



Ravenglass Village Forum

May 2004

No 5

Busy behind the scenes

Ann Edwards reviews the Forum's work during the year

You may think that we have actually done very little in the past twelve months. There may not be anything to see on the ground, but a great deal has been going on behind the scenes. Unfortunately progress is often slowed down by having to wait for other authorities to do their research and planning.

The main project at present is the plaque to mark the approximate site of the Market Cross in Main Street. We hope to be able to go ahead with this very soon. Most of the finance is in place, the design of the plaque is more or less decided, which just leaves the actual site to be agreed. We are waiting to see the plans of all the underground services before going ahead. Obviously there is no point in laying a plaque and its surround only to find a few months later that one of the utilities digs it up! So far the scheme is to be financed by Muncaster Parish Council, Friends of the Lake District and Bootle & Seascale Neighbourhood Forum. We would like to thank these organisations for their support.

The Ravenglass Trail leaflet is still with the editors. Progress has been made with the text and consultations went ahead with the artist who did the drawings for the *Quick Look at Ravenglass* leaflet. He has now completed a new set of drawings to be used for the trail leaflet. We did hope to launch this new leaflet in time for Easter but there have been delays in the editing and again in securing the necessary finance for the initial print run. This leaflet is to have a small charge on it, so hopefully future editions will be self-supporting.

The Millennium Garden has recently been weeded by a group of volunteers. New plants have been planted for the new season. A great deal of money was spent on making this an attractive corner of our village and it is most important that we as a village maintain it. I am therefore asking for anyone who is interested in volunteering to help with the care for the garden to come forward. It would involve weeding, planting and generally caring for the garden. If you are able to give a little of your time to this will you please let Mike Harrington, secretary, know before or at the AGM.

The committee is looking at several small projects for the near future and, as they will involve less money, we are hopeful of seeing them through. Finance for any project is getting harder to come by and always involves a great deal of form filling. Then there are many conditions to be met and all this takes time and effort from a group of people who are doing all this in their spare time!

The small project list includes improving the plant tubs along the Green and adding two or three more to complete the length of the grass banking. A 'gateway' sign on the way into the village will be more inviting than the standard signs and be special to Ravenglass. We are looking into a web site for the village to promote village businesses and encourage people to the area. Many towns and villages already have a web site as a way of increasing trade to their area.

Last year the Forum led a campaign to persuade the Lake District National Park not to put quite substantial charges on the village car park. Thanks to an excellent turnout of village people at the public meeting held jointly with the Parish Council, who were debating parking restrictions on the Main Street, we won the case for not charging on the car park. We have therefore, for the time being at least, maintained our free parking and I wish to thank all those who helped with letters, etc.

Finally I would like to thank all those who have supported the Forum over the past twelve months. Special thanks go to Andrew Lowe of the Lake District National Park Authority for his continued help and support this year. I will also take this opportunity to thank the committee members for their work not just this past year but since the committee began. Several like myself have been here since day one; I have been Chairman since before the first election but I now feel it is time for someone else to take over the Chair. I will therefore be resigning as Chairman at the AGM on 18th May 2004 but will hopefully continue to serve on the committee. Once again thank you all for your support of Ravenglass Village Forum over the past few years and I hope you will continue to support the Forum in the future.

Ann V. Edwards (Chairman)

Marking the Cross

One feature of Ravenglass for much of its history was the Cross in Main Street, first noted in gifts to the Priory of St Bees and where the annual fair would be proclaimed by royal charter from 1209. After a further 500 or so years as the centre of market trading the 'cross' was rebuilt as a simple sandstone pillar on top of four steps; but by the turn of the next century it was being removed stone by stone. The obelisk in the Roman fort close to Walls House is a not unlikely candidate for the latterday shaft. The stones of the steps were reputedly 'thrown in the river' before the surface of the Street was tarred over, leaving only a 'Site of Old Cross' marked on the map as those who remembered it passed away.

In the highway of today a freestanding cross would now be an 'obstruction' – thus re-creation of the original is not a feasible option. So the project arose to mark its site by a memorial plaque that would be almost flush in the road, with a simple design and a ring of a few choice words. To add further to its presence, Alan Bell designed an arrangement of reclaimed granite kerbing blocks to represent the four square steps which surrounded the old cross. Although it is the likely size on the ground of the original feature, it has proved difficult to find a position for it which avoids the various modern services which run down under the surface of Main Street. Thus it won't be on the exact site or damage the archaeology.

This project now has the support of a number of bodies, including the Muncaster Parish Council, the Lake District National Park Authority Sustainable Development Fund, the Friends of the Lake District, and Bootle & Seascale Joint Neighbourhood Forum. Further fundraising is still needed before any order can be made to proceed.

Peter van Zeller

Notice of AGM

The fourth Annual General Meeting of Ravenglass Village Forum will be held on **Tuesday, 18 May 2004 at 7.30 p.m.** in Muncaster Parish Hall.

Agenda

Welcome.

To confirm the Minutes of the Third Annual General Meeting held on 20 May 2003.

Matters arising from the Minutes.

Chairman's report.

Treasurer's report and Accounts.

Elections for Chairman, Treasurer, Secretary and six ordinary members of the Committee.

Any other relevant business.

You have to be a member to vote at the AGM or to stand for office. Any resolutions must be proposed and seconded by members. You can be a member if you broadly support our aims, you are aged at least 18 and you live in the village. There is no subscription. If you are not yet a member and you wish to join, please ask the Editor for a registration form or fill one in when you arrive at the AGM. Time will be allowed for enrolment of new members before the formal meeting opens.

Elections

The Committee for 2003-04 consists of:

Chairman: Ann Edwards

Secretary: Mike Harrington

Treasurer: Kate Hunter

Members:

Alan Bell

Shirley Broadhurst

George Jones

Stuart Robb

Carol Stent

Peter van Zeller

This year we are looking for a new Chairman. Ann does not wish to stand for re-election to the Chair but she is willing to stand for election to the Committee. As far as we know at present, all the other members are offering themselves for re-election.

However, nothing says that we all *have* to be re-elected. Would *you* like to be a committee member?

If you want to know more, please ask one of the present committee members. If you wish to stand for election, you will need to find a proposer and seconder. You and they must all be members of the Forum.

Not a member yet? Please see the foot of the column on the left for advice on how to join.

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RiverEsk

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