

# Elgin Museum Update July 2020



Dear Museum Volunteers, Moray Society members and other friends of Elgin Museum,

Welcome once more to another Elgin Museum Update! If you missed the June (or May) editions, we'd recommend you visit the [website](#) - packed with activities, news, jokes and more, they're sure to help you through the not so sunny days of summer!

In this Update:

- **Now and Next at Elgin Museum**
- **The Moray Society**
- **Our "Virtual Museum"**
- **Mary's Quiz**
- **Geology**
- **Archaeology**
- **Historical Recipes**
- **Janet's Jokes**
- **Books for Sale**

As ever, please do let us know if you have any suggestions for what to feature in future Updates - or even if you would like to contribute. Please email [curator@elginmuseum.org.uk](mailto:curator@elginmuseum.org.uk) with your ideas!

## Now and Next at Elgin Museum



Since our last update, many of the "lockdown" measures have begun to ease, as life starts to slowly and cautiously return some kind of "normal". Scottish Government guidance allowed museums, galleries and libraries to reopen from the 15th July 2020, but, as indicated in the last Update, for Elgin Museum there is much more to do before we will be able to safely welcome our staff, volunteers and visitors back through the doors.

The Exec Group (Bill, Graham, Janet and Claire) continue to ensure the safety and security of the Museum and its collections, and have been inundated with guidance on "what next" - from the Scottish and UK Governments, the Health & Safety Executive, and the Museums' Sector. This guidance is being used as a basis for a Risk Management Plan for the Museum, which will identify what changes we'll need to put in place to ensure the well-being of our staff and volunteers - as many of you are no doubt aware, our building does not currently lend itself very well to social-distancing! We've also been receiving guidance on this from our Museum Mentor, Doug MacBeath.

The plan remains to get our house in order with the undertaking of an Inventory of the Museum's collections, and to use this as a springboard for improving how the collections can be better managed and how they can be used in future.

Throughout lockdown, we have been delighted with the ongoing support which our Volunteers, Moray Society Members and other Friends of the Museum have continued to offer. In particular, we would like to show our appreciation to all who have made a donation to the Museum. It is only with your support that we can continue to operate, even more so in these challenging times, so thank you all for your generosity.

## The Moray Society



### *Your chance to support Elgin Museum!*

Since our last Update, we are pleased to say we have welcomed several new members to The Moray Society. If you are not already a member, and would like to show your support for Elgin Museum, please consider signing up. All of your membership subscription goes straight into Museum, to help with day-to-day running costs, collections care, funding activities and more.

Our special introductory offer means that from as little £15 per year (for single membership) you can help to make sure Elgin Museum can stay open for all to enjoy. More details on how to join can be found on the [website](#).

## Our "Virtual Museum"



Have you subscribed to our [YouTube Channel](#)? If not, you may have missed our latest video - introducing you to our wonderful [Pictish and Early Medieval Carved Stone Collection](#). This video was made possible thanks to Digital Grant from Museums Galleries Scotland. With this grant we have been able to purchase "vlogging" kits and laptops, so stay tuned for more video content in the coming months. If there is a particular subject or theme you'd like to see covered, please let us know by dropping us an email.

We'd also like to hear from you if you'd be willing to part in a series of short films about *What Elgin Museum Means to You*. The call is open to all - as long as you are happy to appear on camera! If you're interested in taking part, please contact Claire by email at [curator@elginmuseum.org.uk](mailto:curator@elginmuseum.org.uk).

If you've already run out of ideas this Summer, there are lots of family-friendly activities and quizzes to [download from our website](#) and our [Young Marvels page](#) as well as our [Elgin Museum online jigsaw puzzles](#). Or why not send them to a friend or relative to try?

Have you been keeping up to date with the [Museum Musings](#) blog? Since our last Update, two new posts have been added: the first, from volunteer Martin Cook, who shares an insight into his recent work at Elgin Museum with our [natural history collection](#); and new to the blog, volunteer and Moray Society Board Member Mary Shand gets [hot & bothered over fans](#)!

As ever, if you'd like to write a piece for the blog, contact us by email at [curator@elginmuseum.org.uk](mailto:curator@elginmuseum.org.uk)

And remember to find and follow us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#) and [Twitter](#) for more museum fun, give us a like, share our posts, and help us to tell the world about Elgin Museum!

## Mary's Quiz



Mary Shand, Museum Volunteer and Moray Society Board Member, has put her quizzing hat on again and created a brand new quiz for you all to try. In this month's quiz all of the answers can be found on the Elgin Museum website. Feel free to let us know on Twitter, Facebook or by email if you score full marks! Answers at the end (no cheating!).

### *Museum History*

1. In 1836 a group of Elgin men met to discuss setting up a museum in Elgin. Name 2 of them and their professions.
2. How did the "ladies of Elgin" help pay for the museum?
3. Who donated the Museum hall?

### *Collections*

4. How many items has the Museum in its collection?
5. How many years do earliest fish fossils in the collection date back?
6. Where can you see many historical images of Moray?

### *The Moray Society*

7. What was the original name of the Moray Society?
8. What is the name of Elgin Museum's mentor?
9. In the "Elgin Museum Highlights" set of films, what item is Dr. Fraser Hunter talking about?

## Geology



The latest Scottish Geology Trust newsletter provides details of upcoming events, including the upcoming *Why geology matters in Scotland* Online Seminar Series which runs every Tuesday from 4th August to 8th September 2020. For more details, or to subscribe, view their [newsletter online](#) or visit the [Scottish Geology Trust website](#).

Also keep an eye out for the Scottish Geology Festival, running this year from the 12th September to 31st October 2020 - more details to follow.

And for some inspiration of where to see geology in Scotland, the [51 Best places to see Scotland's Geology](#) might be able to help. It includes sites in Moray, Highlands and Aberdeenshire as well as further afield - but do remember to follow the Scottish Fossil Code and Scottish Outdoor Access Code while exploring geological sites.

## Archaeology



As lockdown measures ease, now is a great time to begin to explore some fascinating archaeology and heritage sites across Moray – and beyond! Some of our favourite local sites to visit are the Sueno Stone in Forres, Duffus Castle, Elgin Castle on Lady Hill, Burghead Fort, or how about exploring the historic railways of Moray – and see how many remnants of this forgotten era you can spot. Further afield in Aberdeenshire, Claire in her day job has produced a series of historic trails leaflets, available online, which explore some of the best [stone circles](#), [pictish stones](#) and [historic churches](#) across the region. You can also find suggestions for other sites to visit in Moray, Aberdeenshire, Angus and Aberdeen City on the [Aberdeenshire Archaeology Service website](#).

There are also still lots of great online events, activities and learning opportunities available.

If you're new to Archaeology, why not try the University of Reading's free online course [Archaeology: from Dig to Lab and Beyond](#) – a great introduction to the subject.

Explore the concept of [Heritage Under Threat](#) with the University of Leiden's free online course - What is your heritage? Who defines heritage? Why is heritage under threat? How can we protect heritage? This course discusses these issues and more.

Or travel back in time through Scottish history by examining early modern Scottish handwriting with a free course from the University of Glasgow: [Early Modern Scottish Palaeography: Reading Scotland's Records](#).

If you're struggling for ideas for the kids in the school holidays - or for visiting grandchildren, nieces, nephews etc - and you've already tried all of Elgin Museum's [online activities](#), Archaeology Scotland also have some fun [archaeology](#) and [heritage](#) learning activities online.

The latest newsletter from ARCH (Archaeology for Communities in the Highlands) also includes links to events, activities and more (covering the Highlands and Moray too) – to sign up for these newsletters, please contact Susan Kruse at [info@archhighland.org.uk](mailto:info@archhighland.org.uk)

### Scottish Archaeology in the news

- [Mysteries of the 2,500-year-old butter found at the bottom of a loch](#)
- [New light cast on Scotland's Bronze Age mountain dwellers on Arran](#)
- [Top seven Scottish archaeology models on Sketchfab](#)
- [8000 years of Deer and Aden: Aberdeenshire's lost monastery and country park mysteries](#)

## Historical Recipes



This month's historical recipe is a delicious summer dessert from the Renaissance period. If you've been inspired to try your hand at historical pastry, let us know on Twitter, Facebook or by email (and save us a slice!).

### Orange and Pistachio Tart

(Serves 4)

## **Pastry**

225g plain flour

125g butter

50g ground almonds

1 tbsp sugar

1 tsp grated orange zest

Pinch salt

1 egg, beaten

## **For the filling**

3 sweet oranges or 4 clementines, peeled, finely sliced

50g sugar

1 amaretto biscuit, crumbled

1 tsp ground cinnamon

15g unsalted butter

55g shelled pistachios, coarsely ground

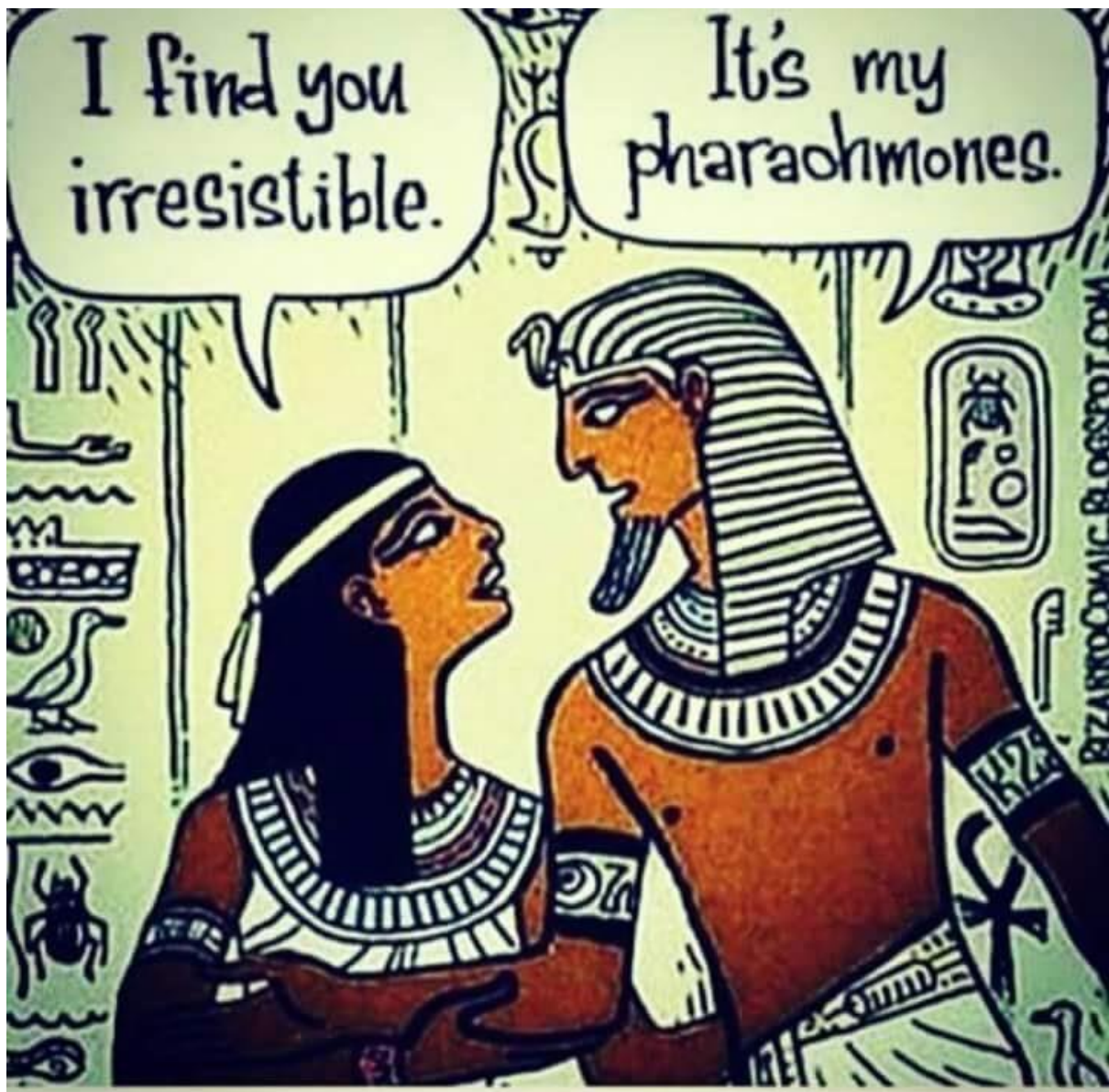
## **Method**

Make the pastry in a food processor, in the usual way (as they would have done in the Renaissance period...!), until a stiff dough forms. Chill for 1 hour.

Pre-heat oven to 150C / Gas mark 2. Roll out pastry and use it to line a 23cm/9in pie tin. Line with foil, fill with baking beans and bake blind for 30 minutes.

Remove beans and foil. Arrange the orange slices in the pastry case, overlapping. Sprinkle over the sugar, amaretto crumbs and a little cinnamon, dot with the butter. Bake in a moderate oven (180-190C / Gas mark 4) for 30 minutes, sprinkling on the nuts 5 minutes before the end of the time.

For more historical recipes, visit the [Museum Musings](#) blog!



*What is a poorly dressed dinosaur called?*

*An eye-saur*

*What do call two similar dinosaurs?*

*Thesauruses*

*What's big, white, furry and always points North?*

*A Polar Bearing!*

How many druids does it take to change a light bulb?

Sixteen. One to change the light bulb, and fifteen to realign the stones!

*Why didn't the skeleton cross the road?*

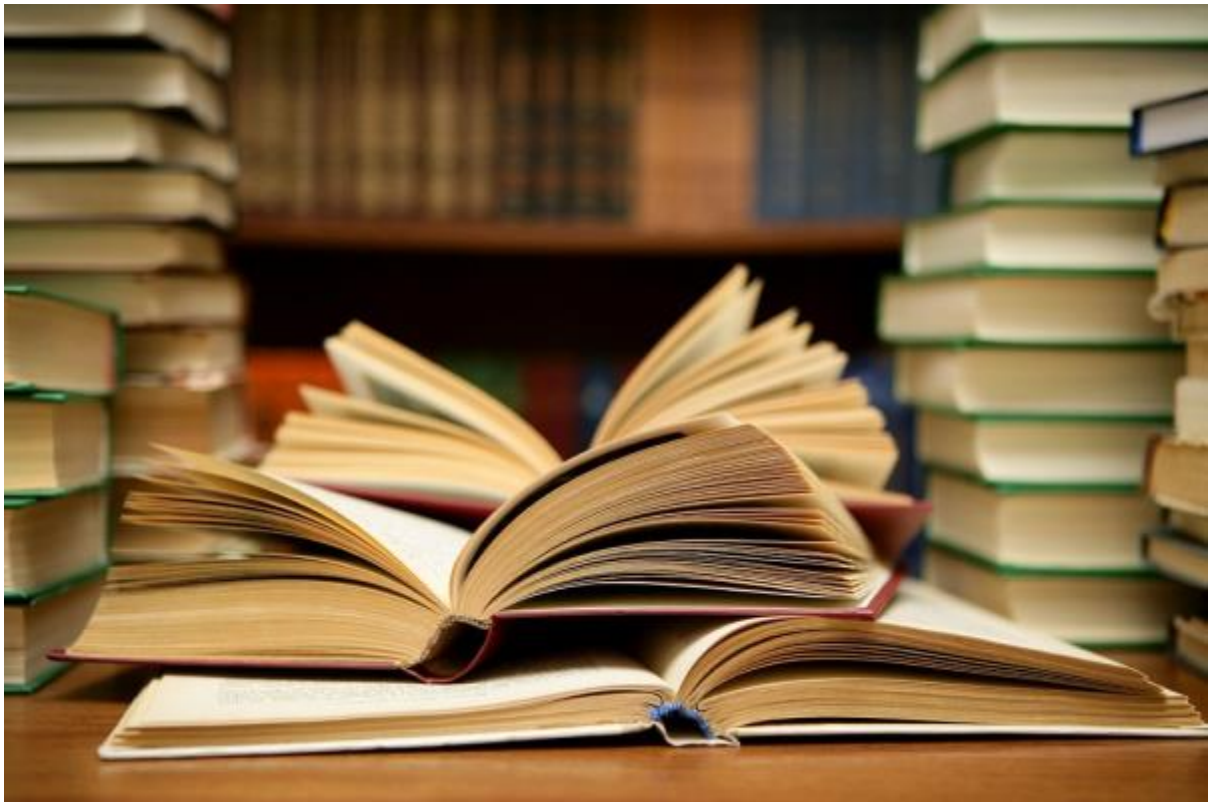
*He didn't have the guts.*

*(and Claire's favourite...)*

A mummy, covered in chocolate and nuts, has recently been discovered in Egypt...

Archaeologists believe it may be Pharaoh Rocher!

## Books for Sale



If you find yourself with time on your hands, and you've already run out of books to read, Elgin Museum may be able to help. Although the Museum is currently closed to visitors, you can still [purchase books from our shop](#) to enjoy at home. There are a variety of publications to choose from, whether your interest is in local history, archaeology, geology or the natural world.

Find out more about the history of Elgin in Mary Byatt's "*Elgin: The Story of the High Street and Cloves*"; gen up on fossils in Nigel Trewin's "*Fossils Alive!*"; discover more about the birdlife of Moray (and beyond) in "*The Breeding Birds of North-East Scotland*", edited by Ian Francis and Martin Cook; get a crash-course in Scottish history and prehistory with the "*Wee Guides*" books; find out more

about the Picts with the Groam House publications; or keep the kids and grandkids busy with the superColour Heroes series of fun historical colouring books.

For details on these and the many other books available, including prices, please visit our [website](#). Payment can be made via Paypal or by cheque, and books will be posted to you within 5 working days. If you are interested in purchasing any of our books, and for details of P&P charges, please email us at [curator@elginmuseum.org.uk](mailto:curator@elginmuseum.org.uk)

Monies raised from the sales of books helps fund the day-to-day running costs of Elgin Museum - so it's a great way of helping us out!

That's all for this Elgin Museum Update!



If you have enjoyed this newsletter, any of our Virtual Museum content, or would just like to make a donation to help support Elgin Museum, please visit our [Paypal donations page](#) or for alternative donation options, please contact us by email: [curator@elginmuseum.org.uk](mailto:curator@elginmuseum.org.uk)

As ever, we end with a note of thanks to you all for your continued support of Elgin Museum - and a request that you keep in touch! Let us know if you have any ideas for online content or fundraising activities, or if you would like to contribute to the next Update or our Museum Blog.

Thank you!

*Wishing you a happy and healthy summer,*

*All the best from the Museum Emergency Executive Committee*

**Please feel free to contact us by email, and do let us know if you enjoyed this Update! Don't forget to visit the [website](#), find and follow us on social media - and why not tell a friend about Elgin Museum online?**

Elgin Museum

[www.elginmuseum.org.uk](http://www.elginmuseum.org.uk)

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**QUIZ ANSWERS:**

How did you do? Let us know, by email or on [twitter](#) or [facebook](#)!

1. The four names are: Rear Admiral Duff, John Lawson (banker), Patrick Duff (Town Clerk), Isaac Forsyth (bookseller)
2. They held a bazaar
3. The Pennycuick sisters
4. Roughly 36,000
5. 450 million years
6. Elgin Museum Side Hall
7. The Elgin Scientific Society
8. Doug MacBeath
9. "The Birnie Budgie", a tiny Roman bird-shaped mount