

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6



THE SEA SCOUTS, THE HARBOUR AND LEISURE SAILING THE SEA SCOUTS



This picture ¹ was taken in 1950 on the occasion of the visit of the Chief Scout, **Lord Rowallan** (he was Chief Scout of the British Commonwealth and Empire from 1945 to 1959). The foredeck in the picture is the war surplus Fairmile D Class that belonged to Raymond Graves (see Part 5 for more photos).

This information from Ian Basham:

The year of Lord Rowallan's visit was in the summer of 1950. Although I was not in the cubs myself, I joined the scouts later that year and I have checked with my classmates that 1950 is the correct year. One tells me that he remembers Lord Rowallan being rowed round from Avoch in the

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scout boat. It was sold shortly after and I had only one trip out in it myself. The scouts were the 1st Chanonry troop and at the time of the photo the Scoutmaster was Mr Coutts (to Rowallan's left) and by that time Rev W Craig was Group Scoutmaster. He is second right next to the Troop Leader, Alastair Geddes, at the far right. Both Scouts and Cubs (Guides and Brownies) met in the Scout Hut (now the Cadet Hut) in Cathedral Square, although I think it was properly the Guide Hut!



This picture² shows Lord Rowallan with Pattie Macrae behind and Sea Scouts Douglas Miller and Cameron Mackintosh (left to right). It is noted that they rowed from Avoch to Fortrose; this photo would appear to have been taken at Avoch.

The Sea Scouts formed nationally in 1909 as scouts whose main interest was in 'scouting afloat'. By **1911** the Admiralty had agreed to **sea scouts acting as coast watchers** and many of their leaders came from the Coastguard. During the **Second World War** the Admiralty asked the sea scouts to help their communities by **coast watching, delivering**

² Groam House Museum Collection

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messages and learning first aid and seamanship – skills considered important to the war effort.

Over the years sea scout groups have come and gone on the Black Isle with groups at Fortrose, Cromarty and Avoch. The **11th Ross-shire (1st Chanonry Sea Scouts)** based at Fortrose would appear to have been first registered on 14 June 1922 with a strength of 1 officer (D B McMonnies of Roseville, Fortrose) and 11 scouts based at the Drill Hall (now the Roman Catholic church). By 1928 the numbers had increased to 27 scouts and the scoutmaster was Lieutenant Commander V C Smith RN assisted by the Reverend W Craig BD. The 1946 registration showed Reverend W Craig as the Scoutmaster with 24 scouts total and now operating from the Scout Hut, Fortrose. In the mid-1960s, Mr George Balfour took over the troop. While most activities were land based, Mr Balfour was helped by the local lighthouse keeper, Mr Archie MacEachern, who gave the boys advice and tales of his attendance at many lighthouses around Scotland. Mr Balfour built 2 Scout Association Dorries, one in the Scout hut and another in his back garden. The boats were launched at the harbour but unfortunately the harbour activities were short lived as the dorries were lent to the Scout group at Loch Usie who left them submerged until Mr Balfour found them again, unusable. The group had numbered up to 20 sea scouts but proved to be unsustainable. The last registration found for this group is dated 1969 when the group consisted mainly of cubs.



Gasóga Mara Abhaich

The **10th Ross-shire (1st Avoch Sea Scouts)** registered in 1943 with the Reverend John Lees as Scoutmaster and with 30 sea scouts on strength. Their headquarters was the Village Hall. This group went in to abeyance and was next active in 1961/2 as the 12th Ross-shire but went in to abeyance again before being **reformed in 2004 under Mr Derek Martin**. The 1st Avoch Sea Scouts are now a very successful group and the only sea scout group in Ross & Sutherland. They have a number of distinctions. First, the Avoch Sea Scouts operate alongside their Explorer Sea Scouts (who would normally be organised at District level); secondly, they are one of only 3 sea scout groups in Scotland to be **recognised by the Royal Navy** (this is why they fly a defaced red ensign on their boats) and, lastly, they are the only scout group in the World to use **drill commands in Gaelic**. The group, while based in Avoch, has close ties with **Chanonry Sailing Club which is an official sponsor**.

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1st Avoch Sea Scouts in 2011 at Chanonry Sailing Club

THE HARBOUR AND LEISURE SAILING

In the latter 19th century an **annual regatta was held in Fortrose Bay** during the month of August with **sailing, swimming and rowing** competitions. The Directory of Fortrose and Rosemarkie records in **1885** that the Commodore was R G Mackenzie of Flowerburn at that the Regatta would be held on the 15th August.



This picture³ shows an early regatta – probably in the late Victorian or early Edwardian period. There are swimmers in the rowing boat on the left.

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Chanonry Boating Club developed from the regattas but was suspended at the outbreak of World War One. In **1928** its remaining assets were donated to other clubs in Fortrose and Avoch.

CHANONRY SAILING CLUB – THE EARLY YEARS

This is not a history of the present sailing club – Chanonry Sailing Club – rather it is a history of the harbour; nevertheless, **the sailing club is an important part of the harbour's history** and the very survival of the harbour owes much to the club. This section covers the first 5 years or so of the club and illustrates some of the issues faced as the harbour made the transition to a leisure facility.

Chanonry Sailing Club was formed on 29 March 1956⁴ after 20 people agreed, at a public meeting, to revive the Chanonry (or Fortrose Boating) Club. The revived Club was to be known as the Chanonry Sailing Club, and would be based at Fortrose Harbour. The annual subscription was set at £1:1:0 (£1.05) for boat owners and 10/6 (53 pence) for non-boat owners and juniors. **The first Commodore elected was W A H Rowat.** The committee visited Mr **Frank Gale's** boat yard in Inverness where they inspected his 14-foot GP sailing dinghy. They then visited Mr A J MacKenzie's Mouldacraft Ltd where they were able to view fibre glass boats. The committee recommended that 'the **Yachting World 14 ft General Purpose Sailing Dinghy was suitable for a one class design for this club**; and that boats can be obtained for approx £140 from various sources.' There follows in the minutes 'The committee while realising that **fibre glass would probably be the material for future boats**, considered that it had not been sufficiently tried out for them to recommend it.'

⁴ The details of the Club history from 1956 onwards are taken from the Club Archives held in the Clubroom

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A 1960s photo with plenty of GP14s evident



This photo from the club scrap book taken in the late 1950s shows **Frank Gale** crewing a Junior Redwing he built being helmed by the designer, the famous **Uffa Fox**

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By 11 April 1956 the Fortrose Town Council had agreed to rent the **Nissen hut** at Fortrose Harbour to the Club for £5 per annum (the Town Clerk having already intimated that the Club might have the use of the Fortrose Harbour for mooring their craft). By 26 April 1956, the committee was meeting in the Nissen hut, had plans for its renovation, had written to the Council to ask to have the sandbank at the harbour mouth removed and had been gifted a 40 foot 'stick of sitka spruce' for a **flag pole**; a racing sub-committee had been elected and a 'first race set for Saturday, 16th June at 4.45 p.m. (*modified to a practice race at a later meeting* – **the first proper race was held on 30 June- interestingly with a dinghy race, a motor boat race and finally a rowing boat race**) with a midnight regatta on Friday 22 June at 10 p.m.' (!) Membership then stood at 33. The pace of early meetings was rapid and a general meeting was held on 3 May 1956 at which the constitution was approved and the club decided to apply for affiliation to the **Royal Yachting Association**. The 'Object' of the Club (from the Constitution of 1956) was 'to encourage seamanship, both under sail and power, and to foster the social side of sailing.'

For those on the committee who have wrestled over the years with the issues of **Harbour Dues** and whether or not to charge for boat space taken ashore, the 13 November 1956 minute may be of interest when a letter from the Town Clerk was discussed. The Trustees had resolved that the present system of charging boats laid up in the basin (*harbour*) must be extended also to boats laid up on the beach (*based on the 1879 Harbour Order defining the limits of the Harbour extending to 200 yards from any part of the walls over the shore below the high-water mark*). The charge was set as one shilling (5 pence) per foot length, with a minimum of ten shillings (50 pence).

The committee meeting of 19 April 1957 was attended by the Harbourmaster (retained by the Town Council) who was none other than **George MacFarlane** who had been fortunate to avoid being lost when The *Young Fox* sank in December 1928 (see Part 4). Mr MacFarlane attended the meeting to discuss methods to moor as many craft as possible in the harbour (the suggestion was to lay chains in the harbour with rope risers on buoys for mooring and with stern lines taken ashore). On 20 July 1957 alongside the Club's Regatta, the Inverness Swimming Club arranged for **'Open and Local Swimming Races, a Swimming and Diving Demonstration and a Water Polo Match'** – all held in the harbour. The scouts took a collection. A special meeting was convened in July 1957 to consider a proposal for a 'DANCE'. This was carried with **George Taylor appointed as Dance Convenor** and a member (Mr Mackay, owner of the West End Stores) offered a suitable barn – in fact this was the top floor of what is now Quay House.

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ARRANGEMENTS FOR A DANCE.

It was decided to held a Dance on Saturday, 17th Aug. 1957 in the top floor of the Barn belonging to Mr. Mackay.

Mr. George Taylor was appointed Dance Convenor, and Mr. Smart, Vice Convenor.

Details regarding a Band, Catering, Decorations etc. were then discussed, and finally left to Mr. Taylor and Mr. Smart to arrange with the assistance of the Ladies' Committee.

5

The provision of a suitable '**guard boat**' (safety boat) greatly exercised the committee in its early days. Various members allowed the use of their motorboats but by 1959 the committee was looking to purchase a suitable boat for the Club and in July '*Miss Pat*' arrived. She must have been a considerable boat as she could take up to 15 persons. Also, in 1959 the committee agreed the use of Terylene (*better known today by the US name 'Dacron'*) sails but NOT in open races.



Miss Pat in the foreground

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This picture from the club scrap book and entitled 'Rave-up gear circa **1958**' shows left to right: Frank & Evelyn Gale, George & Sandy Taylor, Wylie Martin.

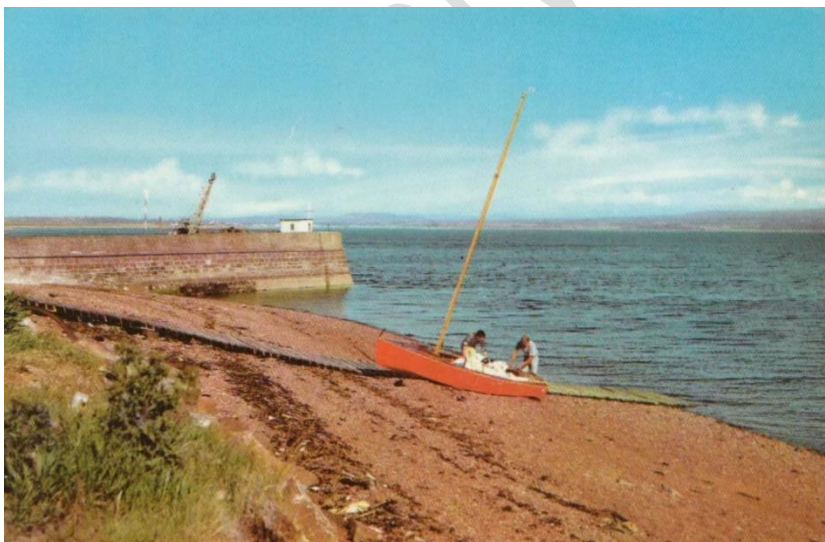


Launching off the west slipway in the 1960s.

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Dinghies on the west beach in the 1960s. Note the 3 Nissen huts in the background. These are all 2 handers unlike today when single handers dominate at the cost of some sociability.



West slip and a GP14 again (possibly George Taylor?). Note the crane and the wooden Starter's box.

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This photo dates from the late '50s and shows the dinghy park from above.

The Annual General Meeting of **1960** (held pre-season in those days) saw the retirement of the founding commodore, W A H Rowat, who was presented with a chromium car badge embossed with the commodore's club burgee. Sailing instruction also featured at this meeting with the new commodore, R A Taylor, stressing that 'he would like to see more opportunities being made available for members who did not own boats to get afloat and for sailing instruction to be given to younger members.' The minutes recorded some concerns that damage has occurred to craft in the harbour through an apparent lack of supervision; **the club considered taking a lease for the harbour** and appointing its own Harbour Master.

A sensible proposal to resolve the Harbour Master situation was put forward in May 1960 when it was proposed by the Club that **if 'the Town Council appointed Mr George Taylor as their Harbour Master that the Chanonry Sailing Club should appoint Mr G Taylor as their Harbour Master.'** The outcome was that George Taylor worked alongside George MacFarlane for a transition period before agreement was reached in early 1963 for the Club to take over the administration of the harbour and to commute harbour dues by a capital payment of £10 per year. George Taylor

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was then appointed as the (sole) Harbour Master – an appointment he held for a further 44 years before his retirement in late 2007.



George Taylor on retirement at Harbour Master in 2007

TRANSFER OF THE HARBOUR LEASE

1975 was a significant year for the relationship between the sailing club and the management of the harbour. In one of its last acts before a major nationwide local government reorganization disbanded the Fortrose Town Council, a contract was signed between the Council and Club **leasing the harbour and environs to the Club for a period of 99** years dating from 1 May 1973. Notwithstanding the last moment nature of the transfer, the Club had asked the Council for the transfer of the lease as early as April 1971⁶ (and as seem above, the possibility of obtaining a lease had been discussed in 1960 during an AGM) and by July 1972 the Council had decided to grant a long-term lease 'subject to no legal difficulties'⁷. At one point a 25-year lease was under discussion until overtaken by events.

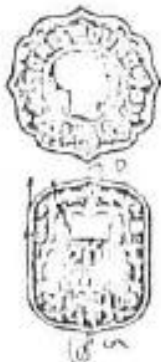
⁶ Club minutes dated 16 April 1971

⁷ Club minutes dated 22 July 1972

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No.6 Lease by Fortrose Town Council - To Trustees for Chanonry Sailing Club.



AT EDINBURGH, the Second day of April Nineteen hundred and seventy five between eleven and twelve (By Post) the Writ hereinafter reproduced is recorded in the 687 Book of the Division of the General Register of Sasines applicable to the County of Ross and Cromarty commencing on folio 80 for publication and also as in the Books of the Lords of Council and Session for preservation as follows:-

IT IS CONTRACTED AND AGREED between the Provost, Bailies, Dean of Guild, Treasurer and remanent members of the Town Council of The Royal Burgh of Fortrose (formerly the Burgh of Fortrose) otherwise the United Burghs of Fortrose and Rossmurkie in the County of Ross as representing the community of the said Burgh or United Burghs and as such the Undertakers of the works and others authorised by the Fortrose Pier and Harbour Provisional Order 1879 along with the Harbour Committee acting under the Act conform to said Provisional Order of 1879 (hereinafter called the "Landlords") On the First Part, and GEORGE TAYLOR, residing at "Melkie Mee", Canonbury Terrace, Fortrose, Commodore, JAMES ARROL, residing at Three Woodlands Road, Dingwall, Secretary, and ALEXANDER SUTHERLAND, residing at "The Pirk", Academy Street, Fortrose, Treasurer, all of the Chanonry Sailing Club, Fortrose and their successors in the said respective offices of Commodore, Secretary and Treasurer as Trustees for the behoof of the said Chanonry Sailing Club and the assignees whomsoever of the said Trustees (hereinafter called the "Tenants") On the Second Part, The Landlords in consideration of the rent and other prestations herein specified HEREBY LET to the Tenants ALL and WHOLE that plot or area of ground lying in the Royal Burgh of Fortrose (formerly the Burgh of Fortrose) in the County of Ross and Cromarty lying on the South West side of The Shore and formerly known as Saint Andrew's Walk and now known as Harbour Road and including the harbour, piers, quays, beaching ground and all the works, roads, accesses and conveniences constructed by the said Landlords or their predecessors in office conform to the terms of the said Fortrose Pier and Harbour Provisional Order 1879 (hereinafter referred to as "The Order") the said subjects delineated in red and coloured pink on the plan annexed and subscribed/

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The lease specifies:

others following thereon; (THIRD) the Tenants bind and oblige themselves to use the subjects hereby let to them exclusively for the purpose of providing facilities for the enjoyment of sailing and other aquatic sports and the recreational amenities relative thereto to those persons residing either on a temporary or permanent basis within the Royal Burgh of Fortrose and to those persons also though non-resident within the said Royal Burgh who apply for and obtain membership either of a temporary or permanent nature of the Chanonry Sailing Club conform to the terms of the Constitution for the time being of said Club;

CHANONRY SAILING CLUB – THE IMPACT ON STRUCTURES AROUND THE HARBOUR

Chanonry Sailing Club has done much, directly or indirectly, since 1956 to maintain and improve the structure of the harbour and its environs. In many cases the Club has been successful in obtaining grants to assist with the work.

Stonework has been repaired and re-pointed; ladders and **handrails** have been replaced. In 1973 the Club requested that Fortrose Council installed a **fresh water supply** near the harbour and the minutes of 21 October 1974 record that the standpipe would be installed 'by the end of the year.' The adjacent **lamp post** came along in 1985 as the result of a suggestion by a club member. The Club persuaded Highland Regional Council to fund the larger part of needed **structural repairs to the harbour** and at the Club AGM on 23 October 1979 the Commodore reported:

Harbour Repairs had in total cost over £17,000 and the Highland Regional Council had agreed to fund the completion of the works. The total cost to the Club after the original Countryside Commission grant was £678. The Club's gratitude had been expressed to the H.R.C.

More recently (2010) the Club has funded **sympathetic repairs** to the stone steps in the harbour and extensive re-pointing work using the correct lime mortar.

The Club built the **western slipway** from the dinghy park and greatly extended the main **eastern slipway** in several phases from 1971

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(replacing a wooden ramp made of recycled bridge timbers) and in 2008 replaced 28 metres of concrete at a cost (born by the Club) in excess of £5000. In late 1985 the Club was acquiring **gabions** (wire cages) and started filling them with stones in February 1986 to **extend the dinghy park** to seaward. As part of this work, the **old access track** to the west beach which was a sunken pathway running along the outside of the harbour wall was filled-in to enlarge the dinghy park and alternative on foot access was provided by the tarmac pathway through the dinghy park to the western slipway.

One long standing feature of the harbour that is sadly no longer there was the **crane** that stood on the southern wall.



Photograph courtesy of Richard Easson

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The crane was yet another link between the harbour and the railway.
The minutes of 9 April **1964** record:

CRANE: Mr. Arrol intimated that he had heard that British Railways were disposing of a mobile crane (2 tons) which could be used for launching the boats and he had inspected same. He thought there was a possibility of purchasing the crane for the sum of Fourteen Pounds and that Mr. Stevenson had offered to assist in the transport for approx a further Six Pounds. On discussing the possibility of purchasing the crane it was found that this item could be included in the application for grant if not previously purchased by the Club. Mr. Arrol agreed to offer for the crane in his own name and sell it to the Club at a later stage. This suggestion was accepted and appreciation of Mr. Arrol's offer was expressed.

The book 'The Black Isle Railway' ⁸ briefly mentions the crane as having stood inside the Fortrose goods shed which was removed in 1959 however George Taylor recalled that this crane had been transported from Inverness and this ties-in with it being obtained in 1964.

Mr James Arrol was as good as, or even better than, his word as the 12 April **1966** minutes record in that he eventually gave the crane to the Club:

LAUNCHING CRANE. Mr. Arrol had bought this crane for his own benefit but is willing to hand it over to the Club. He would only suggest two strictures: (1) That use of the crane be controlled and (2) That suitable insurance be arranged. Mr. Arrol's generous offer was gratefully accepted.

The crane features again in the minutes when on 8 May **1976** it was decided to charge £2/lift.

The crane is visible here in action in the background following a **destructive storm in 1978** (taken from the Club scrapbook)

⁸ The Black Isle Railway by Jack Kernahan ISBN: 978 0 9545485 99

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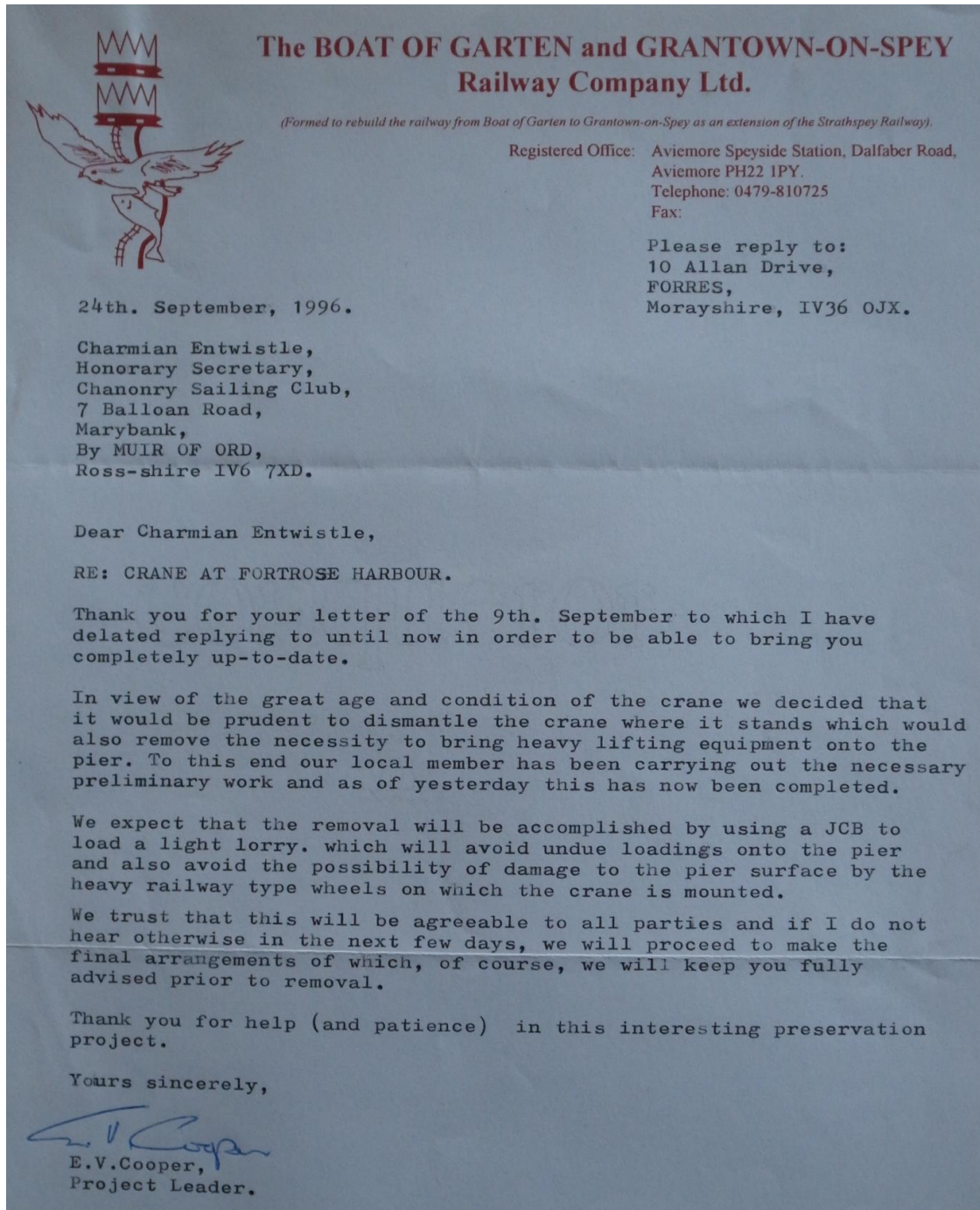
By 1980 it was clear that the crane needed some **welding** and the minutes of 22 May placed a one-ton lift limit (suggesting that a Flying 15 was a suitable load). It was recorded on 25 June 1981 that the crane (still) needed some welding repairs and on 27 March 1984 it was to be 'put back in working order'. By 14 October 1985 it **needed to be painted**.

In April 1994 **British Engine Insurance Ltd** were asked to carry out a **technical inspection** of the crane and their report lists a number of observations although it also stated that the crane was serviceable.

IDENTIFICATION NUMBER, DESCRIPTION and, where applicable, SAFE WORKING LOAD or LOADS (as marked) (Subject to Certificate of Test)	PARTICULARS OF ANY DEFECT(S) WHICH AFFECTS THE SAFETY OF THE EQUIPMENT AND/OR OTHER OBSERVATIONS
	Page 1 of 1
No.1 MANUAL MOBILE JIB CRANE No PM 5322 LOAD 2 tons Condition code: R	Examined 06.05.94 Previously Unknown Next Examination 06.11.94 DEFECTS None OBSERVATIONS The rusting jib, jib ties and crane carriage should be chipped and painted. The seized hook swivel should be freed and lubricated. The primary pinion shaft bushes are worn and should be replaced. The open gearing should be suitably guarded. The hoist brake is worn but serviceable. The crane carriage should be levelled, and the wheels choked during operation. The crane is worn commensurate with age but remains serviceable. If not already in your possession it is recommended that the appropriate certificate(s) of test be obtained - see NOTE L2.

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The reality was that the crane was proving **hard to maintain**, could only be operated by a select group and with open gearing potentially quite dangerous to the operator and its original purpose to launch keel boats (principally Flying 15s) was less in demand. Quotes for 'industrial' painting were between £450 & £500 and there was also an issue with a gear wheel that was going to be in excess of £300 to resolve. However, there is a **happy ending** and a link back to railways. The Club offered the crane as a gift to The Boat of Garten & Grantown-on-Spey Railway Company Ltd.



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The crane was removed on 6 October 1996 and its last full day at the harbour was photographed by Joan Maxwell.



Photo courtesy of Joan Maxwell dated 5. 10. 96

The most obvious Club additions though to the harbour are the **Starter's Box** in the corner where the south and west walls meet and the **Clubhouse**. Both these structures required years of determined work from club members to bring about as told below.

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THE STARTER'S BOX

The mundane and somewhat utilitarian Starter's Box (a place for the Race Officer to start and finish races) has a history spanning over 50 years. Its first features in the minutes of 27 October **1959** to replace a very temporary structure.

STARTERS' BOX. Mr. Ian MacKenzie agreed to prepare a plan for a new Starter's Box of a semi-permanent nature for erection at the Pier Head, subject to approval by the Town Council. This Box would be removed in the Winter.

By the AGM of 17 May 1960 the box was being referred to as the Starter's Lookout Bridge.

STARTER'S LOOKOUT BRIDGE. Mr. Ian MacKenzie submitted a plan for the erection of a Starter's Box at the end of the Harbour, which could be dismantled and stored for the winter. It was agreed to submit this plan to the Town Council for approval and issue of a Minor Warrant.

In fact the Secretary had written to the Town Clerk on 11 April 1960 enclosing 'two copies of Plans for a proposed **"Lookout Bridge"** to be erected at the end of the Harbour at Fortrose; and to be used by the "Officer of the Day" when races are being held at Chanonry Sailing Club.' The Town Clerk responded on 20 April 1960 saying that the "Harbour Cttee. agreed to recommend to Council that this construction be allowed...." Further the Town Clerk stated that the Club should now submit a copy of the plan to the Burgh Surveyor who will issue the Minor Warrant and concluded that "In anticipation of Council's approval you may erect the construction now if you wish to save time." The application was duly made on 22 April 1960.

The Town Clerk's helpful letter may have been rather optimistic as nearly 12 months on little physical progress had been made as was recorded on 21 March 1961.

Starter's Box or Bridge.

The Secretary reported that the Town Council had instructed us not to proceed with the plans to build a Starter's ~~Box~~ Bridge on the harbour pier, until such time as they had carried out repairs to the harbour walls.

The Club archives have a letter on file dated 17 January 1963 from the Town Clerk (W G Lackie) on the subject of harbour dues which also states ".....quite apart from the major repair recently completed at a cost of £925: 15: -d the Town Council expended a considerable amount this Season in the provision of railings etc. and repair to the Harbour deck and wall."

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This **delay to the Starter's Box** did have a fortunate consequence for **the Club** in that in September 1962, **Dr Charles Cameron**, resident in Beverley, Yorkshire, contacted the Club wishing to make a donation in memory of his late mother. In his response of 18 September 1962, the Secretary (Iain Wotherspoon) suggested **donating a starter's box**:

I think that you would probably prefer something of an individual character rather than part of a large development and I wonder what you think of donating a starter's box for the end of the pier? The one we have had up to this year is now beyond repair and last year got Ian Mackenzie to design a new box of a semi-permanent variety with a built-in signal mast, glass fronted and bolted on to a permanent base the idea being that it would be installed at the beginning of the season and stored during the winter. We have Dean of Guild permission for this and the Taylors estimate was about £50. I think that this is a bit more than you proposed giving, but you can let me know if it is the sort of thing you had in mind. I think it would be rather nice to have a plaque on it if you approved the idea.

If you will let me know your views I will pass them on to Wylie Martin and in the meantime many thanks again.

The large development hinted at was the western (dinghy park) slipway which remained stalled throughout 1963. On 1 February 1963, the Club Secretary was able to write again to Dr Cameron thanking him for "going ahead with *your* suggestion of donating the Starter's Box". Dr Cameron came up with an inscription, the "Taylor Bros" were tasked to go ahead with the construction and on 15 June **1963**, the minutes record:

STARTER'S BOX: The starter's box had now been erected and was to everyone's satisfaction. The plate to read, "From the Camerons, Kingarth, to promote messing about in boats".

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This is John Mackenzie's TR3 at the harbour in **1963**. In the background is the 'brand new' all wooden Starter's Box. In the foreground is the heavy block with a hole through it still in use today to anchor the mast of a boat alongside to prevent it tipping away from the wall when taking the ground.

The minutes record that Robert Taylor & Sons were responsible for **dismantling, storing, repairing and re-erecting the box seasonally**. The Starter's Box is in the minutes again in 1972 when Mr Arrol was tasked to contact the Town Clerk for planning permission for the Starter's Box. The minutes of 24 February 1972 record:

HARBOUR.

Report from Mr. Arrol regarding meeting with Town Clerk. They agreed to plan of new Starter's Box and to a long term lease of the Harbour. On the question of the club taking over the Harbour it was agreed that a letter seeking financial assistance (see copy) to be sent to the Countryside Commission and Highlands and Islands Development Board.

STARTER'S BOX.

Mr. Taylor reported total cost to be approx. £163 for masonry and joinery work.
Mr. Scrimshaw agreed to build it when Planning Permission was approved.

This was for a **more permanent box** with a masonry block work store with a wooden box for the Starter mounted on top of it. Planning permission had been received by 29 March 1972 and Mr Scrimshaw commenced work on the block work while George Taylor built a new wooden box.

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Starter's Box circa 1974

The **1970s were an exceptionally busy time** for the Committee dealing with the transfer of the harbour lease and a protracted project to extend the Clubhouse (more below) as well as making improvements to slipways etc. In the late 1970s the Starter's Box appeared again as an issue. By 3 April 1979 the Clubhouse extension was near completion and **a new Starter's Box** became the **number 1 priority** as the wooden part of the current structure was rotting away. The Capital Projects Sub-Committee made the following recommendation on 16 February 1980:

The following recommendations are made to the full Committee:-

- 1) The timber of the starters box is rotten and not worth repainting. The starters box should be reconstructed in concrete block with a smooth rendered finish, on the outside.. This would require the minimum maintenance of a coat of snowcem as necessary. It is proposed that an outline sketch be drawn up and a local builder asked to give a price for excuting the work. In this way, details of bonding the blockwork to the lintel slab base can be worked out to give the best economy.

A request for **planning permission was submitted in January 1981** for a Starter's Box with new block work that would build on top of the existing block work store (now the fuel store and as built in 1972) "to replace the wooden white box at the same height". A feature of the new box at an estimated cost of more than 30% of the whole project (which turned out

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nearer 50%) would be 'a **special glazed structure of 5 bays** with 4mm thick Antisun glass and with the frame anodized in gold' to be supplied by **Alitex** of Alton, Hampshire. During late 1981 and with planning permission in place and a detailed cost estimate for the construction, the Club applied for a number of grants to assist the project and received offers from the Highlands & Islands Development Board (Social Development Fund) and the Highland Regional Council (Capital Fund) although only after an amendment to the Club Constitution to deal with decisions on membership. Materials were ordered in early 1982 and new Starter's Box was completed that summer. **This 1982 box is still in use today** (2014) although various improvements have been made to the gantry. While the original door has been replaced (2013), the Alitex 'special glazing' stood the test of time and exposure to extreme weather well and it was 2013 before refurbishments to the sills were required and were completed by Alan Hardie.



Some detail of the Starter's Box in 2014 showing the 'gold' Alitex window frames (then 32 years old) together with the more recent UPVC work to replace rotten wood.

THE CLUBHOUSE

A club notice⁹ dated January 1958 describes the Clubhouse as:

'There is a Nissen hut at Fortrose Harbour, which is used as the Club House, where changing-rooms, bathroom, & electric cooker are available.'

⁹ From the Club minutes book
Third revision, March 2021
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HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6



The original Nissen hut clubhouse next to Quay House (the larger hut was the fire station) in the early 1960s

As is mentioned above in 'The Early Years', the Club rented the wartime Nissen hut, built in 1943 as part of HMS Monster (see Part 5), from the Town Council.

5. The Secretary informed the meeting that he had received a formal letter from the Fortrose Town Council agreeing to rent the Nissen Hut at Fortrose Harbour to the Club, for an annual rent of £5.
The two keys of the hut had been handed over to the Commodore on 11th April, and were to be kept by Mr. R.A. Taylor at his house, Craigwood, Fortrose.

From the Club minutes on 12 April 1956

Within 2 weeks of obtaining the keys the committee set about making some improvements.

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

Club House. The Nissen Hut, which has been rented from Fortrose Town Council for £5 per annum, was duly inspected. Mr. Ian MacKenzie, who is a fully qualified architect (ARIBA) suggested that the brick partition at the East end of the sittingroom might quite easily be taken down, to make one long room, it would also require an extension to the ceiling in the second room, thereafter the one large room could be distempered. Very little material would be required. Mr. Mackenzie undertook to carry out this work, with the assistance of Mr. Taylor and Mr. Smart, provided permission from the Town Council was received with no condition to reinstate the building. Mr. Brill offered the use of his spray gun for distempering. Work was not to start until permission was received from the Town Clerk.

Minutes 26 April 1956

However, **the Club never regarded the Nissen hut as a long-term solution** and by October 1961 were planning to **bid for 'the barn'** (now Quay House) which was owned by Mr Mackay who ran the West End Stores (see Part 2).

ACQUISITION OF BARN:

The Commodore gave a resume of the position and explained how the Club stood. He gave his opinion that the present Club House would shortly require major repairs. After discussion it was agreed that the Commodore and Secretary should negotiate a reasonable purchase at a price to be agreed by them.

Minutes 17 October 1961

For some reason, the Club's offer for the barn was not received and it was sold instead to **Mr Gowans** who was the factor to the Rosehaugh Estate. This would have consequences.

By 1963 the Club was enquiring of the Council whether they could build on the premises they occupied. Later that year the Club had a plan for the club house that it wanted and was considering building at either the current location or on the site of the large Nissen hut which had been the fire station. A break-through occurred in **April 1964 when the Club became owners:**

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

NEW CLUBHOUSE:

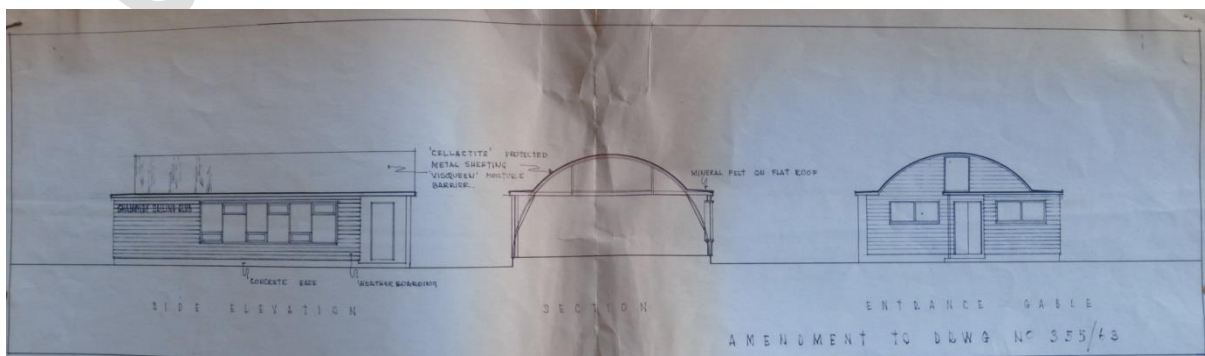
Various letters having passed between the Club and the Town Council it was now agreed that the Club proceed with the erection of a new Clubhouse on the present site. The Club have been offered the Feu Charter to the property and Mr. Mackenzie undertook to carry this through. A grant towards the cost of the work might be obtained through the Scottish Education Department and the Secretary was instructed to write for the necessary application forms, also to apply to the Town Council for the necessary Dean of Guild petition. Mr. Mackenzie offered to obtain the necessary Planning Permission. Tenders will require to be taken for the work involved and up to half of the total cost may be obtained on grant.

By May **1964** the Club had a costing and the intention of incorporating as much as was possible of the Nissen hut in the new building.

ERECTION OF NEW CLUBHOUSE.

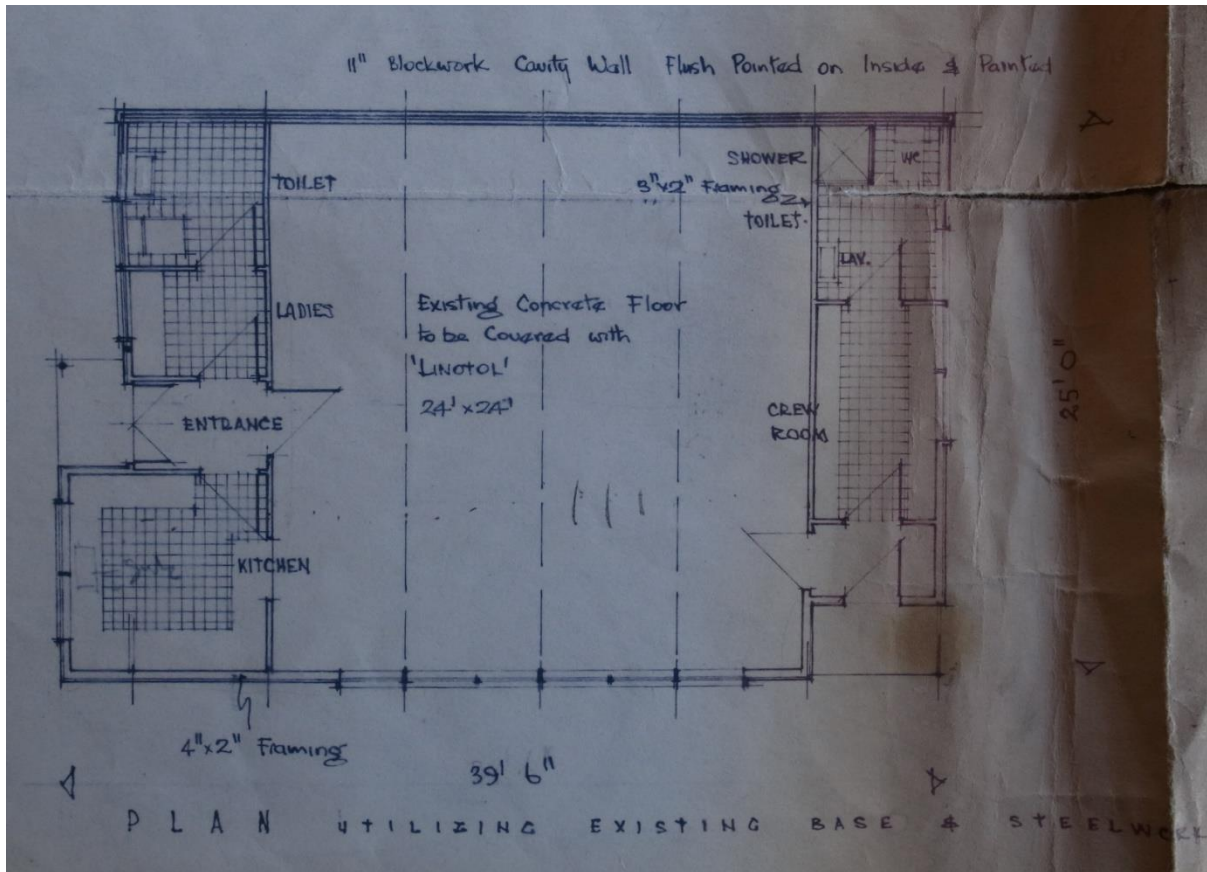
It was stated by Mr. Mackenzie that the cost of erecting the new Clubhouse would be £1,350. Mr. Arrol asked if consideration were given to the erection of a pre-fabricated building and what, if any reduction in cost this would achieve. Mr. Mackenzie replied that every possible part of the present building would be used in the present proposed plan and he felt that it could not be done cheaper any other way.
The/

However, **progress was halted** when Mr Gowans, now living in Quay House, objected to the Club to the plans. The Club was given approval in principle from the Town & County Planning Authority so moved to a formal application on August and this led to a Building Regulations Committee meeting on 22 October 1964 so that the views of both the Club (represented by the Vice-Commodore, Mr Reid) and Mr Gowans (represented by his solicitor) could be heard. At this point the Club had raised £99 6. 5. towards the estimated £1350 required for the rebuild and had pledges of loans from members for an additional £174. Following the hearing matters became more protracted and a list of objections were still present in April 1965 causing the Club to amend its plan in August 1965 and at the AGM of April **1966** the Club was able to confirm that agreement had been reached.



HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

Clubhouse exterior with amended roofline



1963 floor plan drawn by Iain MacKenzie and 'utilizing existing base & steel work'

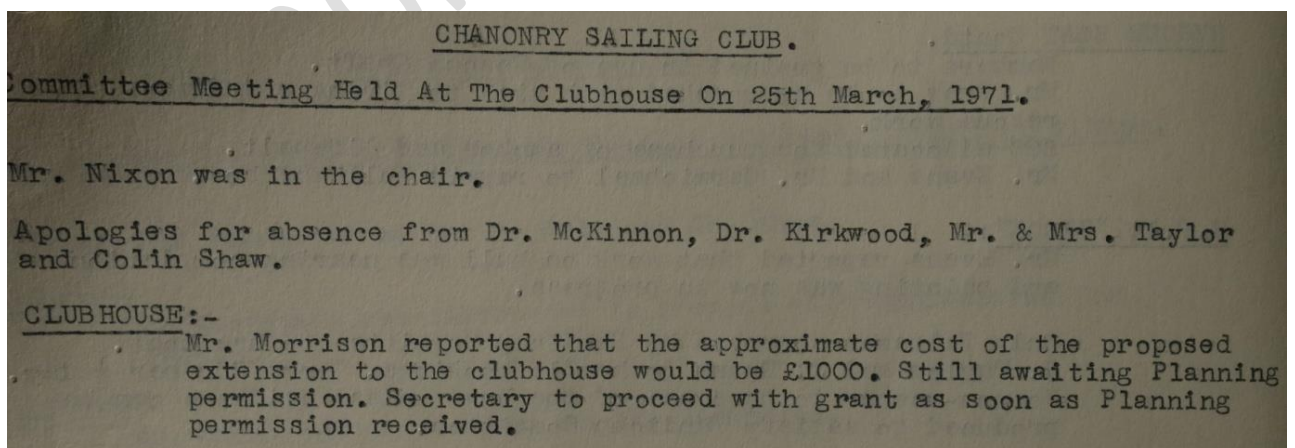
The central issue now became one of **funding**. The Scottish Education Department made an offer to half fund the work but was concerned that the Club's funds still fell far short of their 50%; this problem was solved in August 1966 when committee member **Mr Haxton** generously offered to **'lend the Club whatever sum was required to make up the balance of the Club's share of the cost.'** The decision was taken on 10 August 1966 to go ahead and also to call-in the various promissory notes for interest free loans and to start work with demolition at the end of the sailing season. By 2 February 1967, work was well advanced and it was decided to plan for an official opening on **29 April 1967**.

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6



The 1967 Clubhouse with **George Taylor** making a speech

The next phase of clubhouse development proved even more problematic. The rebuilt clubhouse was barely finished before the committee started to discuss a **forward extension**. During 1967, 68 & 69 the committee continued to discuss the option but costs were a problem. By 25 March **1971 was seeking planning permission** and had outline costs.



In 1972 the subject of **the extension** was 'remitted to a sub-committee' with Mr Arrol in the lead. On **9 May 1973 the committee had a long discussion on whether the Club should not look to the**

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

future and plan for a 2-storey clubhouse; it was decided to ask both the architect and planning officer to look at this option.

The AGM of **24 October 1973** was attended by the architect Mr Rosie of Matheson & MacKenzie who explained his provisional scheme which required a **2-storey building** although planning consent was far from guaranteed. **The estimated cost was £22 500** (compare with the £1 000 estimate for a simple extension only 2 years earlier). The AGM decided to proceed towards obtaining permission.

A **steering committee to develop the new clubhouse plan was set-up under Jack Evans** and the main task was fund raising. After a few false starts initial agreement was received on grants from the Highland & Island Development Board, the Scottish Sports Council, the Ross-shire Education Department, the Avoch District Council and the Fortrose District Council; this raised over 75% of the required amount but there was a **significant fly in the ointment** and that was the local government re-organization of 1975 which resulted in neither the Regional nor District Councils being able to guarantee that their grants would be carried forward to the new organization. **A Special General Meeting** was called in March 1976 and the record is here:

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

Chanonry Sailing Club.

Minute of Special General Meeting held in Phipp's Hall, Beaulieu on 17th. March 1976.

The meeting was attended by 22 members of the club.

The Commodore opened the discussion regarding the proposal to build a New Clubhouse with a brief resume of the proceedings which had led up to the present time.

He explained that up to the end of the previous week the position was as follows:

Loans had been offered by 37 members amounting in total to the sum of £4,360.

Grant offered by the Highland Regional Council	£7,093.
--	---------

do. do. Ross & Cromarty District Council	£7,093.
--	---------

do, do. Scottish Sports Council	£6,400.
---------------------------------	---------

do, do, H.I.D.B. (assumed)	£5,000.
----------------------------	---------

Total Grant offered.	£25,586.
----------------------	----------

from Club Funds.	£ 1,000.
------------------	----------

Loans offered by members	£ 4,360.
--------------------------	----------

	£30,946.
--	----------

Estimated cost of scheme,	£32,272.
---------------------------	----------

Shortfall	£ 1,326.
-----------	----------

He was of opinion that if matters had remained like this then he felt that he would recommend proceeding with the scheme, but unfortunately, it was discovered only two days ago that the District Council had only budgetted for a sum of £2,000. and also that there was some doubt that the H.I.D.B. would not meet the sum of £5,000. This means that even assuming the H.I.D.B. £5,000 the shortfall was now £6,419.

A full discussion then took place on the possibilities and difficulties of the matter. The Treasurer drew attention to the additional expenses which the new building would incur such as Extra rates, Insurance and the paying of interest on bank overdraft if that had to be incurred.

The meeting finally decided that if the shortfall did not rise above £3,326 then the the committee could consider proceeding but if it rose above that figure the scheme should be abandoned. The Commodore agreed to meet the Fortrose member of the District Council and point out to him that the Council had misled us in this matter and ask him to see what could be done. Following this J. Findlayson and J. Arrol were to meet the H.I.D.B. to ascertain how they stood in the matter of their grant offer.

On 14 April 1976 the Club had to abandon their plans as the funding shortfall proved to be too great. The steering committee proposed in May 1976 instead to **revert to the earlier forward extension plan** but to **build it more substantially** so that a second storey could be added in the future:

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Steering Committee

Jack Evans said that they had decided to do a more permanent job which meant improving the plan to make provision for further extension upwards at some future date. The front would now be masonry skin instead of timber skin and the matter had been referred back to the Architect to alter the drawings.

John Finlayson was to obtain two more quotes for the job and it was hoped that we could start making Grant applications to the Sports Council etc. by mid March.

This more modest scheme was estimated to require £9020 and by **27 August 1977 it appeared that the funds had been found** from a combination of grants, club funds and member donations. The plan then hit an **unexpected snag** when on 8 February 1978 the Highland Regional Council refused planning permission! There was a partial climb-down when the steering committee pointed out that permission had been agreed previously. Nevertheless, the Planning Officer wanted some commitment to a 2-storey building even if this could only be achieved in phases.

CHANONRY SAILING CLUB EXTENSIONS - FORTROSE

I refer to our meeting to discuss the above development and the decision notice issued on 8th February, 1978.

I apologise for the error in our records here which led me to believe that there had been no precedent on this site previously. Obviously, the approval F/7256/0/4797 for a two storey new Clubhouse, the area of which extends beyond the existing building line does affect the reasons expressed in the decision notice sent to you for the recent extension. I confirm that I feel the Roads & Transport Department whilst still retaining reservations, must accept that the previous decision would erode any objections that they might have.

The question of design, however, remains, but I believe can be substantially met by the agreements as discussed. My concern is that as a result of lack of resources the Authority will be left with the Nissen Hut and extension, etc., for some considerable time. However, if the Club are prepared to commit themselves to a redevelopment of the whole site comprising (1) in the 1st phase the proposed extension, then (2) in a year's time the renovation and redesign of the Nissen Hut, then (3) the development of the upper storey premises. I feel that the aesthetic problems can be overcome.

Extract of a letter from the HRC Divisional Planning Officer dated 10 March 1978.

By **27 June 1978**, the steering committee had an agreed way ahead:

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

SUB COMMITTEE REPORTS

Steering Committee

John Finlayson reported on the meeting he and Jack Evans had had with the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Planning Officer of the Ross-shire District Council Planning Committee. At this meeting they agreed on behalf of the Club to alter the plans to show three phases:

- (1) Extend the lounge facilities.
- (2) Remove the curved roof and replace with a flat one.
- (3) The addition of a second storey.

The Planning Officer and Planning Committee members present assured us that they would be quite satisfied with the alterations if they were /

By November 1978, the Club had started work on 'Phase 1' and after a few minor delays the extended Clubhouse was opened officially on **9 June 1979 by Sir Kenneth Alexander**, Chairman HIDB (around 12 years after the forward extension was first discussed).



Opening Ceremony being addressed by Jack Evans.

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6



Opening Day **9 June 1979** showing the building layout and 'tin' roof. In the same year work started to implement 'Phase 2' but it was **May 1984 before plans for the second storey ('Phase 3') were being drawn-up**. Matters were still not certain as the Club produced an **ambitious development plan** that would see the 'Phase 2' Clubhouse become storage.

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

CHANON SAILING CLUB DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1984

It is considered that the demand for sailing and boating facilities at Fortrose is now such that the club, being lessees of the harbour, have a duty to provide more extensive accommodation for:-

- (a) Social activities
- (b) Boat moorings
- (c) Dry land boat storage
- (d) Car parking

In addition to the harbour lease the club owns the freehold of the present club-house. The former harbour grain store is now a private residence known as Quay House and this has been on the market for some time.

The club therefore proposes the following developments:

1. Part of the harbour space lying between the club house and Quay House on the one hand and the harbour on the other hand is presently concrete hard standing suitable for boat storage and car parking. The remainder of this area should be brought up to a similar standard.
2. The existing dinghy park to the west of the harbour should be enlarged by infilling the existing beach access adjacent to the harbour wall and providing this area with hard standing surface. Further extension in a seaward direction is also possible. A new beach access could be provided through the dinghy park and down the old dinghy ramp which would be re-furbished as a concrete structure.
3. Club owned mooring trots would be laid to accommodate up to fifty boats in the first instance. Such free swinging moorings should be protected by a new breakwater of masonry construction. These works would be carried out in agreement with the Crown Commissioners.
4. Quay House should be purchased from the present owners and converted into a new clubhouse incorporating:

kitchen	clubroom
bar	changing rooms
committee room	flats
small chandlery shop	
5. The existing clubhouse would thereafter be developed for boat and equipment storage - preferably covered.

Contd. /

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

*CHANONRY SAILING CLUB DEVELOPMENT PLAN 1984 (continued)		
The provisionally estimated costs of these developments are as follows:		
1)	Extend existing hardstanding at harbour for car parking/boat storage	£8,000.00
2)	Extend existing Dinghy park to provide extra car parking/dinghy storage	
	Including infilling existing beach access	£2,000
	Increasing dinghy park by 7 m all round	£18,000
	Including rock armoring on beach front providing new concrete launching ramp	<u>£7,500</u>
		£27,500 £27,500.00
3)	Breakwater and Moorings	
	Breakwater as sketch including design and supervision and 10% contingencies	£420,000.00
	Moorings laid on seabed within breakwater	£10,000.00
4)	Purchase and alterations to Quay House	£70,000.00
5)	Existing Clubhouse converted to storage	£10,000.00
		<hr/>
	Total development costs	£545,000.00
The club seeks an opportunity to discuss funding of these costs with the Local Authorities.		
The benefits would accrue to the sailing and boating community, the economic welfare of Fortrose, the tourist industry, and the schools and training establishments in the district who are interested in water sports. There will also be a significant environmental improvement.		

Much of this plan seems to have been quietly shelved with the exception of the **dinghy park extension** and the **eventual laying of 40 club owned trot moorings**; committee work in **1994 focused on building the second storey**. The architect was to be club member **Doug Stuart**. As usual the main challenge was funding. The Club had been gifted land at Lettoch from the former Beaully Firth Yacht Club and had hoped to raise funds by selling the land with planning permission for a dwelling. The Black Isle Local Plan had consistently recommended against developing the coastal strip and there were concerns too about flooding and the Planning Committee recommended a refusal of the application in 1991 effectively closing off this route for funding. The District Council was reluctantly unwilling to assist with funds unless the Club could close the funding gap and various other offers had to be withdrawn as they could not be left open-

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ended. However, the Club had been **granted full planning permission for the new Clubhouse on 18 February 1991** (with the standard 5-year expiration).

By November 1992 a new **Clubhouse Development Committee** was set-up and it was agreed that **Richard Evans would be the Chairman** with **permanent member David Gibb** and the responsibilities of **Doug Stuart** as the architect would be formalised while he would remain a Development Committee member (and indeed Commodore for part of the period to be followed in October 1993 by Richard Evans). Other members were **Joan Maxwell** and **Vint Grant**. Various potential grant funders were identified and the Development Committee moved swiftly to finalize the design and apply for grants. The total project cost was estimated at **£45 014** of which about a third was 'in the bank'. The main scope was to provide a large multi-purpose first floor room and extend the ground floor changing rooms by using the space occupied by the then existing lounge. By 13 January 1993 the Development Committee had approved the detailed plans and working drawings had been submitted for a Building Warrant. An EGM had been called as the Club Constitution required amendment to meet the criteria of some of the potential grant funders.

The Development Committee asked for **tenders** to build and these ranged from **£48 000 to just over £57 000**. It was hoped that work could start in April 1993 although grants were still pending. The **Building Warrant was obtained on 31 August 1993** but the grant process was still ongoing. By **October 1993, the project costs had risen to £57 500**. **Ross & Cromarty District Council had committed £14 000, the Club had a total of £18 500 available in its funds and it was estimated that Club members would contribute £15 000**. The remaining £25 000 had been sought as grants from **Ross & Cromarty Enterprise (RACE)** and the **Foundation for Sport and the Arts**. By November the pressure to obtain the grants was really on as the District Council grant was now conditional on the project completing in the current financial year (by March 1993). **RACE came through with an offer of £10 000** on 1 December 1993 and the Development Committee took **decisive action** to commit the available funds despite the shortfall rather than lose the District Council grant. By 10 December 1993, Doug Stuart was instructing some work to begin to a total value of £41 467.66. Sufficient work had been completed by March 1994 to claim the District Council grant but the Foundation for Sport and the Arts had eventually written in April 1994 not committing to a grant but expressing intent to do so once their funds would allow it. A building Certificate of Completion was issued on 6 June 1994 although some internal fittings and finishings were on hold pending funds. **The Foundation for Sport and the Arts came through with a grant offer on 2 August 1994**. At that point there was a little over £15 000 needed to complete **the project valued at £69 501.68** in total but there was

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

sufficient usable building to allow for an **official opening on 20 August (1994)** by Duncan McPherson, Convener Highland Regional Council. This had been the Club's biggest project and had been driven hard to completion by the Development Committee not without some risk and 21 years later the building remains much as they envisaged it and a credit to all those involved.



The Clubhouse today much as extended in 1994

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The last bit of visible Nissen hut (the metal frame) being incorporated in a wall during the 2012 re-modelling of the male changing room.

As a final comment on the Clubhouse, it was decided in 2010 that it would be useful if **interpretation boards** could be mounted on the outside of the Clubhouse for the benefit of the numerous tourists who found their way to the harbour each year. The project '**Harbouring Heritage**' was born. 'Seed corn' funding for the boards was obtained from the **Moray Firth Partnership** and this project report (extracts) from early 2011 explains the scope and progress.

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

"Harbouring Heritage is a Chanonry Sailing Club community project, assisted by the 1st Avoch Sea Scouts, to provide interpretation boards at Fortrose Harbour covering both historical and natural heritage. The project has been **funded by grants from the Moray Firth Partnership and the Highland Council (Black Isle Ward Budget)** with contributions in kind by members of the Club and the Sea Scouts.

The project contains **6 broad phases** mainly running in parallel; these are: obtaining community support; funding raising and selecting a designer; conducting historical research; developing recreational boating guidance; developing designs and, lastly, conduct an unveiling. Apart from the unveiling the phases have been completed.

As part of the historical research, **the written history of the harbour has been expanded from 1 page to over 30 – work that will continue to develop.** This history will be made available to all via the Club's website and will be linked to the Fortrose & Rosemarkie Community website. Additionally, discussion is underway with Groam House Museum to put on an **exhibition in 2012** in Rosemarkie focused on the harbour as a joint Groam House, Chanonry Sailing Club and 1st Avoch Sea Scout project.

A further benefit of the project has been to provide **straightforward guidance to the recreational boater in relation to dolphins** that was not previously easily accessible."

The official unveiling of the boards took place on **4 June 2011** led by **Penelope Keith** (now Dame Penelope Keith)



Penelope Keith unveils the first board

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6



Elizabeth Brown (right) representing the Fortrose & Rosemarkie Community Council unveils board #2 assisted by Commodore Helen Jenner



The board entitled 'From Cargo to Leisure via War' was unveiled by **1st Avoch Sea Scout Rebecca Setford**

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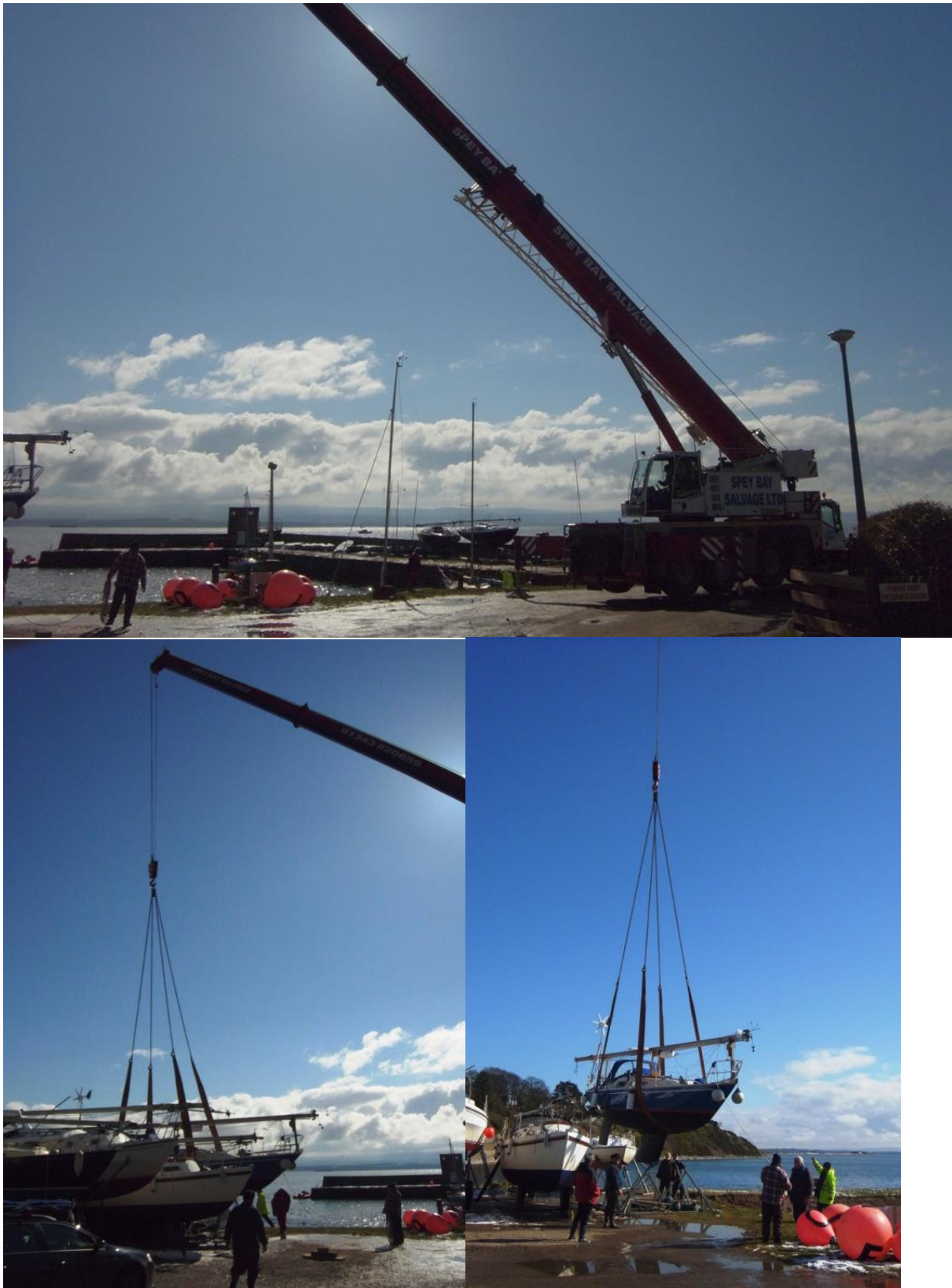
Fittingly, the final board entitled 'Establishing the Harbour' was unveiled by **George Taylor** (club founder member, retired harbour master and Honorary Rear Commodore).

CHANONRY SAILING CLUB – HARBOUR USE TODAY

The casual visitor to the harbour could be forgiven for thinking that little is going on but that would be because they have missed the **bursts of intense activity** that happens every season.

The first big event of the year is normally the **crane-in** of the cruisers. The cruisers overwinter ashore, some at the harbour while others are towed home on trailers. The boats start to come out of hibernation in March as owners, sometimes frantically, try to complete their maintenance and anti-fouling before the allotted day of the crane. Crane-in is tide dependent as most boats have to be a float to allow the slings to be removed and with the number of boats using the moorings generally 2 days are required to complete the task which is in April most years. A large mobile crane is hired-in and it is very much a self-help activity controlled by a club member who has had the necessary training.

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Crane operations

Another large event is the Club's **annual Open Day** which these days is combined with a **fund-raising day for the Royal National Lifeboat**

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Institution. The Club's support for the RNLI is long standing. The first letter on file from the RNLI is dated May 1962 and explains that 5 new life boats had been welcomed to Scotland in 1961 at a cost totalling £200 000; the Club was asked to run a Pennant Race to collect funds and the Secretary replied on 30 May 1962 saying that the Club would run a Pennant Race on 14 July. On 20 July, the Commodore forwarded £2:10s to the RNLI apologizing for the small amount due to a low turn out on a 'not very nice day'. These days the format is to have an open day with the Chanonry & District RNLI Branch of volunteers running catering and sales in the Clubroom and with the Club running the **Nessie Race** on the same day and the more challenging **Ness Cup** on the following day with all entry money donated to the RNLI. The Open Day has other attractions and subject to operational exigencies includes at least one lifeboat in the harbour.



Open Day

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We even managed to get an RAF Search & Rescue helicopter role demonstration in 2006.

The harbour is frequently used to **support training**. The Club is a RYA Recognised Training Centre (since 1987 – the first in the Moray Firth) and provides both **dinghy and powerboat courses** to members delivered by volunteer instructors all of whom maintain current RYA instructor qualifications.



Powerboat Level 2 course

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Senior Instructor course 2006

The **Avoch Sea Scouts** frequently use the harbour on a Friday evening in the warmer weather to kayak, sail and powerboat.



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The harbour is an essential part of the Club's **annual mooring maintenance** with risers and mooring buoys lifted annually and brought ashore or loaded to go out again at the harbour.

Of course, it's not just Club members who enjoy and use the harbour. **Visiting yachtsman** come in for a few hours or days to visit Fortrose or to shelter from stormy weather. The **holiday barges** Fingal of Caledonia and Ros Crana often anchor off and land their tourists at the harbour steps in RIBs. Occasionally the **Inshore Lifeboat** will drop 'casualties' off at the harbour (the Club maintains an emergency mooring throughout the year too). Holiday makers can be seen **angling** off the end of the harbour wall and with no swimming pool on the Black Isle, the harbour is popular in the summer when the tide is in for '**harbour jumping**' and swimming. And it still fulfils its basic function of providing **a berth** for a few small yachts able to 'take the ground'.



Emily & Eleanor Lindsay harbour jumping in 1955

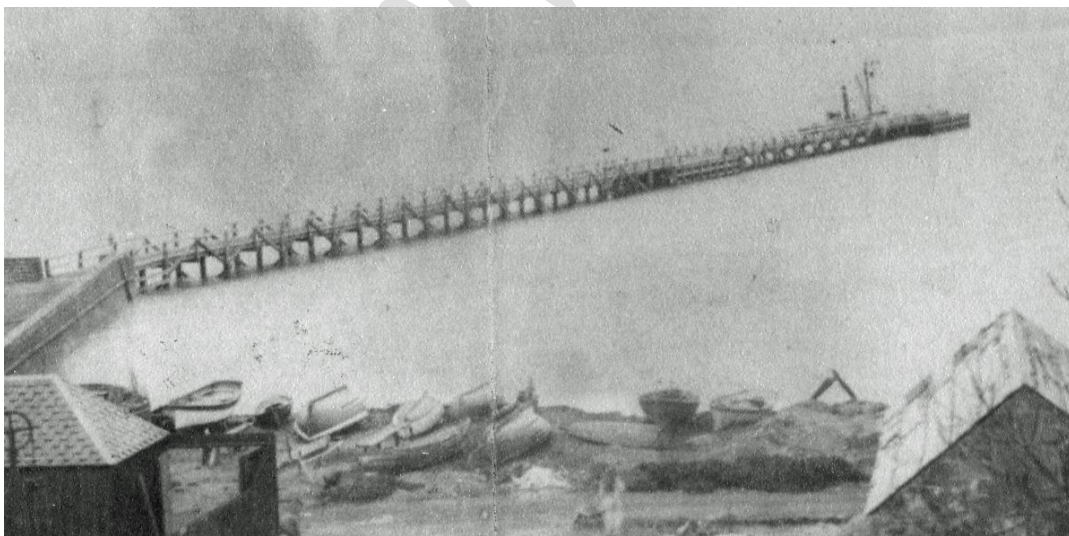
HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6



Harbour jumping at Junior Week.

ROWING IS BACK!

As mentioned at the beginning of this section on The Harbour & Leisure Sailing, **early regattas included swimming, sailing and rowing**. Early photos also show small rowing craft used for salmon fishing drawn-up on the shoreline:



The Sea Scouts have also engaged in rowing (pulling) over the years and when Chanonry SC formed in 1956, there were rowing races at the regatta. In 2014, a dedicated group of volunteers from Chanonry Sailing Club built their first **St Ayles skiff** for coastal rowing. This is the official naming

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ceremony of the **Chanonry Maid** (still under construction at the time) by **Dame Penelope Keith** on **28 June 2014**.



Here we have the Chanonry Maid rowers practising harbour manoeuvres in **January 2015**.



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CHANONRY SAILING CLUB AT 60

On the 16th April 2016, the Club celebrated its Diamond Jubilee with around 70 members, former members and well-wishers attending a function during which 2 new benches were dedicated – the first in memory of former Commodore, Jack Evans MBE, and the second in memory of founder member, former Commodore, honorary Rear Commodore and long-time harbourmaster, George Taylor. A speech of welcome was made by Commodore Mike Wilson which was followed by well received speeches by Richard Evans (son of Jack snr) and Joan Maxwell. All photos by Mike Armitage. Newly reprinted interpretation boards, this time made of polycarbonate which should be more durable than the originals, were dedicated and thanks given to Podiatry Plus for their sponsorship.



Kyle Cameron & David Finlayson

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6



Marjorie Taylor with Jack Evans Jnr



Trying out the new benches – the George Taylor bench is now located on the mole.

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

HARBOUR BI-CENTENARY

Telford reported to the Parliamentary Commissioners (see Part 2) that the harbour was completed in October 1817. On **14 October 2017**, around 30 members of the Club and local community gathered in the Clubhouse to hear a talk on the history of the harbour (by the author) and enjoy an afternoon tea. The event culminated in the unveiling of a new bench on the harbour mole commissioned by the Club and made by Ian Chalmers of Chainsaw Creations (Culbokie). The bench is dedicated to Thomas Telford and has his plan for the harbour carved into the back rest.



The **bi-centenary bench** being unveiled by Anne Phillips representing Fortrose & Rosemarkie Community Council and Katrina Mcleod representing the Club. Pipe music was provided by Tomos Dargie.



Witnessing the unveiling.

HARBOURING HERITAGE – A HISTORY OF FORTROSE HARBOUR PART 6

What might the next 200 years bring? Hopefully not submersion with rising sea levels! Perhaps a more diverse Watersports again?

SCOTTISH CHARITABLE INCORPORATED ORGANISATION

On 16 September 2019, the Club was successful in obtaining a charitable and incorporated status (SCIO – SC049615). The second and last of the 3 charitable purposes are pertinent to the harbour:

The advancement of the public participation in water sports.

The provision of recreational facilities.

The advancement of the heritage of Fortrose harbour.