

Vice President's Report



Dear Members, Volunteers and other supporters

I hope you are all enjoying this year's intermittent summers. The rain does at least encourage visitors to seek shelter in the Museum. Visitor numbers are up also we suspect, because entry is free and local families are coming for return visits – for example, youngsters who have been with their school or on a Family Event, coming back with granny who hasn't been in since she was the same age.

The initial response in the press to our grant application's deferral by Moray Council was somewhat alarmist. We will be in for a rough ride if we don't get continuing Council support, but imminent closure is not on the cards. Our Museum is not alone in being able to attract grants for specific projects and purchases (albeit via time-consuming applications), but income to meet all our running costs is the challenge. The support from The Northern Scot, in featuring the Museum for the past few weeks, is gratifying, as have been comments of public support. Our Fundraising Group is exploring innovative methods of increasing revenue.

Other news from The Moray Society Board: our revised Constitution has been accepted by OSCR and lodged with Companies' House, our accounts up to the end of 2014 have been examined and accepted by OSCR, and we are very pleased to have welcomed Claire Herbert as a co-opted member of the Board. Claire has been an active member of The Moray Society for a while, and has a particular interest in archaeology, as a hobby, and in her day job with Aberdeenshire Council. Please note that any member wanting to see minutes of meetings or have a personal copy of the Constitution has only to ask. Our thanks are due to AIM, the Association of Independent Museums, and the Esmée Fairburn Foundation, for their grant which covered 90% of the legal and associated costs of the new Constitution.

Fortunately for me, involvement with the Museum does have lighter moments! Some of these are described elsewhere in this Newsletter's round-up. It was great to be asked by Yale Press and Aberdeen University to host the launch of the long-awaited local volume of Pevsner's architectural guides. Matthew Woodworth's talk included many new facts about

the importance of Moray's architectural heritage and it is to be hoped the book will help attract a new category of tourist to Moray and to our Museum (p.589-90).

Our Recognised fossil collection continues to attract enquiries and we welcomed Dr Christian Kammerer from Berlin for a couple of days to further his research on dicynodont reptiles. He found the 3D skull model especially useful. The weather was also good enough to show him some of the find sites, coastal features and footprints. Christian is on his honeymoon; they are American, and his wife enjoyed reading the letters Mabel wrote to her mother from Covesea, when she was here on her telephone-promoting honeymoon with Alexander Graham Bell!

Our newly constituted Geology Group has half a dozen members and a wide range of interested contacts in the museum and academic worlds, and is drawing up a plan of action. I have been concerned that much of what I've learned over the years about our Recognised collection, mainly from the likes of Sinclair Ross and former curator, Susan Bennett, could disappear under a bus, and it's well time to enthuse others as I was enthused. Please get in touch if you too would like to learn more or be involved.

Thanks everyone for making the Museum a rewarding place to "work" and for everybody's efforts whatever niche they have chosen. The Visitors' Book comments consistently record the outsiders' favourable perspective of the reception they receive and our Visit Scotland assessor (and yes, he will recommend we keep our 4**** status) commented particularly on his helpful welcome.

Janet Trythall
Vice-president

My Master's secondment to Elgin Museum

Beginning this past April, I had the pleasure of completing a 20-day placement at Elgin Museum as part of the University of Aberdeen's MLitt Museums Studies program. I spent the majority of my first days tucked away in the stores, updating the Natural History collection's catalogue with the new information learned from Andrew Kitchener's visit.

The best thing about work experience at a small museum is that I was afforded the opportunity to become involved in many different areas, not just the Natural History collection. I worked with Heather to re-organise the stores and complete intake paperwork for Treasure Trove finds; I volunteered at the front desk, welcoming and introducing new visitors to the museum; and most recently, I have been assisting Di with presenting the family drop-in activity sessions offered during the holidays.

Elgin Museum houses an excellent collection, but it is the hard-work and dedication of the employees and volunteers which make it a great place to learn what it takes to run a successful museum. I will forever appreciate this opportunity to work and learn at this wonderful institution.

Thank you all!



Rebecca Guetter
MLitt Museums Studies Student
University of Aberdeen

Education and Outreach

As you may be aware we were longlisted for the 'Family Friendly Museum' award 2015. Unfortunately we were not shortlisted this year, but we are still doing wonderful work to encourage families to come and visit the museum. This can be seen in the increased numbers of children visiting the museum, especially after they have been with their school and go home to tell their parents what a great time they had!

The Families activities sessions have started off really well this year, with over 200 people coming to both the Geology Handling session and the 'Rock Painting' craft session. We also had local author Susan Clifford reading her new children's book 'A Dinosaur Dash' and signing copies. She had a great time and we look forward to hosting her again when her new book comes out later this year.



Susan Clifford with her book "A Dinosaur Dash"

It has been wonderful to see so many children taking part in these sessions and also having a go at the Museum Trail – not sure how much the chocolate is influencing them! What has been interesting to see is the number of grandparents coming along with their grandchildren to these events. If you are able to help out at any of the family events this year then please come along – there is object handling on a Wednesday and craft sessions on a Thursday.



*Rebecca, a visiting Masters student from Aberdeen
with some young visitors*

On Wednesday 12th August our session will be a little different. We are running a 'World War 1' session where we will be asking members of the public to come in with their memorabilia, stories and photos of World War 1. We are going to be recording oral histories and scanning photos to add to our website for everyone to share. If you or any member of your family has anything that they would like to share then please feel free to come along. The session will run between 11am and 2pm.

Work is going on to develop the use of the Incorporated Trades artefacts and documents within the museum. We are hoping to have an exhibition of these artefacts sometime next year. If you are able to help with the setting up of the exhibition, or have a story to tell about the Incorporated Trades then please let us know. We are also looking for anyone who would like to take part in a short film – either on the technical side or in front of the camera.

Keep an eye open for details of the 'Mad Hatter's Tea Party' that will take place on 8th August this year. There will be stalls and activities for the whole family, along with a 'Tea Party' in the side hall on the day. We are looking for volunteers to help out – dressed in character of course – both on the day and with setting up and taking down. There is a sign-up sheet in the office if you are able to help out.

Di Hannan

Museum Assistant Update

I can't believe we're half way through the year already but you know what they say? "Time flies when you're having fun" and fun we're having, along with lots of hard work and team effort. Elgin Museum is the place to be!

Fond Farewells

At the end of April we had an 'official' leaving do for **Sue** (Dr Susan Beardmore, Curatorial Assistant Geology/Palaeontology) in the Emperor restaurant. Thank you to all of you who contributed to a leaving gift; £105 was raised which bought a large bunch of flowers, an Elginia Mirabilis tea shirt, Sue's meal and a gift of money.



A few of us said a final informal, goodbye (starting) in The Muckle Cross on Sue's last day in May - with a few it could be said, slightly worse for wear the next morning – you know who you are!



Homemade dinosaur biscuits by Mary Shand as a leaving gift to Sue but gobbled up by the rest of us!

My 9am cup of tea in the morning is not the same without Sue and I know you will feel the same in wishing her well in whatever she strives to do next. Sue has a 3 month geology trip to the U.S. planned for the end of the month but is still job hunting for paid Geology/Palaeontology work.



Another fond farewell goes to **Tracy Metcalfe** (above, left) who has said a reluctant goodbye to managing the museum shop as she starts fulltime work in Forres. And we say 'hello' and 'welcome' to new shop manager and hall lettings 'agent' Gayle Henderson (above, right – and no, it's not a blank screen, just the angle the monitor is at), recently retired from The Moray Council Customer Services Team as a Council Tax and Housing Benefit Advisor. Very glad to have you on board and thank you for letting me talk you in to it!

Temporary Exhibitions

Thanks go to Milan Ardis (formerly of Yorkshire Archaeology Trust – not the Jorvik Viking Centre) for the new 'Alice in Wonderland' themed exhibition in one of the upstairs cases. The exhibition was put together with Milan's ingenuity, '0' budget and with grateful thanks to exclusive loans from the Dodgson Family Trust. The exhibition marks the 150th Anniversary of Lewis Carroll's, 'Alice's Adventures in Wonderland'.



Art Exhibitions

Ian McArthur sold 6 paintings at his 'Caught in the Moment' art exhibition at Elgin Museum, 25% of sales going to Elgin Museum.



Sherin ElHegazi's 'Eastern Illusion' exhibition is now followed by James Byatt's 'The High Arctic', opening on 1st August and then Judith Sutherland's exhibition 'A life in stitches' in memory of Ann Corrigall in September, followed by the High School pupil's art exhibition in October. Please, don't miss them!

Festival of Museums 'Medieval Mayhem' – 16th May 2015



Some Museum staff, volunteers and dancers from Inverness 'Danse Ecosse'



Collecting sandwiches whilst spreading the word up the toon and Frances Wardhaugh sets the scene



Above left: Here comes trouble - Knight Graham, Merchant Marquardt, 'Father' Peter and 'Poor' Ritchie! Launching the new children's 'Young Marvels Club'. Above right: 4 generations of one family make medieval manuscripts with Anne Anderson.



All ages join in the Dancing with the Danse Ecosse ladies



Everyone gets a turn



Object handling



Being a Knight



*Hugely popular sword making with Graham Robertson
Derek' is transformed into a Medieval man (centre), consider where have you seen him before?*



Mary Shand tastes the goods..... before learning to share

Di and Mary, everyone who helped: THANK YOU! A great day all round with 259 visitors, including 157 adults and 102 children between the hours of 11.00am and 3.00pm! Thanks go to all of you volunteers who were coerced into making costumes (without patterns), and to the 14 volunteers who dressed up and took part on the day entertaining the visitors from the moment they stepped over the threshold (one even going barefoot at my persuading him of the authenticity of doing so), and to Rachel Smith who kindly loaned a number of costumes, including chainmail from members of The Historic Saltire Society located all around Scotland.



Nan Fettes and Mary Allan sewing headpieces - and just some of the costumes made for the event

Conservation

During the winter a number of art works were identified as needing conservation, repair, re-glazing or reframing. This has given a new lease of life to 6 items from the collection, two of which can be seen below.



Above left: Elgin Parish Council c1901 and above right: Boneshaker by Maureen Shaw

Coracles

This year I attended the Portsoy Boat Festival for only the second time, having been 'encouraged' by Dave Purvis, Honorary Chairman of the Coracle Society, to take part in the women's coracle regatta. The weather was awful on the Saturday so the regatta did not take place until the Sunday, when I could not make it. Two of our coracles were collected by members of the Society to show at the event (they wouldn't fit in my Fiat 500) including our 'mini' coracle which we use with school groups and the to-scale model by Peter Faulkner of our Spey Currach or coracle. Because of the weather the coracle tent was full, meaning good publicity for us and the Coracle Society. Volunteers for next year's coracle regatta anyone – July 2016?



Left: Coracle regatta. Right: Heather with Dave Purvis of the Coracle Society and our Spey Currachs

Thanks again go to BBC Alba presenter Charles Quinnell who raised £350 (not £300 as mentioned in the March edition of the newsletter) for paddling a coracle down the Tay Descent, along with fellow Coracle Society members, Bruce Watson and Tim Jones. The money raised will go towards conservation and re-interpretation of our Spey Currach – thought to be the oldest remaining coracle in the world!

Weddings

In June we had another successful wedding although it required 22 man hours to set up, host and dismantle causing the Management Committee to rethink the terms of hire and for me to ask for any willing volunteers to assist before, during and after the ceremony. Tidying up and putting the furniture back requires a bit of muscle so if you have any you can loan out – please let me know!



Above: The wedding of Claire Grant to Daniel Murdoch, and their flower girls, outside the museum

We have a further 2 weddings booked for 2015 and hope this positive pattern will continue in 2016; the museum is also available for private parties at very reasonable prices and we hope that you will remember to take up this opportunity with us. There is a generous reduction for Moray Society members!

The slightly boring bit!

I mean to dedicate the remainder of the year to documentation and accessioning; things have been consistently busy front of house and behind the scenes and I am getting really behind with the job I was primarily employed to do – recently donated items need my attention! If I seem a little less enthusiastic to help out than normal, that's the reason why; it's nothing personal, but I'm going to have to be strict with myself. I'm not able to be at the Museum full time to accomplish all that needs to be done or that I'd like to do.

A Mad Hatter's Tea Party!



A fund raiser for Elgin Museum

£2 donation, Young Marvels & Senior Citizens free!

Sat 8 August

11am to 3pm

in Elgin Museum and the Museum Hall

Charity no. SC017546 Company no. 106529

Saturday 4th July to 29th September

Alison Kinnaird Glass, Art Installation – ‘Unknown’

Theme: **‘Unknown’**

Artist: **Alison Kinnaird, M.B.E**



Lt Gen Sir Alistair Irwin opens the “Unknown” exhibition

The exhibition visits Elgin Museum as part of a tour of Scotland which began in the Parliament Building at Holyrood in Edinburgh. It was opened in the Museum by Lt Gen Sir Alistair Irwin, Chairman of Poppy Scotland on Friday 3rd July.

An army of figures, each is an individual, uniquely engraved, but they represent a universal soldier – each one is someone’s son, brother, father or friend. ‘Unknown’ must also refer to the thousands and thousands of ordinary people, casualties of conflict, dismissed and dehumanised in the phrase ‘collateral damage’.

Watch for

Saturday 1st August Last day of exhibition: Friday 28th August

Theme: **Svalbard: The High Arctic**

Artist: **James Byatt**

Following the passing of his father in 2012 James Byatt decided he would like to take his passion for photography abroad. He has been extremely lucky to be able to do this and in summer 2014 he travelled to Svalbard. This exhibition in aid of Moray and Nairn RDA includes some of the images he took on the trip.



Saturday 5th September Last day of exhibition: Friday 25th September

Theme: **A Life in Stitches –**

Artist: **Ann Corrigall MBE** with contributions from **Judith Sutherland, 1st Moray Stitches, NeedleArt North** and **The Tuesday Ladies Group**

Private Preview: 6-8pm, Friday 4th September 2015

A retrospective exhibition of art and embroidery by, or inspired by, the late Ann Corrigall, long-time member of The Moray Society and one time pupil of Creative Embroidery at Moray College – art and embroidery were lifelong interests, she exhibited annually with NeedleArt North in their collaboration with Forres Falconer Museum and was working on her latest piece when she died aged 93yrs old. She was awarded an M.B.E. when she was 80yrs old for her dedication to teaching people with Learning Disabilities.



Above: 'Standing Stones' and 'Elgin Cathedral' by Ann Corrigall

Saturday 3rd October 2015 Last day of exhibition: Saturday 31st October
Theme: Details to be confirmed
Artist: **Moray Senior School Pupils**

Contributed by Heather Townsend, Part-time Museum Assistant

Archaeology

As part of the Highland Archaeology Festival (www.highland.gov.uk/archaeology) the Museum is delighted to offer a series of activities with talks in the first week and family drop in sessions in the second week. Do come along.

Lunchtime talks from 12.30pm to 1pm

Mon 5 th October	'Life in Old Bones: messages from Roseisle Man' – Anne Anderson
Tue 6 th October	'The Medieval case –for food and drink' – Mary Shand
Wed 7 th October	'The Mummy – her story revealed' - David Marquardt
Thu 8 th October	'Bonnie Prince Charlie in Elgin' – Stuart Mackenzie
Fri 9 th October	'Early visitors to Elgin Museum – meet Sacred Waving Feather and others' - Mabel Rennie

Family Drop in sessions from 12noon to 2pm

Mon 12 th October	'Create an Excavation' – try our 'dig boxes'.
Tue 13 th October	'Food for thought' – what did the peoples of the past eat.
Wed 14 th October	'Poos from the Past' – you can guess what this is about.
Thu 15 th October	'Paper Excavation' – archaeology isn't just about digging in the dirt.
Fri 16 th October	'Rubbish!' – what you can find out about people from their rubbish.

Dandaleith Stone

We have just had today, the 28th of July , confirmation from the Heritage Lottery Fund that we have been awarded funding for the removal of the Dandaleith Stone to the Museum and its fitting into place in an updated Pictish display. It is hoped it will be in place for opening on March 26th, 2016.

Activities

The Committee has been busy putting together the Winter Lecture Series for the Museum Hall and have an exciting programme for the season. The talks for this year are

Thursday 24th September ; 7.30pm



‘Underworld encounters: recent archaeological research at the Covesea Caves’
Professor Ian Armit and Dr Lindsey Búster of the University of Bradford.

Thursday 29th October; 7.30pm



‘Scanning Elgin’s Past’
Professor Richard Laing of Robert Gordon University, Aberdeen.

Friday 13th November; 7.30pm



‘Pluscarden Abbey’
Rt Reverend Hugh Gilbert OSB

Museum Convenor’s News

Number 3

I am delighted to tell you that, after several months empty, our property at number 3 High St is let and I am even more delighted to tell you that, from 31st July, **Café Muse** will be open for business from 8am each morning offering a sit in and take away service. Eileen Stewart, an experienced local caterer, is, as I write, renovating the ground floor of the property. It will be great to have a café nearby with which we can co-operate and which will be useful for our visitors, many of whom are looking for catering at the Museum.

Elgin BID

As part of the Elgin BID programme, we have taken part in several events including the annual Scottish Theme Day which was marred by ‘Arctic’ weather. Full marks to Mary Shand, Joyce

Mitchell and Edna Cameron who braved the cold on the Museum stall for many hours in spite of a great lack of visitors.

STOP PRESS!!

**Eileen would like to welcome
all Moray Society members and all
Museum visitors to pop in to**

CAFE MUSE

**which opens at the
beginning of August
at Number 3 High St.**

Membership

PLEASE, PLEASE CHECK.

Can I please make another plea to all members? It would be very helpful if you could check how much you are paying on your standing order and, in fact, to check that you actually are paying by standing order. There are some who may think they are paying who are not. The current rates are given below for all to check that they are paying the correct amount.

With the increased cost of admin, I am afraid we cannot afford to provide, for example, newsletters, to those who do not pay. I am sure that, in the majority of cases, it is purely an oversight.

Current rates are:

CURRENT SUBSCRIPTION RATES

Adult £25 (each member)
Family (up to 2 adults and 2 children) £40
Student and Unemployed £10
Junior Membership £1
Corporate Membership £100
Rates confirmed at the 2015 AGM

For 2015, we now offer a Junior membership (Young Marvels) of the Museum with a token subscription of £1. The hope is to engage children and those under 18 and get them to feel an affiliation to the Museum which will carry on into adult life. Junior members will receive a twice yearly 'junior newsletter' as well as invitations to enjoy special events for junior members only. Below you will find an application form which you can send to me at the Museum or for more details, see the website www.elginmuseum.org.uk



YOUNG MARVELS APPLICATION

I would like to join the Elgin Museum Young Marvels Club. I enclose
my
Membership fee of £1 and look forward to hearing of the offers
available.

Name.....

Address.....

.....Postcode.....

Email address.....

(Please supply your parents' email address if you do not have
one.)

Parents - please sign below.

Name..... Signature.....

Bill Dalgarno
Membership Secretary

Moray Society Prize Draw

The Prize Draw has now been running for fourteen years and during that time has diverted almost £15,000 into the Moray Society current account. This total includes donations submitted through the Prize Draw fund but does not take into account any further income accrued from Gift Aid generated by eligible donations.

This has been of considerable benefit to our daily running expenses and continues to be so, given the huge inflationary price rises on all our utility bills.

The price of the tickets remains unchanged and at present there are 90 tickets in circulation at £10 each. These are all eligible for the 12 prizes during their lifetime (1 year/4 draws with 3 prizes each).

If you are not attracted by those odds then remember that you can still help the Society by purchasing one or more tickets in the sure knowledge that the only winner can be the Society itself.

All income generated by the draw goes directly into Moray Society funds apart from the prize money paid to the lucky winners.

Please address any questions or applications to me at the Museum (or email mabritch@keme.co.uk, or tel 01309 673597)

Moray Society Prize Draw

Please allocate me tickets in the Moray Society Prize Draw @ £10.00 each.

*I enclose my payment of £.....

*Please forward me a standing order mandate

Name.....

Address.....

Post Code..... *please delete if inappropriate

Ritchie Mabon, Prize Draw Co-ordinator

Diary Dates

Children's Summer Activities (11 – 2 each day)

Wed 29th July: Science Equipment Handling session
Thu 30th July: Science Fun
Wed 5th August: Archaeology Finds Handling session
Thu 6th August: "Dig Boxes"
Wed 12th August: WW1 Day – oral history and public items
Thu 13th August: WW1 Biplanes

Full details of events in newsletter and on website

Sat 1 st August	Svalbard: The High Arctic by James Byatt (to 28 th August)
Sat 5 th Sept	Anne Corrigan – a Retrospective
Thu 24 th Sept	Lecture – 'Underworld encounters'
Tue 29 th Sept	Senior Schools Art Exhibition (to be confirmed)
Mon 5 th Oct	Lecture – 'Life in Old Bones'
Tue 6 th Oct	Lecture – 'Medieval Food and Drink'
Wed 7 th Oct	Lecture – 'The Mummy story'
Thu 8 th Oct	Lecture – 'Bonnie Prince Charlie in Elgin'
Fri 9 th Oct	Lecture – 'Early visitors to Elgin Museum'
Mon 12 th Oct	Drop in session – 'Create an Exhibition'
Tue 13 th Oct	Drop in session – 'Food for Thought'
Wed 14 th Oct	Drop in session – 'Poos from the Past'
Thu 15 th Oct	Drop in session – 'Paper Excavation'
Fri 16 th Oct	Drop in session – 'Rubbish'
Tue 20 th Oct	Young members' event – 'Behind the Scenes at the Museum'
Thu 22 nd Oct	Halloween drop in craft activity
Thu 29 th Oct	Lecture – 'Scanning Elgin's Past'
Sat 1 st Nov	Museum – Final day of the Season
Fri 13 th Nov	Lecture – 'Pluscarden Abbey'



ELGIN MUSEUM – Scotland's oldest independent Museum –
Established 1836

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Email: curator@elginmuseum.org.uk

The Moray Society: Company No 106529 Charity No SC017546