

STANEHYVE

·TOLBOOTH TIMES·



Stonehaven Harbour on a calm day probably around 1880/1890. The Tolbooth is prominent top centre and you can see the breakwater on the middle pier. There are a number of small fishing boats. In the Inner Harbour can be seen the ship 'Mary Jane'.



Editorial

We seem to have now returned to more normal times after the disruption of Covid and the improving visitor numbers for the Tolbooth Museum reflect that situation. As always, we are most grateful to the volunteers who ensured that the Museum was open, and to provide a valuable service for visitors. At our AGM last month, our Chair Cressida Coates made yet another plea for more volunteers. If you have spare time ,even only one afternoon per month, or know of someone who may be interested, Cressida would be delighted to hear from you.

Gordon Ritchie MVO DL

Editor



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

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MUSEUM SNIPPETS

AGM 27 September 2023

There was a good turnout on a wild and windy night for this year's AGM. Our Chair Cressida Coates gave a comprehensive report on the operation of the Museum over the past year and in particular thanked all Trustees and Volunteers for all their hard work to keep the Museum open and continue to be interesting for visitors. Our Treasurer Dennis Collie gave figures for the number of visitors which had greatly improved this year, together with the amount of donations and shop sales. The accounts to 31 March 2023 were also very healthy. See full Chair report and Treasurer report on pages 6–10.

QUIZ NIGHT 27TH OCTOBER 2023

Following on from the success of the quiz night last year, Mary Sutcliffe and Clare Thomas are again organising what we are sure will be an other fun event. Quiz Master is Steve Peacock who will no doubt have more fiendishly difficult questions to tax our brains. Each round will be on a different subject—history, music, TV, etc.—and teams (of 4 to 6) will have the opportunity to use their joker on any round to get double points, Held upstairs in the British Legion, there will be nibbles on each table and raffle tickets for sale. Quiz tickets are available from the museum at weekends 12.30pm–3.30pm or at the door on the night (if any still available). We do hope you will join us for what should be a fun evening.

WINTER HOURS

After a busy summer season—see visitor statistics on page 4—we are now reverting to our winter schedule. We are now open only at weekends and from the slightly earlier time of 12.30pm to 3.30pm. We will however also be open for Fridays and Mondays during the school 'tattie' holidays.

CHRISTMAS GIFTS

Is it too soon to think about Christmas gifts? Not if you have friends who live overseas. Final posting dates for overseas parcels always roll round unexpectedly quickly. Remember that in the museum shop , we have some lovely gifts and souvenirs of Stonehaven—from books on Stonehaven to tea towels to local sea salt to fridge magnets to sea glass jewellery A bit of nostalgia for Stoney loons and quines now living overseas?



MUSEUM SNIPPETS

Footfall for the last few months

The summer months saw us using the courtyard again with various outdoor events such as demonstrations of lace making, corn dolly making, net making, Dinky toy repair. We also had entertainment from a magician, singer and storyteller and a very busy day at the Harbour Festival in August when we had a mackerel smoking demonstration.

School visits tend to be just before the summer holidays but other groups have continued to visit the museum in the summer. Various Women's Institute groups came along, and we saw visits from a local heritage group, a Banchory church and Pillar Kincardine . We also had a successful Aberdeenshire Open Doors weekend in August.

The clock tower re-opened in June after being closed for repair for a few years. Unfortunately it had to close again in early August with door lock issues. It will be re-opening in October. For the short period it was open over the summer it saw 1099 visitors.

Numbers for the quarter show 9400 visitors compared with 6782 last year and 3820 the year before and we had a wonderful busy spell in August when numbers were over 100 each day.

2023/24	Museum	Globus	Total	Days open	Average daily footfall
July	2633	276	2909	27	108
August	3889	242	4131	26	159
September	2199	161	2360	26	91
TOTALS	8721	679	9400	79	119

	2022/23	2021/22	2020/21	2019/20	2018/19
July	2123	638	78	3912	3309
August	3260	2134	50	5718	3926
September	1399	1048	83	3728	2288
TOTALS	6782	3820	211	13358	9523



The 'Mary Jane' by Gordon Ritchie

Our cover photo is a well known image of Stonehaven Harbour dating probably from around 1880 to 1890.. This is before the first outer breakwater was built and shows around 30 fishing boats. Prominent in the inner Harbour is a large two-masted schooner the 'Mary Jane', a coal boat based in Stonehaven. It was captained by David Duncan, whose wife, Agnes Duncan, was daughter of Alexander Morgan ,who owned a number of properties in the Harbour area, including the Britannia Tavern at 7 Shorehead and the row of houses at 21 to 24 Shorehead, the last houses at the south end, where there was once a cooperage.. The 'Mary Jane' sailed between Sunderland and Methil in Fife, bringing coal to Stonehaven, where it was stored in the sheds adjacent to 14 Shorehead, where the new Sea Cadets HQ is today. Mrs. Agnes Duncan ran a business selling coal to the Town and surrounding area.

Alexander Morgan had 4 of a family, Agnes who married David Duncan, Margaret who married James Wood, Helenor who married George Wood , and a son who married Ann Pithie, and who also took over the Britannia Tavern from his father.

The painting of the 'Mary Jane' probably dates from around 1900,when the ship sadly foundered off Girdleness at Aberdeen. Unfortunately I have no further information on the loss of the 'Mary Jane'.



There are still descendants of Alexander Morgan around today. Duncan Begg, formerly of Gallaton Farm is a great grandson, his late mother Mary Begg being daughter of Alexander Morgan Duncan.



STONEHAVEN TOLBOOTH ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023
CHAIR'S REPORT

At this time it is customary for the Chair to report on the past year 2022/2023 the achievements, frustrations and what we hope to achieve, realistically in the next year. I say realistically, as when, as a group, we need to have conversations with Aberdeenshire Council this can prove extremely challenging and indeed has done this last year but enough about that at this time.

I would like to start in the usual tradition of welcoming new volunteers to the wearing of the famous 'red fleece' and hope they will find their time with us enjoyable and rewarding. At this point a special mention goes to Mr Jim Bruce who back in April stepped down as a volunteer. I think we all agree that he will be greatly missed. We thank him for sharing his knowledge and of course all the donations he has given to the Museum. We wish him well.

To all the volunteers, new and seasoned alike a big thank you for your continued support because of your commitment we were able to operate our summer opening times of six afternoons throughout these months. I'm not saying it hasn't been without it's challenges however, we were able to keep it open. Our footfall numbers have continued to rise through this time. We are now of course heading into our winter hours which as you know are Saturday and Sunday's with some additional days in the October holidays. The times of opening will revert to 1230 - 1530.

We have during the year been able to host our Events program, which again has proved popular with visitors. Events we hosted included-

- Mackerel Smoking
- Demonstration of Net making and repair
- Art of renovating Dinky toys
- Corn Dolly Making
- Lace making
- Magician, storyteller and singer

Globus Tours made a welcome return during the past summer months and the comments left in the visitor book were very complementary indeed. Last visit for the season by Globus is Sunday 1st October 2023.



STONEHAVEN TOLBOOTH ASSOCIATION

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023

CHAIR'S REPORT

- We had a very good day at the recent Stonehaven Harbour Day.
 - Most recently we opened our doors and took part in Aberdeenshire Open Doors open days weekend. Thank you to the volunteers who took part in this.
 - The famous Quiz night is back and is to be held on Friday 27th October 2023 at British Legion Stonehaven. The hard work which is undertaken by Claire and Mary in organising these events is much appreciated. Thanks also to the organisations, individuals who give up their time to make these events happen.
 - We had our surprise visit from Visit Scotland, where we retained our 3 star status. They offered some suggestions for improvement which we will endeavour to undertake.
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- * **Stanehyve Tolbooth Times** publication is still very popular indeed. Thanks as always to Gordon and Liz for producing this.
 - * **Shop**—the shop is holding it's own and sales of locally produced goods has gone down very well such as Stonehaven Sea Salt and jewellery produced using sea glass
 - * **Curator**—we are also currently in the process of completing a full inventory of the artefacts in the museum. Once this is completed we will have digital and a paper copy for all to have access to when they are on duty.
 - * **Clock Tower**— has had it's own trials and tribulations. Once we have a set of keys for the new lock we will be able to open the clock tower when we open the Museum.
 - * **Social media**—to those who maintain all of our 'social media' platforms thank you for keeping us current.

As you will all be aware the future of the Tolbooth Museum has always been in the forefront of our minds. How do we secure that future? Stonehaven Tolbooth Association has made an application for a Community Asset Transfer for the building. You can imagine that the local authority have not made the process easy by any means. There has been a lot of hard work involved. We have provided the local authority with all the information they required, jumped through all the hoops and they (Aberdeenshire Council) have concluded that we (which includes all of us) are a responsible body and have opened asset transfer discussions with us. We will of course keep you all informed of the progress of this application.



STONEHAVEN TOLBOOTH ASSOCIATION
ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD 27TH SEPTEMBER 2023
CHAIR'S REPORT

We have nurtured good relations with the new lease holder of the Tolbooth Restaurant. He is very supportive of us, so long may that continue.

So, what is next, what are we hoping for?-

- Build and improve on existing practices.
- Gain ideas as to what we as 'volunteers' would like to have more knowledge on
- Improve communications
- Volunteers to share any ideas they have for improving the visitor experience
- Look at ways we can entice more 'volunteers' to join us in wearing the 'red fleece'

Finally, I would like to take this opportunity to voice my sincere thanks to each and every one for their continued valued support and commitment, to the Tolbooth Museum and Clock Tower.

To my fellow Stonehaven Tolbooth Trustees my grateful thanks for all the work they undertake.

Thank you.

Cressida Coates

Cressida Coates—Chair



STONEHAVEN TOLBOOTH ASSOCIATION
ACCOUNTS SUMMARY FOR FINANCIAL YEAR ENDING
31ST MARCH 2023

The treasurer's report normally shows figures for the financial year in question, and those for the previous year for comparison. But because of the recent interruptions caused by Covid, the previous year is not totally meaningful, and so I instead start by looking at just the operational figures, ie the figures from the daily sheets; which exclude for example on-line sales.

Shown in the first table are those for the financial year 2022/23, for the 4 preceding years, and for Apr 1-Sept 25 for the current year. Hopefully this serves to indicate how well we are recovering from the impact of Covid, and gives us some sort of target going forward.

Pre-Covid we were nearing 28,000 footfall per annum, and for 2022/23 we achieved slightly more than half of that, rising from almost zero in 2020/21. The current year shows that by end-Sept we are already approaching the full yearly total footfall for the previous year, and have already exceeded the income figure.

Another interesting feature we can see is the growth of income via the card reader. This has gone from zero 4 years ago, to what looks like exceeding the figure for cash sales by next year or soon thereafter.

The full financial figures, as shown in the second table, are largely self-explanatory.

INCOME

- There was no major funding from the Council or other bodies in the year
- Minor donations comprise those through the museum boxes, plus some from the likes of Amazon Prime.
- Sales figure combines those through the museum shop, both cash & card, plus online sales via the website.

The total Income of £11,766 is up slightly from £10,108 the previous year but the previous year included over £4,000 funding from the Council and other bodies to counter the effects of Covid.

EXPENDITURE

- Publicity & Advertising is mainly our Visit Scotland membership
- Cost of events includes cost of Storyteller, and Quiz night costs

Total expenditure of £3,601 is down from £10,763 previous year, but that large figure included significant expenses including anti-Covid measures, booklet printing, a donation to Mearns Radio and a Survey of the state of the building.

BALANCES

For the year 2022/23 we showed a profit of £8,165 compared to a loss in the previous Year, and closed the year with total funds of £121,699



STONEHAVEN TOLBOOTH ASSOCIATION

ACCOUNTS SUMMARY YEAR ENDING 31ST MARCH 2023

Operational statistics for financial year, plus preceding 4 years and current year Apr-Sept as reported on the daily sheets, and so excluding, for example, on-line sales

Financial Year	days open	foot fall	donations	sales cash	sales card	total income	average £/visitor
2018/19	224	24,047	8,284	7,357	-	15,641	0.65
2019/20	223	27,592	10,038	7,670	339	18,047	0.65
2020/21	14	467	312	116	51	479	1.03
2021/22	99	4,650	1,817	1,446	470	3,733	0.80
2022/23	179	14,350	5,296	3,164	1,806	10,267	0.72
2023/sept	153	13,281	5,487	2,997	2,036	10,520	0.79

Accounts Summary & Balance Statement for 2022/23

Income 2022/23		Amount	Expenditure 2022/23		Amount
Bank Interest (savings a/c)		375	Admin/misc expenses		205
Gift Aid from HMRC		0	Web site		59
Funding - Aberdeenshire Council		0	AGM/other meeting expenses		0
Awards, Sponsors, Donations etc		0	Publicity & advertising		291
Minor donations etc		5,376	volunteer uniforms etc		45
Donations @ events		0	Donations/grants		0
Gross Sales		3,480	display materials/furniture		52
eCard Sales/Donations		1,957	exhibits/artefacts		0
Events/hires		578	Bank charges		0
Total Income		11,766	Stock for sales		1,961
			Lucky Dips		69
			Shop equipment etc		24
			sales P&P		0
			Utility bills/maintenance etc		0
			cost of events		416
			Insurance, H&S etc		479
			Legal/Architectural etc		0
			Conferences/Workshops etc		0
profit/loss		Amount	Total Expenditure		3,601
Income less Expenditure		8,165			

Balances Summary			
Opening Balances		Closing Balances	
Current Account & cash	52,883	Current Account & Cash	37,673
Savings Account	60,651	Savings Account	84,026
Total funds b/f	113,534	Total Funds c/f	121,699

Dennis Collie Dennis Collie Treasurer