

Maritime Rescue Institute
Coastal Notes – 17 July 2007

MRI's Harbour Festival is only 3 weeks away now. Sunday, August 12th is the date, 12 – 4.30 is the time. But, things start to happen the day before. The star attraction this year is the 'Dim Riv', a 40 foot replica Viking longship coming down from Lerwick. While the first leg of her journey won't replicate a Viking trip from Shetland, as she's taking the ferry to Aberdeen, she will take to the water and sail down the coast to Stonehaven on Saturday 11th. This will be the first time in 1,000 years that a Viking longship has sailed into Stonehaven bay. That should entice the photographers - there won't be another photo opportunity quite like this in a long time.

Another highlight of the day will be visit from the new Coastguard helicopter, so a real juxtaposition of the old and new is in store. The new S-92 Sikorsky will replace a fleet of S61Ns that have been the workhorse of the northern skies for the past 18 years. The new helicopters come into service at the end of September, so we're getting an early preview at Stonehaven.

Ian Chalmers is an amazing sculptor. He doesn't chisel away with hammer and mallet, or model in clay for a bronze – no, he attacks a log of wood with a chainsaw and produces the most wonderful work. It's so finely detailed that it's really hard to believe that it's all done with a chainsaw. Don Grant will once again prove that raising a barrel isn't as easy as it looks. Stonehaven used to be a big producer of barrels for the herring industry, but that's all gone now.

It wouldn't be a Harbour Festival without the Newfoundland dogs, those big soft beautiful dogs that captivate everyone, young and old. But, not to be outdone, the super smart collies from Trossachs Search and Rescue, will be showing why they are partners with Strathclyde Fire and Rescue Service providing 24/7 search dog cover for the 2.3 million people of Strathclyde. Trossachs Search and Rescue Team provides specialised search dogs and handlers for use at both urban and lowland SAR incidents.

Stonehaven Fire Brigade will be in attendance – all small boys and not so small enjoy the chance to see one of those close up.

Newtonhill Pipe Band will lend the day a good Scottish flavour, there will be musical interludes by the Bon Accord Silver Band, as well as a number of local talented musicians.

Ian Spink, runner-up in UKTV's Food Heroes series, will once again fill the area with the mouth watering aroma of freshly smoking haddock; once tasted, never forgotten. If fish isn't to your taste, the local Lions Club is running a BBQ, there's ice cream, strawberries, and teas. Add in a climbing wall, demonstrations, stalls, children's games, the Coastguard, Stonehaven Heritage Society and the chance to win a car, and there's every opportunity for a good family day out.

Any donations, whether something for the cake and candy stall, the bottle stall or even of help on the day would be warmly welcomed. All the funds raised on the day go to support the work of the local lifeboat team. We look forward to seeing you on the glorious 12th!

Visit www.maritime-rescue-institute.org to find out more about us.

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For further information or to get involved with MRI as a volunteer, please contact 01569 765768 or email hamish.mcdonald@btconnect.com.