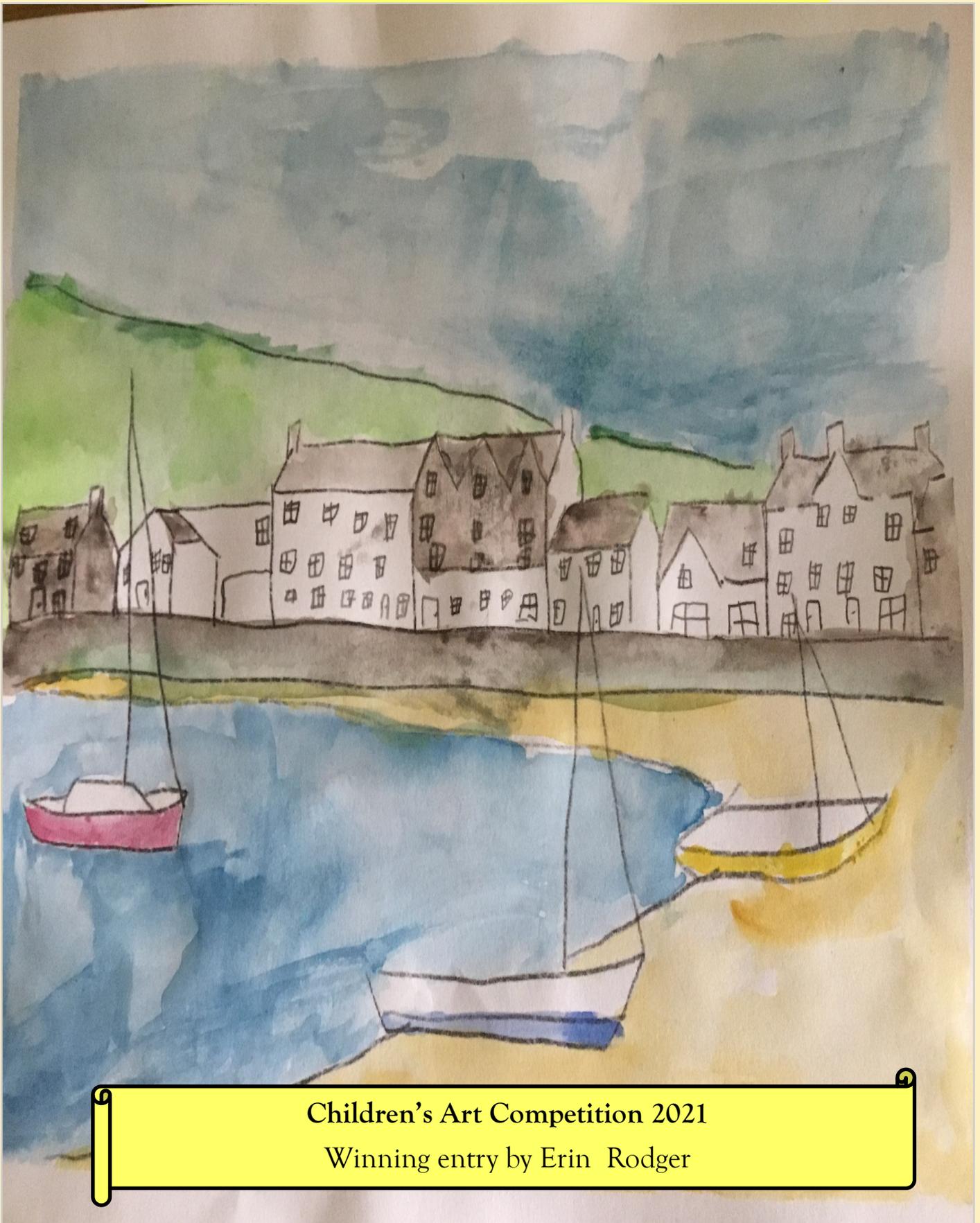


STANEHYVE ·TOLBOOTH TIMES·



Children's Art Competition 2021
Winning entry by Erin Rodger



Editorial

As we enjoy another lovely summer in Stonehaven, we all hope that life will start to return to some kind of normality before too long. Understandably, some of our volunteers have been unable to carry out their duties, and the Museum has only been open at weekends. Visitor numbers are obviously down ,although the Harbour area remains very busy with people on most days, with queues outside the Old Pier coffee shop and the Seafood shack on the middle pier.

However ,there is still no solution in sight to the continuing traffic difficulties around the Harbour. The Backies car park is too small to cope and every day, you will see cars (and camper vans) driving along the Old Pier past the Tolbooth ,and along the Shorehead, searching for spaces which do not exist. They then have to turn around and head back to the High Street ,which is always full of cars. Maybe some give up ,and cancel their visit to the Harbour? Parking around the Market Square and at the Beach Promenade also fills up quickly.

Would it be too much to hope that the Council may find a remedy for this situation? The recent application for a care home on the former gasworks site was refused and if the site cannot be developed, then surely that is the ideal site for a large car park ,close to the Harbour? Can the Council find the funds for its purchase? If nothing is done, the Harbour area will become a traffic gridlock, and visitors will be forced away.

In the meantime, I trust you have a lovely summer, wherever you may be ,and if you visit Stonehaven Harbour, please leave your car at home!

Gordon Ritchie, MVO

Editor

If you have any stories or information you think could be included in future editions, please get in touch with either lizmkritchie@gmail.com or gritchie626@gmail.com

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MUSEUM SNIPPETS

#summeratthecourtyard

A series of summer events have been planned by Clare Thomas and Mary Sutcliffe and are to be held in the museum's outer courtyard. The series started when schools broke up for the summer and forthcoming events will include

- **Saturday 24th July**—Poetry reading
- **Sunday 25th July** Stonehaven Folk Club/Geordie Murison
- **Saturday/Sunday 7th/8th August**—seafood smoking demonstration
- **Saturday 14th August** Corn dolly making demonstration
- **Sunday 15th August** storytelling and magic tricks
- **Sunday 29th August** Spinning and weaving demonstrations

Hopefully there is something for everyone on this list. All events are free—but there will be a small cost if you wish to join the corn dolly making class.



During the pandemic the Association has benefitted from grants from two separate bodies. The Coastal Community Fund, via Aberdeenshire Council, provided funding for the creation of display panels and purchasing of new display boards. In addition this fund is helping to print a new and much extended book on sea shore activities. This book is undergoing final editorial work and will be a great educational companion for families exploring Stonehaven beach. The second grant came from Museum Galleries Scotland (MGS) and its aim is to increase the museum's profile within the local community and also seek new volunteers. The grant has already paid for training in the productive use of social media and adverts are starting to be broadcast by Mearns FM.



Sadly we have been informed that the Carron Stroke Group have decided to cease operations and dissolve the organisation. The Group will be missed for their work in the local community; however, one of their final acts was to make a generous financial donation to the Stonehaven Tolbooth Association.





MUSEUM SNIPPETS (cont'd)



Apart from the many questions that our visitors ask in the museum we frequently receive enquiries via our website. Here are just a few examples from the last couple of months:

- Information on the local Coastguards 1924 -1935
- Where can an individual purchase a crank machine identical to the one in the museum.
- Any information on the Todhead Lighthouse Keeper swept to his death in December 1917.
- Permission to use the image of *Pneumodesmus newmani* in an educational book of biology for Brazilian high school students.



In addition to the events planned for 'Summer at the Courtyard' we have at least two other events that are in the planning stage.

- Stonehaven has entered into the Coastal Town section of **Beautiful Scotland 2021** and a lot of planning has taken place within the town with many local organisations. The judging, which is a walk around with no inside visits, takes place on Wednesday 4th August. The museum has been asked to participate but our impact will be minimal as there is little that we can display externally in a 3 or 4 minute walk past. There will however be a small display of photos in the doorway for judges to see as they pass.
- The Scottish Geology Trust is involved in planning a **Scottish Geology Festival** in September/October this year. They have already made one visit to the museum and were impressed with our geological exhibits and our ethos of involving children in 'pebble hunting'. The Trust will come back with ideas on collaboration for the Festival.



Geode—part of museum collection



Summer at the Courtyard

We wanted to encourage more people to come to the Museum after months without opening, so some of the Trustees put their heads together to organise events to bring families to the Museum and make use of the Courtyard outside.

We contacted local primary schools to publicise an art competition for children in classes P5 to P7 at the beginning of the summer term. We also put up posters and used social media to spread the word. The reward was receiving about 35 pictures from Arduthie School and Dunnottar School.

Mary, Liz and Clare looked at the paintings and we were very impressed by the standard. There were pictures of the museum, the harbour, beach and coast. It was difficult to make a decision but the picture of the Harbour by Erin Rodger stood out. (see below and front cover)

The winners were: Erin Rodger (1st), Hannah Cameron (2nd) and Amelia Smiles (3rd). Highly Commended were Abi Wright, Summer Beadie, Rebecca Don and Ben Brown.

The prizes (including ice-cream gift vouchers, colouring pencils and certificates) were presented by Pauline Cordiner the story teller who was the first in our series of summer events in the Courtyard. The paintings are still on display in the Museum.

Here are a selection of photos from the day

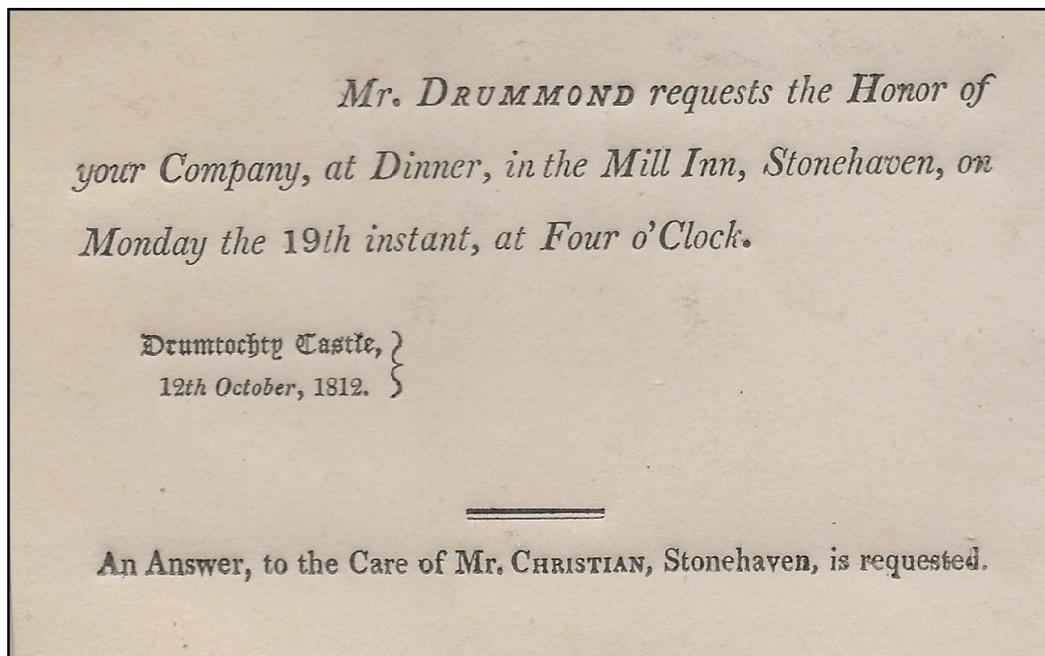




AN INVITATION TO DINNER IN 1812

by Gordon Ritchie

Some years ago, as Secretary of Stonehaven Heritage Society I received this Invitation card measuring 4 inches by 2.5 inches. I do not know where it came from as it was not unusual for historic items to be handed into Connors office for me, but it has always intrigued me and I have now found out more of the story behind it. It is of course now over 200 years old but who was Mr. Drummond and why was he hosting a Dinner in Stonehaven on 19th October 1812?



He was **George Harley Drummond** who had recently built Drumtochty Castle and was standing as Member of Parliament for Kincardineshire. Born in 1783, and only age 29 in 1812, he was the great-grandson of Andrew Drummond who had founded the family banking house at Charing Cross in London. His father had died when George was 5 and left huge debts which were cleared whilst George was a minor. However, like his father, George was a reckless spendthrift with a penchant for heavy gambling and when he was 21 in 1804, his family refused to admit him as a partner in the Bank and he merely had a share of the profits. This was about £2000 per annum but he also had property income of £6000 so he was still very wealthy. He married at the age of 17 Margaret Munro, daughter of Alexander Munro, a Glasgow merchant and they had 2 sons. but this was a hasty and unfortunate marriage..The young couple were described as a frightening example of 'the degeneracy of families and the abuse of enormous wealth'.



AN INVITATION TO DINNER IN 1812 (cont'd)

He had a residence in Stanmore, Middlesex and bought the Drumtochty estate around 1810 and built a new castle in castellated style with Edinburgh architect James Gillespie Graham. This was later extended in 1815/16 before he sold it in 1822 to the Gammells who created the Castle you see today.

He had designs on entering Parliament but as only the landed gentry had the vote, it took him several years to build up the connections he needed. He was elected as MP in a by-election in February 1812. On 11 May 1812 the Prime Minister Spencer Perceval was assassinated and succeeded by the Earl of Liverpool. He called a General Election which was not held on one day as we do today but from 5 October to 6 November 1812. We can presume therefore that the Dinner on 19 October was to either encourage his supporters or to thank them for their support .

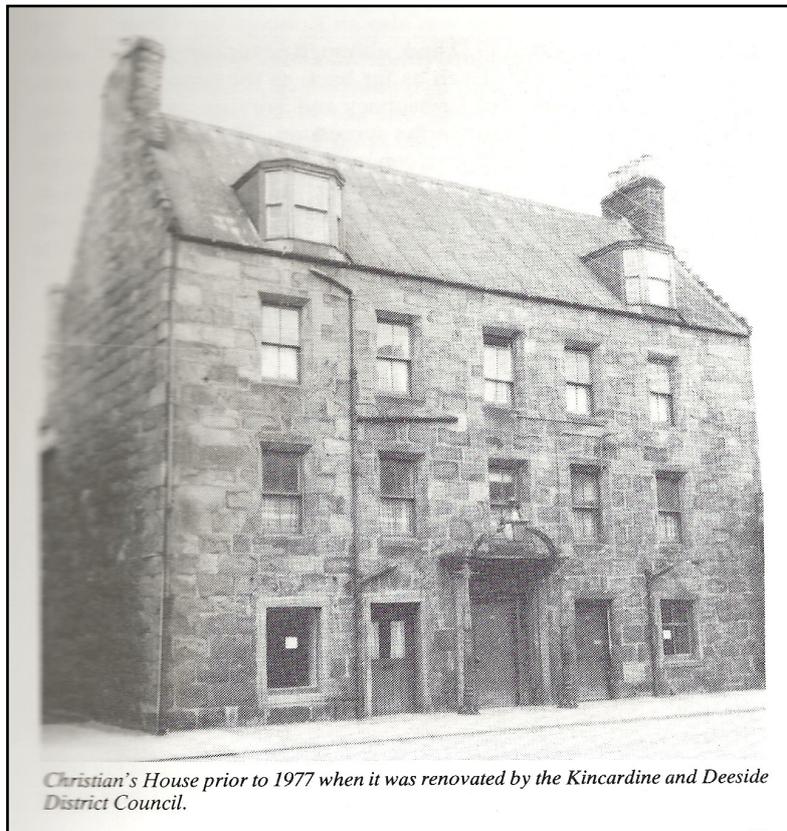
The Mill Inn was the same building we see today, believed to date from the late 1600s when it became a coaching inn for the stagecoach from Aberdeen to Edinburgh. In 1794 the journey of 120 miles took 34 hours.





. AN INVITATION TO DINNER IN 1812 (cont'd)

And who was Mr. Christian, to whom replies to the Invitation were to be sent? He was Peter Christian (1776-1855), a writer or lawyer in Stonehaven and very prominent in the life of the Town in the early part of the 19th century. He was Sheriff Clerk and Chief Magistrate of the Burgh of Barony and laid the foundation stone of the south Harbour in 1826. His family resided in what is now known as Christian's House at 28-32 High Street, with its distinctive portico, and built around 1712.



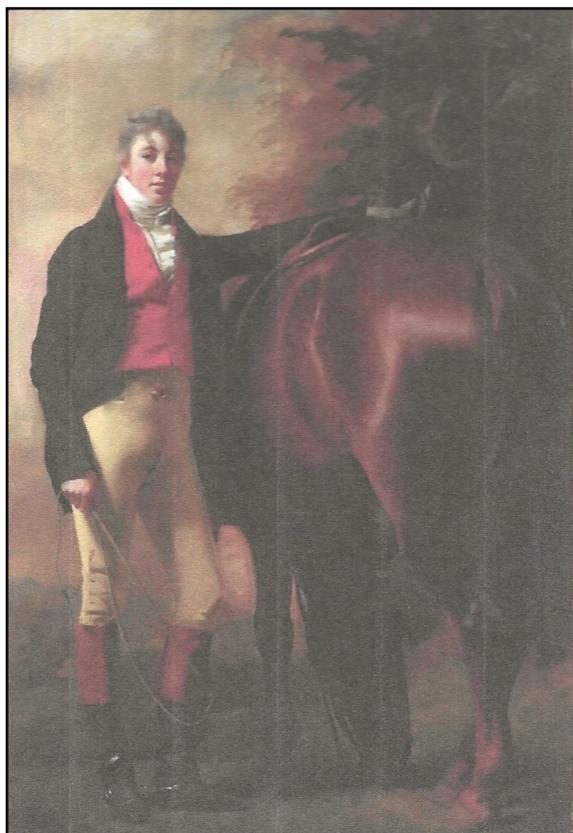
Christian's House prior to 1977 when it was renovated by the Kincardine and Deeside District Council.

And what happened to George Drummond? He did not seek re-election in 1820, when the consequences of his unabated wild expenditure caught up with him. He was said to have lost £20,000 to his crony Beau Brummell in one card session at White's club. Drumtochty was sold for £40,000 in 1822, he deserted his wife and children for his mistress, the wife of a naval officer, eventually went bankrupt and fled to Ireland to escape his creditors. He died in 1855.



AN INVITATION TO DINNER IN 1812 (cont'd)

We have a portrait of George Drummond by the renowned artist Sir Henry Raeburn (1756-1823) dating from around 1808-09 and now in the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, USA. This full size painting 94 inches by 58 inches, depicts George in riding clothes beside a grazing bay horse, with unusually perhaps, its hindquarters prominently displayed.



The only question remaining is who received the Invitation but sadly there is no clue as to who it may be. It would have had to have been a gentleman landowner in this area who had the right to vote. What is good however is that someone kept the Invitation and it was safely put away for over 200 years until it was handed to me. It is also a fine example of what at first just seems to be a simple invitation card but behind it, there is a bigger and more interesting story. I wonder what other items we have in the Tolbooth Museum; can also tell such a story?