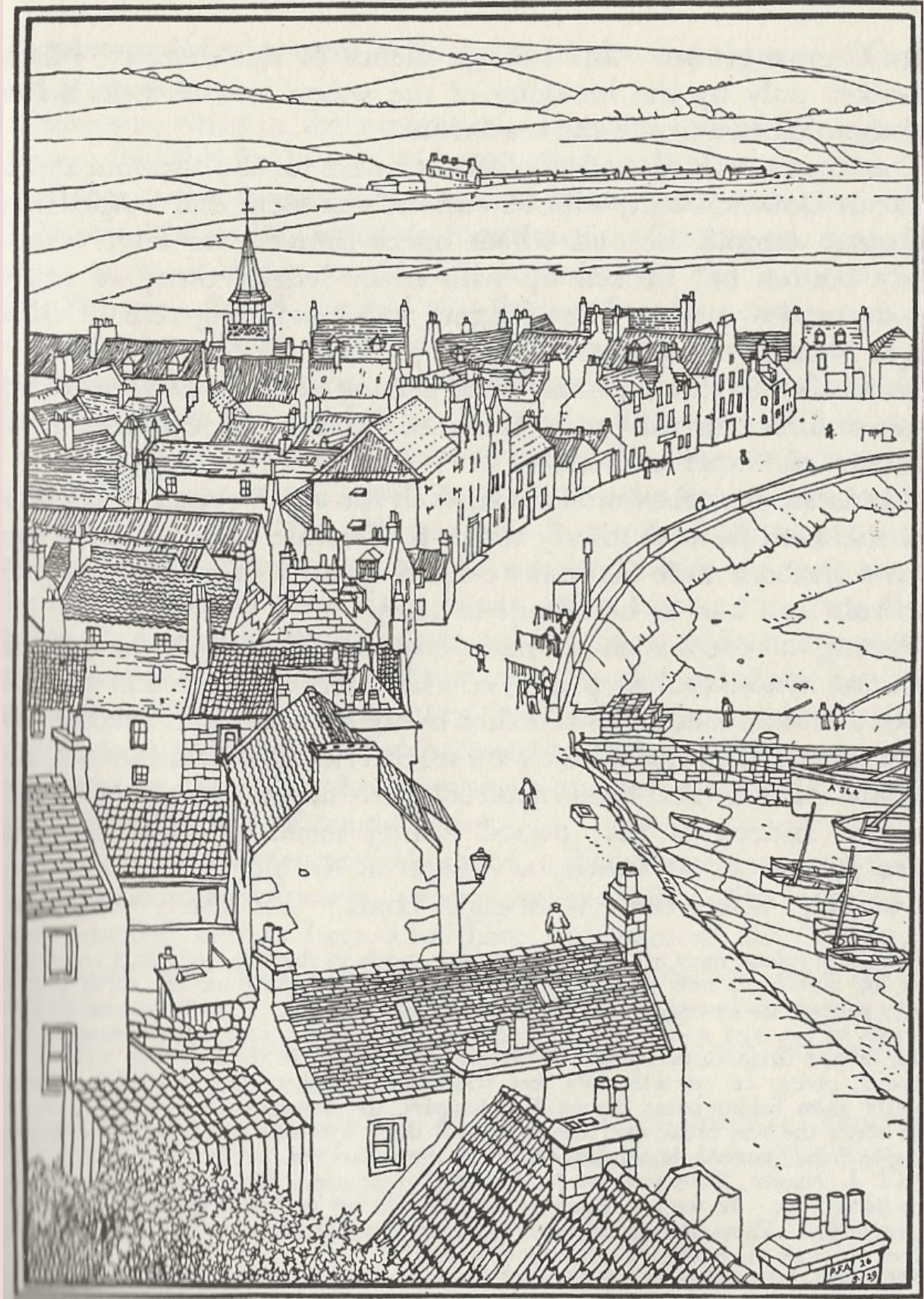


# STANEHYVE

·TOLBOOTH TIMES·





## Editorial

I am sure you will be looking forward to more normal Christmas and New Year celebrations, after the trials and tribulations of the last two and a half years. Thankfully, we now seem to be returning to more normal times and can put these strange times behind us. Visitor numbers to the Tolbooth Museum are much improved, and we can all look forward to a better year in 2023. It will be busy again, and of course, we have a Coronation on 6<sup>th</sup> May to look forward to.

Best wishes to all for a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

*Gordon Ritchie* MVO DL

Editor



Front cover image—Drawing by Peter Anson of Stonehaven Harbour. Taken from the Bervie Braes in May 1929

If you have any stories or information you think could be included in future editions, please get in touch with either [lizmkritchie@gmail.com](mailto:lizmkritchie@gmail.com) or [gritchie626@gmail.com](mailto:gritchie626@gmail.com)

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## MUSEUM SNIPPETS

### Committee Changes

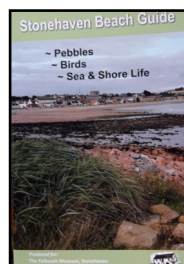
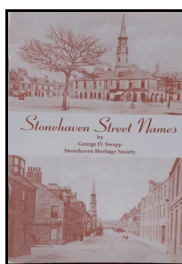
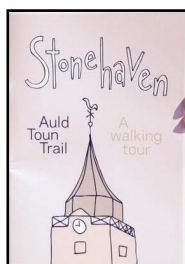
At the recent Stonehaven Tolbooth Association AGM, on 28th September, it was announced that due to health issues, museum legend Jim Bruce would be standing down as a Trustee. We are all very grateful to Jim for his hard work in re-opening the Museum after it was closed by the Council, for donating many of his own personal items especially with farming connections, and of course, for attending as a volunteer on a very regular basis, all ensuring that many visitors could enjoy the delights of our Museum. We wish him well and hope we can see him again soon.

It was then proposed and approved at the AGM, that volunteer Lindsay Petrie Richardson be elected as a new Trustee to replace Mr. Bruce on the Committee. Lindsay has been volunteering at the museum for several months and has a keen interest in local history. As well as being an Assistant Custodian at Dunnottar Castle she is also studying for her Phd in History at Aberdeen University.

### Museum Shop

In recent months, we have been trying to source local suppliers for the Museum Shop. These plus other items in the shop would make great small Christmas gifts or stocking fillers.

- Fridge magnets and ceramic mugs of the Tolbooth—designed by @inkbottledesigns
- Jewellery supplied by Lorna Collie and made using seaglass, pebbles or shells found on Stonehaven Beach
- Sea salt in the distinctive war memorial tins from the recently formed Stonehaven Sea Salt Company.
- The museum also has a wonderful selection of books on Stonehaven local history, Street Names, Shops of the past, Stonehaven Beach Guide and many others.





## MUSEUM SNIPPETS

### Footfall for the last few months

In September the museum was still operating a 4 day week and had 4 visits from the tour company Globus. The museum was however closed on 9th and 19th September following the death of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. October saw the museum revert to weekend opening only—except for the Tattie holidays. Globus Tours had their final visit of the year and both the Elphinstone Institute and Albyn School came for private tours. November saw 1 more private tour by a group from Aberdeen but due to bad weather the museum was closed on the 19th and 20th November.

	Museum	Globus	Total	Days open	Average daily footfall
September	1307	92	1399	15	93
October	905	30	935	15	62
November	284	0	284	7	41
December					

	2022	2021	2020	2019	2018
September	1399	1048	83	3728	2288
October	935	426	88	1598	1395
November	284	219	178	660	664
December					



## The Tolbooth Museum Photograph Collection

The Museum Photograph Collection was taken over from Stonehaven Heritage Society and was originally started by me in 1988 when the first volume of "Stonehaven of Old" was published. Over recent years, the collection has been digitised and new prints and captions prepared, and you may have seen the new displays in the Museum. There is more work to do in order that we can refresh the Photo archive on our website and make the collection available to all. If you have an interest in the history of Stonehaven and old photographs and computer skills, I shall be pleased to hear from you. GR



**Aerial view taken in September 1931 showing a quiet harbour with few boats. The Gasworks are prominent as is the Sawmill with Dawson's Buildings under the Bervie Braes. Beside the Tolbooth, the Backies are being reclaimed from the sea.**



## STONEHAVEN HARBOUR By Gordon Ritchie

There has probably been a harbour or haven at Stonehaven since Dunnottar Castle was first occupied. Originally a small natural bay to the south of the River Carron, sheltered on the south east by Downie Point and protected by a large sandstone rock, Craig-ma Cair, which gave the haven its name. The first man made harbour would have been erected about 1600 ,when the Tolbooth was built , but the pier was later demolished in a storm. A north quay was erected in 1688. In 1715 ,there were 5 boats. Cod, ling, haddock ,whiting and flounders were caught, besides crabs and lobsters. In 1812, Robert Stevenson reported on what could be done to improve the harbour including removing the rock and erection of a new South pier. The sum of £8000 was borrowed in 1826 to start this work to create a harbour of 5 acres with double basins. Herring fishing began in 1814 and by 1855 55 herring boats landed at Stonehaven, rising to 100 to 200 boats by 1870. The first breakwater was finished in 1909, but the peak of the herring trade was past by then. The advent of steam trawlers, too large for the harbour meant that by the early 20<sup>th</sup> Century, fishing was much reduced. By 1929 ,when there were still 47 boats, the 78 fishermen were all either middle aged or elderly. Many fishers migrated to Torry in Aberdeen ,to work on trawlers. (Craig, Christie and Masson, all well known Torry names, originated in Stonehaven). In 1948,there were still 48 boats and 68 fishermen.

In 1929, Stonehaven was visited by Peter Anson, one of the finest marine artists of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, as part of his research into the fishing ports of the east of Scotland. He found no boys or lads could be persuaded to go to sea, when the fishing had so little to offer them. He was told "It's because they will na' work and prefer to live on the dole: they are a different breed to their forefathers".

He summarises his description of Stonehaven as follows:\_ "Whatever may be the cause, the fishermen's quarter of Stonehaven gives one the impression of tragic decay".

Peter Anson visited Stonehaven on 16th May 1929 when he made the superb drawing of the Harbour from the Bervie Braes. (see front cover) The steeple of the Clock Tower is prominent, with the Ship Inn, Marine Hotel and the adjacent Granary. Fishermen can be seen working on their lines. Over the Bay, can be seen the cottages at Cowie.

The earliest fisher names recorded, between 1672 and 1698, are Ritchie, Bridgefoord, Gowan, Christie, Watson, Masson and Law. Others in 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries, are Brown, Leiper, Craig, Brebner, Blair, Lees and Stephen. At the height of the herring boom, around 1881 ,when there were 211 fishers, names were Lees, Adam, Christie, Leiper, Wood and Craig.



## STONEHAVEN HARBOUR By Gordon Ritchie (cont'd)

There have been interesting variations of the town name over the centuries:-

- 1506 Stanhiffe
- 1587 Stanehyve
- 1641 Stone-hyve
- 1703 Stonhive
- 1774 Stonehaven.

Further reading on the Harbour can be found in these books:-

- Fishing Boats and Fisher Folk on the East Coast of Scotland by Peter Anson. JM Dent & Sons 1930
- Highways and Byways Round Stonehaven by Archibald Watt. Stonehaven Heritage Society 1992
- Fishing Communities of Angus and the Mearns by David Adams. Pinkfoot Press 2013.



**A classic view of the Harbour around 1900, full of fishing boats. The Outer Breakwater had not yet been built.**



## The Mearns Leader by Gordon Ritchie

I have reported previously that the Museum holds a collection of bound volumes of the Mearns Leader dating from 1930 to 1978 originally obtained by the Heritage Society when the local Leader office in Ann Street was closed. These are not on display but if anyone wishes to see a volume for research purposes, please let me know.

I have been looking over the 1952 volume, 70 years ago, and attach copies of interesting articles on the formation of Stonehaven and District Motor Club and the first TVs in Stonehaven. Having been a member and official of the Motor Club for many years, I was pleased to see that Dr Scott was a prime mover with the Club as he was still involved when I first joined. Having just celebrated it's 70th anniversary, it is also fitting that 2022 saw the Club organising its biggest ever event, the Grampian Forest Rally last August, a round of the British Rally Championship.

In 1952, television was still in its infancy and fascinating to see that 2 local men were attempting to bring TV to the town, although the transmitter was some distance away.

December 12, 1952.

## MOTOR CLUB FORMED

AT a well-attended meeting in the Station Hotel, Stonehaven, on Friday last it was decided to form a motor and motor cycling club to be known as the Stonehaven and District Motor Club. Eligible for membership are motorists, motor cyclists and enthusiasts for motor sport who do not possess vehicles and already about fifty have intimated their intention of joining.

Dr. I. Murray Scott presided at the meeting and discussion took place regarding the activities of the club. It was agreed broadly that the programme would include organised excursions to motor sporting events in Scotland; informal competitive events; film shows, etc.

Special consideration is to be given to the organisation of an event, or events, to coincide with the local Coronation celebrations. The question of affiliation with the governing bodies of motor sport was deferred until the club was established.

The following office-bearers were appointed with power to co-opt a further two committee members:— President, Dr. I. Murray Scott; Vice-President, Mr C. W. George; Secretary and Treasurer, Mr W. J. McPherson; Committee members, Mr W. King and Mr J. Troup.

It is anticipated that the first event, a film show dealing with motor sport, will be held in the near future.



## The Mearns Leader by Gordon Ritchie (cont'd)

### T.V. at Stonehaven

TWO local business men, Mr W. F. Blacklaws and Mr R. W. A. Mitchell, have installed television and have received initial television signals from the Kirk o' Shotts transmitter near Glasgow. On Friday morning, Mr Blacklaws and Mr Mitchell fitted up the set at the latter's premises on Robert Street, to see if it could pick up pictures of the Royal Funeral, which were relayed throughout Scotland.

Mr Blacklaws, when interviewed, said that the erection of the T.V. was only an experiment, and it wouldn't be known whether it would be successful or not until Kirk o' Shotts goes on to full power.

"At the moment we do not know when that will be," he added. "We did receive signals and faint pictures," he continued, "but all we could make out of the Royal Funeral was the vague outline of Windsor Chapel."

The aerial, which was built by themselves, is not one of the regular H type, for they are no use outside an area of sixty miles from the transmitter. The type of aerial they have installed is a four-element Multirod.

When asked if he would receive pictures when Kirk o' Shotts goes on to full power, he said that they had made some improvements, but it is a case of "you live and learn". "There is considerable interference," he warned. "Motor vehicles create a great deal of interference, but this can be remedied quite simply by fitting a suppressor on the vehicle."

Finally, on the question of T.V. prospects for Stonehaven, Mr Blacklaws said that it was in the balance. "There's really no way of knowing whether it will be successful in Stonehaven or not. You can get television on one side of a road and yet not on the other," he concluded.



**Stonehaven Tolbooth Association**  
**Report on AGM 28 September 2022**

Chair Cressida Coates welcomed 20 members to the Annual General Meeting of Stonehaven Tolbooth Association held in the Community Centre on 28 September 2022 and was pleased to report that we had come through the other side of the Virus and thanked all who had ensured the survival of the Museum and welcomed new volunteers. 2022 had seen a scaled down summer season mainly open 4 days from Friday to Monday with improved footfall. Outside events in the Courtyard had again been successful with a variety of themes. More training is planned for volunteers. Cressida closed by hoping that we can build on our knowledge and strengths to enhance the visitor experience and thanked all for their hard work and enthusiasm.

Treasurer Dennis Collie submitted Accounts to 31 March 2022 which showed a restricted loss but with a healthy bank balance. Gordon Ritchie reported on the Capital Asset Transfer application to the Council to take over the Tolbooth building and which had been making slow progress but with a further meeting planned for November. STA had instructed a survey on the building which disclosed a number of matters requiring attention but we had been advised that the Council had now located a large sum earmarked for the Tolbooth and would be pressing for repairs to be dealt with as soon as possible.

3 Trustees were re-elected and Lindsay Petrie Richardson appointed to replace Jim Bruce. The present Trustees are Ian Balgowan, Cressida Coates, Louise Coates, Dennis Collie, Douglas Cusine, Graham McIntosh MBE, Andrew Newton, Lindsay Petrie Richardson, Gordon Ritchie MVO DL, Liz Ritchie, Mary Sutcliffe and Clare Thomas.



## Stonehaven Tolbooth Association

### Financial Summary for financial Year Ended 31st March 2022

Income	Total Amount	Previous Year
Bank Interest	212	440
Funding-Aberdeenshire Council	2550	0
Awards, sponsors, donations	1688	12303
Minor donations etc	2071	337
Gross sales	2289	4168
E card sales/donations	781	497
Events/hires	518	0
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>	<b>10108</b>	<b>17745</b>

Expenditure	Total Amount	Previous Year
Admin/misc expenses	154	886
Website	56	56
Publicity/Advertising	3682	0
Volunteer uniforms	333	0
Donations/grants	100	0
Display material/furniture	2195	3997
Exhibits/artefacts	61	0
Stock for shop sales	2359	2020
Sales P&P	0	59
Insurance ,H&S etc	467	467
Legal/architectural	900	0
Cost of events	256	0
Utilities/maintenance	200	0
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>10763</b>	<b>7486</b>
<b>ANNUAL TRADING (LOSS)/PROFIT</b>	<b>(655)</b>	<b>10259</b>



## Stonehaven Tolbooth Association

### Financial Summary for financial Year Ended 31st March 2022 cont'd

Balances summary	Total
Cash and bank at beginning of year	114382
Trading loss for the year	(655)
Cash and bank at end of year	113727

*Dennis Collie,* Treasurer 28/9/22



*Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to you all*

Image courtesy of Stonehaven Seafood Bothy