



Alford Heritage Museum



Preserving the rich heritage of Alford and Donside for future generations

Museum Newsletter May 2023

THREE STARS AT LAST !

We were delighted to have our Visit Scotland quality assurance rating upgraded from 2 stars to 3 stars. This is a testament to the hard work put in by the volunteer team over the past 2 years. We were assessed on a range of items such as web and social media; displays and signage; cleanliness; retail offer; and visitor welcome. Now we have some time to prepare for the next assessment in 2 years' time when we will be aiming for 4 stars!

FUTURE PLANS

Having been awarded a Project Feasibility Grant by the Architectural Heritage Fund, we have engaged LDN Architects (Forres) to work with us to take forward proposals for the renovation and reimagining of the Mart building. As the building is now Category A listed we had to employ specialist conservation architects and they are currently assessing the condition of the building before making proposals and advising on costings for its future refurbishment. We will be consulting with the community once we have some options to consider. There is a long road ahead and we would welcome any assistance from those with appropriate skills, interest and experience.

VOLUNTEER WINTER ACTIVITIES

While the doors are closed, a lot of activity takes place behind the scenes, and with some volunteers working from home when it is too cold in the museum.

A small team has been cataloguing the objects in the collection – a task which will take many years to complete ! This web-based inventory of our collections now has over 1500 items. You can view some of the items at <https://www.alfordheritagemuseum.com/collections/>

Others have been cleaning, restoring and redisplaying some of the larger items from the agricultural collection.



In February, a group of volunteers enjoyed a private visit to the Aberdeen Treasure Hub – the new store for the collections of Aberdeen Art Gallery and Museums. Hosted by our mentor, curator Jenny Brown, we were shown some of the different stores where objects such as paintings; textiles and clothes; and local history items are kept. It is very different to our own storage situation but provided numerous points for discussion. We had a demonstration of a large format scanner which we plan to use to digitise some of our fragile paper materials to make them more accessible to researchers.



WHAT'S NEW FOR 2023 ?

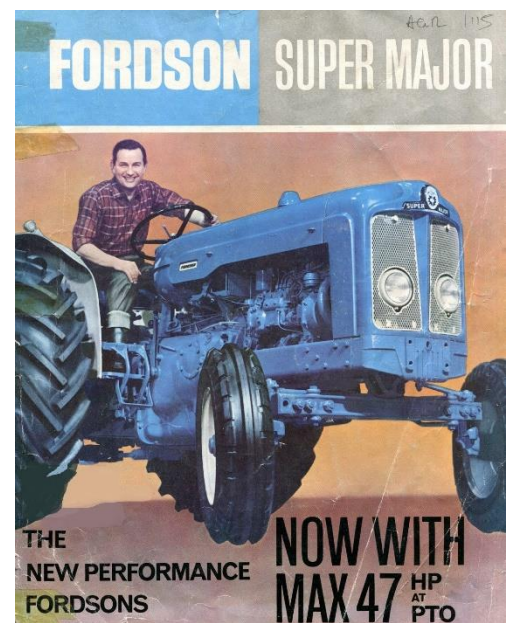
Each year we try to create something new for our visitors to see. We have just completed a refurbishment of the Charles Murray Room, taking the opportunity to broaden out the coverage of the room to include more examples of the use of Doric in poetry, music and theatre. Words of interest to children have been included and it is hoped that sound clips will make it a more authentic experience.

Other new displays include two communion tokens from local churches; a doctor's desk; and a WW1 memorial plaque. Sandy Reid, the "Country Loon", well known for his concert performances in the north east, has also donated his accordion to the museum.

In the back shed, the sale of 6 privately owned tractors freed up quite a lot of space so there was only one thing for it - to fill it up again.

We now have on loan and display the three tractors that made up the **New Performance Fordson Range** which were the latest Fordson models 60 years ago in 1963 - the Dexta, Super Dexta and the Super Major. In their day they were the very latest in tractor design. The Super Major is the development of the Fordson Major first introduced in 1952 when it was the only tractor in the Fordson stable. It was joined in 1957 by Fordson's new small tractor, the Dexta, with the Super Dexta coming along in April 1962.

Looking at these tractors it is hard to believe this was the complete range offered by Ford, when nowadays their successor, New Holland, has 19 ranges covering the sizes from 24-682hp with around 6 tractors in each range (roughly 114 tractors). It is hoped to change the tractors each year which will help keep the displays fresh and will also give us the chance to showcase different tractors.





We received a donation of a threshing mill made by Robert Cormack from Whitecairns which came from a farm at Muir of Fowlis. This is now on display after a clean up by our volunteers. It proved quite a challenge to transport it and safely install it, but it's the sort of job our volunteers enjoy.

We have had help from some enthusiasts to get two of the Lister engines from the stationary engine display up and running for the first

time in many years. These will now hopefully run regularly at the museum to help illustrate what these machines were used for.

SPONSORSHIP

Also new for 2023 is the opportunity for businesses to sponsor the Museum or one of its activities. We were delighted to receive two early offers of sponsorship from Hudsons Catering, who have sponsored the reprint of our leaflet, and from Boghead Holiday Cottages who are sponsoring the reconditioning of the magneto of the 1930 Lister B engine.

We have also received assistance in kind from Country Frames, Leslie, and Repro Overflow, Aberdeen.

2023 EVENTS

By the time you receive this newsletter we will have already held some events, such as our car boot sale; Museum Minis storytelling and crafts for pre-school children; and an event in support of Earth Day. For the remainder of the season we plan to hold

Big Help Out Day Monday 8 May 10 - 1



To mark His Majesty The King's Coronation, organisations across the UK are inviting people to help out for the day at local organisations.

We are opening our doors for the local community to come and see what our volunteers do, and to lend a hand.

From cleaning objects to gardening – from cataloguing and photographing items for our web site – there will be something for you to do. We hope that this may encourage more people to come and volunteer with us. Come for a chat and a cake to celebrate the Coronation. *Thanks to Donside Community*

Council for financial support for the event.

Members and Supporters Evening and AGM Friday 19 May 7.30 – 9.30 pm

Come and see what's new for 2023. View the work done so far by LDN Architects and make comments on their proposals for renovation of the building.

Museum Summer Market Sunday 4 June 12.00 – 4.00

Outdoor event in Museum yard and field. Stalls from craft workers and other sellers, local organisations, food vendors and storytelling. The Museum will be open as usual.

Tractor Run from the Museum Sunday 11 June 11.00

View the tractors in the Mart field before they set off on their run. Viewing from 10.15 am. Free entry.

Museum Autumn Fair Sunday 27 August 12.00 – 4.00

Outdoor event in Museum yard and field. Stalls from craft workers and other sellers, local organisations, food vendors and storytelling. The Museum will be open as usual.

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2023 Open Season
Hours Thursday - Sunday 12-4



HUDSONS
CATERING

