

25 Years of Volunteering in Fife

Can you remember what was happening in the world in 1984?

The year-long miners' strike started; this was the year George Orwell predicted we would all be under the spell of totalitarian socialist dictator, Big Brother. But it wasn't all bad news: Richard Branson's Virgin Atlantic celebrated its first flight; Sebastian Coe won gold in the 1500m in the Los Angeles Olympics and Aileen Risk (pictured below) started volunteering at Barnardo's!



Aileen Risk:
25 years of
volunteering at
Barnardo's

The past 25 years have seen many changes and developments in the world and volunteering is no exception. Now, at the touch of a button, information is accessible to millions of potential volunteers across the globe via the internet.

Ron Nugent, Manager of Volunteer Centre Fife, comments on the changes locally. "The face of volunteering and the role of the volunteer centre have changed almost beyond recognition over the years.

In the early to mid-nineties there were six Volunteer Bureaux offering a rather limited service to volunteers and organisations. Now, with one Volunteer Centre covering the whole of Fife through three local offices, a much more comprehensive service is provided on all aspects of volunteering including support and training to individuals and groups advice to businesses on Employer-Supported Volunteering, as well as targeting under-represented sectors of the population. As part of the National Volunteer Centre Network, Volunteer Centre Fife is supported in its work locally, engages in national initiatives and has access to a national database of volunteers and volunteering-engaging organisations."

Celebrating 25 years of Volunteering in Fife!



To mark the 25th Anniversary of Volunteers' Week (1-7 June) Volunteer Centre Fife is holding a display in words and pictures featuring Fife's volunteers and organisations.

Friday 5th June
Adam Smith
Theatre,
Kirkcaldy,
2-4pm

If you have not yet received an invitation please contact your local Volunteer Centre Fife office.

A Part of Everyday Life Past and Present

St Andrew's First Aid

St Andrew's First Aid volunteers are a familiar sight at events such as gala days, sporting fixtures and music festivals, but behind the scenes a power of work goes on to ensure their volunteers are trained and ready to provide this essential service.



The association has been around since 1882, but it is in the last 25 years, that it has come on in leaps and bounds.

In 1989, the Badger Section was set up to include children aged between 6 and 10, the Cadet section having been set up in 1954. In 1993, the association bought its first defibrillator. A special highlight came in 1996, when the association was granted its own Coat-Of-Arms!

The start of the new millennium was a major step forward for St Andrew's First Aid in Fife, when it raised enough funds to open its own training centre in Glenrothes, the first of its kind in Fife. The centre was named after Mr James Millar, who joined the association back in 1955 and had been awarded a number of awards, including the British Empire Medal and the Queen's Medal.

Through the years much has changed: the uniforms have gone from collar and tie outfit to the current blue "squad suit" - a much more practical uniform to wear. On the training front huge advances have been made, from old slides on the wall to state-of-the-art SMART boards and presentation technology, providing even better quality training.

St Andrew's First Aid looks set to continue its presence at local events, with an ever-improving service from its dedicated volunteers.

Barnardo's Scotland

Volunteers with Barnardo's Scotland work directly with children and young people, in shops and offices, and raise vital funds.

The North East Fife Barnardo's Helper Group has been running for more than 25 years, raising funds and awareness for Barnardo's Scotland in St Andrews and Cupar.

Committed volunteers, including Aileen Risk and Ann Kay who will both receive their 25 years service awards in 2009, have raised over £53,000.00 through events such as dance displays, fashion shows, wine & cheese evenings, Christmas Galas, cooking demonstrations and Burns Suppers. Aileen Risk says "It's not always about the money you make but about the fun you have along the way".



Actress and Barnardo's Ambassador Lynda Bellingham encourages people to think about becoming a member of a Barnardo's Helper Group. "All children deserve the best start in life and the opportunity to reach their full potential. By becoming [part of] a Barnardo's Helper Group you will become part of an extraordinary organisation which believes in the potential of every child, and young people. You and your group could help turn a child's life around."

Safe Space – Recognising its volunteers

Safe Space Operations Manager, Pauline McGee, explains the work of the organisation and praises the dedication of its volunteers over the years.

“This year Safe Space reaches its 21st year of offering counselling and support to survivors of sexual abuse in Fife, offering male and female survivors access to a range of services from counselling and group work to support through the criminal justice system. Funding from BBC Children in Need now enables us to provide a dedicated service to young people aged 12 – 18years.



Development of Safe Space is dependent upon the dedication and commitment of our volunteers and it is great to have the opportunity to acknowledge the wide-ranging skills, enthusiasm and ideas they bring to this difficult area of work. All volunteers complete a training programme, attend supervision sessions and are supported fully in their roles within Safe Space. Some have been working with us for about fifteen years which highlights their level of dedication. From client feedback we know that our volunteers are offering a high level of service and that their input is greatly appreciated - it is hard to imagine what we would do without them.“

‘Although I have been volunteering with Safe Space for 8 years I still feel young in the profession, such is the nature of the endless ways of helping and discoveries to be made about ourselves, clients and the organisation.’ Heather, Safe Space Volunteer

Lend-A-Hand

Lend-A-Hand Short Break Care Service started in Dunfermline in 1987 with Angie Wynn at the helm, soon joined by Margaret MacKenzie who still works with the project today. In 1993 the project expanded to East Fife with Margaret MacKenzie moving there to develop the service soon afterwards.



The idea behind the project is simple and met a need previously unacknowledged. Volunteers and families help out on a regular basis, by providing short break care – respite – to children with a learning disability. Volunteers have come and gone although one of Margaret’s original ‘host families’ continues to provide a service.

Volunteers benefit from the experience Lend-A-Hand gives them often enabling them to access college and university courses and many are now professional carers or work with children.

Although the paperwork has multiplied, the basic process has changed little. A recent recruitment campaign, supported by Volunteer Centre Fife, has had a very encouraging response hopefully ensuring the service will be around for a long time to come.

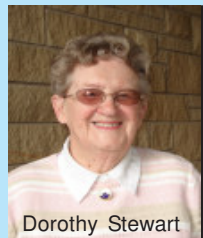
Museum Volunteers taking the Past into the Future

The Fife Folk Museum in Ceres, near Cupar, is a place where its volunteers are appreciated on a daily basis. The museum, which is a charity, was originally founded by dedicated volunteers, including Rachel Peterkin who still lives in Ceres and Mardi Mercer, the first Honorary Curator who lives in East Lothian. What gives this museum its charm is the fact that it is run by volunteers and the contents of the museum are all donated by local people or by people with a Fife connection.



The collections are housed in beautiful, listed buildings, including the original Tollbooth and adjacent weavers' cottages and celebrate the home and working lives of the people of Fife in agriculture, crafts, industries, fashions, textiles.

Now in its 41st year and enjoying progress in the 21st century, the Museum depends more than ever on its volunteers, including Chairman of the Trustees, Wynne Harley. Volunteers welcome visitors, oversee admission and man the gift shop. Others work behind the scenes supporting the Curator, Helen Urquhart. Many volunteers have been with the Museum for fifteen years or more and can provide colourful stories about the collections to add interest for visitors. One volunteer, Mirabelle Dick, became the proud recipient of the Mature Volunteer of the Year Award last year. Some volunteers become Trustees, discussing their visions for a future that will ensure the Museum's survival for a further 40 years at least.



Dorothy Stewart

Volunteering - not just for the young!

Eighty-year-old Dorothy Stewart of Cupar gives lie to the idea that only the young have progressive ideas. In her seventies, she decided to do the "Discovery Award", which is similar to the Duke of Edinburgh Award, but for older people.

She spent three years completing the Bronze, Silver and Gold Awards which involved various challenges. As part of the Gold Award, Dorothy engaged in a range of volunteering opportunities which she maintained for a number of years afterwards. One of these activities was volunteering with VONEF (East Fife Council for Voluntary Service) and Volunteer Centre Fife in Cupar, fulfilling reception and administration duties. While volunteering there, she was introduced to the world of computers and, in particular, the internet. Dorothy says "I found using the internet great fun. It opened up a whole new area of interest for me."

Dorothy looks back fondly on her years of volunteering "It was very interesting and something I did for my own pleasure, meeting many interesting people along the way. It was great fun!"

Link to the Future

Chernobyl Children Life Line

Dunfermline and West Fife Link

Do you remember the Chernobyl Disaster back in 1986?

After the best part of 25 years, the population of Belarus certainly can. Belarus was the region hit most by the disaster, with 70% of the fallout landing on its territory.

The charity, Chernobyl Children Life Line, was formed in 1991 to help children suffering the results of the nuclear disaster. There are around 145 Links throughout the UK who raise funds and bring groups of children to the UK for respite care. More than 44,000 children have been helped in this way.

The Dunfermline and West Fife Link was formed in 2001, hosting each summer and by August 2009 will have helped 100 children. "Our aim is to help these children by boosting their immune systems and offering them respite from the relentless bombardment of radiation."

For the children lucky enough to come to the UK it is a trip of a lifetime. It is estimated that a month staying with a family here, eating nourishing food, breathing clean air and having fun can improve their immune system for up to two years.

Host families welcome children into their homes and care for them as if they were their own. Life here in the UK is nothing like their life at home. Just allowing them to enjoy the comforts of host homes and joining with the rest of the group in the organised outings is all it takes to give these children a very special time.

Rewards: 100 smiling faces, 100 happier and healthier children, 100 families who greatly appreciate what we are doing. What more could you ask?

"We are all volunteers and we gain far more from the experience than we give."



More information: Carol 01383-418781 Anne 01383-740867

The Emerging Face of Volunteering

While celebrating twenty-five years of Volunteers' Week we are also looking forward to the next twenty-five and beyond and that means young people - the next generation of volunteers. It is important to encourage a culture of volunteering from an early age and a recent survey shows that the spirit of volunteering is alive and kicking with Fife's young people.

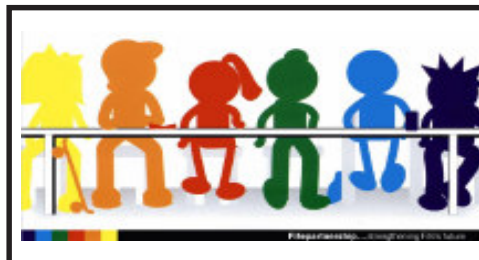
Why do young people volunteer?

Various reasons include learning something new, helping others or helping them to get a job. However, the most popular motivation for volunteering is because it is fun!

Why do some young people not volunteer?

The majority said that they hadn't thought about it, or they didn't know what to volunteer for. If you are a young person wanting to know more about volunteering through Volunteer Centre Fife visit our website at www.volunteeringfife.org Go on, give volunteering a go – it's fun!

If you are an organisation which does not currently have any young volunteers on board, contact our Youth Worker for information on tapping this vital resource for the future. Tel:01592 645546, youth@volunteeringfife.org



The Fife Young People's Panel is itself an example of volunteering for the modern age. It is open to young people aged 10 -15 and allows them to give views and opinions that are relevant to them. Once a young person is registered they are sent a questionnaire about 4 times a year – it can also be filled in on the Internet.

Thanks go to the young people of the Fife Young People's Panel who responded to the first survey which included questions about the Police, activities and safety in Fife, as well as volunteering. Results suggest that 50% of young people, aged 10 – 15, engage in volunteering, with the majority active in their schools. Volunteering also takes place in youth groups, with organisations such as Scouts or Guides, or with charities.

If you know of any young person aged 10-15 who may be interested in joining the panel then please ask them to either fill in an online application at www.fifedirect.org.uk/peoplespanel or contact the People's Panel Co-Ordinator, Betsy Wojcik, for an application form on 08451 555551, betsy.wojcik@fife.gov.uk

If you are an organisation or agency interested in getting young people's opinions then also get in touch with Betsy Wojcik for further details.

Working Together for Tomorrow's Future

Just a baby when Volunteers' Week was born!

The oldest 'young' volunteer with Fife Air Cadets Conservation Group (FACCG) was just a baby at the time of the first Volunteers' Week celebrations! Now he is part of this group which has managed to achieve more than a staggering 49,000 hours of volunteer conservation work throughout Fife and beyond during the last 8 years.

All Ages Welcome

FACCG is made up of Air Cadets from various squadrons throughout Fife, Explorer Scouts, families and individuals. The Group has made a major impact on the local community and environment and also, on an international level, by carrying out numerous conservation projects and educational activities. The group consists of 90 young volunteers, aged 13 to 25 years, and around 20 adult staff volunteers, the oldest being 75 years old!



A Way Into Work and Study

Over the years, some young FACCG volunteers have become inspired through their volunteer experience with the group to follow an environmental career. Three young volunteers achieved their HNC Countryside Management two years ago and are currently employed in the environmental sector. This year two young volunteers are studying the NC Countryside Management at Elmwood College, and another two will join the course in September.



The young volunteers experience the enjoyment and healthy outdoor environment, socialising, learning new skills and knowledge, having a record of volunteer hours for potential employers by achieving their John Muir Award, Queen's Scout Award and Duke of Edinburgh's Award. Young volunteers also learn how to become good citizens within their community and to take responsibility for future sustainability of the environment. This all contributes to an increase in self confidence, team work and leadership.

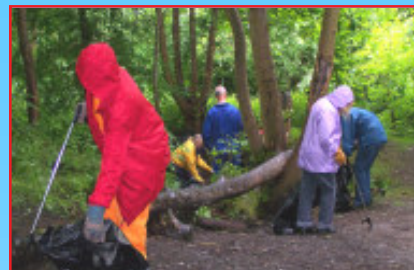
The benefits of volunteering with (FACCG) are very positive for young and old alike - come along and see for yourself!

To find out how to get involved please contact: Mark Pearson, Chairman/Volunteer Co-ordinator, Fife Air Cadets Conservation Group, Mobile - 07887 998975.

Volunteers' Week, Fife-style



The massively successful
Knitathon in 2007



Helping clean up the local environment 2008



3 Cheers for Young Volunteers in 2007

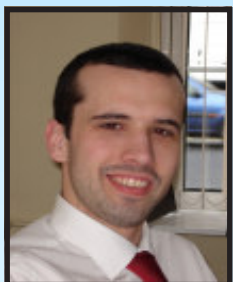


Putting volunteers on the map in the
Shape of Fife 2007



A big Thank You from Volunteer Centre Fife
to organisations and volunteers

Contact Information



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Training Co-ordinator
For all your training needs
Mary Ray
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All Round Care Project
Support to West Fife volunteers experiencing
mental health difficulties or long-term ill health.
Tel: 01383 732136

alison.wilson@volunteeringfife.org

Give Something Back

Support in the Regeneration Areas
of West & Central Fife

Jacquie Mellon on 01592 645540
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Biff McMahon on 01383 732136
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MV Award Scheme

for young volunteers
Tel: 07725 703299

youth@volunteeringfife.org

www.volunteeringfife.org

For info on every aspect of volunteering - advice about benefits, expenses, Disclosures, preparing to volunteer, links to other voluntary organisations, information on volunteering opportunities throughout Fife