

STONEHYVE ·TOLBOOTH TIMES·



New War Memorial Exhibit



Editorial

With the Tolbooth Museum presently closed in these emergency times, and we are all restricted to our homes, it is perhaps a time to take stock and reflect on the many aspects of our lives for which we should be grateful.

We live in a lovely part of the world, and in Stonehaven, we owe a debt to our predecessors who built and developed our town and preserved the Old Town, Harbour and of course the Tolbooth itself, which had fallen in to ruin before re-opening in 1963. Without their vision, we would not have a building in which to house our Museum.

I have also found time to take stock of my own collections, which range from books and magazines to records and cars. I also have the large collection of photographs of Stonehaven built up by Stonehaven Heritage Society over 30 years. When the museum eventually re-opens, there will be a new display of many of these fascinating photos which show Stonehaven as it used to be.

I also have a large collection of billheads from various Stonehaven shops and businesses and dating from the Victorian era to World War II, and these will be in future displays.

I intend to keep myself busy as we live through these unprecedented times, and look forward to the summer when hopefully things will have improved. In the meantime, keep safe.

Gordon Ritchie, MVO

Editor

Diary

Due to the Covid-19 outbreak, the museum is closed until further notice and so the dates listed below are all provisional

Summer opening hours

1st Apr— 30th Sept

Daily—excl Tuesday

13.30 to 16.30

Aberdeenshire Council
Open Days

19th—20th September

Globus Tours

Wednesday evenings

20th May— 23rd Sept

Front cover photo is

courtesy of

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Stonehaven War Memorial Model

The front cover photo is of the War Memorial model recently donated to the Museum, by its maker Colin Sandeman. The model is made of broom wood which grows readily in the NE, including the Black Hill. A retired civil engineer living in Brechin, Colin has been creating furniture in broom wood since 1985. This wood is an unusual material and exceedingly difficult to work with, requiring a great deal of patience and skill. In order to highlight the colour and grain variation inherent in broom, the wood is seasoned, subjected to a two stage chemical process and then polished. This model required about 250 hours to create.

The use of this unusual wood was encouraged by the 3rd Duke of Atholl who in 1758, commissioned a George Sandeman, a furniture maker from Perth, to make furniture from broom wood for the Castle's Derby Dressing Room. Colin later discovered that George Sandeman was his three times great-grandfather. It is believed however that the idea of using broom wood for making furniture originated in Scandinavia and historical research has discovered that Colin's five times great grandfather indeed came from Scandinavia. The model has to be viewed in person to appreciate the skill and patience required to create such a stunning piece of furniture. Thank you Colin.



. From L-R Chair Cressida Coates, Treasurer Dennis Collie, Colin Sandeman, Secretary Andrew Newton



Museum and Clock Tower footfall

Month	Museum	Tower	Combined	Days Open	Museum Ave	Tower Ave
Nov	660	45	705	9	73	6
Dec	1218	0	1218	14	87	0
Jan	1056	0	1056	11	96	0
Feb	813	0	813	9	90	0

The figures above detail the monthly figures for the last 2 months of 2019 and the first 2 months of 2020. A couple of things to bear in mind when viewing the figures.

For the 4 months detailed, the museum was on winter schedule and only opening at weekends. The clock tower counter was found to be faulty towards the end of Nov 2019 and stopped working completely in December. Counter replacement is in hand but work not yet completed. The lower February 2020 figures reflect the 2 major storms, Ciara and Dennis that blew in on 2 consecutive weekends— as the figure for February 2019 was 1184

<u>Comparisons</u>	<u>2019</u>	<u>2018</u>
12 mths to Dec— museum	28872	23179
12 mths to Dec—clock tower (incomplete 2019 figures)	5483	5817

<u>Comparisons with other venues in Aberdeenshire</u>	<u>2019</u>
Arbuthnot Museum -Peterhead	5537
Mintlaw Museum	177
Aberdeenshire Farm-	19141
Hareshowe Farm—Aden Country Park	3779
Maud Railway Museum	673
Banff Museum	1015
Banchory Museum	2159

The STA committee met on 11th March and decided to close the museum with immediate effect. This was in an effort not only to safeguard the public but to safeguard our volunteers, many of whom are in the category now required to self-isolate. The committee will meet again in April to update and review the situation.



Co-op Local Community Fund

The Museum has been selected to take part in the annual Co-op Local Community Fund. This means that until October 2020, the Tolbooth can earn money each time you shop at any of the 4 local Co-ops at Market Square, Kirkton Road, Redcloak and the main store on David Street.

To ensure that the Co-op donates 1% of your total spend to the Museum, please go to the Tolbooth page on the Co-op membership website and choose us as your cause. In the 5 months to date we have raised over £700—so it is worth signing up.

<https://membership.coop.co.uk/causes/39349>

Young Archaeologists Club

At a recent committee meeting., the possibility of setting up an affiliated branch of the Young Archaeologists Club in partnership with the Museum was discussed. Do any of our volunteers have an interest in archaeology and would like to help organise such a club? First of all go to the website below and if after reading, you are interested to find out more, then please get in touch with Clare Thomas at clarerthomas@hotmail.com or call her on **T. 07813 157516**

https://www.yac-uk.org/userfiles/leadersaredownloads/Setting_up_a_new_YAC_branch_NOV2017.pdf

Miniature Queens Award

Calling all volunteers — if you have not already done so and would like to receive a miniature version of the Queens Award for Voluntary Service presented to the museum last year, please get in touch with Treasurer Dennis Collie for more details. Contact him at

denniswcollie@gmail.com

Delivery will be delayed pending the Covid -19 measures currently in force about social distancing and self-isolation.





Tolbooth Extension

It is with regret that the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association has to announce the suspension of the project to add an extension to the Tolbooth building at Stonehaven harbour.

When the Association assumed the running of the museum in May 2011 we were faced with an empty space, no money in the bank and a footfall target of 9,500 per annum as had been achieved by Aberdeenshire Council in previous years. By 2014 we had pushed the footfall to 20,000 and were becoming concerned over a lack of space.

We employed two sets of architects to provide a solution and their imaginative use of the inner and outer courtyards produced a stunning design with a panoramic view over the harbour and bay. We obtained planning permission and listed building consent in December 2017 and then obtained further funding to employ consultants to drive the project forward to the building stage.

Up to this point we had had the active and enthusiastic support of key Council employees but unfortunately all three took early retirement and since then there has been no apparent support or interest from the Council. Just one small but important example; in order to obtain support from major funders we need to have at least a 10 year lease, and more preferably a 25 year lease. After more than 15 months of negotiation the only offer on the table from the Council is a rolling one year lease.

Our difficulties have been compounded by consultants who took a negative approach to the whole project. They:

- Raised the estimated build price by 25% without input from surveyors
- Claimed that funding would be difficult as the Tolbooth would be exposed to coastal flooding due to climate change
- Claimed that funding was almost impossible as Stonehaven is a 'wealthy area'

Eventually there was a parting of the ways with these consultants. The lesson that we have learnt is that no project of this magnitude is viable without

(a) the whole hearted support of the other major stakeholder, i.e. Aberdeenshire Council and

(b) access to a considerable sum of money which is evidently not available in these stricken times.

The Association is happy to review the situation if these constraints can be resolved.

STA March 2020



Tolbooth Museum Collections Group

This new group has met in the Museum a few times and has had a good look around, firstly to assess what is there, and secondly to see what improvements can be made. Any changes will however only be done with the approval of the Committee.

It was decided to group together some of the household items found in various parts of the museum and to display them next to the kitchen cabinet area in the East Rom.

New display boards are to be acquired for the central section of the North Room, and these will display a rotating selection of photographs from the Heritage Society's extensive collection.

Also in the North Room, additional shelving will be fitted at high level next to the existing display of ships models in order to improve that area and create more display space.

The display of swimming trophies from Stonehaven Amateur Swimming Club (currently housed in glass cabinet in Entrance Room) has proved very popular but to add to this, there will be a new display panel nearby telling the story of the Open Air Pool which has for over 75 years been one of Stonehaven's best attractions.



APOLOGY

In the last edition of the Stanehyve Tolbooth Times, we omitted to mention that several photos taken of HRH Duke of Rothesay visit to the Museum were courtesy of © Martin Sim



History of the Stonehaven War Memorial by Martin Sim

Stonehaven's War Memorial is a particularly noticeable monument, standing on top of the Black Hill just south of the town. It is often thought of as being in a poor state of repair but this is the way it was designed to look – as unfinished or ruined as the lives of those it commemorates. The plans were drawn up by John Ellis a locally born architect who designed quite a few notable houses in Stonehaven as well as some other war memorials in the area. Mr. Ellis's choice of design for this memorial created what has become a very strong and recognizable feature in the area and we can certainly appreciate its constant presence on our skyline. Visitors to the area may think it's a folly, a temple or a mausoleum but they certainly notice it, speak about it and remember it and, surely, that is what it was meant to do.

Stonehaven could be said to have been a little hesitant about its war memorial, as it was one of the last to be built in the area. The process did not start late, in fact the Town Council discussed it in 1917 and again in January 1918, but nothing was decided. By early 1920 comments were appearing in *The Mearns Leader*, the local paper, about the fact that "In other counties, almost every little village, and every church, has raised some token of remembrance". In late February, in response to public feeling an open meeting was called and a lot of ideas were proposed and discussed. These included, siting a memorial on the Market Square, as this was a popular meeting place. A Memorial Park or Hospital was also suggested to commemorate the fallen. The Black Hill was put forward as a site for a cairn and park or a rock garden as it was "Where the Men o' Mearns kept watch and ward over their homes in troubled times", and, "which has been from time immemorial the rallying ground for defence of the coast". By the end of the evening, when a vote was taken, the meeting seemed to favour a park in some form. A committee of sixteen was formed and instructed to go ahead and put things in motion.

Months passed. Other memorials were planned and built at Muchalls, St Cyrus, Portlethen, Catterline, Cookney, Durris, Arbuthnott, Fordoun, Banchory, at the local school Mackie Academy (now Arduthie Primary) and at the various local churches, but not a word was heard or read about the Stonehaven Town memorial.

It would seem as if the issue had been forgotten about, as at a Town Council meeting in April 1921 the councilors were not too sure as to who was on the committee. Discontent and embarrassment about the situation was made very apparent by some of those present. Something must have worked at that or a subsequent meeting because, two months later in July, the architect John Ellis had been engaged and had produced two drawings of how he saw the two main ideas.



History of the Stonehaven War Memorial by Martin Sim (cont'd)

They were displayed in the window of Hugh Ramsey, the Drapers, at the corner of Barclay Street and Evan Street. One drawing was for a cross, made in granite to be located on the 'plain steans' the paved area at the south side of the market buildings on the square. The other was for a memorial like "a ruined temple" built in the early Doric style of architecture for the top of the Black Hill. The idea of a memorial park or hospital would seem to have failed for various reasons.

After an initial burst of enthusiasm for the cross on the square, the Black Hill plan gained favour and soon had the wholehearted support of the public and councillors. At a rather poorly attended public meeting on Friday 8th July 1921 the plan for the Black Hill was given 99% support and the hope was that building work would start the following spring.

Maybe the population thought that their presence was not required, as everyone was in agreement as to which plan was best, but as the Mearns Leader put it the next week "When one remembers that over 200 men, from Stonehaven alone, gave their lives, it is not very gratifying to know that less than 100 persons ~ of whom a goodly number were ex-servicemen ~ thought it worth while to attend" and "100 persons out of a total population of over 4000 is not creditable to a town whose sons made so great a sacrifice". The editorial chastisement would seem to have had an effect, but in the wrong way.



Image courtesy of © Martin Sim



History of the Stonehaven War Memorial by Martin Sim (cont'd)

The Memorial issue is not mentioned in the paper for eight months, so, on the 3rd of March 1922 the paper fired another broadside stating - "People are becoming impatient about the war memorial. It is four years since war ended and the community has done nothing. Not one single official scheme for the raising of funds has been started or is due to commence." The paper continued - "It is twelve months since the public meeting decided on which scheme it favoured but since then nothing has been done except by individuals and societies outside the committee. The public is heartily sick of the situation".

This piece of editorial would seem to have hit a nerve as, the following week, the paper included: - an engraving of the finished Memorial, an appeal for contributions to the Memorial Fund and a promise to publish a list of all the contributors, but it did add "It will, no doubt, come as somewhat of a surprise to most people to learn that nearly £600 has already been subscribed". The report went on to say that the committee felt that as so much money had come in in such a short time, the building work could start as soon as possible. The total cost was estimated at £2000.

When Lady Cowdray, who owned most of the land around Stonehaven, heard of the plan for the memorial on the Black Hill, she made arrangements to donate that piece of land to the community. So the way was clear to finally start on the building work.

Once the fundraising started it took off very well with new ideas each week. There were dances, concerts, whist drives, bazaars and a mock trial by the debating society. Personal donations flowed in and special arrangements were made for children to donate a penny per week. A special film show was held at the Queens Cinema in Allardice Street, which produced £17-5/-. The weekly list shows that a pair of stockings raised 7/6d, as did the sale of a bicycle frame. A torch-light procession brought in £5-1/4d, and the list shows "proceeds of pig £3-13/6d".

We are not told if the pig was alive or dead, in one piece or many. Twenty-seven pounds was raised by the sale of articles made by the soldiers at St. Leonard's Hospital (which used to be a hotel, now a private residence complex).

The regular appearance of these lists no doubt helped to keep up enthusiasm and spur new activities. By the end of March the total raised was £791. In April it rose to £1089, and May saw it clear £1140!! After that, however, the pace of fund raising slowed slightly and it took to the end of July to clear £1200. In late September an outstanding contribution of £400 (the largest single amount donated) was given by the St. Leonards Auxiliary Hospital Subscribers that brought the total up to £1662. The final £486-7/11d came mainly from Lady Cowdray who donated £300. The total donated was £2148-7/11d and this would appear to have been raised within just twelve months. No mean feat! Especially given the



History of the Stonehaven War Memorial by Martin Sim (cont'd)



The Dedication Ceremony at the new War Memorial on the Black Hill on Sunday 20th May 1923, at 3pm. From a glass slide by Alexander Ross, Photographer, Stonehaven

On the 31 March 1922 the Mearns Leader reported that there was “every likelihood of work beginning, in connection with, the erection of the War Memorial in the near future”. The paper also reported that, once started, the building work would not take long and an unveiling would hopefully take place in the Autumn.

Something seems to have delayed the plans as it wasn't until around mid-May that the large granite block for the middle was ordered and, to add to the problems, despite a ‘making rapid progress’ report in June, by late August it seems that the granite suppliers were having difficulty in obtaining the right size of block in the type of stone specified, so the unveiling was put back to the following Spring.

The main bulk of the memorial is sandstone and it was quarried locally, more or less immediately below (but not under) where the memorial sits! The old harbour quarry was located beyond where the Yacht Club boat park now is, to the south of the harbour bay. A lot of the houses in Stonehaven were built of sandstone cut from that quarry. There used to be a roadway round to it so getting the blocks out and up to the Black Hill site was not difficult.



History of the Stonehaven War Memorial by Martin Sim (cont'd)

The wording on the stonework is unusual and thought provoking. Around the outside of the lintels are the names of some of the outstanding battles of the First World War; Mons, Jutland, Gallipoli, Zeebrugge, Marne, Somme, Vimy and Ypres.

On the inside of the lintels is cut the quotation from Sankey's 'Student in Arms' – "*One by one death challenged them, they smiled in his grim visage and refused to be dismayed*". Stirring stuff indeed. Certainly a big step away from the inscriptions on some of the other memorials that seem to lack any inspiration or individualism.

Finally the day arrived- Sunday, 20th May 1923, at 3 o'clock. The unveiling and dedication of Stonehaven's War Memorial. A procession formed up in the town square some time before the appointed hour. It consisted of ex-service men, territorials, the Provost, Magistrates, the Town Council, Church Councils, the War Memorial Committee, various other public bodies representatives and a pipe band from Aberdeen.

They set off from the square and marched through the town up to the Black Hill via the Bervie Braes. Relatives of the fallen were accommodated in a special enclosure to one side of the steps that lead up to the gate of the Memorial. Eight sentries were posted outside the memorial one at the base of each pillar their rifles reversed out of respect. There followed the dedication service with hymns and speeches and Lady Cowdray performing the unveiling. Then a wreath was laid and the last post was sounded followed by the National Anthem. A poem composed specially for the memorial by Prof. John G. McKendrick of Maxieburn, Bath Street was read out at the very end of the service.

So eventually Stonehaven got its amazing unique memorial, unlike any other, but a credit to all the people who helped make it happen as well as to the names of those who are on it.

My thanks to the Mearns Leader for granting me permission to use their material and The Stonehaven Heritage Society for allowing me access to their archives. Martin Sim ©2014





Stonehaven's War Memorial Facts and Figures

The Stonehaven Heritage Society's records show the following:-

Building work

Alexander Adamson, Builder , Garvock Street, Laurencekirk £1175: 0/-

The descendants of that builder still stay in the area and the company is still in existence but under new ownership.

William Fife who stayed at 43 Cameron Street was the Foreman Mason on the project.

Granite supplier

Bower and Florence, The Spital Granite Works, Aberdeen £291:13/6

The Red Swead granite block (which is white) for the centre weighs 10.5 tons

Lettering

Cost of lettering £170:15/10.

Number of lead letters needed 4099

Number of names 162

Seating

Number of iron seats placed around the sides 5

Made by Allardyce the blacksmiths in David Street. £15: 0/-

Landscaping

James Burnett & Sons, Sawmillers £47:10/-

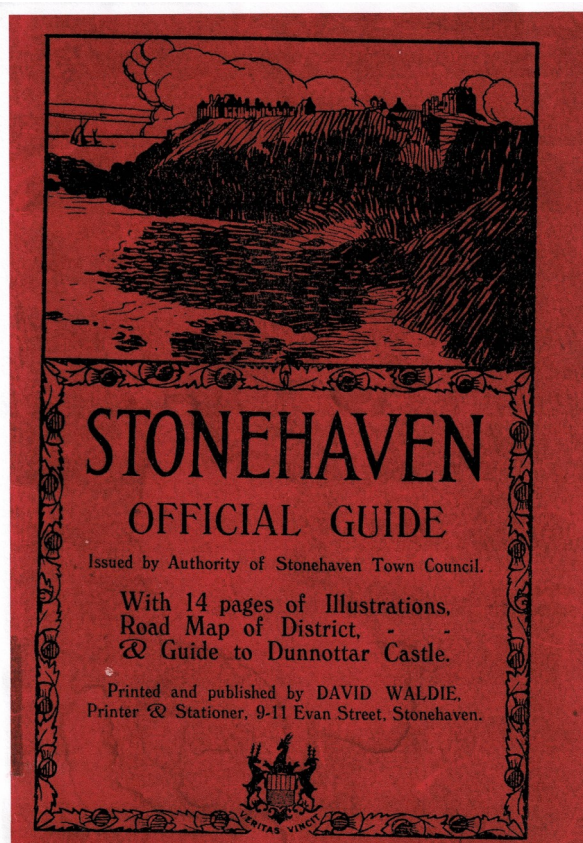
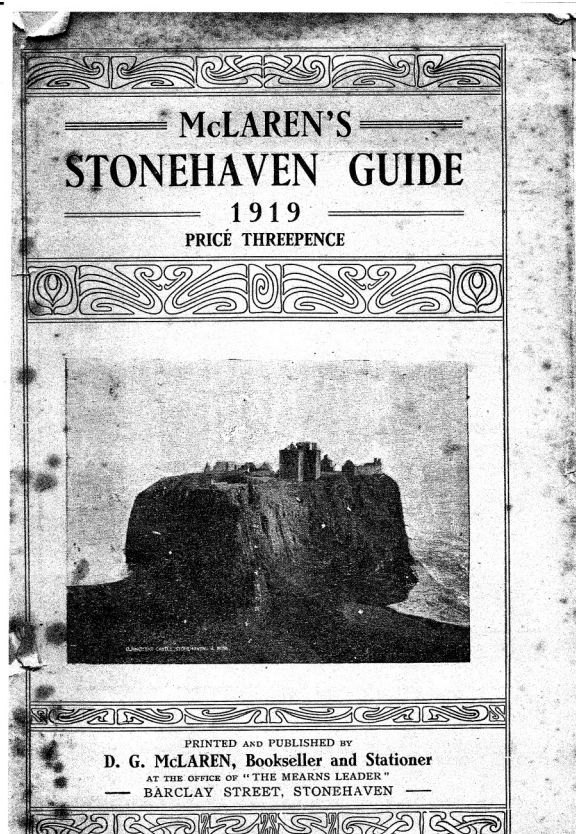
for the wire fence, posts and gate to surround the whole area.

Interesting trivia

The memorial is not aligned to the points of the compass – it appears to be offset by 52 degrees.



In the next edition—Guides to Stonehaven Part 1



If you have any stories or information you think could be included in future editions, please get in touch with either

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