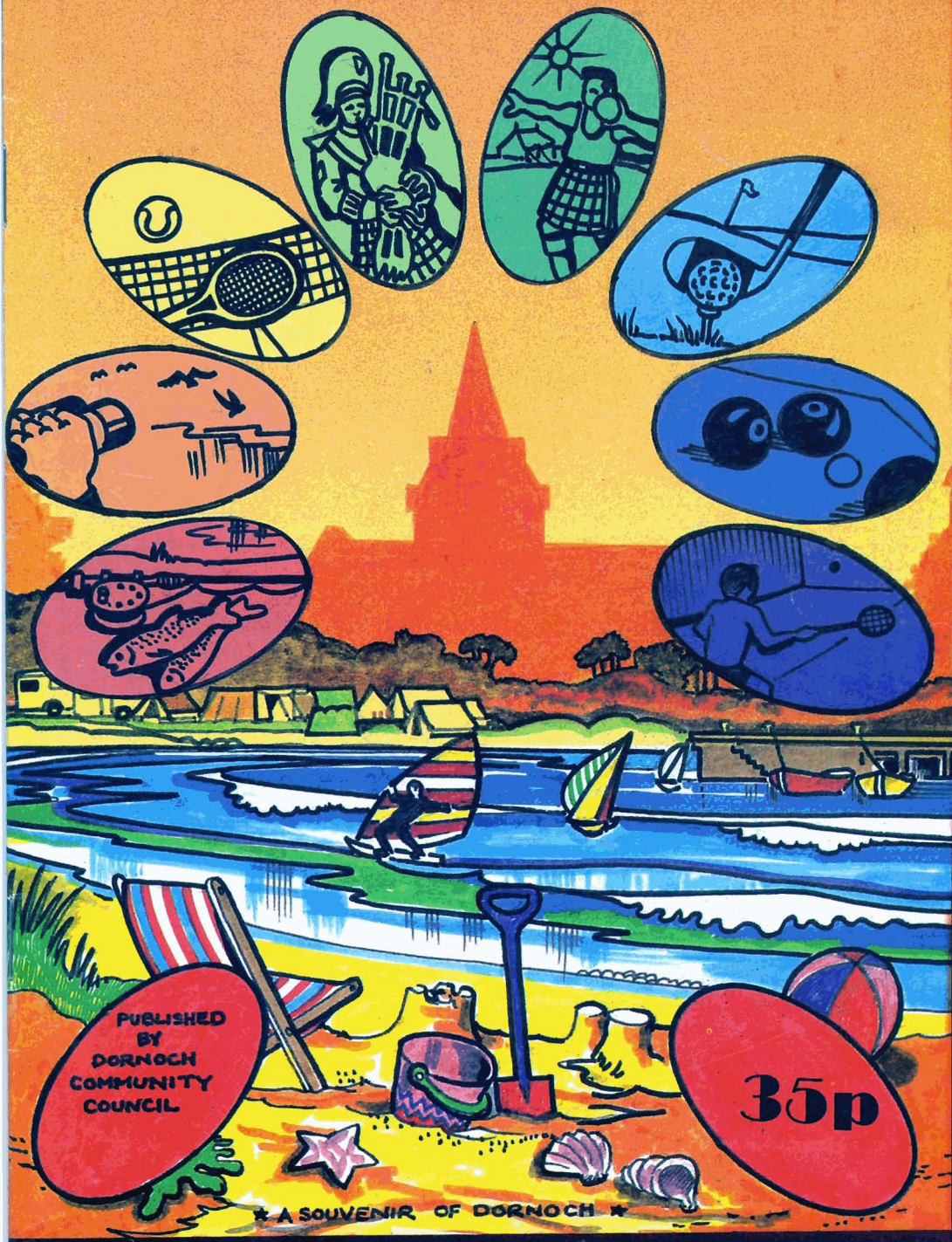


ROYAL BURGH of DORNOCH



PUBLISHED
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35p

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The Shangri-la of The Highlands

Imagine that dreamed-of perfect Summer's day. Blue, blue skies, a slight breeze, the sound of the surf on golden sand. Imagine miles and miles of uncrowded beaches, the call of the seagulls, the lure of one of the world's top ten golf courses, the thrill of landing that determined salmon, the sheer pleasure of traditional Scottish cooking, enjoying a dram with friendly and hospitable locals.

If that is the kind of relaxing and unpressurised holiday that appeals to you, then maybe you should think of the Highlands of Scotland for your next break — and specifically the unique Cathedral town of Dornoch on Sutherland's East Coast.

Dornoch, nestling at the mouth of the Dornoch Firth, and enjoying an enviable climate with little rainfall, offers first-class accommodation in recommended hotels and guest houses; or, if you prefer, self catering chalets, caravans or cottages; or in some of the most reasonably-priced bed and breakfast accommodation.

And don't forget the satellite village of Embo with its historic Grannie's Heilan' Hame, now a secluded caravan and camping complex, and its beautiful beaches.



Dornoch Pipe Band play most Saturday nights in the Square.

Dornoch itself is a treasure chest of paradoxes: steeped in history, the amenities are modern and of a high standard; atmospherically serene and peaceful, the scene can be disturbed by the haunting sound of the bagpipes and drums of the local pipe band or the wild exuberance of a colourful ceilidh; although without a large, impersonal leisure centre, it offers squash, bowls, tennis, swimming, pool and even curling within its environs; as well as the magnetism of superb lochs and clear rivers for fishing, unspoilt hills, mountains and forests for walking and rambling, links golf courses to test any golfer, and the habitat that attracts hundreds of unusual birds and wildlife.

This idyllic backwater is the obvious choice to use as a base while you are exploring the rest of the Highlands — the majestic mountains and scenery of Sutherland's West coast; the bustling capital, Inverness; or the travellers' "must", John O'Groats, are all within an hour or so's drive.

Certainly for those people who have not travelled farther North than Inverness then 'you don't know what you're missing'. Because Sutherland offers all that is best in the Highlands — and Dornoch all that is unique in Sutherland. The Dornoch Firth has justifiably been called the Shangri-La of the North because of its balmy climate with particularly low rainfall.

Youth Hostellers — Dornoch is situated half way between the superb hostel at Carbisdale Castle and that at Helmsdale.

So there's no excuse for not indulging yourself. After the stresses and strains of the year, don't you deserve a holiday in Dornoch?

How to Get There

BY ROAD — The completion of improvements to the A9 trunk road have resulted in Dornoch being only an hour from Inverness and about 3½-4 hours from Glasgow and Edinburgh. And you can enjoy driving through some of the most outstanding scenery in Britain.

BY RAIL — Quick, efficient Inter-City services speed you to Inverness, from where you can catch one of the thrice-daily routes to Wick. Alight at Ardgay station for Dornoch.

BY AIR — There is a grass airstrip on Dornoch Links which is frequently used by light aircraft and helicopters. Dornoch is also easily accessible from the two civil aerodromes at Inverness and Wick.

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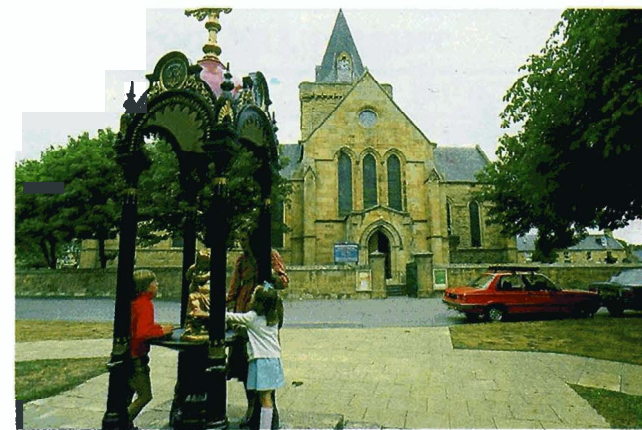
Enquiries to: Sutherland District Council, Golspie. Tel: (04083) 3192/3 or
Sutherland Tourist Board, Dornoch. Tel: (0862) 810400.

The Story of Dornoch

Dornoch, County Town of Sutherland, was created a Royal Burgh in 1628 and was once the seat of the Bishops of Caithness.

The Bishops' Palace, now a hotel, stands opposite the Cathedral, now the Parish Church. Built in the early 13th century on the site of what had been the centre of a Culdee community since the 6th century, the Cathedral was severely damaged in 1570 during a clan feud, partly rebuilt in the early 17th century and restored by the then Dowager Duchess of Sutherland between 1835 and 1837. Further restoration was completed in 1924 to commemorate the 700th anniversary of its foundation. Sixteen Earls of Sutherland are said to be buried here.

The remains of Skelbo Castle stand some 4 miles by road north of Dornoch in a commanding position overlooking Loch Fleet. There in 1290 the messen-



gers of Edward I of England learned of the death of the Maid of Norway, heiress to the Scots throne. The news brought to an end Edward's dream of uniting the thrones of England and Scotland by a marriage between the young Queen of Scots and his son Edward. Skelbo is a Norse word meaning "place of shells" and was a site of a Norse farm set up at the time of the earliest Norse invasion about 850 A.D.

In a garden near the lower links of Dornoch is a stone marking the spot where the last judicial execution, by burning, of a witch in Scotland took place in 1722.

To the west lies Skibo Estate which once belonged to the Bishops of Caithness and later to George Dempster, who was largely responsible for the erection of the spinning and weaving mill at Spinningdale, the ruins of which are still visible. Later Skibo was the home of Andrew Carnegie, who built the present Castle in the early part of this century.



Historic Skelbo Castle.

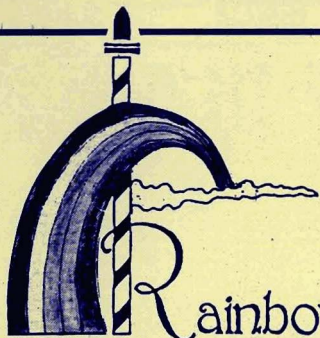
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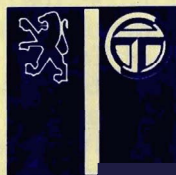
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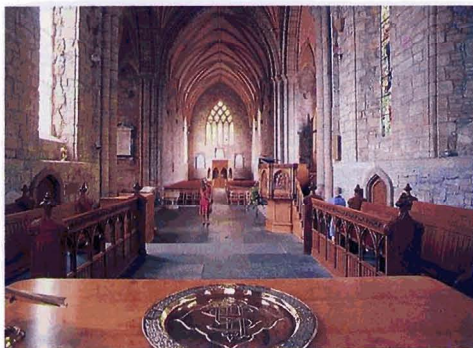
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wee house . . . my grannie's heilan hame.' By kind permission of Mrs T.M. MacFarlane
and Messrs. Mozart Allen.



Cathedral nave looking West.



"Always time for a chat."

A Wide Choice of Amenities

It was over a quarter of a century ago that the people of Dornoch recognised the tourist potential of the town. Always a Mecca for golfers, it was realised that the natural and man-made amenities of the area could be fully exploited to ensure that holidaymakers were comprehensively catered for.

To this extent, Dornoch and Embo offer a variety of first-class hotels, restaurants, shops, caravan parks and craft establishments as well as the natural attractions of unrivalled sandy beaches and a much-praised airstrip.

The seven hotels in the area allow the potential visitor to choose the type of accommodation to suit the family's needs and pocket. They are the Burghfield House Hotel, the Carlingbank Hotel, the Dornoch Hotel, the Dornoch Castle Hotel, the Eagle Hotel, the Royal Golf Hotel, and Trentham Hotel. All offer special package deals such as golfing, fishing or squash etc.

As well as the excellent hotels, Dornoch and Embo have an enviable choice in bed and breakfast accommodation, guest houses and self-catering establishments, all at very reasonable prices.

There are several private caravan parks also, and a superbly situated municipal site on the links with the golf course and beach only yards away. Caravans, caravanettes, and tents are all welcome.

The shopping facilities are prime examples of the so-called "old fashioned" service and style of shop. Although outwardly, perhaps, appearing to be few in number, the shops carry a wide variety of goods, as they have had to over the years to cater for the needs of the local population. But shopkeepers also recognise the wants of the holidaymaker — campers, fishermen, golfers, naturalists, ramblers, game and deer hunters, children and babies are all well in mind when they buy their stock. Food — particularly fresh meat and fish — is also no problem with an abundance of home-produced foods and vegetables, as well as all the household name items you have been used to buying at home.

What you will find refreshing is the friendly service, and the "clock o' the North", where there is always time for a chat or advice.

It is the excellent foodstuffs available locally that makes eating out in the Dornoch area such a pleasure. Mouth-watering steaks, fresh salmon from the nearby mountain streams and rivers, or succulent strawberries picked that morning, allow the chefs to devise appetising menus.

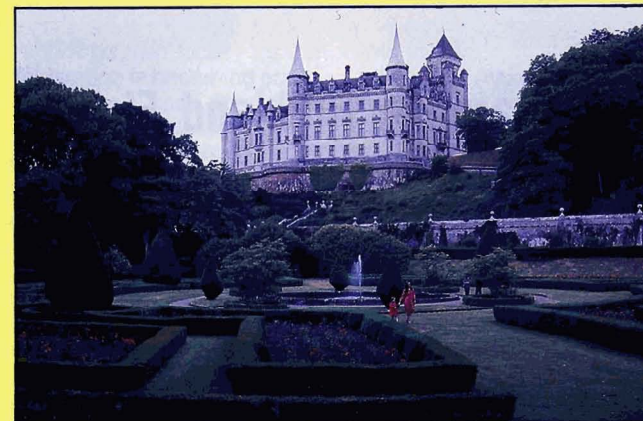
The Highlands of Scotland have always attracted talented craftsmen and women, and Dornoch is fortunate enough to have more than its fair share of such accomplished people. Most of them work from units at Station Square where there is a small industrial and craft estate. One of the more unusual workshops there is Treecraft Woodwork, producing boomerangs — and, yes, they do export to Australia! Treat yourself to a beautifully crafted boomerang or simply enjoy the special 'History of the Boomerang' exhibition.

Other units on the estate include Highland Armourers where authentic targets, swords, sgian dubhs and other weaponry are superbly crafted; Fountain of Dornoch, where uniquely fashioned jewellery is manufactured; and you can even get your dentures fixed at the Dornoch Dental Lab!

There is an opportunity to watch weavers at work in Dornoch Craft Centre in the Square. The Centre is housed in the historic Jailhouse and tableaux depicting the prison and its inmates as they would have looked make a fascinating exhibition.

VISIT DUNROBIN CASTLE AND GARDENS

Ancient seat of the Earls and Dukes of Sutherland



WHENEVER you are in the Highlands, you will find a visit to Dunrobin well worth the journey. Much of the interior, containing a wide variety of furniture, paintings and exhibits, is open to the public and the magnificent gardens are there to be enjoyed at your leisure. Light refreshments are available in the castle.

Open from 1st June to 15th September
Monday to Saturday 10.30am to 5.30pm Sunday 1pm to 5.30pm

DUNROBIN CASTLE

Gospiie, Sutherland

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