

Meeting of the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association (STA)
Wednesday 23rd April 2025
Tolbooth Museum

Agenda

- 1 Welcome
- 2 Apologies
- 3 Minutes of previous meeting
 - a) acceptance
 - b) matters arising
- 4 Chair's report
- 5 Treasurer's report
- 6 Secretary's report
- 7 CAT and Grants - update
- 8 Events report
- 9 Collections report
- 10 Curator's report
- 11 Shop report
- 12 Clock Tower report
- 13 AOCB
- 14 Future date

Minutes

Present. Cressida Coates (CC), Andrew Newton (AN), Dennis Collie (DC), Clare Thomas (CT), Gordon Ritchie (GR), Lindsay Petrie (LP), Neil Smith (NS), Liz Ritchie (LR)

1 Welcome.

CC welcomed attendees to the April meeting.

2 Apologies. Louise Coates (LC), Douglas Cusine (DCu), Mary Sutcliffe (MS)

3 Minutes of previous meetings.

a) Acceptance. The previous minutes of 19th March 2025 were accepted.

b) Matters arising.

Summary of Action Points

Summary of Action Points	Person	Report
Contact owner of ship's bell	CC	CC has been in touch with Rod Macdonald and established that the bell (from SS <i>Creemuir</i>) was in the possession of the former r/o living in Bedford. Unfortunately he has died but his family are keen to donate the artefact to the museum. Ongoing process.
Pursue new sign for Bervie Braes	DCu	Not known
Continue considering options provided by the old blocks	LR	LR has tried twice to contact the owner but no replies. Action to be terminated.
Contact AU over student opportunities	LP	LP contacted AU but no reply. Will try later this year for the 2025/2026 intake.

Source and purchase suitable storage containers.	LP	Price £16/£20. Authorised to purchase but need more storage space first.
Contact Katy re re-working poster	LP	Ongoing
Investigate funding for recording local history	LP	This could turn out to be a larger project than first envisaged as successful funding would probably be more favourable to a Stonehaven wide project rather than museum focused. Ongoing.
Investigate Temu products	LR	LR will not proceed – See AOBC
Source new lanyards	DC	Done
Contact Council re Open Doors Day	AN	Done
Decline paranormal investigation	AN	Letter sent
Confer over funding application	DC/GR	See AOBC
Provide instructions to refer all potential sale of goods to LR	CC	To be actioned
Clean Clock Tower	AN	Done
Submit press release.	AN	Done

Action Points

CC Ship's bell

DCu Pursue new sign for Bervie Braes

LP Contact AU over student opportunities – for next academic year

LP Source suitable storage containers

LP Contact Katy re re-working poster

LP Investigate funding for recording local history

CC Provide instructions regarding sales on behalf of third parties

4 Chair's report (CC)

The museum acquired 5 new volunteers after the successful Open Day and some have already worked in the museum, albeit alongside a more experienced member.

The April rota was the first to use the new digital version and although there are a couple of minor 'glitches' e.g. doesn't work on a smart phone, overall it is a success.

Johnny Trudgill has set up an agate display.

5 Treasurer's report (DC)

Summary of Activity from 01/03/2025 to 31/03/2025

Income

Cash Sales	100.30
Sumup	209.52
Madge Book Sales	280.00
S'haven Shop Book Sales	30.00
Donations (Barrel)	225.02
Donations (Dino)	37.30
Donations (Walking/Scouts)	50.00
Gift Aid	10.00
Total	£942.14

Expenditure

Xmas Soiree(Dennis)	139.40
Padlock (Andrew)	29.98
Finance Examination	100.00
Mats (Dennis)	59.96
Display Shelves (Dennis)	14.37
Dinosaur Prizes (Dennis)	12.89
Simbas (Courtyard)	6991.20
Total	£7347.80

6 Secretary's report (AN)

Grampian Writers have approached STA with a request to hire the Inner Courtyard for an event during the summer. Committee agreed with a hire charge of £50.

On 20th April an Open Event was held in the Inner Courtyard to publicise the completion of the renovation. A very successful day with at least 138 in attendance with only positive reviews received. Soft drinks and 'nibbles' were provided by Maria and Wes Lewis and the committee agreed to provide liquid gifts to the couple as a token of appreciation. The committee also wished to record their thanks to AN, DC, GR and Lorna Collie, aka The Easter Bunny, for their work in organising the event.

The courtyard was 'dressed' with whisky barrel tables for the occasion but although the concept was well received the actual tables were not practical for regular use in a catering environment. Research has discovered a potential source of suitable barrels in Strathdon and LR agreed to contact the vendor and purchase 3 barrels if they meet STA specification. DCu had intimated previously that he knows of a single barrel for sale and this will also be reviewed.

DCu has spoken to Jimmy Malcolm about the possibility of constructing a bench in memory of Ian Balgowan and Jimmy has agreed subject to STA paying for materials. The siting of the bench is still to be decided but the committee's preference is in one of the courtyards.

We are currently obtaining a quote to flood proof the bottom of the large doors that cannot be opened and a painting of all the ground floor woodwork. The committee agreed that we should also look at the possibility of purchasing a flood gate for the main door.

SMS- Environmental has requested access to clean and sanitise the shower head tap in the kitchen. Unfortunately the museum does not possess such equipment but two denials to the company have not solicited a return.

The new video about the Cowie Foreshore is now up and running.

Action Point

LR to contact barrel vendor

DC to purchase wine/whisky

7 CAT and Grants (GR/AN)

GR has now received from the Council, via our solicitor, the Deed of Conditions for the asset transfer. The majority of conditions are the general ones expected in purchasing a commercial property although one stand out was the assertion that the Council would continue to insure the whole building whilst they owned the first floor. However, GR has major concerns over the separation between the ground and first floors and believes that this is a major sticking point in a successful transfer. David Chouman, our original architect, has agreed to provide advice on his return from holiday.

Tim Stephen, Council Area manager, had contacted STA with 2 options concerning proceeding with the forthcoming repairs to the Tolbooth. Option 1: to let the council organise and oversee all repairs. Option 2: to hand over to STA responsibility for all repairs unique to the museum. The committee are unhappy with the clarity of the relevant specifications and deemed option 2 a high risk. AN to inform Council to proceed with option 1.

All work has been completed in the Inner Courtyard and signed off by the Council. The committee are grateful to John Aitken for waiving all charges for his personal architectural services.

A new grant application has been submitted to the Area Coastal Community Fund for remedial work in the Outer Courtyard and council officials have recommended awarding the grant. Final decision will be made at the next Area meeting on 29th April.

Action Point

AN to inform Tim Stephen to proceed with Option 1

8. Events report (CT)

The first Globus trip of the year was hosted on Sunday 20th April. CC will issue a 'Globus rota' shortly.

Amy would like to hold another workshop during the summer. Likewise Natalie would like to hold an art workshop for children. CT suggested the purchase of addition tables although both GR and DC pointed out that they had suitable tables at home which could be used.

The 80th anniversaries of VE and VJ Days will be held in May and August this year and to mark the occasions bunting will be hung outside the museum. In addition, the curator of the Gordon Highlander Museum will visit on Friday 25th to discuss the loan of suitable material to celebrate the end of the war.

9 Collection Report (GR)

GR continues to seek help on completing the education display panel. The panel is partially completed but an input from a teacher would be useful.

David Fleming wishes to review the museum's collection of harbour photographs in relation to his forthcoming book.

10 Curator's report (LP/CC)

A date for the next meeting between CC and LP is still to be set.

11 Shop report (LR by email)

A new line is packets of seasoning for the sea salt. This is a trail offering.

The shop is low on copies of George Swapp's Street Names. GR has checked his stock at home but with no success; CC believes that she may have 10 copies and will place them in the museum. It was pointed out that one copy should be retained in the museum as a Reference Copy.

Gaps are appearing in the number of Chinese items on sale but this issue cannot be resolved until late summer.

12 Clock Tower report (AN)

The main video continues to be temperamental; sometimes it is easy to switch on but on other days the software fails to find the video. Currently there is no easy solution and at the moment there is no known contact person within the Council.

13 AOCB.

Stanehyve Magazine. GR raised the possibility of a wider circulation via social media. LR offered to highlight the front page of every subsequent issue and provide a link to the full publication on the website.

Harbour Book. From Matters Arising. The book is in the final stages with GR and DC revising text and lay out. Once DCu has completed a final review of the book it will be ready for printing. GR is anxious to be able to start selling during the summer; this probably precludes seeking funding from the local windfarm. AN suggested applying for a grant, for printing, to the Area budget as the turn around on such applications could be quicker. DC to investigate. Failing this STA will have to carry the cost of printing although GR pointed out there would still be a good profit margin.

Visitor Guide. DC had produced a simplified guide to some of the artefacts, mainly for the benefit of visitors but volunteers have also found it useful. More copies will be produced.

Little Stop Libraries. LR highlighted the project from Penguin books to set up miniature libraries in 90 UK locations. Whilst the committee appreciated the idea it was thought that there was little benefit to the museum and that there were probably other, more suitable, locations in Stonehaven. It was decided not to apply.

Temu. From Matters Arising. DC showed some items that he had bought from Temu. The price is extremely low which provides a decent profit margin for the shop. Some concerns were raised over Temu employment conditions but the use of Temu was not ruled out.

Action Point

DC to investigate Area budget

14 Date of next meeting

Wednesday 4th June

Andrew Newton

24th April 2025

Secretary

Stonehaven Tolbooth Association (Tolbooth Museum)

A Scottish Charitable Incorporated Organisation (SC043279)

Summary of Action Points

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Pursue new sign for Bervie Braes	DCu
Contact AU over student opportunities – for next academic year	LP
Source and purchase suitable storage containers.	LP
Contact Katy re re-working poster	LP
Investigate funding for recording local history	LP
Provide instructions regarding sales on behalf of third parties	CC
Contact barrel vendor	LR
Purchase wine/whisky	DC
Inform Tim Stephen to proceed with Option 1	AN
Investigate Area budget	DC