



# THE ATHELSTANEFORD SALTIRE

NEWSLETTER OF THE SCOTTISH FLAG TRUST

No.9 • AUTUMN 2005

## Saltire Theme in the Parliament

Mr J.G.Scott, a "Friend" of the Trust, has written to express his delight that Enric Miralles, the architect of the new Scottish Parliament, incorporated a number of abstract interpretations of the Saltire into the building. The most dramatic are the Saltires moulded into the vaulted ceilings of the main entrance hall, which reflect the tradition of the St Andrew's Cross appearing in the sky over the 9th century battle at Athelstaneford.



Saltires in vaulted ceiling and fine carpentry in saltire themed door.



Stunning views towards site of battle and on to North Berwick Law

## Viewpoint Upgraded

"Friends" familiar with the viewpoint overlooking the battle site will know that the sandstone paving incorporates an incised Saltire at the centre of the roundel. Over recent winters, the Trustees had become concerned about the possibility of excessive weathering due to water collecting/freezing. Accordingly, it was agreed to infill the Saltire with verdigris bronze resin, and the work was carried out by Tim Chalk of Chalk Works in February 2005. Viridor Waste Management Ltd kindly funded £295 towards the costs. The finish is an attractive light blue, though natural oxidation will cause its own patina (which needs waxing periodically!).

## Thank You

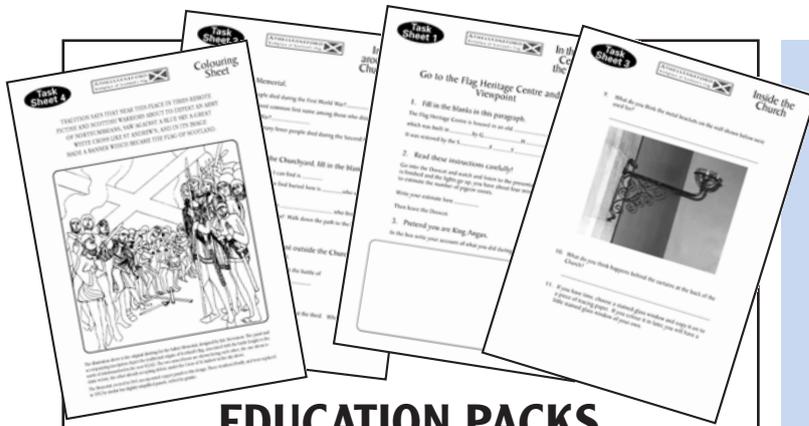
The Trustees would like to acknowledge the following individuals and bodies whose contributions over the last year and more have greatly benefited the work of the Flag Trust. Their support is appreciated.

- J.Haig Hamilton & Sons whose donations through landfill tax credits, including £1,500 in December 2004, proved invaluable in allowing the toilet restoration work to be fully completed.
- "Friend" John Mackay who has been promoting/selling Athelstaneford T-Shirts at Highland Games in Aberdeenshire over the last few summers.
- Knightsbridge, house-builders in the village, who donated £200 towards improvements to visitor signage in the locality.
- The Museum of Flight, who are enjoying high visitor numbers with the addition of Concorde, and who have agreed to display the Flag Trust leaflets.
- "Friend" Jim Lynch for a donation of £100 towards the work of the Trust.
- AVC who maintain the audio-visual equipment in the Heritage Centre and who have agreed to hold their charges for a number of years.

**VISIT THE WEBSITE**

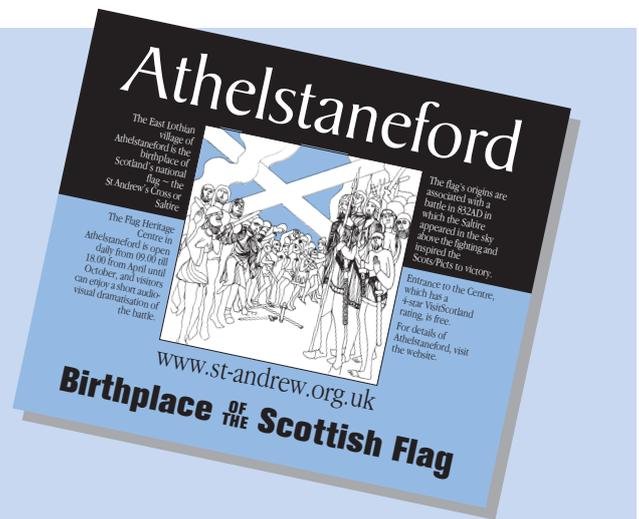
Information about Athelstaneford can be found via the St Andrew Society Website at

[www.st-andrew.org.uk](http://www.st-andrew.org.uk)



## EDUCATION PACKS

One of the objectives of the Flag Trust is to raise awareness of Scotland's flag and of its origins, and this is especially pertinent for school children. The Trust holds a supply of Education Packs which can be made available free for any primary school class planning to visit Athelstaneford. In addition, the Packs can now be downloaded direct through the website. Letters are being sent to Directors of Education across Scotland to try to encourage more school visits.



## Mouse Mat Initiative

In recent years, the Trust's only promotional merchandise has been the excellent T-Shirts. Funding for promotions of this type has always been an issue, as has the lack of any local retail outlets. However, thanks to financial support from the St Andrew Society, the Trust has been able to introduce a second branded product - the attractive and distinctive Mouse Mat. This incorporates the Athelstaneford battle "logo", and features the website address prominently.

The cost of the Athelstaneford Mouse Mat is only £2.50, with an extra 0.25p for postage, while on multiple orders postage is free. The Mouse Mat would make an excellent gift for friends or relatives or souvenir, and it is hoped that "Friends" will respond with lots of orders!



Empty flagpoles on A1 southbound.



Vexillological incorrectness on A1 northbound!

## Flags at the Border

A recent Scottish Executive report has highlighted the need to create for visitors a more favourable impression and a "unique sense of arrival" at all gateways into Scotland. Given that most visitors arrive by road, the report is especially critical of the A1 border crossing point where existing flagpoles have been lying empty for long periods. The Executive has promised to improve the A1 gateway and to ensure the Saltire is flown prominently and permanently. This is to be welcomed. The greater the number of visitors travelling north who feel a sense of welcome as they enter Scotland, the more might be persuaded to take the short detour to the birthplace of the Saltire at Athelstaneford.

The St Andrew Society has asked the Executive to hold a design competition which might throw up some inspiring/innovative ways to mark the historic border. Something badly needs to be done. Despite good approach signs, the A1 lay-bys themselves, with their unauthorised burger bars, are bleak. And even though a single Saltire is once more flying, its impact is diminished by the introduction of the Union Flag on the adjacent flagpole. This is simply wrong! The border is not between Scotland and the UK but between Scotland and England, and the St George's Cross should be flying.

## CCTV Renewal

In March 2005 the Trust's new CCTV system was successfully installed within the Heritage Centre.

This was only possible thanks to a generous £1,768 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund Awards for All. The CCTV system is more sophisticated than the earlier one, and provides a much higher level of security on the site. The importance of this was highlighted as recently as June, when a donation box within Athelstaneford Church was stolen.

## ABOUT THE TRUST

The Flag Trust is delighted to welcome David Johnston as a new Trustee. David, who lives in Fearnielaw House, the old Manse of Athelstaneford, is a former managing director of Radio Forth. A journalist by trade, he has extensive knowledge of marketing and promotional work, and acts as a public relations consultant to a number of groups and organisations.

The recent death of James Gilchrist, former Director at Scottish Life, who served as Trustee on the Flag Trust for many years, is noted with sadness.

The Scottish Flag Trust, which is a registered charity in Scotland (No:SC002778), was established in 1984 with the following objectives:-

- To maintain and upgrade the Heritage Centre and the Saltire Memorial at Athelstaneford
- To raise public awareness about the origins of Scotland's national flag.

For information about the Trust and its activities, or to request a copy of the School Information Pack, write to the Scottish Flag Trust at PO Box 84, Edinburgh.

Key contacts are:-  
David Williamson, Chairman (Tel:01368.863.239)  
Charlie Blair, Custodian (Tel:01620.880.297)  
Malcolm Duncan, Treasurer (Tel:01620.880.306)

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