



Peterhead Maritime Heritage Centre
16 June - 22 August 2008
Come along and see what's happening!

The Elphinstone Institute of the University of Aberdeen, was founded in 1995, and is dedicated to working with communities in the region to explore and celebrate the culture of the North-East and Northern Scotland.

Supported by Aberdeenshire Arts and Heritage and the Friends of the Elphinstone Institute.

Groups and parties of ten or more are welcome to visit by appointment, and there are opportunities to learn the skills and see how to build, or help to build, a boatie. Refreshments are available in the adjoining café within the Heritage Centre. For opening hours, please contact either:

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 Aberdeenshire Arts
and Heritage

ELPHINSTONE  INSTITUTE

the Boaties Craft Residency



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For ten weeks during the
summer, a craft residency
devoted to the building of
model sailing boats will
take place in Peterhead



Background

Building 'boaties' is a model-making skill that dates back at least 150 years in North-East Scotland. Boaties are based on the traditional Scottish fishing boat known as the 'fifie' and sail without rudder, motor, or remote control, depending on the skill of the maker/owner to trim the boat and set the sails to match the conditions. Sizes range from 1-foot-6 to 4 foot, but boats as large as 6 foot have been made in the past. There are a few well-known makers and several others who have the necessary modelling skills.

The centre for hand manufacture is the Peterhead district, especially Boddam, where races are held at the Den Dam on the first fine sailing Saturday in June. Here the boaties are sailed competitively in various classes. Some of the boaties sailed at the Den Dam go back many years, their hulls having been repainted and refitted many times. Each boatie is named for, and dedicated to, a particular child from the community and, if it wins, that child receives a trophy and a small prize at the New Year's party in Boddam village hall.

Project Aims

- To raise awareness of this remarkable craft skill.
- To increase participation in the craft.
- To develop a website about boatie building and sailing.
- To showcase the craft skill to audiences from Scotland and further afield.
- To build on international links with model boat builders in Scandinavia.
- To enhance the workshop with appropriate events linked to North-East maritime tradition, including singing, music-making, and storytelling.



The Residency

The residency involves highly-skilled craft workers from North-East Scotland, Alec James Stephen and Stephen Ritchie, training the new apprentices, who are adults over 18. They will be supported by a group of enthusiasts and volunteers, some of whom are members of the local model yachting clubs, Boddam Junior Model Yachting Association and the Buchanness Model Yachting Club. The residency gives visitors and participants a rare chance to find out about and experience one of Scotland's less familiar crafts.

The Craftworkers

Alec James Stephen was apprenticed as a ship's carpenter and built wooden boats for most of his working life. He was an adult apprentice in the 2004 residency and has built two model boats as a result. He is President of the Boddam Junior Yachting Club.

Stephen Ritchie is a former trawler skipper from Peterhead. He has co-ordinated the Boaties Project since it began in 2004.

