



## Stonehaven Tolbooth Association 2017

### From the Editor

We are now well into the museum's summer season and as you can see there has been a slight increase in visitor numbers compared to last year. We have also had visits from external organisations and schools.

One of the things I enjoy most as a volunteer is meeting and chatting with the visitors. There are some fascinating stories to be heard, both from visitors here in the UK and those from other parts of the world. Occasionally I even get the occasional opportunity to try my very bad French!

The museum secretary Andrew Newton has created excellent statistics extracted from our visitor book, which show that visitors continue to be from all parts of the world— an incredible 108 different countries. As one of the Disney Florida attractions says "It's a small, small world". I have (just) managed to squeeze the table into page 2. I hope you find both this and the rest of the articles interesting and informative.

*Tom Macpherson*

**Issue: April—June 2017**

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### New Key Procedure

As volunteers know, museum keys are held by the Harbour Hut café where volunteers can collect the keys and deposit them after closing the museum. This has worked well, however on several occasions the Harbour Hut has closed early (before the museum) leaving volunteers at a loss as to where to leave the keys.

Vicky the Harbour Hut lessee has agreed that should this happen in future the key pouch can be put through the letterbox of her house behind the shop.

Access to the flat is in Keith Place (first right after you pass the shop). Once in Keith Place you will see at the back of the shop five concrete steps leading to a black door. Just post the pouch through the letter box. No need to knock on the door.

This is a photo of the house entrance in Keith Place.



### Aberdeen University Placement

During April, May and June the museum has been fortunate to secure the services of Amanda Hoffman, an Aberdeen University student. Her main task has been to audit the museum collection and update the museum database.

At times it has been a challenge to identify some of the more unusual artefacts and their purpose. Jim Bruce has been of great assistance in this. Once the database is up to date, the next task will be to label the museum artefacts which currently have no information. The updated database will greatly assist the museum Curator Louise Coates.

### Special Visits

5th and 6th year special needs pupils from Bucksburn visited on 31st May. And were hosted by volunteers Gwynne Stewart and Mary Sutcliffe. The pupils reportedly enjoyed their visit and said that they intended to return with their parents at a later time. Both volunteers said that they also had a great fun with the pupils!

On 6th June, after a talk and quiz the previous week by George Strang and Jim Bruce at their AGM, twenty members of Stonehaven Ladies Probus club visited the museum. A few passers-by also popped in while the doors were open!

A party from Aberdeen Grammar school called in when their visit to the castle was unexpectedly cancelled.

A party of Stonehaven Guides visited on 2nd May. They had a great time and spent a lot of pocket money in the shop!

## Snapshot of Worldwide Visitors

(Thanks to Andrew Newton)

	Total	%		Total
Scotland (excl S'haven)	6358	42.65%	Chile	9
England	2769	18.58%	Qatar	9
Stonehaven	708	4.75%	Columbia	8
USA	648	4.35%	Israel	8
Germany	480	3.22%	Kazakhstan	8
Canada	382	2.56%	Dubai	8
Australia	363	2.44%	Bangladesh	8
Poland	328	2.20%	Azerbaijan	7
France	234	1.57%	Libya	7
Italy	212	1.42%	Croatia	6
Norway	186	1.25%	Oman	6
Spain	171	1.15%	St Helena	6
Ireland	156	1.05%	Bolivia	5
Holland	132	0.89%	Luxembourg	5
Wales	121	0.81%	Abu Dhabi	5
New Zealand	120	0.81%	Algeria	5
Switzerland	118	0.79%	Nigeria	5
N Ireland	108	0.72%	Kenya	4
Czech Rep	89	0.60%	Saudi Arabia	4
Hungary	73	0.49%	Pakistan	4
Brazil	59	0.40%	Philippines	4
South Africa	57	0.38%	Sri Lanka	4
Romania	55	0.37%	Peru	3
Denmark	52	0.35%	Moldovia	3
China	46	0.31%	Nepal	3
Austria	45	0.30%	Bahamas	2
Russia	45	0.30%	Costa Rica	2
Sweden	43	0.29%	Dominican Republic	2
Malaysia	43	0.29%	Panama	2
Lithuania	39	0.26%	Uruguay	2
Latvia	37	0.25%	Greenland	2
Finland	34	0.23%	Ukraine	2
Belgium	32	0.21%	Egypt	2
Slovakia	31	0.21%	Iran	2
Bulgaria	27	0.18%	Morocco	2
Portugal	27	0.18%	Zimbabwe	2
Hong Kong	26	0.17%	Falkland Isles	2
Armenia	25	0.17%	Belize	1
Greece	25	0.17%	Jamaica	1
India	22	0.15%	US Virgin Isles	1
Thailand	21	0.14%	Ecuador	1
Cyprus	18	0.12%	Albania	1
Malta	14	-	Gibraltar	1
Trinidad & Tobago	13	-	Macedonia	1
Venezuela	13	-	Angola	1
Iceland	13	-	Bahrain	1
Indonesia	13	-	Ethiopia	1
Mexico	12	-	Republic of Guinea	1
Argentina	12	-	Tanzania	1
Kuwait	12	-	Tunisia	1
Singapore	12	-	Burma	1
Japan	11	-	Cambodia	1
Estonia	10	-	Mongolia	1
Turkey	10	-	Taiwan	1
South Korea	10	-	Viet Nam	1
<b>SUM</b>	<b>14906</b>		<b>108 Countries</b>	

## New Lighting System

At long last we have had approval from the council lighting department to install the new lighting system. The work will take 2—3 days to complete . To avoid the impact of the work on visitors it will take place over three Tuesdays, when the museum is normally closed.

Work on the first room, the entrance room , has been completed and has significantly improved both visitor experience and safety. .A new lighting switch panel has also been installed allowing individual control of each room's lighting.

## Is it Yours??

Museum Treasurer Dennis Collie recently discovered an unusual coin in the donations box. Further investigation has revealed that it is worth a significant amount of money. How it came to find its way into the donations box is a mystery and we presume it was done in error by a visitor. Mind you, why a visitor would have such a valuable coin in his or her pocket or purse is an even greater mystery!

The museum would like to return it to its rightful owner, so if it is your coin and you can tell us both the type of coin and its date, we will be glad to return it. Please contact the museum treasurer Dennis Collie on [colliefolk@gmail.com](mailto:colliefolk@gmail.com) if you wish to reclaim your coin.

## Wheelie easy now!

The external sign for the Clock Tower is heavy and awkward to move and in the Scots vernacular has proved to be “a real trauchle” to put out and take in. However, committee member Bill Emslie has come to the rescue and has fitted wheels to the sign. It is now easy to roll out and bring in.

The wheels have brakes on them. These are two white arms with orange tips. To move the sign, pull the levers out to unlock the brakes. Once the sign is in place, remember to push the levers in to apply the brakes and prevent it rolling down the steps!



Brakes Locked



## Footfall April to June 2017

Month	Museum	Tower	Combined	Days Open	Museum Avge	Tower Avge
<b>April</b>	3006	665	3671	26	116	26
<b>May</b>	2006	557	2563	27	74	21
<b>June</b>	2241	578	2819	26	86	22
<b>Totals</b>	<b>7253</b>	<b>1800</b>	<b>9053</b>	<b>79</b>		

### Accumulative 2017 Totals

Museum 9430  
Clock Tower 2524  
**Both Attractions 11,954**

### Comparative 2016 Totals

9123  
2807  
**11930**

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## Stonehaven Tolbooth Association

OSCR Charity SC043279

Stonehaven Tolbooth Association  
Old Pier

Stonehaven AB39 2JU

Phone: 07512 466329

Email: [inquiries@stonehaventolbooth.co.uk](mailto:inquiries@stonehaventolbooth.co.uk)

We're on the web!

[www.stonehaventolbooth.co.uk](http://www.stonehaventolbooth.co.uk)

The Stonehaven Tolbooth is thought to have been founded by George Keith, 5th Earl Marischal (c. 1553–1623), with the original purpose of the rectangular building being to act as a storehouse during the construction of the nearby Dunnottar Castle. In 1600, an Act of Parliament provided that the building become a Tolbooth.

After 1624, the town business functions were conducted on the upper level of the Stonehaven Tolbooth, with the ground floor being used as the prison. It remained a courthouse (upper floor) and prison (ground floor) until 1767 when these activities were relocated.

The building then reverted as a store until the 1950s by which time it had fallen into disrepair. In 1963 the building was renovated and officially re-opened by Her Majesty the Queen Mother. In 1975 the lower floor was converted into a museum reflecting Stonehaven's long history. Currently the museum occupies the ground floor whilst a separate restaurant operates on the upper floor.

*Entry is free.*

### Snippets

We extend a warm welcome to new volunteers Maureen Cook, Fiona Hill, Eilidh Latto and Ailsa Mackintosh. We hope they will enjoy taking part in the museum activities and meeting our many visitors.

STA committee members would like to thank Stonehaven Lions Club for another generous donation of £250 and Stonehaven Ladies Probus Club for their donation of £25.

Stonehaven Heritage Society will shortly be publishing George Swapp's new book ***The Streets of Stonehaven*** and it has been agreed that an evening launch will take place in the museum at a date to be decided.

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### Become a Tolbooth Volunteer!

The Tolbooth museum is supported by Aberdeenshire Council, but managed and operated entirely by a team of volunteers.

The museum is visited by over 22000 people a year of all ages, and from 108 countries across the globe, as we can see from our visitors book. We regularly have visitors from Europe, Asia, Australasia, the USA and Canada and many other parts of the world.

Volunteers play a vital role in providing a warm greeting to visitors as they arrive and in answering the many questions about items in the museum.

Also, we frequently act as an information service, including providing directions to other attractions such as the castle.

We have a dinosaur hunt for the children with a small prize at the end which they find great fun.

No experience is necessary, just an interest in being part of an enthusiastic team dedicated to preserving and sharing this incredible piece of history.

We're a friendly bunch and volunteers are on duty while the museum is open. Most volunteers do one or two afternoons a month, but you can do as many or as few as you choose.

The museum's opening hours are

#### Summer Season

Daily except Tuesday,  
13:30 — 16:30

#### Winter Season

Saturday & Sunday 12:30—15:30

**If you'd like to join us, you can complete the form on the website or drop in when the Tolbooth is open.**

**You'll even get one of the famous red fleeces!**

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