

GROOMSPORT VILLAGE ASSOCIATION NEWS

Spring/Summer 2008 Working Together to Protect the Future of Our Village

ON AN EAGLE'S WING



Residents and visitors have a double treat in store this year. At a meeting with North Down Borough Council's Tourism Manager, Christine Mahon, and Events Assistant, Patricia McCall, committee members were given details of the Council's new plans. The traditional Eagle Wing Festival will be replaced by two events on separate dates.

The first event will take place on Friday 4th July - American Independence Day – and will celebrate Groomsport village's historic links with America. There will be a free evening concert featuring a wide range of country music. The evening will close with the usual excellent Fireworks Display.

The second event will be the "Eagle Wing Celebration". It is proposed that Groomsport be transported back to the year 1636, with authentic replica period costumes. Consideration is being given to ways in which interested Groomsport residents might participate in what should be a very enjoyable, educational and unique cultural event!



The Leisure & Tourism department is committed to organising high-quality, professional events that will bring visitors into the Village. The proposal to replace the existing event with two distinctly different celebrations is innovative and exciting – and of course offers an additional major occasion to attract a wide range of visitors and entertain residents!

Our December newsletter headline was: "The Way Forward". These major events certainly help to put Groomsport "on the map" and give residents and local businesses opportunities to welcome new visitors and enjoy a variety of entertainment and activities.



Arty? or Crafty?



Perhaps it is the picturesque village itself. Perhaps it is the inspirational views all around us. Perhaps it is the fact that Groomspout residents are friendly, helpful and exceptionally talented, that makes our village one of the most creative places to live in North Down.

From patchwork quilt making to painting, there are classes and clubs to suit everyone, skilled or novice alike.

Chattering Needles



This group meets in the Parish Halls at 7:30 p.m. on the second and fourth Monday of each month. A variety of creative skills, from creating Faberge style eggs to making jewellery, are shared amongst the members. Of course, if you enjoy knitting or wish to learn how to knit, this is the ideal venue.

For more information contact Jenny Craythorne tel: 9145 1605

Groomspout Art Group

The Art Group meets weekly in The Walter Nelson Hall. Previously the group met every Friday morning but this has now been changed to Thursday mornings from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. No experience is required. Although there is no expert tuition available, at present, members are willing to give advice and support each other. The group hopes to organize a series of demonstrations in the near future.

For further information contact Margaret Johnston tel: 9188 3951

Patchwork Club

The Patchwork Club meets every Monday and Wednesday afternoons in The Boathouse. Articles produced range from simple cushions and bags to fabulous quilts and artistic wall hangings. Patchwork is a textile art and expert tuition can be given on the three elements required – piecing, appliqué and quilting. If you wish to know more,

please contact Anne Steele
tel: 9145 8779





View of The Point
circa 1910 painted
from a photograph by
Maureen Lightbody
(Groomsport Art Club)

Ards Art Club

The club meets in The Boathouse every Wednesday morning from 9:30 to 12:30. Whether you are a total novice or an accomplished artist you are very welcome to join the group and share knowledge and expertise. Each year the group holds a highly successful exhibition where visitors are given the opportunity to purchase works of art produced by the members. If you like the idea that someone else has one of YOUR paintings hanging on his or her wall, then why not contact
Rae Morrow tel: 9127 0181

Groomsport Art Club

Run by Community Arts teacher, Jean Hadden, this group meets in the Boathouse every Thursday morning from 10:30 to 12:30. Artists of all ability are invited to join the group. Jean is there to give expert advice and encouragement and would welcome new members.

For further details contact Jean Haddon tel: 9188 3066

Male or female, young or not so young, we all have creative potential. Why not put your talents to the test and find the artist in you?

S.O.S SAVE OUR SEAL



Seals and their pups are no strangers to our coastline and over the years a number of pups have had to be rescued from the rocks around Groomsport.

Unlike whales and dolphins, seals are well adapted for periods on land and actively come ashore for rest, mating, pupping and nursing their offspring.

At certain times of the year it is perfectly normal for seal pups to be alone on the shore.

Common seals, born in June and July, are able to swim from birth as their fur (lanugo) is moulted before birth. However, when they are weaned, at approximately 4 weeks old, they remain on shore for long periods living off their fat until they have learned to hunt on their own.

Grey seals, the larger of the two species native to our shores, are born in September and December. They are born with fur which is easily waterlogged and so they remain on shore until moulting occurs.

If you discover a seal pup:

Observe from a distance

Seal pups are often unafraid of people and will not attempt to move into the water if approached. However, the seal's mother will not return to retrieve or feed her pup if humans are present. Human disturbance can result in the mother abandoning the pup. Keep your distance and keep dogs away from it.

Do not attempt to touch

Seals are wild animals and are capable of inflicting a painful bite that can result in a serious infection. Some diseases that seals have can be transmitted to humans.

Do not attempt to feed

Do not move the pup into the water

Never move a seal pup into the sea as it is on shore for a very good reason. For example:

- Its mother may have left it there and will return later.
- It may be a young grey seal pup and is unable to swim because of its fur.
- It may be a newly weaned pup which is resting.

If the pup is obviously injured, sick or distressed contact Exploris

on [028 4272 8062](tel:02842728062) / [028 4272 8002](tel:02842728002)



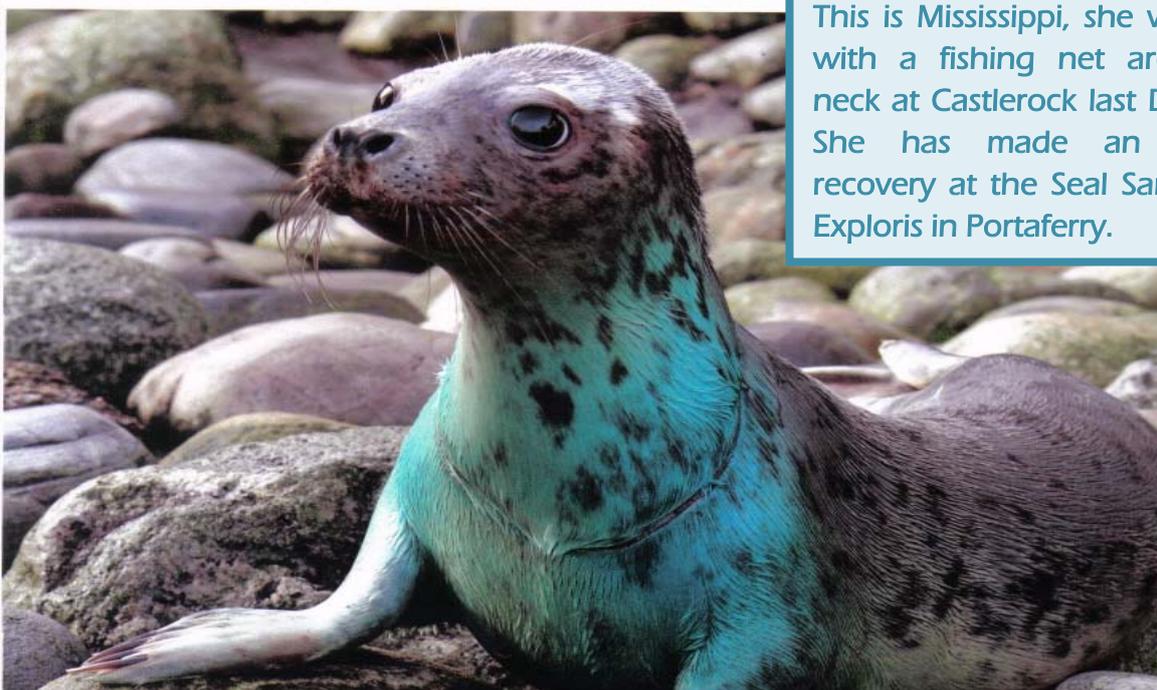
A seal being rescued from the rocks at Groomsport

Did you know?

The grey seal population is estimated to be increasing by seven per cent a year.

Grey seals have been known to live for 46 years.

There are 33 species of seals worldwide, 2 of which live around Britain.



This is Mississippi, she was found with a fishing net around her neck at Castlerock last December. She has made an excellent recovery at the Seal Sanctuary at Exploris in Portaferry.

Spring Clean Week 26th May – 1st June 2008

Last year more than 500 people in North Down got involved in activities such as litter picks on the beaches, graffiti removal and clean-ups in their streets and local parks.

This year the Council hopes that the response from residents of the Borough will be even better.

Glenn Thomas, Assistant Borough Inspector with North Down Borough Council explains, “ A core aim is to encourage residents, businesses, church groups, youth clubs etc. to become actively involved in helping to clean up their local environment. All such efforts will be supported by Council and led by Council staff. We will supply rubbish bags, gloves and litter pickers to make the clean up easier. To keep it fun we will also be making a few prizes available for the hardest workers in each clean up.”

*Why not sign up for a
"Great Groomsport Clean Up"?*



If you or your group is willing to take part contact either Glenn Thomas at the Town Hall tel: 028 9127 1371, or Lynda Anderson (Village Association) tel: 028 9146 3824



Pick it Up!

There are approximately 7 million dogs in the U.K. producing 1000 tonnes of faeces every day. Much of this is left on footpaths, playing fields, children's play areas and beaches. At best, it can cover shoes and clothes, and at worst, can lead to blindness, due to an infection called "Toxocariasis".

Toxocariasis is a direct consequence of contact with contaminated soil or sand.

The infection can be carried on hands, soles of shoes and wheels of prams or toys etc. and can only infect humans if swallowed, which is why the infection is most commonly found in children between the ages of 18 months and five years.

Eye disorders, and in extreme cases blindness, are the most commonly reported complaints. Other symptoms are dizziness, nausea, asthma and epileptic fits.

Please, for the sake of our children and grandchildren – Bag it & Bin it!



news

The committee has been in touch with Translink regarding the replacement of old style buses on the Donaghadee – Bangor, via Groomsport, route with the new "low floor" buses.

Only a limited number of these buses are available on this route at present. Restrictions on government funding means that "low floor" buses will have to be phased in over the next few years. Richard Hudson, Translink Manager, appreciates the difficulties encountered by a great number of our residents and has assured us that he is striving to have all "low floor" buses operating the route within the next two years. Unfortunately he cannot guarantee that this will be the case.



Cockle Row Cottages

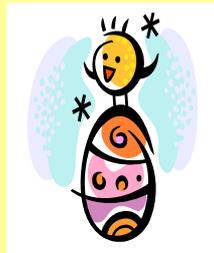
Committee members were interested to learn that the series of activities held in the cottages in 2007 attracted 9156 visitors.

In addition to the very popular summer programme, the following special events have been planned for Cockle Row in 2008.

Easter Family Fun Day

Sunday 23rd March

A day filled with music,
story-telling,
baking and
crafts.



Groomsport Christmas Family Fun Day

Sunday 7th December

A festive afternoon of family fun with Santa, traditional open fire baking, Christmas crafting and traditional music.

Spooktacular Family Fun Day

Sunday 26th October

A spooky afternoon of ghoulish family fun with creepy creatures, spooky baking and trick or treat lucky dip.



For more information
on events at
Cockle Row Cottages,
contact North Down
Borough Council
028 9127 0069

HELP US SET YOUR AGENDA

The next Village Association Inter-agency meeting is due to be held in April.

Inter-agency meetings enable Village Association committee members to meet with representatives from relevant Agencies, local councillors and assembly members. At the meeting, resident's concerns are discussed and dealt with appropriately. Inside this issue of your newsletter there should be a leaflet which outlines concerns which have already been identified, and which gives you the opportunity to register your support and/or raise further issues.

It is very important that we are able to demonstrate to Agency representatives and politicians that we are speaking on behalf of a large section of our community. Therefore we are asking all residents to show their support by filling in the form provided.

If you have not received a leaflet, copies can be obtained from the village Post Office.

Completed forms should be posted in the Village Association post boxes (Spar shop or Post Office) no later than Monday 31st. March.

ASSISTANCE REQUIRED

"The Evergreens" meet every Thursday afternoon in the Parish Halls. Many of the members have difficulty arranging transport to and from the venue.

There are six pick-up points in the Groomsport area. Pick-ups are usually around 1:30p.m. to go to the hall and 4p.m. for the return journey.

If you are willing to offer transport on a weekly or even a monthly basis please contact either:

Pearl Brown – tel: 91464755 or Vera Angus – tel: 91464592

Your help would be greatly appreciated!

Through our newsletters, the Village Association is striving to keep you informed of current events and issues. A number of residents are already helping us with distribution. We desperately need more volunteers. If you are willing to deliver copies in your street, please contact Lynda Anderson tel: 9146 3824

Be wary of Bogus Delivery Scam

The scam involves consumers being sent a delivery card telling them that a parcel is awaiting collection and they should contact a telephone number on the card to arrange delivery. The cards are made to look like the postal-collection cards legitimately used by the Post Office or other delivery company cards but the telephone number is actually a premium rate line and no worthwhile goods are ever awaiting collection. The cards appear to come from a company called PDS - Parcel Delivery Service - claiming that they have a parcel awaiting delivery instructions and asking people to contact them This number is a mail scam. If you call the number and you start to hear a recorded message you will already have been billed a large amount for the phone call.

AND FINALLY.....The committee would like to thank North Down Community Network and Northern Ireland Housing Executive for the publication of this newsletter.

Groomsport Village Association **Working together to protect the future of our village**