



SEASONS GREETINGS
Santa had an accident this year!
Greetings from all at
Elgin Museum

Vice-President's Welcome

I was delighted to see so many of you at our 180th anniversary events, at our Victorian Soirée and our Victorian Fundraising Bazaar. We raised over £1100 at the Bazaar, and everyone had a great time with our various Side Show games – including Mr Ingram, who came down from his tower room to join the party! The Silent Auction which started on the 25th October will continue online shortly. Please bear with us while we arrange the technology, and we'll share details in due course – some excellent prizes up for grabs and all monies raised will go towards our exciting building redevelopment project.

More news on our large-scale building redevelopment: I'm thrilled to confirm that we are finally taking the project forward, with the intention to submit our full planning & listed building applications to Moray Council by February 2024. Once our application is in, we will then start our fundraising campaign in earnest, building on our 180th anniversary events. We look forward to sharing updates with you as works progress and hope you will continue to support us through what will be a challenging period!

Our 2023 Summer Season has been excellent, with almost 5,700 visitors since we opened in April. We also saw a welcome return of overseas visitors this season, with more than double the number we saw in 2022. Thanks to our Visitor Services Volunteers and to Jo, our Seasonal Weekend Visitor Steward, for providing such a warm welcome to all of our visitors and generating such good feedback!

Lastly, I would like to take this opportunity to offer my thanks to all of our dedicated Volunteers who have gone above and beyond this year, welcoming visitors to the Museum, working with collections, delivering outreach events to school and community groups and helping to plan and deliver our programme of events. I hope to see you all at our Volunteers' Party at the end of November!

Claire Herbert

Vice President



A glimpse of the proposals for the Museum

Obituary



WALKER - Marjorie (Aberlour) Peacefully, after a long illness with dementia, at Speyside Care Home, on Sunday, 22nd October, 2023, Marjorie Walker OBE, of Aberlour, aged 83 years, a much loved mother of David, a caring mother-in-law of Beverley, a devoted gran of Josh and the late Brodie and great-gran, a sadly missed sister and friend to many.

All of us at Elgin Museum and The Moray Society have joined in sending regrets to the Walker family on the passing of our long -time patron, Marjorie Walker. During her time as patron, Marjorie was very generous in her support of the activities of Elgin Museum.

Happy Birthday Elgin Museum, 180 years young!

Thank you to everyone who attended (and helped to deliver!) our Victorian Soiree on the 25th October, celebrating the 180th anniversary of Elgin Museum first opening to visitors. The Victorian Portraits were a particular favourite at the Soiree - see below if you can recognise any of our Volunteers!



As noted elsewhere, we did launch a Silent Auction on the night and intend to continue this online over the coming weeks - once we have determined the best method to do this! Stay tuned, and we'll let you all know once it's live!

How Bazaar!

We followed the evening event with our Victorian-inspired fundraising Bazaar on the 4th & 5th November, replicating the efforts of the Ladies of Elgin who came to the rescue in 1843 by holding a fundraising bazaar to raise the funds needed to complete the original building project. We were delighted to welcome so many people to the 2-day event, and great fun was had by all as they attempted our various games and puzzles throughout the Museum!



We plan to hold another sale in the new year, as we still have an excellent selection of second-hand books, artwork, and bric-a-brac available, so keep an eye on your inbox for news of this, and other, events in 2024.

Thanks go to our sponsors for both of our 180th events:

Grigor & Young, The GlenAllachie Distillery, Innes House, Visit Moray Speyside, Duncan & Todd, Glen Moray, Room to Bloom florists, Strand Hair Salon, Walker's Shortbread, Marks & Spencers, Baxters of Speyside, H & M Designs, Johnston's of Elgin, Tesco.

Archaeology - past, present, future

Treasure Trove Review

Elgin Museum was specially recommended by the Treasure Trove Unit to the King's and Lord Treasurer's Remembrancer (KLTR) as a go to museum as they begin the first full Review of the Treasure Trove Code of Practice for 20 years. The significance of the Code and the engagement by Elgin Museum became increasingly important with the rise in metal detecting by members of the public in Moray. We have the double effect of more 'chance finds' of archaeological interest being unearthed and reported with potential benefits for public enjoyment and research in museums, balanced by the downside of unethical and illegal detecting – theft. Mainly through the attention given by Heather, our Museum Assistant, we have built up a rapport with many in the local detecting community, and also with staff in the TTU.

We had a visit in person in October from two of the KLTR leaders of the Review, admirably hosted by David, our Buildings Volunteer. This was followed by a Teams meeting with Heather and myself where they heaped embarrassing praises on the Museum and all who sail in her! A most productive meeting and gladdening to be listened to so attentively.

We will have further opportunities to contribute to the Review through the Scottish Governments's Archaeology in Museums Working Group – I thought Elgin Museum should be represented here to balance the input of the national, regional and university museums! The Group has just received external funding to be able to progress work done pre-Covid towards what will be most useful to us: a complete restructuring of the relationship between the assemblages deriving from formal excavations and the repository museums. An end to bags of soil and unconserved ferrous objects?

Treasure Trove allocations

As an Accredited museum, we are eligible to bid for objects claimed by the Crown as Treasure Trove, which are then allocated by the Scottish Archaeological Finds Allocation Panel (SAFAP). We pay the *ex gratia* payment to the finder. Yes, the finder not the landowner. Detectorists must of course have permission from the landowner but there is no reward for them to police any failure of detectorists to report finds on their land. We try both to display finds from the stores illustrating particular stories, but also newly allocated finds, for detectorists to see results beyond their financial reward: to show how they add to our understanding of Moray's occupational history. The last allocation was relatively simple, just 3 objects including a chunk of a cannon from Cullen Castle (illegally detected on the site of the Scheduled Monument), but in September: a delivery of 251 items associated with the environs of Spynie Castle. I was exceedingly grateful to the finder for selecting 20 for display! All this generates a considerable amount of cataloguing for Heather, but also attracts 3 or 4 researchers a year to visit – or to send in email queries – more time-

consuming work, but usually generating papers that contribute to our collections archive. What we are here for, but we need more funding, external archaeological support – and time.

Conservation

The Iron Age gold ribbon torc from the Law Farm Hoard, near Urquhart, was damaged probably as a consequence of its display in Glasgow for a Scottish Gold exhibition. It is now with the conservator at Hopetoun House for assessment as to how best to repair what is an old soldered break. Once repaired, it will be supported on a bespoke stand which will be more robust to move. While it's in Edinburgh, Fraser Hunter will supervise (non-destructive) research including Scanning Electron Microscopy (SEM).

Not archaeology, but history. Over the winter at Hopetoun House we also have for conservation, the 18th century embroidered 'Map of the World as it was Known Then' and John Martin's original 19th Century geological map. Both these projects will require external grant funding which we hope to acquire in the Spring.

The Iron Age

Torcs have been re-assessed as Iron Age (IA) not Late Bronze Age, hence Fraser's interest. There are a couple of Treasure Trove items that we have allowed National Museums Scotland (NMS) to bid for recently but expecting in return to have them on loan in Elgin - and for an associated IA 'event', collaboration over further archaeological display cases and an update on the Birnie case. Given realistic time scales, we are looking at a discussion visit from Fraser in the New Year towards an event in 2025. There should be updates available by then for post-excavation research from Birnie, Clarkly Hill, the Covesea Caves and of course Gordon Noble's 'Northern Picts'. The state of the fabric of Elgin Museum by then is guesswork, but we have to be positive!

Janet Trythall, Archaeology Volunteer 8/11/2023

Collections Management Group and the Virtual People Cabinet

The collaboration with Volunteer Doug Stewart began in conjunction with the approach by National Museums Scotland (NMS) and their project looking at Scotland's museums' African and Caribbean Collections. Their Coordinator, was welcomed to Elgin in late December 2022 and was shown a number of objects following a list prepared by Bill Dalgarno as possibly meeting their criteria. Their visits to Scottish museums lead to an exciting virtual presentation. With specialist input, several re-identifications and reassessments of function and significance had been made in addition to providing a window onto the rich and diverse examples of world culture we host.

At that point it became clear that we had very incomplete information about some named donors, and more importantly, the donor was not necessarily the collector. In addition, as outlined by Doug, Museums Galleries Scotland (MGS) launched their project, 'Empire, Slavery and Scotland's museums'. As we moved on to consider the Museum's objects in the light of both projects, it became essential that we gathered more accurate information about the circumstances of collection. Doug has left us with an invaluable database. The NMS project has somewhat slowed down as the coordinator is on maternity leave and the expected final report will not be ready until next year. We continue to work with the deputy appointed by NMS and there will be a virtual meeting on related collections care, Reveal and Connect, in November 2023.

I had discussed with Doug a project 'to tell it how it is', and clarify our Museum's historical acceptance of objects with possible connections through their collectors to slavery and colonialism. I gained practical and sector advice from two NESHN meetings; one in Aberdeen: 'Exhibitions Day' and a virtual meeting, 'Breaking the Interpretative Chains'. Various approaches were showcased. I intend to develop object interpretation over the winter, providing additional text, as suggested by Doug for the slave yoke, and in a readily identifiable format distinct from more general interpretation. The Scottish Government asked MGS to address the 'Empire, Slavery and Scotland's museums' concept, but subsequently has not been entirely clear how or what will be carried forward.

We have a Restitution and Repatriation Policy and Procedure which is published on our website. It has long been our expectation to deal with cases as and should they arise and along the lines of our document. Proactive 'return' is fraught with danger – we have a duty of care to our collections and clearly must for starters, ascertain the identity of the claimant, their right to claim and their plan for the object's future. From the outset, I took advice from Neil Curtis, Head of Museums and Special Collections, University of Aberdeen, as he has extensive experience in matters of museum ethics and repatriations and Dr John Giblin, Keeper, Department of Global Arts, Cultures and Design, NMS.

I am happy to speak with any of our members who would like further information on any of these topics.

Janet Trythall, member CMG 6/11/2023

Virtual People Cabinet: Consultation & Recommendations

In the Museums Galleries Scotland publication 'Empire, Slavery and Scotland's museums guide to the consultation', we see (page 12) the target to "better recognise and represent a more accurate portrayal of Scotland's colonial and slavery history."

<https://www.museumsgalleriesscotland.org.uk/research/empire-slavery-scotlands-museums-project-research/>

This narrow target had expanded in significant ways by the time of the production of the associated 'Empire, Slavery and Scotland's museums recommendations' publication, this being only one of six recommendations (page 4), with the updated target that (page 19) "Museums will need to take responsibility, build on, and accelerate their work to address the legacies of empire, colonialism, and historic slavery."

This includes consideration (page 37) that, "Museums should seek to return unethically acquired items within their collections," meaning (page 42) "items that were stolen, taken under duress, or removed without the consent of the owner" or "objects that were taken through legitimate, but systematically unfair, trade deals."

The recommendations report produced by the steering group identified six main areas to be considered (page 4), far too much for museums to take on as one project, and beyond the initial consultation target (page 12).

The task must be divided, and one obvious area was to concentrate on the initial consultation idea. There were already teams of Museum volunteers tackling the Inventory, and it was clear my involvement might be better elsewhere – with what's called 'Donor' in the main spreadsheet.

Virtual People Cabinet – start of the project

Although, in the Museum's Inventory spreadsheet, there is a column headed 'Donor', there are instances where more than one name appears: for example, there are some 35 objects donated by Annie Margaret Holloway of Streatham, London (donor) from the possessions of someone named John Brander (owner). For this reason, and after some false starts, the details I'm compiling have been given the name, Virtual People Cabinet.

In the East Store, there is a filing cabinet with folders for individuals – the People Cabinet; my work leads on from this, but on disc rather than paper, leading to the 'Virtual' title.

For the first few names I tackled, I have to admit I delved too deeply, and spent too much time on each person. For example, for James Brown Eddie, I can now track him from his baptism in the parish of St Andrews Lhanbryd, through his time in Elgin, a spell in the parish of Duffus, a trip to London, his time in the Congo, a possibly visit to Italy, his return to Elgin, his departure for Kansas, a trip home to Scotland (to marry), off to Salt Lake City, back to Elgin (the death of his father), out to California, and his death in Los Angeles.

The above took, by my reckoning, the best part of eight hours hunting down (free) online references. Progress was slow – too slow.

Review of the approach and a restart

At the end of January 2023, as the consequence of a review of how I was presenting the information there was a need to reset everything. The information I had gathered may have been acceptable, but the means by which I was presenting it turned out not to be so. This meant (a) a review of the software I was using to prepare the details and (b) a need to review each and every item I'd so far produced.

The above tasks took the best part of a month, and it was during this period I decided upon a change of tack. To make progress, rather than do what I did for James Brown Eddie (see above), I chose to do as little as possible for each person. My new plan was to identify the person in the Inventory; to compile a list of objects linked to that person from the Inventory; and to find (at least) one external link for the person – which would serve as the starting point should anyone ask for more details. As an example of the revised approach, for Grizel Evelyn Haig or Lethington, Nairn, who donated some objects with an African link which had belonged to her father, I only went as far as finding a record of her Probate – doing no more until the day someone asks the question.

The copy of the Inventory I was given in October 2022 had, when all tabs are combined, 34,700 objects. A quick analysis of the Donor column suggests there are 3,898 Donors – which, of course, means there are more than 3,898 people listed (see Haig, above). At 10th August 2023, when circumstances meant I had to pause my digging, there were 563 entries in the Virtual People Cabinet.

Eventual style of the Virtual People Cabinet

For each person, each folder contains a summary of the person details – name, dates, list of references found, &c. – and separate sub-folders for each:

For Miss Pringle, there is a summary sheet telling us her name was Margaret Pringle, she was the daughter of Rev John Pringle & Robina Shirreff, born in Elgin in 1834, and died at 24 Hay Street, Elgin in 1914; and listing three references, and three sub-folders:
Inventory Master Reports (7 1910);
LIBINDEX NM146702;
Bequests (The Scotsman, 1914)

My plan, providing what I'm doing will work for Elgin Museum, was to continue along the path following the review of presentation, waiting for the day someone asks for a more detailed analysis of any one person – for example for Walter Gordon Frederick Cumming:

In The People and Place alcove 'The Scientific Outlook', there is on display a slave yoke, described as:

10. Slave yoke

Brought home from Central Africa by Captain Walter Gordon Cumming when serving under Sir Harry Johnston in an Expedition for the suppression of the Slave Trade in 1901.

ELGNM: 1922.7

My digging would allow a more detailed explanation of the object:

10. Slave yoke

Forked wooden sticks or yokes were used to tie captives together when they were marched to the coast. The forked end was placed around a captive's neck and the iron bar put across to hold it in place, and the other end would be tied to another yoke. Large numbers of captive Africans were controlled by few guards in this way, and walked in single file to the coast. (<https://understandingslavery.com/artefact/yoke/>)

This slave yoke was donated to Elgin Museum in 1922 by Sir William Gordon Cumming Bart. of Altyre, Forres as part of bundle of objects collected by his brother Walter Frederick Campbell Gordon Cumming, 1859 – 1913 (<http://www.thepeerage.com/p42372.htm#i423720>).

Late in 1895, Walter just happened to be in southern or central Africa at the very time the British Government sent an expedition north from Port Natal [Durban] to root out the remnants of the Arab-based Slave Traders. Walter, although not a member of the Army, along with a small number of others, volunteered to help the cause, and took an active part in the capture and defeat of the slave-trader, Mlozi in what was then called British Central Africa – now the state of Malawi. It is likely Walter obtained this object at that time.

For more details, see the House of Commons Parliamentary Paper, 'Correspondence respecting Operations against Slave Traders in British Central Africa' at https://archive.org/details/correspondencere00grea_3

ELGNM: 1922.7

Doug Stewart,
Elgin Museum Volunteer, November 2023
[Many thanks to Doug, JT](#)

Elgin Museum Geology Group Autumn Report

The Geology Group has had a fairly quiet summer although we have hosted numerous school and activity groups alongside the Museum's Learning and Outreach Team. Many of the activities have featured our fossils in one way or another and the participants seem to have enthusiastically appreciated our efforts.

We have many similar dates in the pipeline over the coming months which will be keeping us all busy!

In September, Dave, helped by Alison, led a Scottish Geology Festival field trip from Burghhead to Hopeman, and Dave continues to be involved in the Scottish Geological Trust geosite project, monitoring and recording SSSIs:

<https://geosites.scottishgeologytrust.org/>

On the research front, University of Edinburgh graduates Hady George is finalising his 'Clashach' dicynodont paper and Scott Reid has completed his 'Knock of Alves' dicynodont thesis (see below). Dr Davide Foffa (NMS) has published his final paper on *Scleromochlus*, presenting further evidence to show that the animal was a very early relative of pterosaurs:

<https://anatomypubs.onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1002/ar.25335>

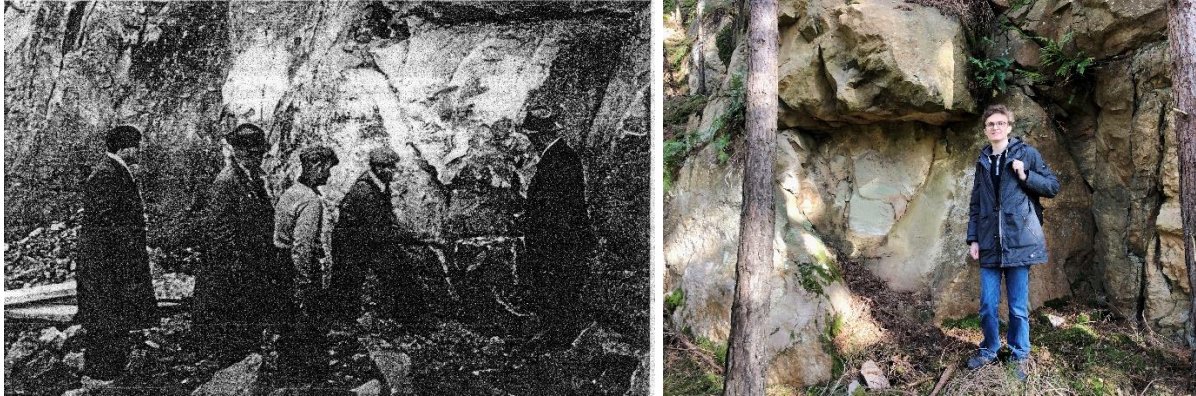
Knock of Alves fossil

Scott Reid has been studying the Knock of Alves dicynodont fossil for his MScR thesis which he completed this summer. Scott contacted the EMGG last year and we were able to send him historical information about the 1953 discovery of the fossil by palaeontologist Dr Alick Walker. Alick, who died in 1999, had studied the Permian fossils found in the Quarrywood area and had chanced upon peculiar cavities in the quarry wall of the Knock of Alves Quarry. Confirming the presence of interlinking voids by blowing cigarette smoke into the cavities, Alick asked local quarry workers to extract the area around the voids and found that the rock contained the jaw bones and part of a skull of a fossilised animal. Latex moulds were created to examine the structure of the fossil but it was always known that vital detailed information was going to be lost using this method.

Fast forward 70 years, and Scott is able to utilise the modern, now almost customary, method of μ CT scanning. This allows researchers to study fossil material down to the finest detail; in many cases the remains are still surrounded by rock making this non-destructive method a really effective way of studying fossils. Scott's research results have shown that the fossil, although part of the dicynodont family, actually belongs to a previously unknown species. Unfortunately, because the fossil material was very limited, Scott can't attribute a species name but can say that the animal is a novel 'Elgin Reptile' species which sits between the Cutties Hillock and Clashach dicynodonts *Gordonia* and *Geikia*. The Knock of Alves specimen has affinities to similar fossils found in Mongolia, Tanzania and Zambia and reinforces the biogeographical connection between East Africa and Scotland.

Consequently, when Scott visited Elgin to have a good look at the Permian fossils in our collection and to update us on his studies, he was very keen to see the actual quarries where these fossils were found. Modern researchers can be deskbound with a huge amount of computing time needed to reconstruct scans and wade through the literature so having the opportunity to see the Knock of Alves, Cutties Hillock and Clashach Quarries was warmly welcomed. A minor hitch in a very busy afternoon was that Dave had previously said Clashach Quarry is very quiet these days only to find a Tennant's JCB extractor at work when they got to the quarry

entrance! Not to be deterred, and after introductions, they were allowed to see the Permian trackways in the quarry; it was a good opportunity to show the workers that the footprints are still of interest and that co-operation between Elgin Museum and Tennants (Elgin) Ltd remains valuable.



Left: 1953. Dr Alick Walker (far left) overseeing the extraction of the Knock of Alves fossil.

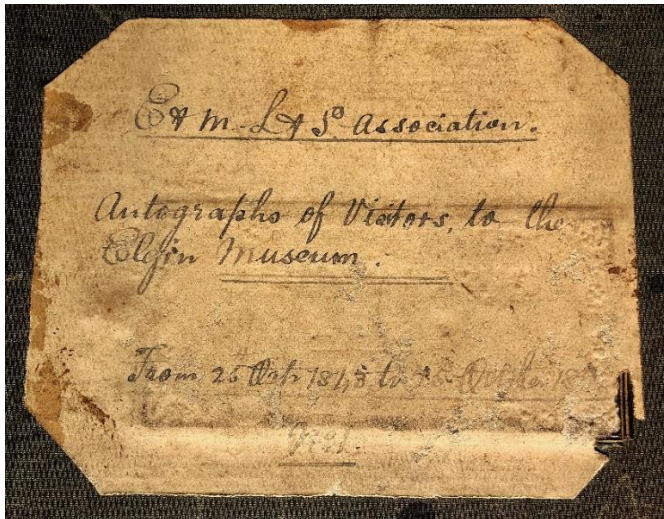
Right: 2023. Scott Reid at the same spot 70 years later (note the triangular shape on the quarry wall for reference).

Dave Longstaff & Alison Wright

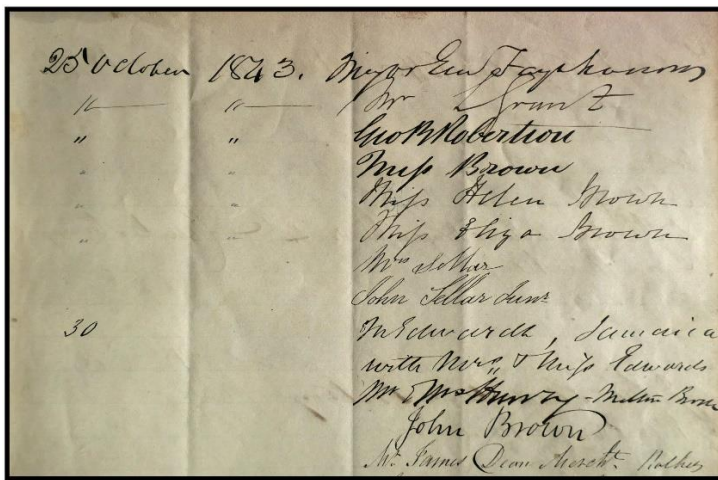
Geology Group Nov 2023

Elgin Museum Visitor Book: Victorian Scientists

As part of the preparation for Elgin Museum's 180th Anniversary I started to delve into our old museum visitor books to look for visiting dates and signatures of notable Victorian scientists. I produced a small display panel for our Victorian soiree on 25th October and, for this autumn newsletter, I thought it would be worthwhile enlarging on this theme and give brief descriptions of some of the scientists featured in the book. A few years ago, volunteer Mabel Rennie produced a Moray Society booklet describing some of the characters who visited in the past but here I'll concentrate on Victorian scientists.



Front cover of The Elgin and Morayshire Scientific Association Visitors' Book



First page of Visitors' Book: 25th October 1843. First name difficult to discern, possibly Major Euan Farquharson?

Visitors to the Museum. in 1844.			
Date.	Name.	Designation or Residence.	
1844	Miss Sim	Aberdeen	
Sept 2	Mr Cameron	Dundee	
" 5	John Forsyth	Elgin	
" 5	John Thom	Forres	
" 7	Admiral Mackay	London	
" 9	Hugh Falconer	India	

Hugh Falconer: visit 9th Sept 1844

Assistant surgeon British East India Company. Distinguished botanist, geologist, and palaeontologist studying flora, fauna and the geology of India, Assam, and Burma. Gave his name to the Falconer Museum, Forres, which opened in 1872.

Visitors to the Museum, in 1844.

<i>Date.</i>	<i>Name.</i>	<i>Designation, or Residence.</i>
Aug 12	Miss M. Grant	Deerfield
	Miss Grant	Belchamps
13	J. Warren	Writer Ayr
X 15	Hugh Miller	Editor of the Witness, Edin
17	James G. etc	London

Hugh Miller, Editor of *The Witness*, Edinburgh: visit 15th Aug 1844

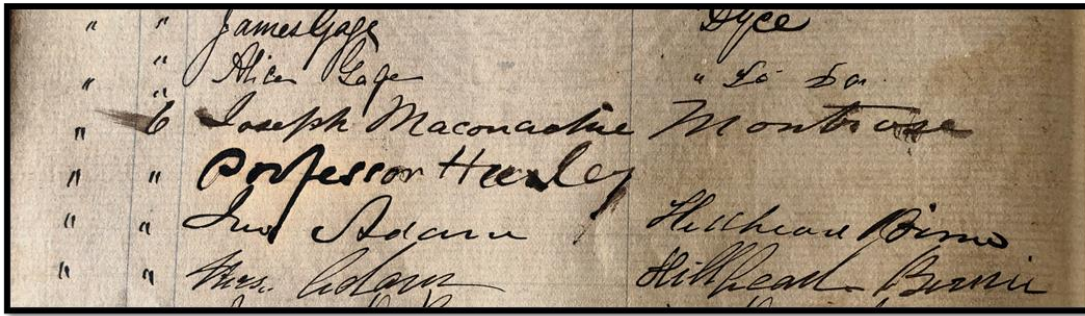
Cromarty-born stonemason turned accountant and newspaper editor. Self-taught geologist, palaeontologist and man of faith. He discovered the Devonian 'winged fish' *Pterichthys milleri*, which is named after him. Author of many influential books, the most famous of which is *The Old Red Sandstone*, published in 1841 and, most recently, republished in June this year.

A handwritten list of names and titles in cursive script, likely a visitor log or a list of contacts. The entries include:

- Mr. Home
- Mr. Murchison
- Mr. Murchison
- Mr. Booth
- Mr. Dempster
- Genl. G. G. G.
- Grafton St. London
- London
- Director General
- Geol. Survey
- Genl.
- Edin
- Edin

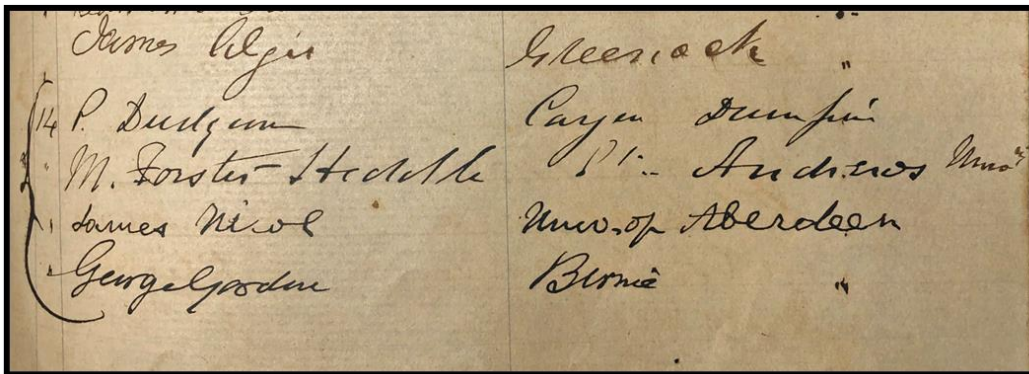
Sir Roderick Impey Murchison: visit 5th Sept 1858

Born in Tarradale House, Muir of Ord. Retired Army officer turned geologist. Became Director-General of the British Geological Survey. Heavily involved in the geological survey of the Northwest Highlands but his mistaken ideas were superseded by the work of other geologists, including Aberdeen based Professor James Nicol.



Professor Thomas Henry Huxley: visit 6th Sept 1871

Known as 'Darwin's bulldog'. A very influential London based palaeontologist who visited Elgin twice and was instrumental in describing some of the 'Elgin Reptiles', notably *Hyperodapedon* and *Stagonolepis*. The fossil specimens on display in the Museum with red paint numbering are some of those examined by Huxley in London. He was famously impeded on his 1871 visit to Elgin Museum by the museum keeper William Ingram who demanded the entry fee of sixpence before being allowed on the premises. Just before Huxley revisited on 27th Sept 1875, he writes to George Gordon requesting "Will you have the kindness to give directions at the Museum, so that I may have access to the specimens? You see I have a lively recollection of the stern janitor".¹ It seems that Huxley didn't sign the Visitor's Book on his second visit! Also notice by his 1871 signature that he didn't see the need to say where he was from...London, of course!



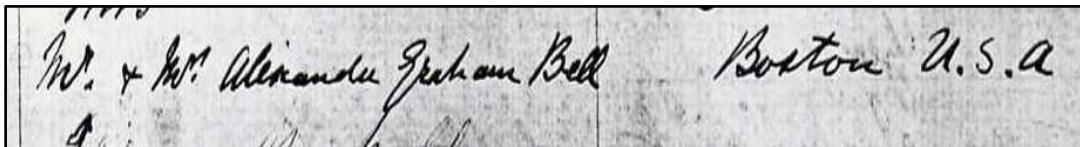
Patrick Dudgeon, Professor Matthew Forster Heddle, Professor James Nicol and Rev. Dr George Gordon: visit 14th Sept 1877

Patrick Dudgeon, Cargen House, Dumfries. Close friend and collaborator of Heddle in collecting minerals. Both founding members of The Mineralogical Society of Great Britain in 1876. Orkney-born, **Matthew Forster Heddle** became Professor of Chemistry at St Andrews University studying and amassing a huge collection of Scottish minerals. The National Museum of Scotland cares for 5,700 specimens collected by Heddle and he wrote the world-famous book *The Mineralogy of Scotland* in 1901.

James Nicol, Professor of Natural History at the University of Aberdeen, was one of the first geologists to correctly challenge Murchison's mistaken interpretation of the stratigraphy of the Northwest Highlands.

Rev. Dr George Gordon, Minister for Birnie. Influential naturalist and antiquarian and one of the founding members of The Elgin and Morayshire Scientific Association. Studying for a doctorate in medicine at the University of Edinburgh, he could count Hugh Falconer and Charles Darwin as fellow students.

The four geologists had met in Elgin to go mineral prospecting in Hospital, Ashgrove, and Findrassie Quarries². The mention of Ashgrove Quarry is interesting because it doesn't feature in the literature of the time nor on old O.S maps. It must have been a relatively shallow and short-lived quarry which may have been visited because of its proximity to Elgin Museum. Also on this occasion, James Nicol collected fossils of *Stagonolepis* from Findrassie Quarry, which remain in the University of Aberdeen's collection³.



Alexander Graham Bell: visit 28th Sept 1877

Alexander Graham Bell, credited with the invention of the telephone, was born in Edinburgh in 1847. In 1863, he was a pupil teacher at Weston House School in Elgin and, after a year studying back in Edinburgh, he returned as a teacher. His family emigrated to Boston, USA, soon after. Once his telephone patent was registered in 1876, Alec married Mabel and set off on a whirlwind tour to promote his invention; their only real honeymoon was the week spent in a cottage at Covesea Village (next-door to Janet!). They arrived in Elgin by train, after what must have been an exhausting conversazione in Aberdeen and visited the Museum before driving on to Covesea. Mabel insisted that he should not give in to the Museum's requests to give a lecture here, perhaps also because Aberdeen had failed to pay him as promised!

References:

Letters held in Elgin Museum George Gordon Archive:

1. 23rd Sept 1875, from Huxley, DDW 71/875/34
2. 12th Sept 1877, from Heddle, DDW 71/877/31
3. 24th Sept 1877, from Nicol, DDW 71/877/33

Dave Longstaff Nov 2023

Learning and Outreach Report – November 2023

The Learning and Outreach team have been busy planning and hosting visits from several local schools, including Gordonstoun Junior School and West End Primary. The former P6 pupils were studying fossils and evolution so came to see our palaeontology collection and the letters that Darwin had written requesting samples and information about the local orchids. The latter P5 pupils were studying 'Victorians' so took part in themed activities, giving them an insight into the Museum's collections.



Pupils from West End Primary School looking at Victorian clothing and farming practices

The team also ran a series of ticketed drop-in sessions during the October holidays, three with an archaeology theme and one focusing on the geology collection.



Drop-in participants making a 'jet' necklace from paper beads and Egyptian-themed stamps

The drop-ins were well received and the group will consider further options, including a monthly session, rather than just restricting these to the school holidays.

The team are now working with Findhorn-based environmental charity 'Wild Things' to support their local Silver Sapling groups. The first of six groups visited the Museum on 10th November to learn about our natural history and palaeontological collections. The group, all aged 65+, enjoyed coffee and cake on arrival and the chance to buy items from the shop. All came equipped with a packed lunch so it was a much longer session than those that we normally offer but all were interested in the collections and the wider Museum displays so we look forward to welcoming the other groups over the coming weeks.

Alison Wright Nov 23

Upcoming events

We have a great programme of talks continuing throughout the winter, taking us right through to March 2024!

Remember, all Moray Society members can now attend all of our lectures or free as part of their membership, but (free) tickets must be booked in advance via our online ticketing website – go to the “What’s On” page of our website and follow the link to book: <https://elginmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/>

Friday 24th November 2023, 7pm

Bruce Keith: Are We Nearly There Yet? A journey celebrating Scotland’s Milestones.

Wednesday 6th December 2023, 7pm (after The Moray Society AGM)

Dr Daniel Rhodes: Barmkins, Bottles, Casks and Castles: Archaeological Research at the National Trust for Scotland.

Friday 12th January 2024, 7pm

Prof. David Worthington: A New Perspective on the North of Scotland in the Century before Culloden: The Life-Writing of Rev James Fraser (1634-1709), the “Curious Cleric”.

Friday 16th February 2024, 7pm

Martin Cook: Moray's birds - 30 years of change.

Friday 22nd March 2024, 7pm

Prof. Gordon Noble: An Update on Recent Archaeological Investigations in North East Scotland.

Adult tickets to our lectures are £4, Students £2

All Moray Society members can attend our lectures for free as part of their membership. All tickets (including free tickets) must be booked in advance via our online ticketing website – go to the “What’s On” page of our website and follow the link to book: <https://elginmuseum.org.uk/whats-on/>

The Moray Society Prize Draw

The Prize Draw has been running since April 2000 and has raised over £8000 for Elgin Museum. This helps with the day to day running costs and the Society is very grateful for this income. Sales of the Draw tickets are strictly limited to Moray Society members and income from the sale of tickets is paid directly into the Moray Society Prize Draw account. All proceeds are used for the exclusive benefit of the Moray Society.

Tickets are priced at £10 each per annum and are valid for 4 draws. Draws are held quarterly with prizes of £25, £15 and £10 respectively for the first 3 numbers drawn, in sequence, at each draw. These prizes are based on an income of £1000 in tickets sold ie. 100 tickets. Many members have annual standing orders with their banks, which greatly reduces our costs. Standing orders can only be amended or cancelled by the persons concerned. Mandates for standing orders are available from the Museum, or myself, on request. Cash, or cheques made payable to the Moray Society Prize Draw, are also accepted. There is no limit imposed by the Society on the number of tickets that may be held by individual members. Please contact me at the museum for queries about the draw or for application forms.

Mary Shand (Prize Draw Organiser) Museum Tel. No. 01343 543675 Email curator@elginmuseum.org.uk

Moray Society Prize Draw

Please allocate me tickets in the Moray Society Prize Draw @ £10 each.

*I enclose my payment of £ *Please forward me a standing order mandate *Delete as appropriate

Name

Address

Post Code

Email address

A Great Christmas Gift Idea

As you can see from the newsletter, there are lots of activities happening for members of the Moray Society. Why not share this by giving a gift membership for Christmas? All you have to do is fill in a standing order (page 14) and send it to The Membership Secretary, Elgin Museum, 1 High St., Elgin. IV30 1EQ. Membership rates, if paid by standing order) are £25 for a single membership and £40 for a family of up to two adults and three children.

As a very special offer, we are offering membership for £15 for a single person and £25 for a family in the first year as long as a standing order for the full amount is payable from 2025.

GIFT MEMBERSHIP (please complete both pages)

I would like to apply for membership for the undernoted. The membership secretary will send a membership pack to the recipient after Christmas and will send an acknowledgement to the subscriber. Below are my bank details. The membership is in favour of:

Name.....

Address.....

..... Post code.....

Recipients email address.....



**STANDING ORDER
MANDATE**

To _____ Bank (Your bank)

Please set up the following Standing Order and debit my/our account accordingly

.....

1. Your account details

Account name _____ Account number _____

Account holding branch _____ Sort code ____-____-____

.....

2. Payee details

Organisation you are paying:

The Moray Society

Payment reference (to be completed by Moray Society)

Bank of Scotland, Elgin

Sort code 80-06-66

Account No 00476195

.....

3. About the payment

Date and amount of first payment

Date_1st January 2024 £_15.00

Annually from January 2025

£_£25.00

(allow 3 working days for receipt)

.....

4. Confirmation

Customer signature(s)

1. _____

2. _____

Date _____

APPENDIX: Annual General Meeting Papers
Notice of The Moray Society Annual General Meeting 2023
6th December 2023, 6 pm

Agenda

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence
3. Minutes of AGM 2022 - for approval
4. Matters arising from above
5. Vice-president's written report on the activities of the Society
(Vice-president Claire Herbert)
6. Receive the Financial Report, including draft Accounts (Treasurer and Company Secretary, Graham Robertson) (Copy available to view at Elgin Museum)
7. Appointment of Ritsons, Chartered Accountants, Elgin as independent financial examiner for 2023
8. Board Membership - Annual Election

The following existing Trustees are resigning and standing for re-election having been duly proposed by two Ordinary Members.

Bill Dalgarno	1. Stewart Halkett	2. Dave Longstaff
Nick Brown	1. Mabel Rennie	2. John Trythall
Claire Herbert	1. Stephanie Horner	2. Alison Wright
Stuart Huyton	1. Dave Longstaff	2. Sara Marsh
Graham Robertson	1. Janice Mackenzie	2. David Bennett
Donna Skelly	1. Heather Cruickshank	2. Bill Dalgarno
Janet Trythall	1. Jenny Main	2. Anne Oliver
Alison Wright	ex officio	

9. Membership report, Bill Dalgarno, Membership Secretary
Currently 229 members, 45 of whom are Life members.
No proposed changes to Membership categories or subscriptions
10. Disposal by transfer of ownership to Moray College of a piece of Elgin Academy stone, with engraved "Sic Itur ad Astra" Object Entry 326 The carved stone was given on loan to UHI in 2018 and it was then agreed that, so long as UHI (in the old Academy building) agreed to take responsibility for the stone and to look after it, we would seek to transfer ownership at the next AGM UHI have since agreed to this and so we would seek agreement to its transfer.
11. Disposal by sale or donation of an egg case: 1978.650. The egg case is now surplus to the requirements of the Society, our egg collection having

been rationalized in the recent past by Martin Cook. Since space in stores is limited, we would seek agreement to de-accession it and to dispose of it advantageously.

12. AOCB

11. Close, to be followed by Moray Society Prize Draw.

Minutes of The Moray Society Annual General Meeting 2022

1st December 2022, 7.00pm, via MS Teams Platform

1. Welcome: The Vice-President, Claire Herbert (CH) and Trustee and Meeting Chair, Janet Trythall (JT) welcomed those present.

2. Apologies for absence: Apologies from President Grenville Johnston plus 16 other apologies received

3. Minutes of AGM 2021 – *accepted nem com*

4. Matters arising from above: None

5. President's and Vice-president's written reports on the activities of the Society (President, Grenville Johnston, Vice-president Claire Herbert)

On file (see below). No questions.

JT thanked Grenville for his long service as President (2009-2022). The commemorative medallion will be presented to Grenville as soon as we can arrange this. It was shown to the attendees.

JT advised that following advice from our Solicitor it is possible to progress in the interim without a President in place. We are currently seeking new Trustees; an advertisement has gone out – but if anyone is interested or knows someone who might be suitable, please visit our website and get in touch with a Board member or via Museum email.

6. Receive the Financial Report, including draft Accounts (Treasurer and Company Secretary, Graham Robertson)

Accounts were circulated before the meeting. Reference to surplus of £3000 on unrestricted funds (running of the museum outwith the projects); note this includes the gain in investments for the period (which fluctuate) which really should be considered a book figure. One off donation of £10,000. In reality a cash loss for the year of £14,000. Grants recently through Covid recovery funds, but these are one offs. Important to be aware of challenging financial situation going forward. Restricted funds are tied up in projects. Looking ahead, will be a hard time. *Accepted nem com.*

JT noted on brighter side that funding has been received from MGS to employ a Funding Development Officer; the project has not progressed as quickly as planned

but we will advertise in December for appointment in the new year. A two-year p/t post to address general financial sustainability, improving income, sourcing funds to enable appointment of manager/curator. We hope the FDO post will go some way to improving our overall financial position.

7. Appointment of Ritsons, Chartered Accountants, Elgin as independent financial examiner for 2022 *Accepted nem com*

8. Board Membership - Annual Election

The following existing Trustees, resigning and standing for re-election, were duly proposed by two Ordinary Moray Society Members:

<i>Bill Dalgarno</i>	<i>1. Alison Wright</i>	<i>2. Ritchie Mabon</i>
<i>Nick Brown</i>	<i>1. Ritchie Mabon</i>	<i>2. Bill Dalgarno</i>
<i>Claire Herbert</i>	<i>1. Fiona Bing</i>	<i>2. John Trythall</i>
<i>Stuart Huyton</i>	<i>1. Dave Longstaff</i>	<i>2. Sara Marsh</i>
<i>Graham Robertson</i>	<i>1. Dave Longstaff</i>	<i>2. Claire Herbert</i>
<i>Donna Skelly</i>	<i>1. Bill Dalgarno</i>	<i>2. Janet Trythall</i>
<i>Janet Trythall</i>	<i>1. Mary Byatt</i>	<i>2. Jenny Main</i>
<i>Alison Wright</i>	<i>1. Mabel Rennie</i>	<i>2. Claire Herbert</i>

JT introduced the new candidate, Dr Alison Wright, an active volunteer and EMMC member, Coordinator of the Museum's Geology Group and the current Education and Outreach grant funded project.

All accepted nem com

Thanks were given to those Trustees who had stepped down in the last year: Richard Laing, Grenville Johnston.

9. Membership report

Fixing of annual subscriptions. The Board recommends no changes to categories or rates:

Ordinary Member (18 to 25 Years old):	Free
Ordinary Member over 25 years of age:	£25 (Paid by standing order)
Ordinary member over 25 years of age:	£30 (if not paid by standing order)
Family member:	£37.50 (paid by standing order)
Family member:	£45 (if not paid by standing order)
Junior member (under 18):	Free
Corporate Member:	£500 minimum contribution.
Life Member:	£500 – SINGLE PAYMENT

BD Currently 250 members, inc. 52 Life Members. Will write to all members in 2023 to update gift aid declarations, contact details and will ask members of lower rates to uplift to current rates.

JT Think of the arithmetic; if we all recruit a new member that makes 500! Remember that membership supports the Museum as a “Friend of Elgin Museum”, helping with day to day running costs.

10. AOCB

Mary Byatt – is there a leaflet to pass on to people? JT – yes, as an application form - speak to Bill Dalgarno, or see Museum website. GR - more a brochure/flyer? MB - yes, fold over leaflet to hand out. JT - Activities Committee meeting planned for Saturday (after some time in abeyance) and this will be raised at the meeting. SH - do we need to rebrand as the Friends of Elgin Museum? JT – for some time, this has been The Moray Society’s banner and is described thus on past leaflets and website. However, the Constitution, registration with Company’s House and as a Charity are in the name of The Moray Society despite all aspects of the Society’s purposes being fulfilled through Elgin Museum.

11. Close

JT thanked everyone for attending, and added thanks to our members, volunteers, Trustees, and our departing President.

Moray Society Prize Draw – Bill Dalgarno announced the winners. (Draw carried out by Mary Shand before the AGM) Any member can buy a ticket for the Prize Draw – for ticket price of £10 for 4 draws throughout the year. Contact Mary Shand via the Museum email.

1st Prize Bill Dalgarno, 2nd Kerstin Keillar, 3rd Elizabeth Oliver.

2/11/2022 CH/JT

Vice-president’s Report 2023

What a year 2023 has been! For those who don't already know, we celebrated a significant milestone: 180 years since Elgin Museum first opened to visitors, on 25th October 1843. And we celebrated in style with a Victorian Soirée! It was wonderful to see so many familiar - and new - faces at the event, and to then welcome even more visitors at our Victorian Fundraising Bazaar the following weekend. We raised over £1,100 at this event, a great start to our fundraising campaign for our building redevelopment project.

Our 2023 Summer Season has been excellent, with almost 5,700 visitors since we opened in April. We also saw a welcome return of oversea visitors this season, with more than double the number we saw in 2022.

We've also begun to welcome more school and community groups back to the Museum - it is a significant effort on the part of our Volunteers to create and deliver these events, but well worth it to hear the positive feedback of all of those attending - not to mention their repeat visits to the Museum.

Our building project is making positive forward strides, and we aim to have our Full Planning and Listed Building Consent applications submitted by February 2024 at the latest. The project will see the reorganisation of our 'behind the scenes' office space, improving facilities for staff/volunteers; a revamp of the entrance area and addition of better public welfare facilities; a new roof for the Rear Gallery; and in the Side Hall we will refresh the space, making it more accessible and more flexible for our own and for community use. Throughout, we will introduce new lighting and heating systems as we begin our transition towards net zero – including (we hope) the installation of solar panels on the rear gallery roof.

No 3 High Street will be revitalised, with improved access to our cellar store, a small rentable retail space at ground floor level and the reintroduction of living accommodation on the upper floors, bringing a vacant eyesore back into use – and bringing people back to the east end of Elgin's High Street. These new rentable spaces will generate a regular income for the museum, helping us with the day to day running costs going forward.

This will be a period of exciting changes and upheaval, and we hope you'll continue to support us through this essential project.

As you will note by the absence of a President's Report, we are still currently without a President to head up the Board of Trustees of The Moray Society. If anyone is interested in becoming a Trustee, or you know someone who might be well suited to the role, we'd be delighted to hear from you.

As ever, nothing we do at Elgin Museum would be possible without our amazing, dedicated, team of Volunteers, who have gone above and beyond in all that they do: welcoming visitors to the Museum, working with collections, delivering outreach events to school and community groups and helping to plan and deliver our programme of events. So, a huge Thank You to you all!

Lastly, as you will have noted in our latest newsletter, we are sad to have heard of the death of our long time patron, Marjorie Walker. She was a staunch supporter of the Museum and will be greatly missed by many in Moray.

Claire Herbert, Vice-President November 2023

Financial Report Below you will find the summary page of the financial report for 2022. The full report can be viewed in the Museum and will also be available at the AGM.

The Moray Society
Company Limited by Guarantee

Statement of Financial Activities (Including Income and Expenditure Account)

Year ended 31 December 2022

		2022		2021	
	Note	Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	Total funds £	Total funds £
Income and endowments					
Donations and legacies	5	12,391	19,550	31,941	45,261
Charitable activities	6	–	8,985	8,985	47,122
Other trading activities	7	4,151	–	4,151	2,623
Investment income	8	1,724	–	1,724	1,554
Other income	9	–	–	–	5,488
Total income		<u>18,266</u>	<u>28,535</u>	<u>46,801</u>	<u>102,048</u>
Expenditure					
Expenditure on raising funds:					
Costs of other trading activities	10	(1,368)	–	(1,368)	(1,187)
Expenditure on charitable activities	11,12	(52,588)	(34,093)	(86,681)	(130,530)
Total expenditure		<u>(53,956)</u>	<u>(34,093)</u>	<u>(88,049)</u>	<u>(131,717)</u>
Net (losses)/gains on investments	13	(14,615)	(4,581)	(19,196)	22,934
Net expenditure and net movement in funds		<u>(50,305)</u>	<u>(10,139)</u>	<u>(60,444)</u>	<u>(6,735)</u>
Reconciliation of funds					
Total funds brought forward		270,050	175,545	445,595	452,330
Total funds carried forward		<u>219,745</u>	<u>165,406</u>	<u>385,151</u>	<u>445,595</u>

The statement of financial activities includes all gains and losses recognised in the year. All income and expenditure derive from continuing activities.

The notes on pages 9 to 23 form part of these financial statements.

The Moray Society

Form of Proxy Voting AGM 2023

I *(insert name)*

Of *(insert address)*

being an *Ordinary Member of the Society; or *one, aged 18 years or over, of a Family Membership hereby appoint the chairman of the Annual General Meeting,

or *(insert alternative name)* *, of

as my proxy to vote for me on my behalf at the Annual General Meeting of the Society to be held on 6/12/2023 and at any adjournment thereof.

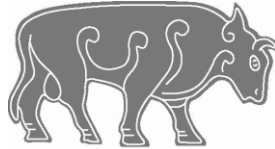
*** to be deleted if not required, or amended if it is required**

This form to be used in favour of/against the resolution(s)

Agenda item		For	Against	Vote withheld
3	Minutes AGM 2022			
6	Financial Report			
7	Independent Financial Examiner			
8	Board Membership			
	Nick Brown			
	Bill Dalgarno			
	Claire Herbert			
	Stuart Huyton			
	Graham Robertson			
	Donna Skelly			
	Janet Trythall			
	Alison Wright			
10	Carved Stone			
11	Egg Case			

Signature of member appointing proxy (insert printed name or signature):

..... Dated: / / 2023



THE MORAY
SOCIETY

ELGIN
MUSEUM

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

The Moray Society: Company No 106529 Charity No 017546

Newsletter editor: Bill Dalgarno