

# STANEHYVE ·TOLBOOTH TIMES·



STONEHAVEN HARBOUR  
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STONEHAVEN  
HARBOUR  
BY DOUGLAS CUSINE AND GORDON RITCHIE

New publication by  
Stonehaven Tolbooth Association



## Editorial

With some lovely warm and sunny weather over the Summer, Stonehaven Harbour has been very busy this year, and the Tolbooth Museum has attracted many visitors from all parts of the world. In this issue, we celebrate our newest publication on the Harbour, and it is surprising, when seeing the many old photos, how little has changed over nearly 150 years. The boats are different but many of the buildings are the same.

We can also welcome the new Lifeboat Station opened by RNLI in September on the site of the former Maritime Rescue buildings, and which is a great asset to the Town, making it safer for those who venture out to sea or along the coast.

*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 [gritchie626@gmail.com](mailto:gritchie626@gmail.com)

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## MUSEUM SNIPPETS



In early August, the museum was delighted to receive a framed photograph of a famous son of Stonehaven, Professor James Murdoch.

Image shows Chair Cressida receiving the photo from Mr. Santiago Murdoch a direct descendant of Prof. Murdoch.

Read more about Prof, Murdoch on pages 6-7 and read about his family history on page 8.

### Dates for your diary

**Friday 24th October**—Get your friends and team ready for the museum's annual fundraising **Quiz Night** to be held at British Legion Market Square, Doors open 7.30pm. Quiz starts 7.45pm. Tickets are £5 per person and teams are for 4–6 persons, Raffle, nibbles, cash bar.

**Wednesday 1st October**—museum will return to winter opening hours . Weekends only from 12.30pm to 3.30pm . There will be extended openings for the ' Tattie holidays' . See social media for details.

### Front cover image

2 excellent panoramic views of Stonehaven Harbour from Downie Point, the earlier one from around 1880 and the other by David Smillie of 2025, form the cover of the new Harbour book, designed by local artist Frank Robertson.



## MUSEUM SNIPPETS

### Footfall for the last few months

**JULY**—was a busy month with the newly refurbished courtyard being put to good use by the Folk Festival and animal handler Critter Keeper. A local nursery visited on 2 occasions with 36 children and carers and some 30 children transitioning from P7 to S1 came along too. We also had successful return visits from local storyteller Pauline Cordiner and NE Lacemaking society.

**AUGUST**— the month got off to a lovely start with our Courtyard being the setting for a photo shoot for a newly married local couple. This was followed by events being cancelled due to bad weather. Indoors we hosted a 2nd creative writing course led by one of our volunteers Amy. Weather at the end of the month also meant the local Harbour Festival was cancelled.

**SEPTEMBER**—we had 40 visitors from St. Margarets Church early in the month and then Doors Open Days resulted in more than 750 visitors over that weekend.

Throughout the 3 months we have had our regular summer visits from Globus Tour company. They usually visit twice per week after closing hours and we are always very grateful to those volunteers who agree to stay on longer to cover their visits. ( 18 visits, 681 visitors)

2025	Museum	Clock tower	Total	Days open	Average Daily Museum footfall
July	2716	697	3413	26	104
August	2875	652	3527	27	106
September	2266	677	2943	25	91
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>7857</b>	<b>2026</b>	<b>9883</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>101</b>

Museum only	2024	2023	2022	2021	2020
July	2641	2909	2123	638	78
August	3876	4131	3260	2134	50
September	2465	2360	1399	1048	83
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>8982</b>	<b>9400</b>	<b>6782</b>	<b>3820</b>	<b>211</b>



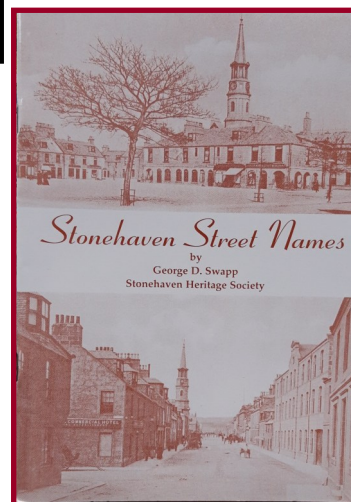
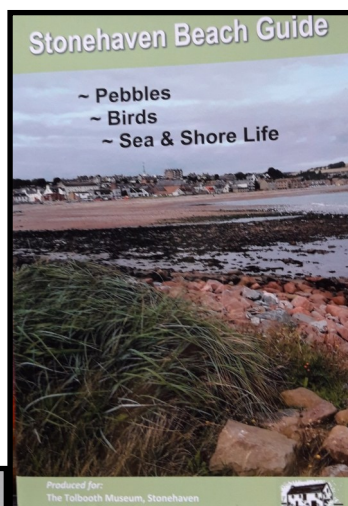
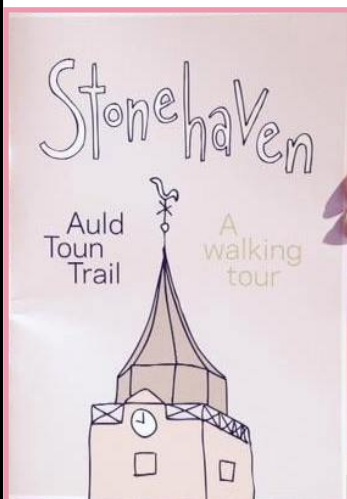


## New Stonehaven Harbour Book

We are delighted to announce that a new book on Stonehaven Harbour has been published by Stonehaven Tolbooth Association and is available to purchase from the Tolbooth Museum. Written by 2 of our committee members, Douglas Cusine and Gordon Ritchie, it tells the story of the Harbour from 1600, the building of the Tolbooth, the connections with Dunnottar Castle, the development and building of the piers, and removal of the Craig-Ma-Cair stone (from which the Town got its name). The growth and decline of the fishing industry are covered with the story of the cargo ships which used the Harbour and trades and businesses around the Harbour, up to the present day. It is well illustrated with 45 photos from over the years, taken from the Museum's archives.

It is a worthy addition to the Museum's list of books and is highly recommended. It is available price £5 from the Museum and can also be ordered online on our website., [www.stonehaventolbooth.co.uk](http://www.stonehaventolbooth.co.uk).

## Other notable museum publications include





## PROFESSOR JAMES MURDOCH, M.A. (1856 - 1921)

by Santiago D'Angelis Murdoch

(originally published in Stanehyve edition no.81 in Summer 2013)

Born on 27th September, 1856, in the little croft of Milldens of Cowie, in Stonehaven, James Murdoch was the son of William Murdoch and Helen (nee McDonald). After attending the Parish School of Fetteresso, which was then situated in Bath Street and the Old Aberdeen Grammar School, popularly known as the "Old Bam", he won the first bursary offered by the University of Aberdeen in 1875 and graduated with an M.A. in 1879, with first-class honours in Classics and second-class honours in Mental Philosophy. He then studied for a time at Worcester College, Oxford, and then travelled to Gottingen, Germany, where he studied Sanskrit, and from there went to the Sorbonne in Paris.



On 26th June, 1880, at Lyme Regis, England, three months after passing Responsions at Oxford, he married Lucy, the youngest daughter of the Reverend William Parkes, F.R.G.S., Congregational Minister at Lyme Regis, and soon afterwards returned to Aberdeen University as Assistant to the Professor of Greek and Lecturer in Sanskrit. On 10th April, 1881, at Lyme Regis, his first and only son, Kenneth Macdonald Murdoch, was born.

For some time he was the Head Master at Maryborough Boys' Grammar School and then Second Master at the Brisbane Grammar School in Queensland, Australia. It was in Queensland that Murdoch and his wife Lucy had a daughter named Mabel Helen, who was born on 7th August, 1884 and died soon after at the age of two.

In 1893 William Lane induced Murdoch to accept the position of Minister of Education in the socialistic colony of "New Australia" that he was then founding in Paraguay. Murdoch remained there for only a very short time, however, and disillusioned he abandoned the project and went to Japan via London. He left his son Kenneth behind in South America and he later moved with his family to Argentina, where the majority of Professor Murdoch's descendants remain to this day.

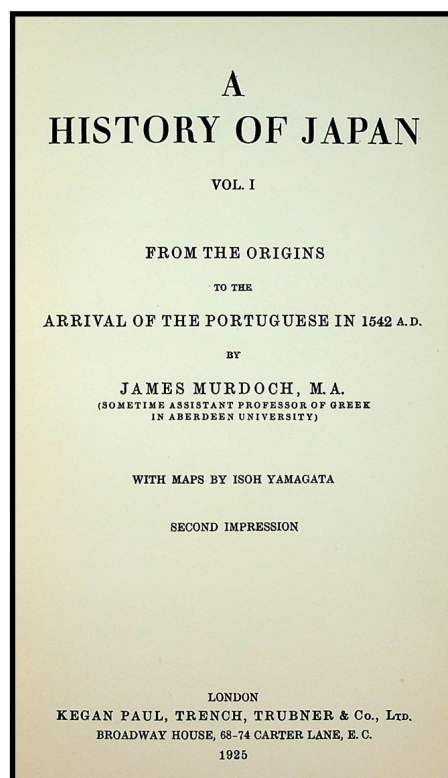


## PROFESSOR JAMES MURDOCH, M.A. (1856 - 1921)

by Santiago D'Angelis Murdoch

Murdoch lived in Japan for nearly Twenty-five years, where he taught at several high schools and colleges. He married for a second time to Takeko Akada, daughter of Nagatoshi Okada, 11 former samurai and ex-retainer of the Bakufu government. In 1917 he went to Australia to lecture in Japanese at the Royal Military College in Duntroon and at the University of Sydney. His lectureship in Japanese at Sydney was then raised to a chair and he was appointed Professor of Oriental Studies.

James Murdoch died on 30th October, 1921, at his home at Baulkham Hills, Sydney. His lasting and most important contribution was his magnum opus 'A History of Japan' whose third volume was published posthumously in 1926 - which was a pioneer work that immediately procured him his world-wide reputation. He is remembered by many as probably the world's leading English-speaking authority upon Japanese language and history of his time and regarded as one of the ablest historians and interpreters of Japanese. He was also considered by the Australian defence authorities as one of their more important intelligence sources, valuing highly his observations and predictions regarding Japanese politics and public opinion.





## THE MURDOCH FAMILY IN KINCARDINESHIRE

by Lorraine Stewart

Adam Murdoch (grandfather of **James**), was born in Kildrummy and, following his marriage to Elspet Shepherd in 1824, was recorded living in Birse, Kildrummy and Lumphanan, before moving to Kincardineshire around 1840. In April, 1841, the family was living at Corsbald, Parish of Fordoun, where Adam was working as an agricultural labourer and where later that year they had their seventh child. By 1851 Adam and Elspet had moved to Rickarton where Adam worked as a wood sawyer and over the next fourteen years they lived in the Crofts of Temple, Roadside and Woodside, all within a few hundred yards of each other about five miles out of Stonehaven on the Slug Road. Only Roadside Croft still survives, a few piles of stones indicating the sites of Temple and Woodside Crofts.

Their second son William was working as a farm servant at Redcloak, on Ury Estate, when he married Helen McDonald (a domestic servant at Redcloak), in December 1855. By the time that **James** was born nine months later, the couple had moved to Milldens and it's likely that they were either given the rental of the cottage as part of William's fee, or took the lease of the croft and combined working their own land with William working as a labourer on the estate. Sadly, Helen died of tuberculosis when James was only ten months old. Tuberculosis was not uncommon among female farm servants who often worked in the dairy.

Following Helen's death, **James** went to live with his grandparents at Rickarton, while his father William, by 1861, had become grieve, or farm overseer, working for James Melvin at Cheyne. Interestingly another grandchild - Robert Lindsay (age two) was also recorded in the Rickarton household at the time of the 1861 census and William's younger brother Robert was also a widower with a young son, farming at Bush of Dunnottar. Both Adam and Elspet died at Woodside of Rickarton in 1864.

Four years later William married for a second time - to Elspet Craig from Cookney. In 1871, **James** (age fourteen), is recorded as a grocer's shop boy living with his father, Elspet and five month old Barbara, in Evan Street. There are stories of the young **James** never being without reading material while on his errands about the town, and of an Aberdeen bookseller who remembered the boy who "would walk in the sixteen miles from Stonehaven for a new book and walk back again".

In his later years William is recorded as being a grieve at Arduthie, minister's man to Rev. John Watt of Fetteresso and coachman and gardener to William Mowat at Viewmount. He and Elspet moved from Evan Street to Bridge of Cowie before settling finally in Cameron Street where William died in 1890 at the age of 65. His gravestone can be found in the Old Fetteresso Kirkyard.