



## SEASON'S GREETINGS

FROM  
ALL AT ELGIN MUSEUM

### Message from The President



The Christmas Newsletter has the effect of reminding me that another Museum year has flown past. But it also enables me to reflect on another successful season. Whenever I come in, the Museum appears and sounds busy and happy, and the Visitors' Book entries tell me of a satisfied clientele.

Thanks to the support of our Patrons and Johnston's of Elgin, Gordon & McPhail, Walkers of Aberlour and Baxters of Fochabers, we have remained open and with free entry to the Museum. We have been very pleased with our numbers which are 20% up on last year but, most particularly we have had many youngsters

enjoying our Museum. Our junior club "The Elgin Marvels", which we only started this year, already has 70 members. This is great because so often, in later years visitors often seem to remember a visit as a youngster.

The Dandaleith Stone has taken up a good deal of time and is proving an adventure for the Museum Management Committee. I use the word adventure because it is the size of a person but weighs as much as ten: this presents some challenges to getting it in and installed. However we have intrepid people working tirelessly to bring this great find and artefact to Elgin Museum. If I can I will want to watch the installation. We will let you know when it happens.

We have had excellent exhibitions all summer and they have supported the Museum. We are most grateful, especially to the Moray Schools which have supported our two school exhibitions during the year, and to Judith Sutherland, a relative of Anne Corrigan who organised a retrospective of Anne's work, which raised £1350 for the Museum.

Now to raise the matter that is seriously troubling the Board. Moray Council's museums budget supported us for some 20 years with a regular if modest contribution to our running costs and we were most grateful. It enabled us to remain independent and from their point of view we were, and are, a bargain tourist and educational attraction, for both visitors and local people. The world, however, has changed, and their Museums Department has been disbanded. If we wish to receive any funding now, it has to be from their Economic Development Department, in the form of a project grant with the aim of our becoming self-sustaining within 3 years.

Undoubtedly, there are opportunities we have not yet tapped to increase our *unrestricted* income, the form of income we desperately need to pay the regular bills. A simple but effective measure has been the increase in donations boxes around the Museum. Any money required for capital acquisitions or say, for Di's salary, comes from specific external grants, for example the Heritage Lottery Fund and Museums Galleries Scotland; we are also very grateful to our donors for certain restricted funds - but these *restricted* funds can make our bank balance appear unrealistically healthy.

We remain hopeful that the Council will see there is benefit to Moray, now and for the longer term, if the Museum is supported, while it explores new ways to attract income. I'm sure members are all aware of the service the Museum provides to the community, not least with its well-presented Grade A listed building in the High Street - a key player in the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere project with which we are working very closely, for example providing specialist local knowledge and images for the interpretation panels.

Finally after another season our volunteers and staff have delivered a great summer. It is time now to reflect, and also time for us yet again to tackle the winter essential work behind the scenes. The Board cannot thank our staff, volunteers and members enough. Nor can I.

Have a Happy Christmas and a Good New Year.

**Grenville Johnston, Hon. President**

PS. My Granddaughter, Sophie, aged 7, visited with Tinty (Mrs J's name) to see the model of *Elginia* in Buppa's (GSJ) museum because we have the Quarry above our house where she was found. She loved it!

## Archaeology report

### Well now!

The museum has been advised by NMS, Edinburgh that the timbers “found” during their preparations to relocate their stored collection are in a good condition. The timbers are believed to be of part of a Medieval well found during the 1976/77 excavations on the site of Nicholson’s Garage undertaken before the building of Alexandra Road. Dendrochronological examination of the wood has shown that it comes from trees felled around 1300AD.

Discussions are planned with other bodies as to the practicality of attempting a reconstruction, to determine how large an exhibit it would be and whether it might be displayed in the museum, or alternatively have the timbers stored somewhere.

### Highland Archaeology Festival

Elgin Museum was well represented at the Highland Archaeology Festival in Inverness. David Marquardt gave a talk on the Dandaleith Stone and volunteers manned a stall giving details of the Museum and its activities as well as selling items from the Museum shop.



*Elgin Museum at Highland Archaeology Festival in Inverness, 10th October  
Edna and Leanne admire the images of the Dandaleith Stone, while David Marquardt  
relaxes after giving his talk at the symposium*

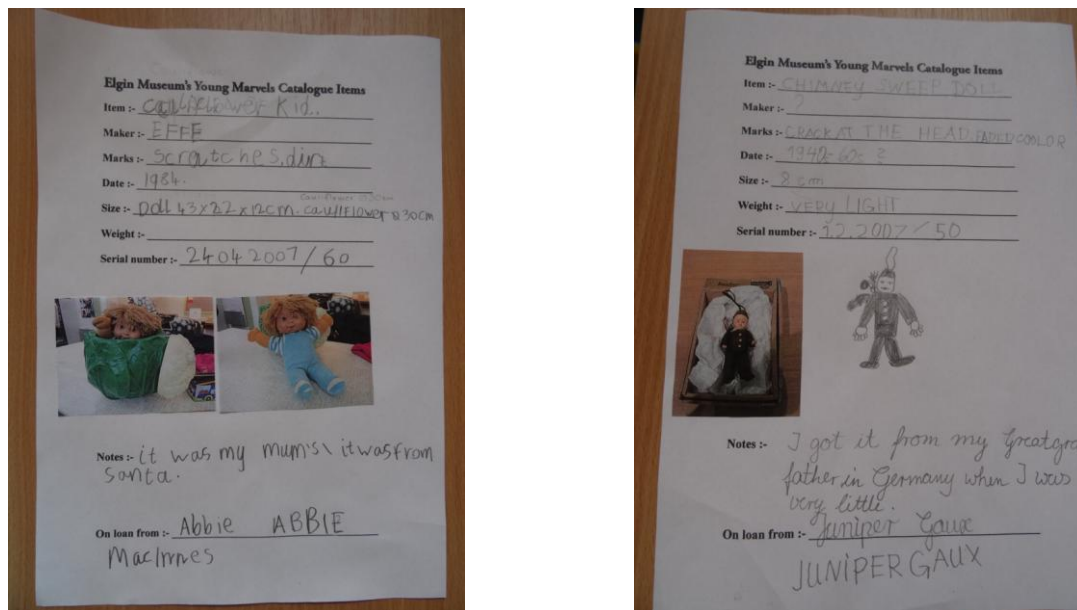
### David Marquardt.

### Education and Outreach December 2015

Merry Christmas to you all!

We have had a very busy year this year, with nearly 1000 visitors coming along to our Family drop-in sessions across the Summer and October school holidays. In addition we have had 70 junior members join our ‘Young Marvels’ since we started this year. We held a special activity for them in October, with the children

bringing in a family heirloom which they catalogued, followed by a tour of the North Store to see some of the treasures that we have.



*Two of the catalogued items*

Once again the trails around the museum have been very popular, with the Halloween trail being of particular interest. Some children have found the trail difficult, some easy, so we will work on developing this for next year.

There is a full plan of events happening next year, the main one being the 'Festival of Museums' event that will be held on Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> May 2016. The theme of this event will be 'The Picts' – linking with the arrival of the Dandaleith stone. Our Family session will also have a 'Pictish' feel to them. If you are able to help out at any of our events and activity sessions then please let the museum know.

We have an exciting project planned for the Young Marvels next year that links in with the Incorporated Trades artefacts and documents within the museum. Along with an exhibition of these artefacts sometime next year we will be making modern day 'Trades' banners. This project will run over the six weeks of the Summer holidays, so if you are able to help with the setting up of the exhibition or the making of the banners then please let us know. We are still planning to film this project so we are looking for anyone who would like to take part in a short film – either on the technical side or in front of the camera.

Lastly I would like to thank all of the volunteers who have helped out at the activity sessions over the past year. I couldn't have done it without your help.

**Di Hannan**

## **Spreading the word**

It's been a very busy open season and a great year for publicity for the Museum and its work. Even before we actually opened to the public there was the Geology Conference, organised by Dr Sue Beardmore, which brought visitors from all over the UK and abroad. Specialist publications carried information about the conference and the report of the speakers' lectures has been widely distributed.



After we opened at the end of March, a couple of museum representatives attended the Moray Speyside Tourist Summit, in Moray College. This was looking at ways of attracting tourists to the area, especially heritage tourists looking to connect with Moray's past. A lot of different ideas were discussed and contacts made.

In May we had a stall at the BID Scottish Theme Day in the centre of town. As I remember, it was freezing weather which fitted in with the theme, because we had all turned blue by the finish! Also in May there was the Medieval Day, as part of Festival of Museums. Thankfully that was indoors! It was a great success and I know that a number of overseas visitors came, as well as local Moray folk. Everyone seemed to enjoy the activities and costumes. We certainly gained a lot of publicity through it - although I felt some of the photos printed were less than flattering to some of us!

There were a number of art exhibitions throughout the season and many were featured in the papers. The Museum also hosted the Alison Kinnaird etched glass installation, "Unknown" with an evening reception held in the main gallery. This was mentioned widely, in many different publications.

The summer children's activities went very well, with information going out on Facebook, Twitter and the Museum website as well as through the papers. We had a Mad Hatter's Tea Party fund raiser which featured in the local press. The Northern Scot also decided to campaign for the Museum when it realised that our Council funding was going to be stopped. There was hardly a week the Museum didn't appear at least once in the paper.



*Left: Di, Mary and Jenny get set for the Mad Hatters Tea Party and  
Right: Elgin Museum display at the recent Wedding Fair*

The Museum has teamed up with the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere initiative on a number of occasions and they are generously funding three of the Moray Society's talk this winter. Some volunteers are going to help at the Victorian Christmas event in December and we hope to continue working together next year.

With the winter work of cataloguing, changing exhibits, cleaning etc being done, there are fewer events which we can use to market the Museum, at the present. However, next year is looking very exciting, with the Dandaleith Stone coming,

the Festival of Museums day being organized, art exhibitions booked, children's activities and The Young Marvels events being planned and lots more. These will enable us to spread the word about the great work of Elgin Museum and remind people of this great cultural, community and tourist attraction in Moray.

Mary Shand  
Volunteer, Publicity and Marketing



*Held in the Museum recently was a display of costumes from the recently released film of Macbeth*

## **MUSEUM CONVENOR UPDATE**

### **Thank You**

Huge thanks are due to our Patron, Marjorie Walker, for a most generous donation of £5000 to the funds of the Moray Society. Marjorie's generosity will prove very helpful since the donation comes without restriction on its use. The Society and the Museum find it relatively easy to raise funds for capital projects or for specific activities. It is trying to get funding to pay the gas and other bills or to keep the roof on the building that we find difficult. Once again, our profound thanks.

### **Behind the Scenes with the Collection**

The Museum may be closed to the public but, as you can see from the pictures below, much is still happening behind the blue door. The Kinneddar stone display has been dismantled and the floor of the cabinet opened up to investigate what is below the floorboards.

We have had a meeting with a representative from Graciela Ainsworth Sculpture Conservation and local contractors in order to work out how to get the Dandaleith Stone into place. A shoe has to be made for the stone and a base built up under the dais to support the stone when in place. It is hoped that all of the notable stones in our collection will be in the new display area, including stones previously kept in storage. The rest of the early bronze to early medieval archaeology display area will be revamped to show the inter-relation of the exhibits. We also hope to be able to put the Spey log boat back on display, suspended above the coracle area.



*The rear gallery being readied for the Dandaleith Stone and the new 'Stones' display.*



*Martin Cook works on the butterfly and moth collection (left) and it looks as though a bomb has hit the renewal of the WW1 display*

## Quiz Night

Thanks are due to Edna and Hamish Cameron who organised a very successful quiz night in the Museum in aid of funds. I am delighted to say that almost £400 was raised and thanks are due to all who attended.

## OBITUARY

We regret to report the death of John Grigor, a great friend of the Museum, who died on the 10<sup>th</sup> of November and whose funeral service was held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of November in St Columbas Church.

John's family were carpenters and had a business which was part of the Incorporated Trades of Elgin. As Boxmaster, John ensured that the Squarewrights remaining funds and archives were passed to the Museum when the Trades disbanded in May of last year. John, who was 90 earlier this year was often to be seen during the summer, tending the garden area in front of the Museum, having travelled from Forteach Avenue on his mobility scooter carrying all the tools required for gardening.

He will truly be missed by all at the Museum.



## Pictorial News



*A painting by Shannon Marley of Elgin Academy, which was one of the features of the Secondary Schools Art exhibition*



*Some of the volunteers who attended the end of season Thank you party*



*Professor Richard Laing of Robert Gordon University giving his lecture on the scanning of Elgin High Street, part of the Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere project*



## Museum Visit



We were delighted to be honoured by the visit by a descendant of John Brander of Pitgaveny whose entrepreneurship took him to Tahiti where he married Princess Titaua.

We were asked if we knew someone who spoke French and could act as a local guide, and Mabel Rennie kindly offered to show Yvette Brander and her partner Mauri Tapu around and take them to Pitgaveny.

They were very pleased to see pictures of the objects John Brander had donated to the Museum, and presented Heather and Janet with shell necklaces – flower garlands being impossible for travelling. Yvette also gave a donation to the Museum

**Bill Dalgarno**

**Museum Management Committee Convenor**

## Membership

**PLEASE, PLEASE CHECK.**

Can I please make another request 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 27 members paying less than the annual subscription with some paying only £15 instead of £25 and 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.

During 2015, we have been offering a 'Junior' membership of the Museum with a token subscription of £1. I am delighted to say that we now have a total of 70 junior members who, we hope, will come to feel an affiliation to the Museum which will carry on into adult life. Junior members will receive a twice yearly 'junior newsletter'.

Junior members will be receiving a newsletter very shortly and, as Di has reported, we have already held a training session for members in order that they can find out what happens behind the scenes.

During 2016, we will again be running the special offer for new members of £5 for the first year (£10 for family) on condition that a standing order is completed from the following year. If current members know of any friends who would like to join to help support the large amount of work being done by the Museum and the

Society, please get them to complete an application form, which can be downloaded from the Museum website.

Current rates are:

**CURRENT SUBSCRIPTION RATES**

Adult £25 (each member)  
Family (up to 2 adults and 2 children) £40  
Student (ES40 & under 18's) £10  
Junior Membership (Elgin Marvels) £1  
Corporate Membership £100

**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](mailto: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

Please address any questions or applications to me at the Museum (or tel 01309 673597).

**Ritchie Mabon,**  
**Prize Draw Co-ordinator**

## CAN YOU HELP?

James Welsh, who is a Patron of the Society, and who has been very supportive of the Museum and the Society would like to enlist the help of fellow members of the Moray Society in identification of some of the detail on some pieces of Elgin Silver. Any answers, please, to [curator@elginmuseum.org.uk](mailto:curator@elginmuseum.org.uk).



Elgin silver Brooch by William Stephen Ferguson  
Punched on back: WF, thistle and ELGIN



Clan badge possibly by Alexander & Charles Fowler  
Punched on back: ACF Can anyone identify the clan?



Clan badge by James Thompson MacKay II Punched on back: JTM in gothic script and ELGIN  
Can anyone identify the clan?



Snuff mull possibly by Alexander & Charles Fowler  
with later inscription 'FROM R.F. TO A. SIMPSON  
1900 Punched on inside of lid ACF ACF  
Who is R.F. ?  
Who is A. Simpson?



Medal of SPEY AVEN AND FIDDICHSIDE FARMER  
CLUB 1883 by James Thompson MacKay II  
NO ENGRAVING ON BACK Punched on bottom of base  
MACKAY ELGIN  
Any suggestion for what it was issued?

## Dates for Your Diary

- Fri 29<sup>th</sup> January: Food through the Ages – talk by Mary Shand 2.30pm  
*Sponsored by Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere*
- Fri 26<sup>th</sup> February: Moray Birdlife; a century of change – talk by Martin Cook  
*Sponsored by Castle to Cathedral to Cashmere* 2.30pm
- Mon 14<sup>th</sup> March: Volunteer training and induction 2pm
- Fri 18<sup>th</sup> March: Dandaleith Stone unveiling 3pm (Details to be confirmed)
- Tues 22<sup>nd</sup> March: Volunteer training and induction 10am
- Sat 26<sup>th</sup> March: Opening day of 2016 Season
- Wed 6<sup>th</sup> April: Children's activity – Queen Elizabeth 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday
- Fri 29<sup>th</sup> April: Moray Society AGM 6.30pm followed at 7.30pm by  
Talk on "Wildcats"
- Fri 13<sup>th</sup> May: Night at the Museum (Details to be confirmed)
- Sat 14<sup>th</sup> May: Festival of Museums – "The Picts" 11am to 3pm
- Sat 18<sup>th</sup> June: Coffee Morning in Austins Tearooms

### School Holiday activities:

5<sup>th</sup>, 12<sup>th</sup>, 19<sup>th</sup>, 26<sup>th</sup> July and 2<sup>nd</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> August: 11am to 1pm  
Young Marvels – Incorporated Trades project

7<sup>th</sup>, 14<sup>th</sup>, 21<sup>st</sup>, 28<sup>th</sup> July and 4<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> August: 11am to 2pm  
Families drop in activities - Early Scottish tribes



1 High Street, Elgin, Moray, IV30 1EQ – Tel: 01343 543 675 – Email: [curator@elginmuseum.org.uk](mailto:curator@elginmuseum.org.uk)  
**ELGIN MUSEUM** – Scotland's oldest independent Museum – Established 1836

**The Moray Society: Company No 106529 Charity No SC017546**