

# Royal Dunfermline - A Story to Weave New Museum & Art Gallery

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## Highlights from Dig Dunfermline

First ground was broken at the end of August on the site of the new Dunfermline Museum and Art Gallery building, by Dundee firm, Rathmell Archaeology who won the tender to run a community archaeological dig.

### Volunteer Target Smashed !

We promised 60 digging days but delivered 286 with 83 volunteer diggers aged from 16 to 77. Over four weeks, 500 visitors dropped by to watch the volunteers labouring in the mud. Another 120 went on guided tours which covered an earlier dig at Abbot House and really put our new dig into its historical context.



### What Was Found?

The unexpected! The archaeological layer turned out to be twice as deep as was forecast, so the dig was extended for an extra week to investigate further. Lots of drains or culverts were uncovered, as well as the corner of a building which has still to be dated. An interesting discovery was made too - almost the whole site was filled with rubble and soil brought from somewhere else. Before construction work starts in April 2014 we will run another short dig to the east of the building foundations to make sure that no unexplored archaeology will be destroyed.

### Post Dig Seminar

A "celebrate and share" event was held on 27th November. Stars of the show, apart from our archaeologists, Peter Klemen and Thomas Rees from Rathmell Archaeology, were the brave volunteers who stood up and spoke to the audience about their experiences.



[www.facebook.com/dmagfife](http://www.facebook.com/dmagfife)

## News from Dunfermline Carnegie Library

With construction work due to begin in the spring of 2014 for the £10.8 million extension, alternative premises for library services have been sought and evaluated. Work to adapt 13/15 Maygate (the former Tourist Information Office, a building which is Council owned) will be carried out. This will be a temporary town centre library while Carnegie is closed, offering a great range of popular books for adults and children. Computer users will not be forgotten, either. PCs for free public access will be available in the City Chambers and, subject to feasibility testing, at the Music Institute.

The Dunfermline Museum & Gallery project team will join with Local History Services in St Margaret's House which is just a little bit further down the hill from the library. Dates for closure of the library and relocation of services will be announced early next year.



Dunfermline coat of arms with St Margaret above from the main lending library

### "I've even learned to dance the Charleston!"



Catriona Davidson has joined the DMAG team as Volunteers Co-ordinator Intern. She's one of 20 interns throughout Scotland taking part in the Museums Galleries Scotland Skills for the Future Programme which will train interns in the museums sector for a year.

Just two months in, Catriona said: "Being involved in the development of a new museum is such an exciting opportunity, and I've already learned so much doing such a variety of different things. I've made bronze-age pots with children, assisted with public consultations, learned how to interpret, catalogue and assess archive materials, undertaken research projects, visited local community groups,

helped train and supervise groups of volunteers...I've even learned how to dance the Charleston! I'm thoroughly enjoying working with the DMAG team, and am excited to see what the rest of the year will bring."



### Curator's Corner

Lesley Botten, Museum Display Design & Activities Curator, reveals some of her project highlights in this regular slot.

I had the pleasure of showing artwork by Dunfermline-born artist Joseph Noel Paton to Isabella Lennie and her family.

The Lennies are related to this famous artistic family which included Waller Hugh Paton and Amelia Hill and their father Joseph Neil Paton.



The Lennie family visiting Pittencrieff House Museum to view the Sir Noel Paton collection.

## Recreation in Dunfermline

### ARE YE DANCIN'?

One of the themes in the new Museum is recreation and leisure in Dunfermline. We are looking for stories from people about all types of recreation, from dancing, to sports, to going to the cinema.

Please get in touch with us if you would like to tell us yours.

Image: 1957 radio from museum collection



### John and Rosemary Grieve

John and Rosemary Grieve met in the Kinema Ballroom in the early fifties.

John began going out to the dancing in 1947 from the age of 17, and started off in Unitas Dance Hall – which was above the Co-op's clothing department.

“Going to Unitas dancing was something new for me; it always had to do with sport. I had to admit, dancing came easy to me, but to be honest, the girls who helped me learn all the steps were great - and patient. Once I thought I was good enough, it was time to try the Kinema Ballroom – it was worth the wait. This was when I met my now wife Rosemary.”



“We all thought we looked great, especially with the Tony Curtis haircut! All our suits were made-to-measure. There were plenty of gents tailors on the High Street in the 1950s. Burton Tailors; Fifty Shilling Tailors; Claude Alexander; Hepworths...to name but a few!”

Rosemary has fond memories of time spent with John at the dance halls in the 1950s. She remembers Cecil Hunter's Band, the resident band at the Kinema Ballroom. She had her first date with John at the Kinema when she was 17.

“The girls wore felt skirts and petticoats that were starched so that they stuck out, with a waspie belt, stockings and suspenders, 4 inch high heels and a neck tie – like in the film Grease! I looked forward to dressing up, with what little we had. We used to make different outfits from the same clothes, like wearing your cardigan back to front so the buttons were on the back. I went to The Ballroom by myself and met up with people I knew there. It was common to go by yourself back then. After I met John, we went as a couple and left as a couple.”

John and Rosemary have been married for 56 years and have two sons.



Kevin Cox has been helping us with research into shopping in Dunfermline. He searched through the Dunfermline Press archive held in Dunfermline Carnegie Library's local history section for the men's clothes shops mentioned by John Grieve. Here's one of the adverts he found for Hepworths which had a branch in the High Street.

# Dean of Guild Court Plans

## The Shopping Centre That Never Was

Two teams of volunteers have been coming in every Thursday and Friday to catalogue and research our vast collection of Dean of Guild Court plans. They were delighted to find this beautiful drawing of what would have been a splendid addition to Dunfermline's townscape and amenities.

Drawn in 1921, for James W Copland, optician, it proposed a dance hall above with lots of shops below and filled in the grassy space at the eastern end of East Port and James Street.

The architect, John Fraser, designed the Alhambra and Robin's Cinema in East Port. But this scheme was never built.

One of our volunteers, historian Sue Mowat said "This is such a fascinating project and I really look forward to Thursdays. Glad that it's likely to go on for some time!"

Dean of Guild courts were responsible for enforcing burgh building regulations. They evolved from a court which heard complaints about building and boundary disputes to one which vetted all proposed buildings. They were the forerunner of today's Planning departments and all alterations, additions or new buildings had to be approved by the Dean of Guild court. The Dunfermline Burgh plans run from 1880 to 1974.



Iain Ross, Douglas Bell, Sue Mowat and John Johnstone  
The Dean of Guild Court project's Thursday volunteers.

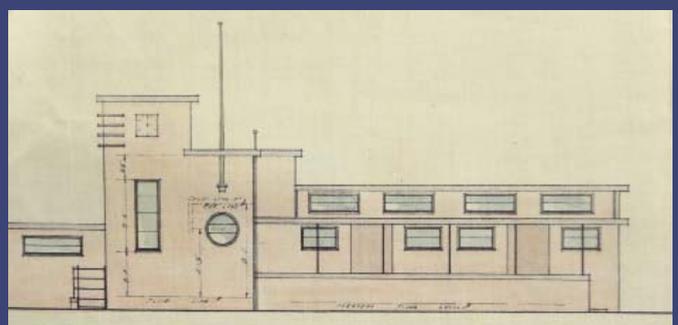


Cameron Chamberlain, Kevin Cox, Rachel Lessels and Alec Wells:  
Some of the Dean of Guild Court project's Friday volunteers

Lots of plans of Dunfermline High School have been catalogued recently. This rather futuristic design for a new sports pavilion dates from 1938.

Fife Archives look after the plans. For more information please see

[www.onfife.com/archives](http://www.onfife.com/archives)



# Schools Admission Registers

## School Snapshot from 100 years ago

This archives project has almost finished the name index for two volumes of admission registers to Pittencrieff School from 1892 to 1910. Ross and Anne Mitchell have kindly agreed to be volunteer supervisors and everyone involved is looking forward to seeing the first registers being made available online for January 2104.

These under-used archives are a useful source for family historians. There are some interesting snippets like: Lizzie and Alexander McKenzie, who lived in Pittencrieff Street, left school in April 1903 aged about 13 and 11 to move to South Africa. Pittencrieff Primary School, inspired by this, are working with our volunteer Mark Seaborne to research the history of their school. Perhaps they will find out what happened to the McKenzie children.

Admission registers from Dunfermline High School (from 1874-1908) will be tackled next. More volunteers are always welcome; this is a task you can do from home provided you have a suitable computer. Ring us on 03451 555 555 extension 492781 or email [shahana.khaliq@onfife.com](mailto:shahana.khaliq@onfife.com).



SUCCESSIVE NUMBER (OR NUMBER OF RE-ADMISSIONS)	DATE OF ADMISSION (OR RE-ADMISSION)			NAME IN FULL CHRISTIAN AND SURNAME	IF RE-ADMITTED ORIGINAL ADMISSION NUMBER	EXACT DATE OF BIRTH		
	Year	Month	Day			Year	Month	Day
1	02	2	24	Robert Milne		90	3	30
2	-	-	-	Sayin Milne		92	10	8
3	-	3	3	Reaper Elizabeth Russell		94	9	20
4	-	4	17	Eva Reid		93	1	20

Above: Detail from a Pittencrieff School

Left: Training for school registers project

## Dunfermline Burns Club Appeal

Dunfermline Burns Club will be asking their Burns Supper guests to make a contribution to pay for repairs to some of the precious books held in the Murison Burns Collection of over 2,000 books, prints, and Burnsiana housed in Dunfermline Carnegie Library. John Murison, born in Glasgow in 1852, collected books by and about Robert Burns for almost 40 years. Towards the end of his life he sold his collection to Sir Alexander Gibb, (owner of the company that built Rosyth's naval dockyard), and Gibb gifted it to the people of Dunfermline.

Over the last few months we have put together an electronic catalogue essential to managing the collection whilst it is in storage (during the construction phase) and to give better public access when we reopen in 2016. Our volunteer book packing project is all set to go in January next year.

Images

Top: Known as "The Kilmarnock Edition", Poems, Chiefly in the Scottish Dialect was published in 1786. Our copy has pages missing but is still a rare book worthy of repair.

Bottom: Provost Jim Leishman and Shahana Khaliq preparing for the packing up project.



# Thanks to The Scottish Pottery Society

Heather Jack, Robin Jones and Alex Inglis, members of The Scottish Pottery Society, have given up their free time to clean, photograph, research and catalogue the ceramic items in the Murison Burns collection.

This colourful figurine of Scotland's national poet Robert Burns was probably made in about 1850 although we know very little else about it.

If you are interested in Scottish pottery why not visit The Scottish Pottery Society website.  
[www.scottishpotterysociety.co.uk](http://www.scottishpotterysociety.co.uk)



## Get involved ... Find out more

For the next 3 years there will be lots of ways that you can help make the new Dunfermline Museum & Art Gallery into something to be proud of. More information will be issued in quarterly newsletters which you can download from the website or receive by post if you send in a request to join a newsletter mailing list. Send an email to [libraries.museums@onfife.com](mailto:libraries.museums@onfife.com) or pick up a mailing list request form at a Dunfermline library or go to:

**[www.fifedirect.org.uk/futureheritage](http://www.fifedirect.org.uk/futureheritage)**

You are also welcome to contact any of the following people involved in the project:

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Funded by Fife Council, the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) and The Carnegie Dunfermline Trust, Royal Dunfermline – A Story to Weave will develop a new and accessible museum and art gallery in the heart of Dunfermline's heritage quarter, adjacent to and integrating with the world's first Carnegie Library.

