

GLENESK FOLK MUSEUM



Autumn Newsletter

OCTOBER, 2024



2025: Anniversary year

As Autumn colours begin to creep up the glen, it is time to reflect on a busy summer season at the museum and look forward to an eventful programme through the rest of the year and into 2025, when we will celebrate our 70th anniversary. It was on the 15th of June 1955 that the Earl and Countess of Dalhousie opened the museum, a project that was inspired and founded by Greta Michie. We will certainly be marking the occasion as we continue to honour and build on the fantastic legacy for future generations left to us by Greta.

Rising visitor numbers



From the world over

This summer we welcomed visitors from all over the UK and the world - from Arbroath to Australia and pretty much everywhere in between. Visitor numbers were up, boosted no doubt by the quality of the cakes and the coffee! Takings in the cafe were almost double those of last year, reflecting both higher numbers of visitors but also a healthy increase in average sales. It all helps in the constant challenge of raising cash to fund the museum. It is also gratifying that despite the inevitable draw of the cafe for hungry walkers, cyclists and other visitors, some 40 per cent of those coming through the door spent time in the museum itself.

Special exhibitions



Among the notable events this year have been special exhibitions in our upstairs rooms on the history of piping and pipe bands in the glen and Angus, and of tartans, the latter staged by Strathmore Woollen Mills of Forfar. The Piping Routes exhibition allowed visitors to try their hand at playing the chanter, evincing some interesting noises from the display room.

One of the tartans exhibited by Strathmore was a handsome blue tartan especially designed for the old US navy base at Edzell that was a prominent feature of local life until it closed in the 1990s.

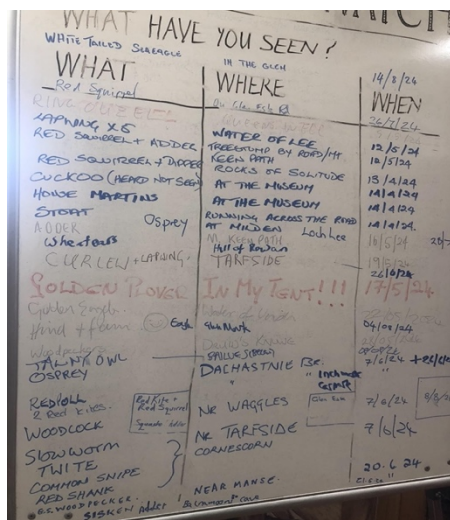
We also hosted visits to the museum for those with sensory impairments, children's groups, demonstrations of Victorian butter and dairy making and in early August held a 'Maker's market' weekend for local crafters, a number of whose products are featured permanently in the museum shop.

Bridges & milestones



Throughout the year, artist-in-resident Ken Kidston has been taking photos up and down the glen, producing a marvellous exhibition in the upstairs rooms. He has focused on bridges and milestones. A set of pictures of the many bridges in the glen alongside maps showing their location was a boon to walkers - especially showing those that have been swept away by flood waters or are closed for other reasons.

Our visitors have also logged a terrific variety of wildlife on their walks, including eagles, an osprey and a golden plover in someone's tent!



Whisky in the glen

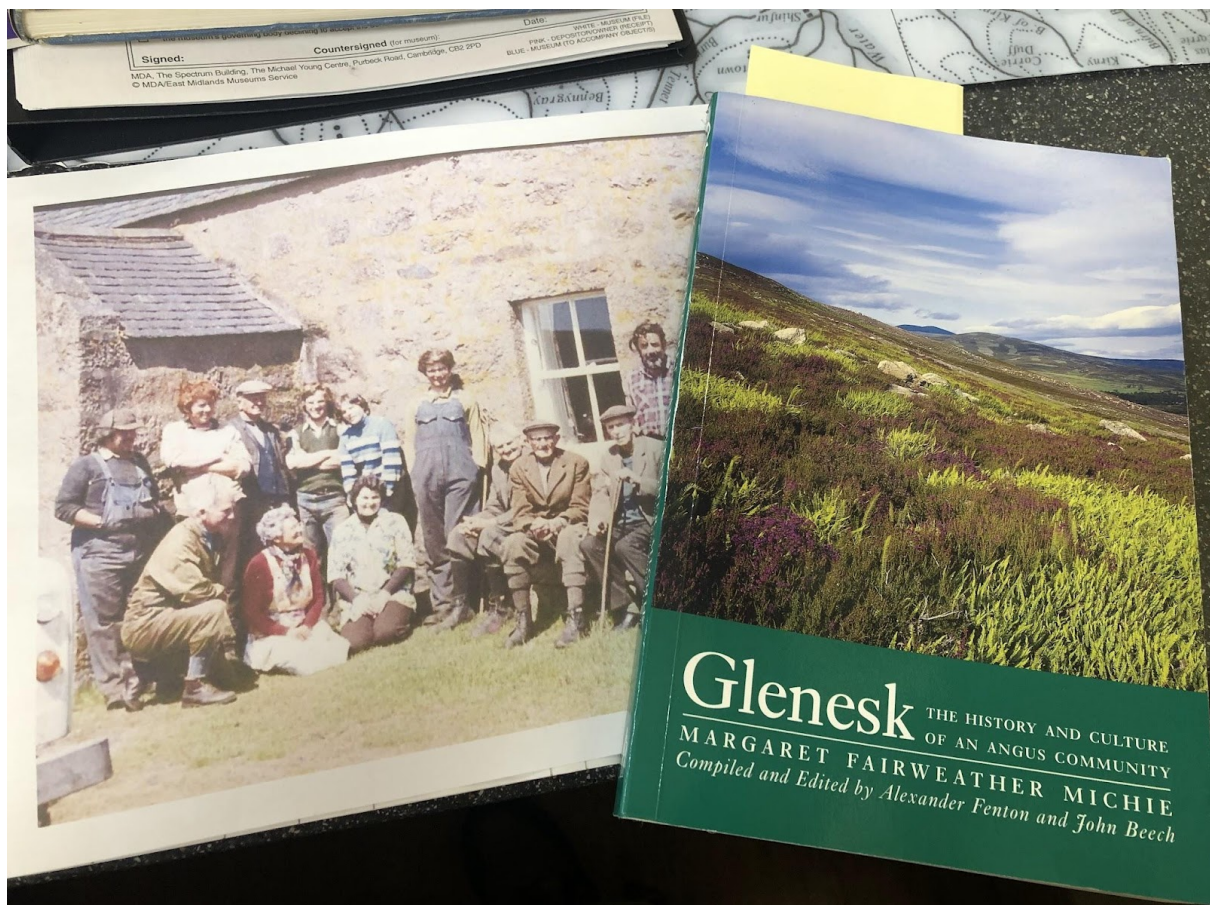
The museum has an exciting new collaboration with the family-owned Glencadam distillery in Brechin, which, by happy coincidence, is celebrating its 200th anniversary next year. The

distillery is building a new visitor centre and we have been helping them in the making of a film about illicit stills in the glen. There were at least 14 whisky bothies in Glenesk, from Craig of Doune high up Glen Mark, down to Ranoch. There are many rich stories of the lengths local distillers went to avoid detection by the excise men, including disguising the copper pots and stills as sleeping children under blankets on a bed. 'Dinna wauken ma bairns,' said one canny farmer's wife at Arsallary as she successfully steered the searching officers away from the incriminating kit.

Looking ahead

At the end of the summer many visitors ask "When do you close for the season?". The answer is the museum remains open throughout the year - and there is plenty to look forward to in the coming months.

We are making plans to mark the 70th anniversary in 2025. An exciting prospect is the reprinting of *Glenesk, the history and culture of an Angus glen*, with a foreword by Greta Michie, which was published in 2000 but recently has only been available second-hand. The book is a fascinating compilation that captures and details much of the information available in the museum, with a wealth of evocative photos and archive material about the people of the glen. We plan to have new copies available in good time for the anniversary in June, when we will mark the occasion. We are still making plans for a celebration and will have more information in due course. Meanwhile, please let us know if you would like to pre-order a copy of the book. Email Julie Cave at enquiries@gleneskfolkmuseum.org



Upcoming events

We have other notable events coming up during the Autumn:

Saturday October 5th: Eileen Budd storyteller woolcraft session (spinning)

Friday 11th and Saturday 12th October, at 7pm: There will be performances of **Miss Lindsay's Secret** at **Brechin City Hall**. This true and intimate tale of a Glenesk seamstress and her fiancé who left to join the Klondike goldrush is written and performed by Maria MacDonnell and won glowing reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe and everywhere it has been performed.

Tickets from: www.ticketsource.co.uk/brechincityhall/e-jblgod

Sunday October 13th: Eileen Budd storyteller woolcraft session (Natural dyeing)

Saturday October 19th: Introduction to machine knitting (no machine required)

Thursday October 24th: Glenesk Folk Museum **Annual General Meeting**

Sunday October 27th: Halloween storytelling event with Forbes Inglis

Sunday November 10th: Eileen Budd storyteller woolcraft session (Weaving)

Sat/Sun November 16/17: Christmas market

Fund raising & volunteers

The museum is more than ever dependent on the generosity of its visitors and supporters.

We especially encourage legacy donations and direct debits

<https://bit.ly/GleneskTrustdonate>

We are always on the lookout for volunteers to help in the museum, in the café and 'front of house'. The trustees are also looking for volunteers to fill the roles of secretary and treasurer. Anyone with accounting, legal and HR skills is especially welcome.

Please contact: enquiries@gleneskfolkmuseum.org

[Read more on our website](#)

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