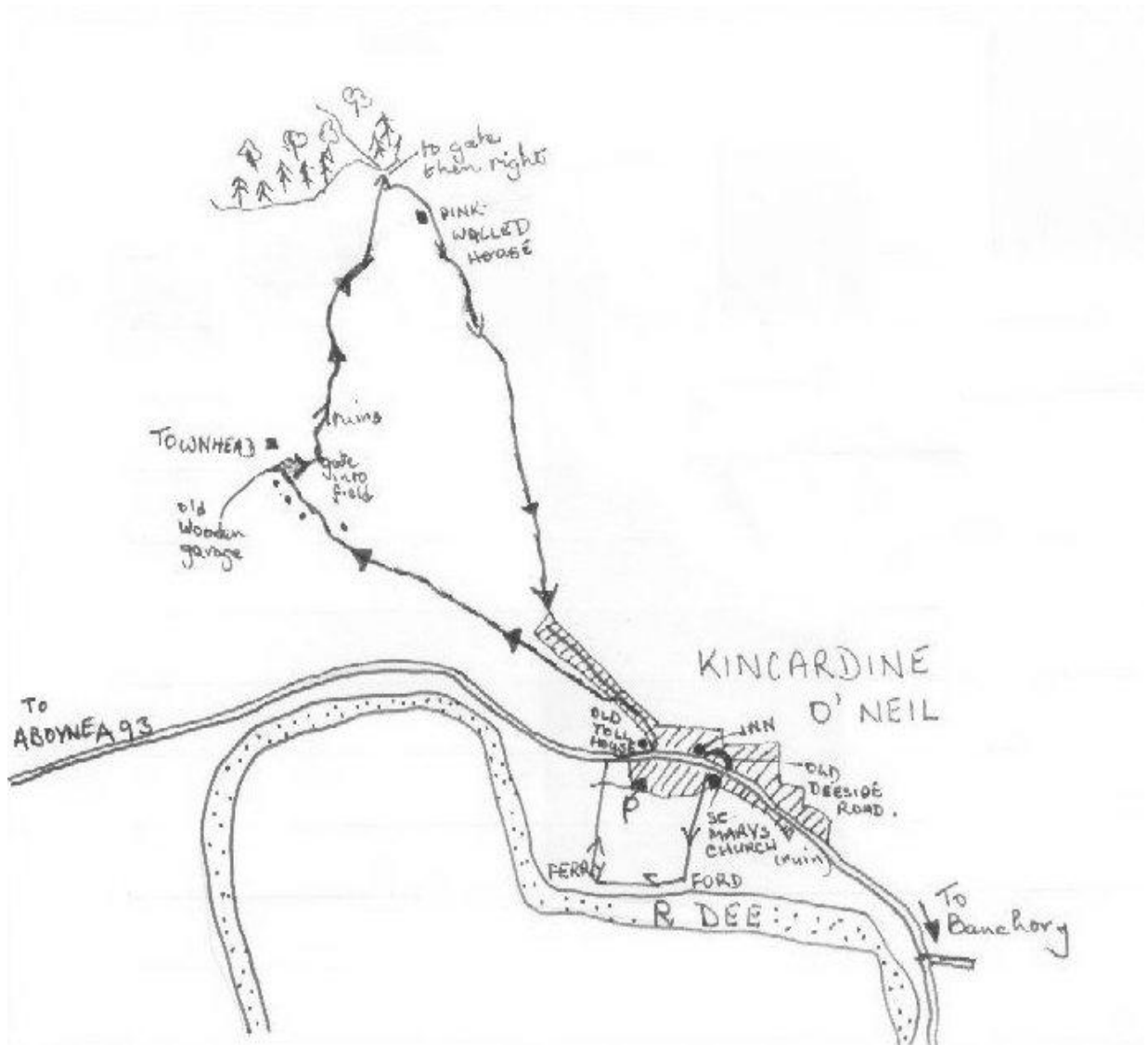
Thanks to the Carnyx team for giving me an opportunity to introduce myself as Aberdeenshire's new Cultural Services Manager. I'm thrilled to be in post, and am really excited at the potential offered by working with an extended team of Arts, Libraries and Museum professionals.

As some of you may know I've spent the last four years working as Senior Arts Officer (Strategy & Development) with the Council, with my professional background being as a visual arts curator. Fewer of you, however, will know that I have worked within a number of local authority Museums and Galleries departments, most significantly for me at Glasgow Museums, where I was a member of the exhibitions team, working on shows at Kelvingrove and the McLellan Galleries. My time at Glasgow offered the fantastic opportunity to travel to India researching contemporary Indian artists, and also to purchase objects for the Hindu displays in the then newly created St Mungo's Museum of Religious Life and Art. Museums and the stories they tell are very close to my heart and I am looking forward to working with staff to develop our local museums, and to celebrate the rich cultural heritage we have here in Aberdeenshire.

And we have much to celebrate! Even in my first few weeks in post, our Museums Service has been hitting the headlines with the launch of our Online Collections, and the announcement that the collections at Aden Farming Museum have attained the status of a Recognised Collection of National Significance, awarded by the Scottish Museums Council. Not only do these developments reflect the quality of the collections we hold in Aberdeenshire, but are a direct testament to years of hard work and expert contribution that a number of our Museums staff have made to ensuring that Aberdeenshire can offer the very best to our local communities and visitors alike.

Congratulations to all those involved, and I look forward to sharing future successes with you, and all our Cultural Services colleagues, in the months to come!

## **A WANDER THROUGH THE PAST AT KINCARDINE O' NEIL.**



### **A walk designed by Banchory Curatorial Assistant – Margaret Cordiner**

A walk through the Aberdeenshire countryside can have an added dimension when something is known of the historic significance of some of the features passed. This easy three and a half mile walk has only a moderate hill – 105m gained – and will take the average family group one and a quarter – one and a half hours. There are spectacular views to east, south and west.

Kincardine O' Neil advertises itself as “the oldest village on Deeside” and so is suggested as the starting point for a route which, although easily accessible, gets well away from busy roads. The village sits on the A93 and is served by an hourly bus service for most of the day, the 201 route (less frequent on Sundays). There are public toilets, a tiny tearoom, and the post office sells cups of tea when the tearoom is closed. If the pub is closed then Potarch Hotel is only two miles away.

Start at the car park, just off the main road. It has a large interpretive noticeboard in the car park telling of the village's history, and therefore no attempt will be made here to repeat the information displayed there. It makes a suitable starting point to the walk.

Cross the road and make your way towards the pub!! – sorry it's often closed – note the fountain and water trough alongside; they are filled with flowers in summer. These were important when the pub was a staging inn, often the farthest west that a carriage would venture. Take the short loop road leading eastward round behind the fountain. You are on a short section of the Old Deeside Road, used

before the present main road was built in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century. The old building on the right on this section of the route was once a girls' school.

On regaining the present North Deeside Road again look to the first house on the left, "Cochran's Croft". The site of the croft granted rent free to its tenant by James V in thanks for the hospitality received by the king when he was touring round the countryside in disguise calling himself the "Gudeman of Ballangeich".

Cross the road to the old ruin of St. Mary's Kirk, a religious site from the 5<sup>th</sup> century, with the oldest part of the existing ruins dating from the 14<sup>th</sup> century. Again detailed information may be obtained from a noticeboard at the entrance to the kirkyard. Continue down the lane between the kirkyard and the tearoom to reach the River Dee. This is the site of the old ford makes a lovely picnic spot. A quarter of a mile's stroll upstream takes one to the old ferry crossing point. It was not discontinued till 1937 when the cost was 2d per journey.



Apparently a wooden bridge spanned the R. Dee in the 13<sup>th</sup> century, built by the local Durward family; i.e. it predated the old Brig O' Dee in Aberdeen, but it is not known how long this bridge existed. The riverbank is attractive with wild flowers including cowslips and blue lupins in spring and early summer.

Leave the riverbank at the ferry point, turn right and return to the village via the side of the playing fields. The Old Toll House is one of the first houses on the left. Apparently it was built only a short time before tolls were abolished in 1865. Turn left up the side of the tollhouse, and walk up Pitmurchie Road for about 300 metres. Take a grassy lane to the left. The lane goes in front of a few houses at first, then between fields and uphill to pass between a cluster of houses- one on the right then three on the left - till an old wooden garage is reached on the right hand side. Here arrows point the way in front of the garage, in front of Townhead farmhouse and into a grassy field. Follow the arrows within the field i.e. straight ahead for only a few metres, then left to cross the fields. The many ruins show the remains of the old Townhead, a hamlet used by drovers resting animals before crossing the ford at Kincardine O' Neil. There are former houses, folds, etc. The animals were normally on their way south over the Cairn O' Mount to the huge markets at Falkirk or Crieff. It is interesting to note the width of the route here. This would be a fairly late drove road as the original drove roads were just routes with no edges defined.

This hillside above Kincardine O' Neil was the original site of the large Bartle Fair, an autumn gathering of farmers and merchants, which was important for many centuries. It started in the 15<sup>th</sup> century, but by the 1790s had moved down into the present village where, for two days, the 100 inhabitants were joined by hundreds of visitors. There is written evidence of complaints that the Church of St. Mary had been invaded by stallholders plying their trade within its walls. The building of the Potarch Bridge two miles downstream in 1815 meant that the fair moved to the Potarch Common; the decline started. The coming of the railway to Deeside in the 1860s, although bypassing Kincardine O' Neil, brought an end to the droving trade.

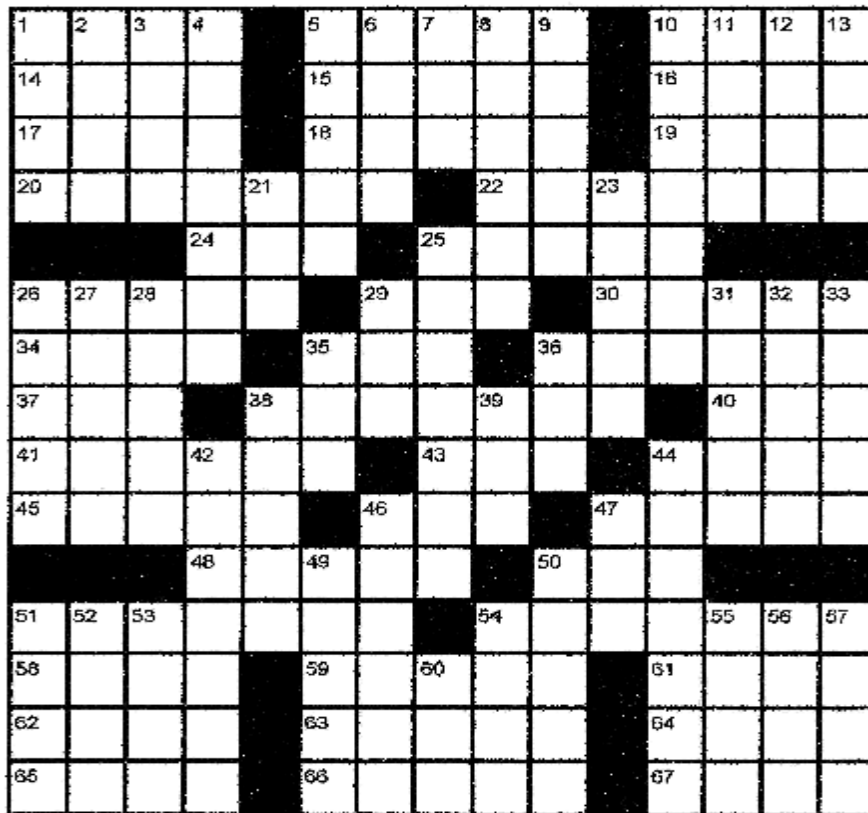
The arrows lead out of the fields at a gate at the top of a small piece of woodland. There is a marker point just through the gate pointing down through the wood. This is now the wrong direction for us. Instead turn right; this track going straight ahead to the back of a prominent pinkish coloured house. At the road junction beside the house turn right to go down the hill and so back using Pitmurchie Road again to get back to your starting point.

This last downhill section of the route follows the route of the old Military road, built to connect Craigievar Castle with the R. Dee ford and hence south over the Cairn O' Mount. On the map it is easy to pick out large sections of this old road, and many sections can still be walked.



Q Where do Santa's little helpers go to relax after the festive season?  
A. The elf farm!

## The Carnyx Crossword - number 1



### Across

- 1 - Celestial body
- 5 - Used a broom
- 10 - Lifeless
- 14 - Behind
- 15 - Dwindle
- 16 - Volcano in Italy
- 17 - Footless
- 18 - Adjust
- 19 - Egyptian sun disk
- 20 - Morale-raising speech (2 wds.)
- 22 - Formal order
- 24 - Biblical boat
- 25 - Three goddesses
- 26 - Adjust
- 29 - Fled
- 30 - Staggers
- 34 - Ice cream holder
- 35 - Golf norm
- 36 - Canadian peninsula
- 37 - Egyptian king
- 38 - \_\_\_\_\_ Hall
- 40 - Consume
- 41 - Egyptian deity
- 43 - Believer (suffix)
- 44 - Inking
- 45 - Appear again
- 46 - Artist's medium
- 47 - Store employee
- 48 - Confuse
- 50 - Earth's star
- 51 - Ridiculed

54 - Divides

- 58 - Commentator Severeid
- 59 - Long distance runner
- 61 - Butting animal
- 62 - Concerning (2 wds.)
- 63 - Bring together
- 64 - King of the Huns
- 65 - Emaciated
- 66 - Fortification
- 67 - Look at flirtatiously

### Down

- 1 - Strike with the hand
- 2 - Adhesive strip
- 3 - Above
- 4 - Bureaucratic mess
- 5 - Celery portion
- 6 - Go on foot
- 7 - Slender pinnacle
- 8 - Scribe
- 9 - Entertain at one's own expense
- 10 - Jordan's salt lake (2 wds.)
- 11 - Miss Kett of the comics
- 12 - Dill herb
- 13 - Scandinavian
- 21 - Culture
- 23 - Bold
- 25 - Agriculture
- 26 - Entertainer

27 - Extinguish

- 28 - Capar
- 29 - Crash against
- 31 - Dodge
- 32 - Last in the race
- 33 - Lurk about
- 35 - Pascal (abbr.)
- 36 - Busy insect
- 38 - Exhausted
- 39 - Inquire
- 42 - Italy's Fiumicino river
- 44 - Lawless
- 46 - Antiseptic liquid
- 47 - Kind of lettuce
- 49 - Thighbone
- 50 - Alluring woman
- 51 - Business agreement
- 52 - Celtic language
- 53 - Actress Hayworth
- 54 - Second of a series
- 55 - Doves' home
- 56 - Anecdote
- 57 - Mix
- 60 - Cover

Send your solution to the editor by 07/01/08 first correct answer drawn wins a prize.



## **BLOWING OUR OWN TRUMPETS**

We are VERY pleased to be able to announce - that after an awful lot of hard work, teeth-gnashing and hair-pulling, Clair and her ICTfriends have now got the Aberdeenshire Heritage Collections online. Well done! Co-incidentally - the first 'object of the month' on the site is the Deskford Boar's head - first cousin to our Carnyx title. The site is searchable although there is still a bit of tweaking to do. Go to this address to see the Boar's Head and click on 'our collections to get to the search engine.  
[http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/museums\\_new/explore/collections\\_month.asp](http://www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/museums_new/explore/collections_month.asp)

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## **A DIP INTO DR DAVID'S DIARY**

*Dr. David M. Bertie    Curatorial Officer - Documentation & Conservation*

**October** This has been a busy month. My latest paper has just been published:

**"The arms of Baird of Auchmedden"**, in *The Double Tressure*, Vol. 29, pp40-46 (2007)

*The Double Tressure* is the journal of the Heraldry Society of Scotland. The paper is about an armorial panel which came into the collections in 2004, setting the panel into its historical context and how it forms part of a body of evidence which demonstrates that the Bairs of Auchmedden changed the design of their coat-of-arms sometime between 1593 and 1638.

I was also pleased to receive a letter from The Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations (SCVO) regarding the Hareshowe Farm at Aden:

*"I am delighted to inform you that your organisation has been selected as one of the 100 Best Things in Rural Scotland by users of the Rural Gateway website."*

The resulting list can be found at: [www.ruralgateway.org.uk](http://www.ruralgateway.org.uk)

They also supplied the following notes:

"The Rural Gateway website is funded by the Scottish Government and is a one stop shop for rural news, information and networking. The site is hosted by online community experts Sift and content managed by the Rural Team at the Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations' office in Inverness. The Rural Gateway's email newsletter, Rural Update, is published fortnightly and updates members on all the latest news from the site. Rural Update currently goes out to over 3300 members."



**Our local police arrested two youngsters the other day. One was drinking battery acid and the other was eating fireworks.**

**They charged the first and let the other one off!**

## ***From the Conservation lab***

(or, “No, Madam, I didn’t say I was a Conservative”)

In case we haven’t been introduced, I’m Catherine, the Conservation and Environment Officer at Mintlaw. My job is to look after the physical welfare of the objects belonging to the museums, from ploughs to (stuffed) polar bears. This involves a wide range of tasks, such as monitoring the conditions in the museums and stores to make sure they’re at the right temperature and neither too damp nor too dry, ensuring that objects are properly packed for storage and transport, and seeing that objects are displayed in the right conditions. Sometimes I even find the time to do some “interventive conservation”, such as cleaning or consolidating individual objects. In the old days (long before I trained as a conservator), this often meant restoring them as far as possible to “as new” condition; nowadays, conservators are generally more interested in preserving the original material, and preventing any further damage to the objects. I sometimes think conservators have a lot in common with dentists in this respect!

My predecessor left six years before I came to the post in September 2006, so you can imagine the backlog of work I’ve inherited. Luckily, I’ve also been given a fine, shiny new lab at the Mintlaw HQ, which at the moment looks more like the back room of an Oxfam shop, it’s so full of clothes and furniture and objects of all descriptions from all over the world.



Boxes of textiles waiting to be unpacked

I’d like to divide my time a bit more evenly between the Mintlaw store and all the Museums, but at the moment, with two offsite stores (at Fraserburgh and Tortorston) urgently needing to be emptied, I’m spending most of my time here, sorting through the boxes and boxes of “stuff” that come in from those stores to be dealt with. Most organic or partly-organic objects are frozen at -40°C for a few days to kill off any pests before they are transferred to the store, but I have to inspect them first to make sure they’ll survive the freezer. The fun part is opening the stacks of plain brown boxes – I never know what I’ll find inside! I’ve come across bears’ teeth, Chinese women’s shoes from the bad old days of foot-binding, a hairball extracted from a cow’s stomach, and an English agricultural worker’s smock straight out of a Thomas Hardy novel – what on earth is that doing here in the North East?

I searched the pockets of the smock in the hope of finding a train ticket from Dorset to Aberdeen, but that would have been too good to be true – however, I did find cereal grains and fragments of straw, indicating that the smock has probably been worn for work, and wasn’t just collected as a curiosity.



Detail of the yoke of the smock

Another part of my job is to advise Aberdeenshire's volunteer-run independent museums on conservation matters, and this led to an enjoyable assignment a couple of months ago (although not strictly for an "Independent"). The Friends of Duff House were putting on an exhibition of textiles there, called "The Constant Thread", and asked me to help them to display a Bill Gibb wedding dress and bridesmaid's dress from the early 1970s, which had been worn by two of Bill Gibb's sisters. The bride's dress had a train the size of a double bedspread and trying not to crush it in transit was a major difficulty! Luckily, both dresses had high necks and long sleeves, so padding the mannequins to fit the dresses was a relatively simple matter.



The Bill Gibb dresses on display

Although I spend much of my time lugging boxes around and organising objects on shelves, I'll try to report any unusual objects I have to treat in future editions of the *Carnyx*; and if anyone would like to visit the lab and see what I'm up to in more detail, you'd be most welcome. Please give me a ring on 01771 622807.

Catherine McConnell.



**Q. What's purple and shouts for help?    A. A damson in distress!**

# ARBUTHNOT MUSEUM, PETERHEAD

Arbuthnot's Summer exhibition has just come to an end. There was tremendous interest in the local information on show. In particular people were keen to see a retrospective display of artwork by late former Art Teacher Sheila Mair who was obviously a popular figure in the area, and recorded scenes home and abroad from the 1950s onwards.



Archaeology Month has come around again and there are fascinating examples on display in 'Buchan Beads and Beakers'. Some of the urns have never been on show during the time present staff have been working for the authority and perhaps never! Other finds such as the jet and amber beads from Ardiffery are regularly displayed and admired. Inverurie Carnegie still has the urns and the 'message in a bottle' so kindly arranged by Alison Sheridan of NMS.

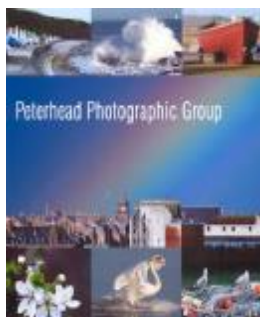
There is material from the shire in the National Museum of Scotland - wouldn't it be nice to have objects back for a special 'Homecoming (objects) 2009' Display! It was lovely to have the replica Carnyx on loan some time ago along with 'musical' soundtrack but now that we have such a secure and visitor-friendly HQ it would be great to have the real thing! A 'Carnyx Come Home' Campaign perhaps ?.

In addition there is a beautiful shield from Auchmaliddie, bracelet from Turriff, Gaulcross Hoard...And , why not be ambitious and request the Book of Deer too in association with the Mintlaw project group....watch this space.  
(Perhaps we can have the Banchory Bronze Age Beaker back in Banchory? Ed.)

Maud Railway Museum had an encouraging weekend with numbers at 290 for this popular Doors Open Day event.

Aden Park held the annual Tractor Day and visitors are estimated to have been in the region of 1600.

When the current Archaeology display end on 21<sup>st</sup> November Peterhead Photographic Club will be showing examples of their latest images. The club have displayed work with us before and the standard of work is very high for all ages.



2008 at the Arbuthnot will bring a display of 'Hidden Treasures' which will allow visitors to see fascinating items from our museums collections some of which have only come to light as the store relocation project progresses. This will continue into Museums & Galleries Month in May.

2008 Summer Exhibition entitled the Trawlermen will celebrate the Maritime Past of the area .It is hoped that extra footage from the BBC might become available in addition to the DVD given to the service in appreciation of the assistance they had. Also in 2008 there is the possibility of a Family History Group setting up in the Arbuthnot Museum.



## **ON THE ROAD**

with Annie Scott, our Travelling Education and Access Officer  
**Archaeology Summer School, New Pitsligo**

Interpreting our collections for a variety of audiences is one of the basic requirements of my post. So, I was delighted when families in New Pitsligo - via the Central Buchan Community Learning and Development team- asked for “something to do with archaeology” to take place during their summer holidays.

Coincidentally, archaeology items were flooding into the Mintlaw Store at that time; a great opportunity to discover what we might offer. There is something particularly appealing about these artefacts, I find: to hold a Neolithic hammer and feel the imprints there of an ancient ancestor’s hand is uncanny. I spent many hours exploring the dusty boxes and becoming more and more intrigued.



For the first morning of the Summer School we concentrated on Aberdeenshire’s collections, forming a timeline of objects from the Stone Age and learning through them how early people lived: discovering why they needed axes and stone whorls, for example. Alison Parfitt, my NEMP colleague from the Marischal Museum, visited us in the afternoon. Alison showed us how professional archaeologists manage to piece together different pots from a bewildering pile of broken bits (we had to smash the china first- great fun). We also tried spinning wool from fleece, using spindles.



Neil Wilkin, also from the Marischal Museum, gave us a very interesting presentation on Day 2, on why he became an archaeologist. He spoke, too, about his current research into Beaker pots, in which North East Scotland leads the world. That afternoon, we attempted to make our own clay Beakers, under the patient guidance of Jamie Cutts (who, you probably know, is a trained ceramicist as well as being our multimedia wizard).

On the final day, the sun shone on Aden Country Park: just as well, for we were outdoors there all day, learning basic survival skills. We were taught by Ruaraidh Milne, a bushcraft instructor with the Moray charity *Wild things!* We had a wonderful time, including searching for wild food in the area, how to make fire with no matches and making cordage from the stringy bits inside nettle stems. Also, Helen kindly gave up a day’s holiday, to demonstrate fish gutting - using real Stone Age flints! A messy but entertaining spectacle; then the results were cooked over an open fire and declared the best fish the group had ever tasted.



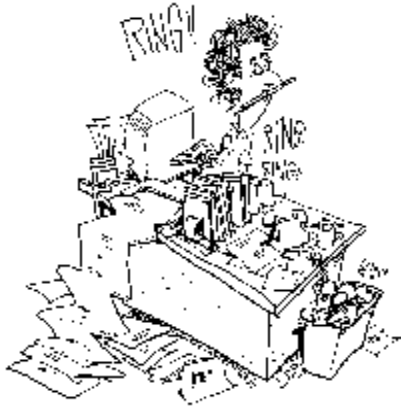
Helen’s ‘gutsy’ demonstration

*Wild things!* is an environmental education charity, which teaches nature conservation through practical activities in the forest. How appropriate, then, that we discovered not only how our ancestors survived in the wilderness, but that they had an innate respect for their

environment and lived in harmony with it. I don't think there can be a more powerful message for us in these polluted times, and the day underlined the wisdom and skills of early people who were, by no means, savage.

Feedback on this 3-day event has been unanimously positive; it was greatly enjoyed, and thanks go to everyone who made it such a success.

Annie Scott 2007



## **FROM THE EDITOR'S DESK IN BONNIE BANCHORY.**

We received some lovely comments about our first issue of the Carnyx and several requests from outwith the Heritage Service to be put on our mailing list !?!

There were NO entries for the Limerick competition – not even an unprintable one! So the prize will be given instead

to the first correct entry for the Carnyx Crossword (page 4) pulled out of the Banchory Office WPB on 8th January 2008.

Here at Banchory Museum, we had the first of our temporary exhibits in a series we are calling 'Looking at.....'. In partnership with local man George Parkinson (pictured here with local Councillor Linda Clark) the Museum put on a display of old maps, photographs and objects from the village of Kincardine O'Neil. It attracted a lot of attention with local folk who brought in some of their own photographs and memories of the village, we have already had enquiries from Strachan and Drumoak to see if we can do the same for their villages. The other exhibitions in preparation are 'Looking at...Festive Customs' which will be running from November to February '08 and will include festive food and drink recipes for people to take away. 'Looking at..North East Languages' from March until May '08 and to co-inside with next year's St Ternan's Fair ' Looking at ...Childrens' Toys & Pastimes' running from June to September'08.



If anyone has a local walk like Margaret's on page 2 that they would like to share with us please send a description (and photo/map if you have one) to the address below.

To contact me e-mail [anne.lamb@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:anne.lamb@aberdeenshire.gov.uk) or tel: 01330 823367

Closing date for articles for issue number 3 will be 27<sup>th</sup> January

(Apologies if your article wasn't included, I have held some back for the next issue)