

STANEHYVE

·TOLBOOTH TIMES·



Stonehaven Harbour
Taken from a 1960's postcard



Editorial

Stonehaven can now be a very busy place in the summer months, with the Aberdeen WPR bringing visitors from the city and towns to the west and north. The Caravan Club site at Cowie is full nearly all year and couples, usually with dogs, can be seen enjoying the Beach promenade and the Baywalk to the Harbour. Parking is at a premium, certainly in the Harbour area, and how many cars and motorhomes do you see driving down the High Street and along the Old Pier past the Tolbooth, only to find there is no space at the Backies car park and then have to retrace their steps? Some then drive along the Shorehead and still can't find a space to park and have to turn back again. There seems to be no solution to this problem and unless you can reclaim more land from the sea, similar to the Backies, there is no space in Stonehaven for more parking. At one time, it was hoped that the Council would purchase the old gas works site in Cowgate and make a new car park, but that has never happened, and there is a current planning application for 4 houses and 6 flats on the site, and which will only create more traffic in a congested area. What is really needed is clear signage, at the Sheriff Court/Police Station junction, to tell visitors that the Harbour area is a no through road and direct them to parking elsewhere, either at the Market Square or at the Beach, and walk to the Harbour from there? But that would still not solve the lack of available parking in Stonehaven.

The refurbished Courtyards behind the Tolbooth are ready for our Summer events and hopefully you can enjoy these in more pleasant surroundings. Have a lovely summer, wherever you may be.

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

Our recently refurbished courtyards, will be put to good use this summer as we are busy organising some FREE events for visitors and residents to enjoy. A poster for the first 3 events is set out below. More events are in the planning, so check our social media for further details.



Stonehaven Tolbooth Museum

FREE Summer Events

Critter Keeper
Monday 14th July
2.30 pm to 3.30pm
Meet exotic animals in the
museum courtyard





Jack MacPherson
Sunday 3rd August
From 1.30 onwards
Music and song in the
museum courtyard

Lacemaking Demonstration
Sunday 27th July
1.30pm—3.00pm
Indoor event



Front cover image A bright and sunny photo of Stonehaven Harbour taken from a late 1960's postcard. It has been colourised and which seems to have been the fashion at the time. Not many cars to be seen. Burnett's lorries are outside their garage, which is now the Yacht Club, You can see the sign for The Granary Shop next to the Marine.



MUSEUM SNIPPETS

Footfall for the last few months

April saw us have more than 500 visitors over the Easter weekend. To show off our newly refurbished inner courtyard, our Open Day on 20th April saw 138 people come to see our very smart outdoor space and Globus Tours started their twice weekly visits in April.

We always say we will AIM to open 6 days per week over the summer months BUT sadly we had no volunteers available one day in **May**. The clock tower also remained closed for 4 days that month as there was no power available. If you think you could help volunteer and avoid such closures, please get in touch by emailing us at enquiries@stonehaventolbooth.co.uk

June was a better month however and saw regular visitors and also 3 private tours of the museum from Drumlithie WI, Aberdeen University Culture Conference and W Stephen—more than 60 extra visitors

2025 to date is far better than any year since Covid hit in 2020—so we hope this trend continues for the rest of the year.

2025	Museum	Clock tower	Total	Days open	Average Daily footfall
April	1931	559	2490	25	99
May	2012	324	2336	26	90
June	2031	342	2373	28	85
TOTALS	5974	1225	7199	79	91

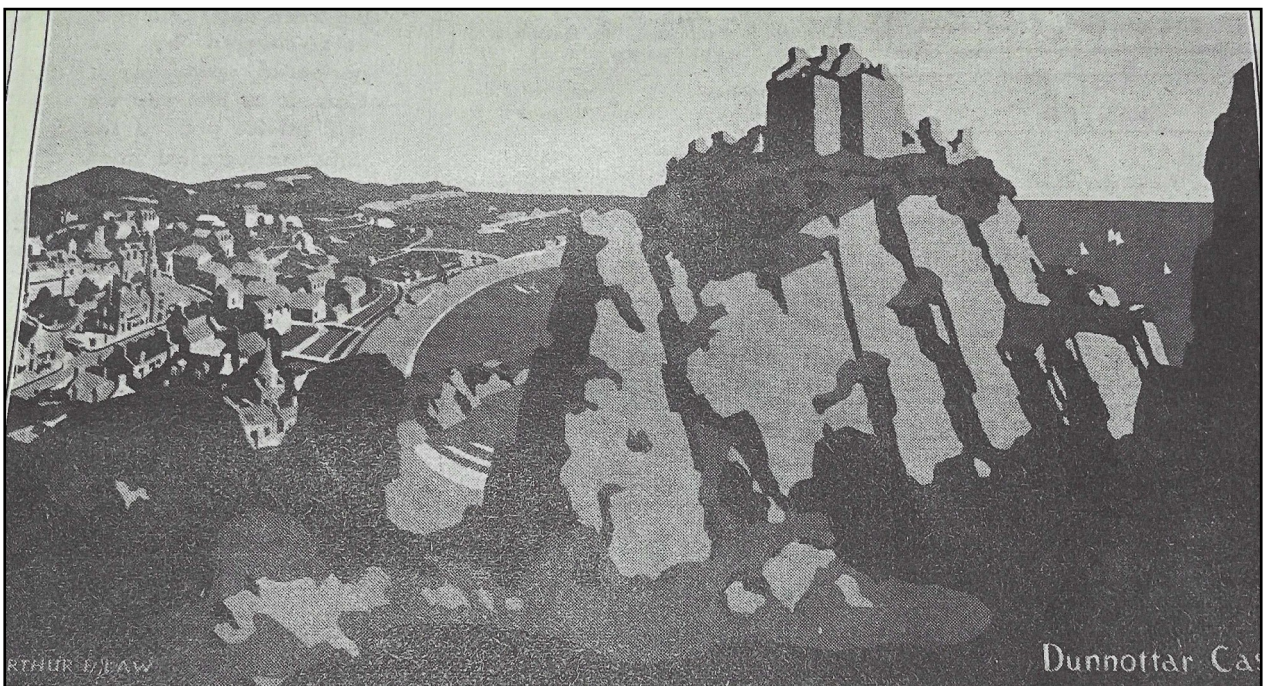
Museum only	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
April	1307	1747	1172	111 Covid	Covid
May	1883	2041	1422	354	Covid
June	2177	2017	1809	356	Covid
TOTALS	5367	5805	4403	710	0



Railway posters of Stonehaven by Gordon Ritchie

Dunnottar Castle must be one of the most photographed castles in Scotland and if you search online, you will find hundreds of images, taken at all seasons of the year. It has attracted visitors since the Victorian age, and probably more so after it was purchased by Viscountess Cowdray in 1919, refurbished and opened as a visitor attraction. Railway companies competed with each other to encourage travellers to visit all parts of Britain and to enjoy the many splendours to be seen. Between 1923 and 1948, Stonehaven was served by both the London & North Eastern Railway (LNER) and the London, Midland and Scottish Railway (LMS), with trains from both Edinburgh and Glasgow. The heyday of railway posters was probably in the 1920s, which coincided with the Art Deco era, and some famous posters come from this time. Fine examples are Skegness 'so bracing' and St Andrews.

The image below has the caption of Dunnottar Castle, but you would find it difficult, if not impossible, to see both the Castle and the Town of Stonehaven in the same view. I think a great deal of artistic licence has been used here, but to stunning effect. This came from the Mearns Leader of 1932, and the caption says that '*putting Stonehaven not merely on the map, but all over the map, was the idea of this picture being used to boost visitor numbers that summer. The artist was one of our own, Arthur E Law, who also had just had one of his pictures exhibited at the Royal Academy in London.*'

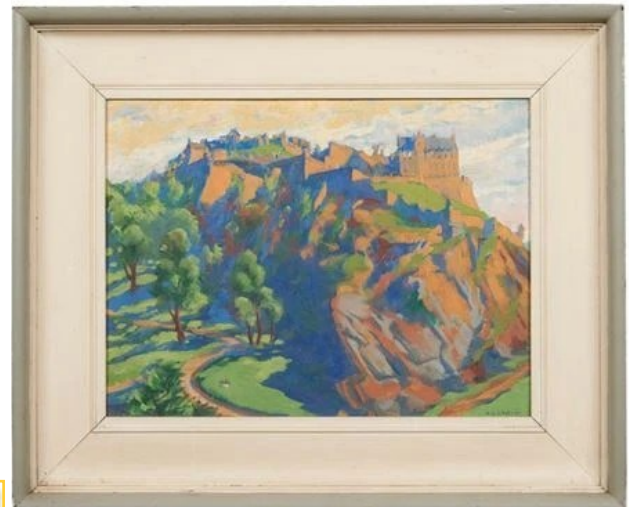




Railway posters of Stonehaven - cont'd

Further searches disclose that Arthur Law was Art master at Mackie Academy from 1923 until 1935 when he went to Harris Academy in Dundee. The only other painting of his that I could find online was one of Edinburgh Castle which sold in 1957 (see below) and is certainly in the same style as the Dunnottar painting. So far, I have been unable to find a colour copy of the Dunnottar painting and I just wonder if it had only been a proposed poster and which never made the final selection?

LNER and LMS did have a railway poster of Dunnottar, produced in 1937 by the Dundee artist, James McIntosh Patrick, for both LNER and LMS as part of their *'It's quicker by rail'* campaign, and it gives a fine impression of the Castle on its wild rocky perch over the North Sea. He was one of Scotland's most famous painters of the 20th century, renowned for his country landscapes, and also did several railway posters. Railway posters are very collectable today, but reproductions are widely available.





Museum Courtyards

With summer events now planned for our outdoor space, here is a reminder of the state of the courtyards before and after major works. Check out our social media for details of upcoming events.

Before recent
refurbishment



After completion of
work.

