



# **CRAIL MATTERS**

#### incorporating About Crail

W/C 13 March No 6 Free

## Anstruther Food Bank

There is a box in the Smoke Fired Wholefoods shop for donations to the Anstruther food bank. Crail Matters understands that the box fills up very slowly, and it would be good if we could put this right.

## **Corn Bunting**

Fife Council is looking to support the RSPB's Corn Bunting Recovery Project and involve communities and schoolchildren in this conservation initiative.



The corn bunting has declined by around 90% since the 1970s, and we are very fortunate in the East Neuk of Fife to have one of the few remaining strongholds in Scotland, along with Angus and

John Anderson

east Aberdeenshire. So it is a special bird in Fife and is a priority species within the Fife Local Biodiversity Action Plan, as well as its international Red Listed status.

Many farmers and more recently also golf courses undertake management for the corn bunting by sowing a bee and bunting seed mix. This includes



cereals and flowers and provides much needed food in the wintertime (winter starvation is one of the biggest challenges the birds face) as well as safe nesting space in the summer.

A proposal has been made by Fife Council that the northern section of the greenspace at the end of Bow Butts Road be used for this (see map) as it would be ideally situated adjacent to farmland. This is supported by the Community Council. If you have any views on this, please contact the Community Council on:

crailcommunitycouncil@gmail.com

#### **The Scouts**

The Scouts would like to thank everyone who came to support them at the Coffee morning on Saturday.

The Total raised was £593.63

## **Crail Parish Church**

Crail Parish Church invites all to a **Daffodil Coffee Morning** to mark the opening of the new Kirk Hall Garden. The Coffee morning will be held in the Kirk Hall on Saturday 18 March at 10.00am. Tea/coffee, home baking, raffle - and of course daffodils. Entry £2 and all are welcome.

## **Rats Crail Harbour**

At a recent Community Council meeting, problems related to rats at the Harbour were raised. Both Fife Council and the Harbour Master were surprised and unaware of there being any particular problem at the harbour as this was the first report they have received for some considerable time. Trap setting for vermin has proven ineffective around the harbour in the past since the readily available scraps of food between it and the nearby houses means that they aren't attracted to the poisoned bait. Should the situation worsen and rats do become a concern then the pest control officers will arrange any necessary steps to try to mitigate it.

#### Application to reroute the Fife Coastal Path and close the public car park at Kingsbarns

Readers of Crail Matters will already be aware of the public opposition to the proposal from International Management Group (UK) Ltd to remove public access rights from Kingsbarns Golf Links and surrounding area for the duration of the Ricoh Women's British Open from 31st July to 7th August. Fife Council has the power to exempt land from public access rights, following procedures laid out in the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 and the Land Reform (Scotland) Act 2003 (Modification) Order 2013. The order approving this was passed by the North East Fife Area Committee at its meeting on 22 February. This order is subject to a statutory period of consultation, and the order must be confirmed by Scottish Ministers before it can be issued.

Consultation is required with the owners of the land, Fife Access Forum and any other persons as the local authority sees fit. In this instance it was felt appropriate to consult with the local Community Council and Fife Coast and Countryside Trust. It is also required to post notices at all appropriate entrances to the area to be exempted informing the public and giving them a reasonable period to make comment or objections. Other authorities in Scotland have generally suggested 21 days to be an appropriate length of time and it was recommended that Fife Council also uses this period of time.

A consultation has been held with Kingsbarns Community Council (see Crail Community Council Notes) at which considerable opposition to the proposal was voiced. As of 11 March no notices have been posted at appropriate entrances informing the public of the proposal, and no other opportunities for public consultation have been made.

A separate application has been submitted to Fife Council's Assets, Transportation and Environment Service to close the public car park at Kingsbarns and Back Stile/Sea Road access to the shore from Sunday, 30th July (1800) to Monday, 7th August (1800). This includes all pedestrian and vehicle access, with the exception of emergency vehicles and Fife Council. No justification for this was offered in the documents submitted to the North East Fife Committee, although this is probably the most disruptive element of the proposal for both residents and visitors alike. A number of readers have asked how objections to this proposal can be lodged. In the absence of notices informing the public of the proposal, no formal route for objections has yet been published. Given this, the following appear to be the only avenues to follow to make objection in writing:

The relevant **Fife Councillors** (Elizabeth Riches [cllr.elizabeth.riches@fife.gov.uk], Donald MacGregor [cllr.donald.macgregor@fife.gov.uk], John Docherty [cllr.john.docherty@fife.gov.uk]).

North East Fife Area Committee Michelle McDermott (michelle.mcdermott@fife.gov.uk - 03451 555555 ext 442238)

Chief Executive Fife Council Steve Grimmond (03451 55 55 55 ext. 444143)

**Fife Coast and Countryside Trust** (ask.us@fifecountryside.co.uk ).

**North East Fife MSP** Willie Rennie (willie.rennie.msp@parliament.scot).

Regional MSPs: Murdo Fraser (murdo.fraser.msp@parliament.scot), Alex Rowley (alex.rowley.msp@parliament.scot), Liz Smith (liz.smith.msp@parliament.scot), Claire Baker (claire.baker.msp@parliament.scot), Dean Lockhart (dean.lockhart.msp@parliament.scot), Alexander Stewart (alexander.stewart.msp@parliament.scot), Mark Ruskell (mark.ruskell.msp@parliament.scot).

Local experience suggests there is great and justifiable cynicism about the adequacy of public consultation - but if it is not used, then there are no checks on government. If you feel concerned, then contact the above.



Martin Sloss

Picture taken from W Braes showing the Moon with full halo on Thursday 9th March.

## **Royal Voluntary Service GrandFest**



Royal Voluntary Service (RVS) is passionate about encouraging older people to stay active and continue pursuing their interests as a way of encouraging social interaction and maintaining self-esteem. To promote this message, RVS created GrandFest; a celebration of the skills that older people can pass on to younger generations.

Over the years they have brought together GrandMakers; people over the age of 60 who have a traditional skill they enjoy sharing with others. These GrandMakers then present Masterclasses to small groups at the GrandFest Events The main GrandFest event will be at Spitalfields in London on Sunday, 18 June. In addition, there will be a number of smaller events across the UK. With a combination of Masterclasses and entertainment these events are guaranteed to be fun packed.

RVS is looking for talented GrandMakers who have a particular skill and would enjoy sharing it with others to join the RVS existing family of GrandMakers. So if you know someone who would make a great GrandMaker, or would like to do it yourself then apply today. These are the kind of skills: Brewing, Butchery, Poetry, Story telling, Pottery, Upholstery, Perfume making, Bike maintenance, Map designing, Quilting, Knitting, Print making, Wickerwork, Weaving, Candle making, Calligraphy, Book binding, Cross stitching, Beading, Embroidery, Pickling, Furniture recycling, Tailoring, Pastry making, Millinery, Distilling & wine making, Gardening.

If you are, or if you know of, an older person with a skill to share then RVS would like to hear from you. There is no limit to the number of people that can apply but be quick, RVS must have all applications by 10 March. If you nominate someone, don't forget to get their permission first.

GrandMakers chosen for GrandFest in London will need to be over 70, but anyone over 60 (by 18 June 2017) can apply to take part in the regional events. For further information call 0845 608 0122.



## Down Your Way Crail Scouts

Things must have changed beyond recognition in the Scouting movement since this photograph was taken.

Can anyone identify where and when this could have been taken? Our estimate is early 1960s but would welcome any information from our readership.

Indeed, you may even feature in this snap!

#### **Letter from America**

#### Alex Fleming, Washington DC

Now and again in life you come across quite remarkable people—people who have done things or have endured things that could be the subject of a novel or a movie. One of the people my wife and I have visited from time to time on our trips to Scotland falls into that category. Some of you may have seen Zoe Polanska-Palmer's obituary in the Herald or Courier recently. I must say a few words about this amazing women's life.



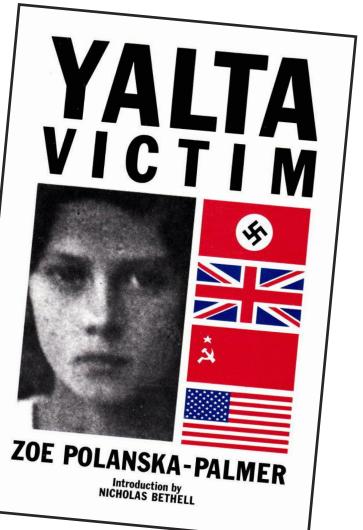
Zoe was Russian and born in the Odessa region of the then Soviet Union. Her parents' land was taken away under Stalin forced collectivization in the 1930s. Her father was initially imprisoned and her two brothers were sent off to the Gulag prison system.

The Nazi invasion of the Soviet Union in 1941 saw her village overrun and she witnessed the cruelty of war first hand, including the massacre of Jewish women and children. In 1943 she was taken away from her home by the Nazis, aged 16, and put in the Auschwitz concentration camp. There she was used for medical experimentation by the infamous Dr. Mengele. She was unable to have children as a result.

Later she was taken to the Dachau concentration camp where she was used as a farm labourer. During the confusion of an allied air raid she was able to escape and at the war's end found herself in the presumed safety of Austria. This was not the end of her story however because she was rounded up with Cossacks and White Russian (who had fought with the Nazis) and forcibly placed upon a train to be taken back to Russia as part of the Yalta agreement negotiated between Russia, USA and UK. This would have led to imprisonment or death for Zoe on arrival back in Russia. A kind British doctor pulled the then injured Zoe off the train.

Subsequently she married a Canadian servicemen, came to the UK, and settled in Broughty Ferry. Her adventures continued however and included an unexpected visit to her home by the KGB and, while travelling to Moscow as an interpreter for a Scottish trade mission, a brief reunion with her mother.

All of these events were described in a book Zoe wrote titled "The Yalta victim". It is an honest and gripping read. There are very few people left now who can attest to the horrors of the Second World War.



#### **Monday Club**

Monday, 13 March 2.15pm, Community Hall St Andrews Botanic Garden" – Kirsty Wilson

Monday, 20 March 2.15pm, Community Hall Our A.G.M. & "Stories" – Judith Hutton

## WILD CRAIL

Will Cresswell,

with Photographs by John Anderson



Every so often last Saturday the herring gulls started making a fuss and whenever I looked up there was a buzzard soaring over Crail. The gulls really don't like buzzards. I am sure they take quite a few chicks later



on the summer. At the moment the buzzards are just feeling springy and soaring over their territories (2-3 pairs include Crail within their territories) to advertise themselves and their ownership of the area. They also do a display flight at this time of year with exaggerated slow wing beats up and then rapid dives down in a saw-tooth progression across the sky. It's a common bird of prey display - simple and obvious. A sparrowhawk was doing the same over Danbury this week as well.

There have been quite a lot of geese flying over Crail well after dark this week. Heading out towards the Lothians (or back again). They have all been pink-footed geese, easily identifiable

because their honks are broken by squeaky bits that sound like their voices are breaking - "honk- onk wink – wink".

There is a carrion crow (or perhaps more than one) out at Fife Ness that regularly fishes in the rock pools. It strides around like a black egret, freezing and stabbing at tiny fish (or maybe shrimp) like a pro. Crows are among the smartest of birds. They are flexible generalists that make their living out of exploiting new situations and the misfortunes of others. Very like us in fact, which goes some way to explaining why, perhaps, they are mistrusted and often hated. Animals that might just be appraising you, as you judge them.





Another clever crow is the jackdaw. They are right up there among my favourite birds, I think because of their sheer exuberance and the many signs that they actually have free time and have fun during it. Students of animal behaviour are not supposed to anthropomorphise. Nevertheless, as an appreciator of natural history, and in my free time just as a plain bird watcher, I think imagining that animals are a bit like us can help in understanding why animals are doing things. Jackdaws, for example, spend a lot of time soaring around above Crail in a big group apparently just having fun. And why not? They are clever and they are intensely social, just like us (plus they can fly which must be so much better than being able to dance): a party is really

not that unlikely. If you listen to anthropologists talking about human parties, there are always good reasons why people might be there – forming alliances, finding mates, meeting new people etc. – yet whatever the ultimate reason, the motivating reason is because parties are fun. The jackdaws above Crail like to party and do it because it is fun, I am sure.

It's not just Crail, of course, wherever jackdaws are, they party – most spectacularly on a sea cliff or a Greek mountain monastery, where the updraughts and the backdrop make their aerial acrobatics even more spectacular. And they constantly talk to each other. Their constant chacking echoes around the buildings and



cliffs, varying in tone and pitch and intensity in a way that suggests to me that they are saying just a little bit more to each other than "whee – look at me fly". pair The that warm themselves on top of my Aga chimney, when they are not showing off, also

chat constantly away to each other, their contented chacks echoing down into the kitchen below to add a comforting ambience. Talk must be important to jackdaws too.

It can all turn nasty though, and our own experience in this helps me understand what might be happening when I observe one jackdaw being picked on, either being viciously chased by the others or excluded from their tumbling games in the evening. I suspect the victim may have stolen something, or got caught cheating, or just might not be the most popular jackdaw in town that day. Jackdaws are impossible for me to tell apart (and catching them to put colour-rings on is nearly impossible, they are just too smart) but they know each other and have long running associations, alliances and family groups that must turn sour every so often. I think the only reason that it's meerkats rather than jackdaws that are so popular as super social, smart animals like us is because actually, meerkats are not as smart (or as mobile) as jackdaws, and so can be manipulated into being TV stars. If we could truly get into the middle of jackdaw society and know them as individuals, it would be just as interesting and complex.

#### **Crail Choir**

Monday, 13 March

7.30pm, Town Hall

The choir welcomes all adults who enjoy singing. There is no requirement to read music. The evenings are relaxed, friendly and informal.

## Crail Festival 2017

Crail Festival 2017 will take place 19-29 July in a variety of venues in Crail. We have had to adjust the programme of events because Fife Council accepted a booking for the Community Hall on Friday 28 July and Saturday 29 July. Notwithstanding this frustrating administrative glitch this year's very varied programme should have popular appeal. Perennial favourites include the Street Market (already, virtually fully booked by eager stallholders), Art Exhibition, Festival Quiz and Putting- the Putting Green will be open 24 June- 20 August. Given good weather we should beat the amazing total of 4200 putting rounds in 2015!

The exciting range of children's activities will be unsurpassed the length and breadth of Scotland. Fun, education, creativity, imagination, teamwork, curiosity and friendship will be found indoors or outside for all who participate in such events as: Afternoon at the Movies- 'BFG' (Big Friendly Giant): Zoolab: Fossil Hunt: Crabbing: Sandcastle Competition: Story Telling: Putting Competition: Rock Pool Guddle: Bake-Off Competition: Workshops- Art; Ceramics; Krafty Kids; Fused Glass; Ceramics: Junior Golf Skills. Xboxes, Smartphones and iPods will not be required during the Festival!



Adults too have much to anticipate: Red Wine Productions with their take on Alan Bennett: Folk Club 30th Anniversary Concert: Outrageous comedy with Vladimir Mc-Tavish: hugely Horse popular McDonald: very talented Edwina Haves: the rau-

cous, entertaining Bevvy Sisters- and much more!

Follow the buildup on the Festival website www.crailfestival.com . For those of you who have discovered the joys of Social Media please look at Facebook.com/Crail Festival: Pinterest.com/Crail Festival: Twitter.com/Crail Festival.

There is certainly something for everyone!

#### **Planning Notices**

- Alter existing porch, installation of replacement windows and roof tiles - 11 West Green Crail Anstruther Fife KY10 3RD

- Listed Building Consent to alter existing porch, installation of replacement windows and roof tiles and internal alterations - 11 West Green Crail Anstruther Fife KY10 3RD

- Alterations and extension to outbuilding to form ancillary accommodation - Spalefield Lodge Spalefield Carnbee Anstruther Fife KY10 3LB



#### ROYAL BURGH OF CRAIL AND DISTRICT COMMUNITY COUNCIL NOTES

#### British Womens' Open Golf

Crail Community Council were represented at a meeting of Kingsbarns Community Council for their discussion of the proposed traffic and other changes associated with this competition. There was considerable opposition to the proposal voiced by Kingsbarns residents. Aside from the specific objections to the proposal (see last weeks Notes), it was noted that there were numerous objections to the original formation of a golf course at Kingsbarns and planning was eventually approved with very strict conditions mainly, the golf club are forbidden to use Back Stile for any kind of traffic. Should the planned closure go ahead, the organisers would need to submit a further planning application which would raise significant objections. Thus far no notices inviting comment have been posted.

#### **Traffic Management Sub-Committee**

This Committee has continued to meet with officials from Fife Council, and considerable progress has been made in identifying problem areas. This work is ongoing, and will be reported on in full at a later date.

#### **Crail Community Wetland Project**

At the last Community Council meeting (27 February) Professor Cresswell made a presentation on the proposed Community Wetland Project. Very strong support for the project was expressed. It was recognised that there would be financial implications in implementing the project, but it was agreed that such an initiative would be a very positive addition to the facilities Crail offered.

## Whale Off Kinghorn

People have been flocking to see the Humpback Whale breaching off Kinghorn, but have been warned not to make any attempts to approach or actively pursue it by Police Scotland. Lindsay Kerr, Police Scotland wildlife liaison officer, said: 'This is a fantastic opportunity for wildlife watchers and marine tourism but it is essential that the health and well-being of the animals is considered at all times. The Forth estuary is subject to large tidal changes and any disturbance to the visiting whale could cause significant risk of it becoming distressed and moving further into shallow water and then becoming stranded by a rapidly outgoing tide'.



Steve Johnstone

#### Puffins

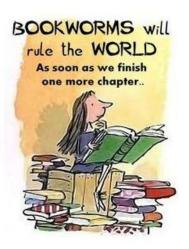
The Centre for Ecology & Hydrology are studying the diet of Puffins on the Isle of May to determine the type and size of prey that the birds are bringing in. Your photos can help them achieve this. If you've visited the Isle of May in recent years and taken photos of Puffins (and who hasn't!) with beaks full of food, then they need those photos!

Ideally the team would like one photo per bird carrying fish with the date on which it was taken (although the year would be sufficient). The photos will be examined to determine the prey species and relative size estimated which can then be compared with those that we have collected by catching adults. Once analysed they will be deleted and at no time published. Photos from any year will be useful. The photos can be uploaded to:

marknewell3 at http://www.flickr.com http://www.facebook.com/CEHpuffins/ https://www.dropbox.com/sh/rp6sanomcns4zw 5/AABfT8XIgM5X3gsxr3FvmLi9a?dl=0

#### ATTENTION ALL BOOKWORMS a message from Ruth Redfern

Good news: I've a date for next event, usual place usual times, details to follow, just think "April Fools Day" Meanwhile I want to turn your thoughts to an old favourite of mine *Greenmantle* – I've always reckoned it a jolly idea that several pals set off at different times from different places and agree to meet in two months' time in a distant capital. Although this story is 100 years out of date with the usual outrageous coincidences, the hero is based on a real person so Ruthie likes to think that all the places are real. Ruthie's usual holiday companions who lived out in Greece or were travelling out there were not at *all* keen on re-enacting this journey and meeting up en route in what is now Istanbul and definitely *not* in late December "Spoilsport meanies" thought Ruthie as she set off alone. (Her disastrous adventures were nearly as bad as Buchan's fictional ones - details on request).



This is not an accidental digression, just to explain our thoughts, "our" meaning Ruthie's Booksale Transport and Tombola Team. It's been suggested we could occasionally meet to talk books and digress and possibly do one of Ruthie's unspeakably UNFAIR quizzes or maybe the reading aloud idea which we never have time to do at booksales (the trouble with booksales is that book customers keep interrupting our Silliness Sessions). SO Ruthie has been looking for a local venue where followers could gather for several hours or those who don't like books could just buy a drink or nibble and keep a safe distance but would be welcome to join us once they realised being a Bookworm is not Boring. Herewith the para that inspired Ruthie:

"Whoever gets there first waits for the others.....we want a rendezvous where all kinds of odd folk assemble ... ..Sandy, you know Constantinople. You fix the meeting place" "The lane that runs from the bazaar to the ferry..... .....halfway down on the left hand side is a café kept by a Greek...Behind the café is a garden surrounded by high walls which were parts of the old theatre ...at the end of the garden is a shanty called the Garden House of Suliman the Red. Its been called in its time a dancing hall and a gambling den ...not a place for respectable people but the ends of the earth converge there and no questions asked"

Several chapters and thousands of miles later, one of the parties arrives at the cafe; to be told there's dancing next day by the *compagnie des heures roses* I can't digress into any more plot, as haven't given Editorial team notice I need 270 A4 pages small font, but the book's still in print We can't start a group calling ourselves the Companions of the Rosy Hours nor even the Ruthie Hours as we are not actually a group and only one or two of us do dancing (NOT that we plan to dance in confined spaces) but if you'd like to join us sometime to offer help with next booksale or just chip in with ideas I think I've found a suitable venue. Amended *Greenmantle* instructions for the cognoscenti: The sloping lane that runs from the bus stop to the harbour. At top of the hill is a hotel. Alas there is neither garden nor dancing hall and certainly no gambling den but it **IS** a place for respectable people and like all other establishments here occasionally has customers from "ends of earth" (a couple staying in Pittenweem had called in for a drink on the weekend the buses were diverted).

It'd be lovely to have book gatherings that are NOT exactly book clubs. We don't want to alarm the manager of the Respectable Establishment at this early stage, he might PANIC so if you happen see me in there (I've been doing a little undercover advance publicity for the next booksale but not actually been throw out yet) please do NOT mention books of any sort; younger Companions of the Ruthie Hours most welcome, don't start talking about CAKES, this in in-joke for Buckeridge or Brent-Dyer fans

Best NOT to mention my Transport Fleet, I did have wild ideas of hijacking the Stockwells Juggernaut but sadly I can't drive. I toyed with the idea of doing a spot of cattle rustling and having a team of pack animals to drag book crates through Marketgate but have always been scared of anything larger than me with horns or hooves in fact I'm not 100% comfortable round sheep after being chased by a huge flock along the Ridgeway. Even my young nephew's assertive bunny rabbit had to be given a wide berth. Then just as hope was fading, I spotted a lovely article (*Economist 18 Feb*) on a new device called a "Gita" which looks like a sort of cylindrical book crate and navigates itself down the road. "The plan is" They said "ultimately a single person will be able to herd a flock of up to 100 of them online" This is EXACTLY what I need for my next booksale!

#### **Folk Club**

Our next guest night is on Thursday 16th March 8pm (Doors open 7.30pm) BYOB (NB. no spirits please). Our guest is Wizz Jones – Acoustic Guitarist, Singer-Songwriter and Bluesman!



For one night only we are in the Kirk Hall, Marketgate South, Crail which is no more than 150 yards from our normal venue

Originally inspired by seeing Big Bill Broonzy and Ramblin' Jack Elliot, Wizz learnt his guitar licks from the likes of Davy Graham and Long John Baldry whilst playing in the coffee bars of London's Soho in the late 1950's.

He then followed the time-honoured buskers' trail from the streets of Paris to the markets of Marrakech during the early 1960's and returned to Britain with a unique acoustic guitar style, an eclectic repertoire and "right hand worthy of Broonzy"!

Clapton, Keith Richards and the late John Renbourn have all named him as an important early influence and Bruce Springsteen opened his Berlin concert in May 2012 with Wizz's song "When I Leave Berlin".

After more than 50 years "on the road" Wizz shows no signs of slowing down and continues to tour on the Acoustic Folk and Blues circuit.

## World Day of Prayer 2017

Thank you to all who participated or attended the World Day of Prayer Service on Friday 3rd March in Holy Trinity Church. The offering collected £200 which will be donated to support Christian Societies in the Philippines.



An eye on our world

My friends in Kingsbarns are worried. Apparently the Golf Course wants to make changes to access to the roads and paths to the beach 'in the interest of security and safety'. It's for some golf competition. Is this competition for learners? It must be if the players are worse than the usual players and are likely to hit balls onto the coastal path and beach endangering everyone. Its good to see Kingsbarns Golf Club supporting novice talent. Or is it about controlling entrance to charge? If so, what are Fife Council doing helping a commercial operation make money out of a public facility especially during the summer holiday season? Anyway, I don't think I'll bother looking at it if they are so unsafe.

The Guild meet on Thursday 16 th March in the Kirk Hall at 2.15pm when Karen Price will be speaking about the Macular Society. All welcome.

The Guild

Now the Library is closed, what's happening to the area it was in? My talkative friends in Glenrothes haven't told me anything. Do you know? I thought this building was public property, but it seems to be managed in a very secretive way. I wonder why? Has some deal been made, but they are afraid to tell us until its finalised for fear of objections? Or maybe they are just inefficient. We've had experience of both I suppose.

You may recall that my good friend from Arbroath sent me a photograph of some of his friends helping themselves to snacks from local stores: well, last night he told me that every day, there is a terrier called Jake patrolling the harbour area who, on command of the word 'cheese', sings and it is so dreadful that it scares off seagulls! I've never heard the like of this before but I am assured that it was on the BBC so it must be true. I suppose I can expect some new arrivals seeking sanctuary in Crail. How will my readership distinguish me from these imposters?

Material for inclusion in Crail Matters should be sent to crailmatters@gmail.com and received on Friday midday before publication. We reserve the right to edit copy for length and style. Submission does not guarantee inclusion.

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