

Listen Up!

While researching the history of the local area, Diana Maxwell stumbled upon a fascinating find: that the First World War Admiralty Experimental Establishment Station, HMS Tarlair, was at Hawkcraig in Aberdour. And where had the person in charge of the base, Captain Cyril P Ryan, lived? In Diana's own house, Hawkcraig Cottage.

Her book about the base – *Listen Up!* – tells the story not only of the development of technology, but also of the characters and personalities involved.

Other than some shattered concrete hut bases and the ruins of an old pier, nothing now remains of HMS Tarlair, yet during its short period of operation, around 4,000 officers and men worked and trained here – among them many famous scientists and musicians – and major technological advances were achieved.

The Hawkcraig Trail introduces you to the site of the base; you can walk in the footsteps of those who lived and worked here. Why not start your walk around the Trail at the Forth View Hotel, home to many of the ship's company during the war; look along the beach to where seaplanes were launched; walk past Captain Ryan's cottage; up the 'Heath Robinson steps' to the top of the point; gaze out to Inchcolm island, which was connected to HMS Tarlair via photophone (a beam of light modulated by speech); then walk down the hill, imagining the line of huts, glass viewing tower, submarines and drifters out in the bay, and the hustle and bustle of naval and civilian scientists working together to try to defeat the U-boat threat.



About the Hawkcraig Trail

This leaflet will guide you around what is left of HMS Tarlair, the Navy's main hydrophone and research training base during the First World War.

Before the outbreak of war, Aberdour was best known as a tourist destination, yet it became home to a research establishment that played a significant part in Britain's war at sea. What impact must the base have had on the local area and population, most of whom would never have seen a submarine or seaplane? What must they have thought as they witnessed the trials of new technologies on their doorstep? Find out in *Listen Up!*, local historian Diana Maxwell's book about the base, and let this leaflet guide you around a piece of British naval history. All you need is suitable footwear and a good imagination!

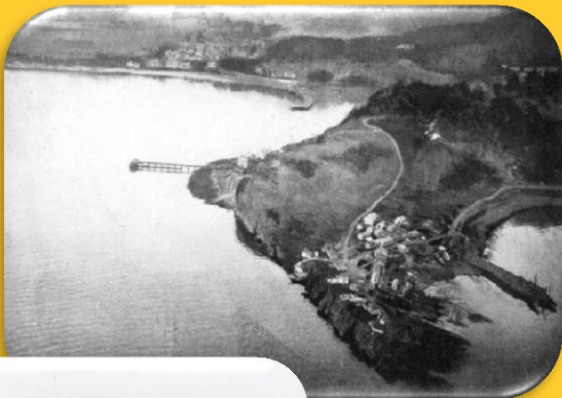
Special thanks go to Aberdour Cultural Association ~ Aberdour Community Council ~ Lewis Banks ~ Alison Chapman ~ Fife Council ~ Jane Halleran ~ Pat Heneghan ~ Heritage Lottery Fund ~ Diana Maxwell ~ Liz Short



Aberdour is on the A921, 4 miles east of M90 J1.
Aberdour station is on the East Coast line.
There is free parking at the railway station.



THE HAWKCRAIG TRAIL



HMS Tarlair – Hawkcraig Admiralty Experimental Establishment Station



Ships' carpenters, including William and George Lyon and Dougie McLauchlan – some of their relatives still live in Aberdour

Sports day with the locals



The Major tells a tale



Huts between the Point and the current Boathouse with ships and submarines in the background



Men at work in the machinery workshop and a listening class under instruction



There were at least 16 huts with different functions



A 1917 view of the base



Captain Ryan at Hawkcraig Cottage, where Diana Maxwell now lives



Remote controlled boat NYKR (No Yachting Knowledge Required) and seaplane



Seaplanes were launched from under the cliffs by the Forth View Hotel

King George V visited the base in 1916, viewing experiments from this specially made glass tower



Ryan's white Cairn terrier was once shot and buried by a gamekeeper, but dug himself out and returned to Hawkcraig!