

## Stonehaven

Stonehaven is historically a summer tourist location - a reputation it maintains to this day. With pleasant seascapes, an attractive harbour and town centre, it is perfect for a day trip or longer stay.

It has many old and ancient buildings reflecting its historic past, and also offers many activities and entertainments for people to take part in.

The Stonehaven Leisure Centre offers indoor swimming and sports such as badminton, volleyball and aerobics. Also for the energetic is a heated art deco outdoor swimming pool, bowling, tennis, fishing, golf and many other sports.

For other members of the family, there is a wide variety of specialist shops. Stonehaven's main streets have many interesting and charming shops to explore, and the hotels and restaurants all offer varied menus and delightful surroundings in which to sample some of the local delights.

Stonehaven is no longer a substantial fishing port, but it retains much of its historic interest. There is the old harbour and the 15th Century Tolbooth which houses a fascinating museum of local history and fishing.

There is also the imposing Dunnottar Castle which is perched precariously on the cliffs to the south of the town.

During the summer months there is a full programme of events for young and old. In July there is the Stonehaven Folk Festival, a youthathon and the Stonehaven Highland Games, which are held in Mineralwell Park.

There is also the Feein' Market, which is held on the first Saturday in June in the Market Square.

This is a revival of the old feein' market, when at the end of

term, farm servants, wishing a change of employment, gathered to become "fee'd" with new employers after striking a deal over terms.

These markets attracted stall-holders and there was much buy-ing and selling.

The new Feein' Market is run by Stonehaven Business Association and takes in the entire Market Square, which on every other day of the year is used as a car park.

There are stalls by local trades-men and entertainments including Highland dancing, country music and period costume competitions.

Stonehaven's main event, however, is at a time of year when there are very few tourists, although visitors from all over Britain come to see it.

The annual Fireball Ceremony, which is held on Hogmanay, is a spectacle watched by thousands. It sees people walk through the town twirling giant fireballs above their heads.

Fireballs consist of wire netting bags packed with all kinds of combustible material. They are swung round the head with the aid of a long wire rope and handle.

The ceremony takes place in the Auld Toon High Street and is reputed to hark back to pagan times as a means of warding off evil spirits which might beset the town in the coming year.

The original settlement at Stonehaven was no more than a small fishing village, but in 1600 Stonehaven was made the County Town of Kincardineshire when the seat of the Sheriffdom of Kincardine was transferred from the old Kincardine town-ship at Kincardine Castle, near Fetter-cairn.

When Stonehaven became the administrative centre of the county, it was essential to have a municipal building and there was only one suitable building in the town - the storehouse belonging to the Earl Marischal on the north side of the harbour.

It was rapidly modified to make a courthouse and prison, and still stands today, restored and renovated.

Stonehaven's New Town grew when Robert Barclay of Ury built a bridge over the Carron in 1781. The New Town was designed around a central market square, and the Market Buildings were built in the square. A clock tower was added in 1857.

Stonehaven grew around the nucleus of the square and its perimeter streets. The railway reached the town in 1848, but the topography of the area necessitated the building of the station up the hill from the town. This resulted in more houses being built and a prosperous suburbia soon linked Stonehaven and its railway station.

Stonehaven - Art Deco open air swimming pool

ONE of the North-east of Scotland's main attractions is Stonehaven's

wonderful art deco open air salt water swimming pool, which is over 65 years old. It's waters are heated to above 80 degrees, making it a magnet for families whatever the weather.

From June until the end of the summer season, it caters for swimmers and non-swimmers alike. As the oldest heated outdoor pool in the country - and one of the few that are left - it has become one of the most popular tourist attractions for many people in the North-east and further a field.

The fact that the pool is still here is thanks to a determined campaign by locals which forced the Aberdeenshire Council to do a U-turn on its closure.

The Olympic-size pool was opened in June, 1934, when 2,300 people turned up for the grand opening. The pool cost £9,529 and one of its best features is that the water comes from the sea.

Prior to it's opening, local councillors and designers had long, and heated, debates about how best to fill the pool and keep it clean.

The latest technology was brought in to fill the pool with sea water which was emptied and refilled every two days. However, many feared this was unhygienic and wanted a tidal pool system using a filter and disinfectant method installed.

This did not happen until the following year, and a special pumping room had to be built.

The pool at first was unheated and the main attraction for spectators was to watch international competitive swimmers taking part in races and spectacular high dives from a six meter high board.

Once heating was installed in 1935 using a gas boiler system, set at a chilly 58F, visitors rocketed to almost 3,000 per day during the height of the season!

During the war the pool was an asset in boosting the morale of local people despite the small numbers and lack of galas and other

competitions. Special concessionary fares were given to the forces from local camps using the facilities and the MoD also commandeered the showers for the troops.

At the end of the war in 1945, the professionals again took over the running of the pool. The de-rationing of petrol in 1950 had a dramatic effect on attendance's.

Again that year it was noted that the pool was at the forefront of technology, being the first in Scotland to use breakpoint chlorination as a method of disinfection.

The pool's coming of age was marked when international water polo matches between Germany and Great Britain were transferred from Aberdeen to Stonehaven because of its superior facilities.

In 1958 disastrous flooding affected the whole of the Cowie area with several burns and rivers bursting their banks leaving the pool completely cut off. The plant room was flooded and stringent safety checks had to be carried out before it could be reopened.

These events were recorded with a small plaque attached to the corner of the north-west wall indicating the height to which the waters rose (approximately three and a half feet).

Since then a number of flooding incidents have happened, but fortunately none of them have ever been to the same extent.

In the 1960s and 70s the pool was hit by a number of disasters due to old age and stricter safety controls. For safety reasons many of the diving boards were taken down and in 1975 the season was interrupted by maintenance.

The weather was also not very kind and this kept attendances down. The biggest change, however, came in 1979 when fresh water replaced sea water.

Sea water returned in 1982 after the pipes and filters to the sea were cleaned, replaced and repaired.

Consultants were also brought in during the 1980s to explore the changes that were needed to secure the pool's future. Suggestions included roofing it over so that it could be used all-year-round. This option is now being reinvestigated by "The Friends of the Open Air Pool".

This was not done because of financial constraints, but the Stonehaven Leisure Centre was built next door in 1985 complete with sports hall and an indoor pool.

In recent years there has been considerable upgrading of the pool with lockers installed in the changing rooms and provision made for disabled people.

The old spectator benches have been replaced with patio armchairs and large bright terraces for sunbathing.

The biggest difference today to times long past is the water temperature was increased to 85F.

Swimming lessons and life saving sessions are still run at the pool and summer fun time afternoons always see a large number of children taking part.

International and national swimmers still use the pool for salt water training and the local triathlon club holds a series of evening events.

Midnight swims are perhaps one of the most exciting events at the pool. They begin in mid June and run through the season.

The modern alcohol free sessions are just as attractive with hundreds of people turning out to swim under floodlights an experience not to be missed.

## Stonehaven Harbour

OVER the last years, Stonehaven's picturesque harbour has been given a facelift to make it more visitor friendly, but it still retains all the charms of a thriving old-style port.

The harbour was built to service the historic Dunnottar Castle nearby and for many years was a busy fishing port.

At the turn of the century when the herring fishing was very popular as many as 150 boats regularly tied up at Stone-haven, so many that you could walk from one side of the harbour to the other without getting your feet wet. Hundreds of herring barrels were stacked on the piers and the industry contributed to the prosperity of Stonehaven.

Now only a few boats regularly fish commercially and the harbour is mostly used for pleasure craft. But there has been a recent resurgence in fishing activity by scallop boats which come in the late summer from as far away as the Isle of Man to dredge the sea bottom off Stonehaven.

At the southern end of the circular harbour the Aberdeen and Stonehaven Yacht Club put their craft to sea at weekends during the summer months.

Much has been done to improve the look of Stonehaven harbour, to recreate the atmosphere of its busy past. First large improvements were done to the parking area known as the Backies to the north of the harbour. This expensive scheme included reinforcing the sea defences, new toilets and larger parking places, with a fine view across Stonehaven Bay towards Garron Point and the local golf course.

Great care has been taken to use old cobbles on the street surface and recreate 19th century walls.

The street lamps are also very fine reproductions of old gas lights.

Stonehaven harbour is a good location for artists. Many set up their easels there where good subjects are all around them.

The old Tolbooth, on Old Pier was renovated some years ago and reopened by the Queen Mother. The building is reputed to be the oldest in Stonehaven and has an intriguing history.

You can find out all about its past in the excellent Tolbooth Museum where the helpful staff will make your visit to Stonehaven harbour one you will remember.

Here's just seven reasons why Stonehaven is special.

-

The Harbour

One of the most picturesque in the country with pubs with real ale, restaurant and gift shop

-

Dunnottar Castle

Dunnottar

Castle is a dramatic and evocative ruin. As you wander around the extensive buildings you are almost surrounded by sea with gulls and other seabirds wheeling and screaming around the cliffs below you. Only 2 mile south of Stonehaven. Open for visitors summer and winter.

-

Stonehaven War Memorial

A

particularly noticeable monument on top of the Black Hill near Dunnottar Castle providing a distinct land mark entering Stonehaven by road or sea. Looked upon as a welcoming sight for people returning to the town. The walk from The Harbour to the Memorial and the Castle is very popular

-

### Stonehaven Fireballs Festival

This unique event starts at midnight on Hogmanay every year and is a memorable way to bring in the New Year. Attracts 10-12,000 visitors each year.

-

### Stonehaven Golf Course

A challenging course for Golfers in Summer and Winter where you can enjoy stunning clifftop views. Many other courses nearby for those seeking a golfing holiday in the North East of Scotland

-

### Stonehaven Open Air Pool

UK's only art deco, heated olympic sized, fully filtered sea water, open air swimming pool. It's an STB 4-star visitor attraction open from first Sunday in June to September each year.

-

### Pneumodesmus Newmani

The oldest known air-breathing land animal: a tiny millipede that lived 428 million years ago was discovered in January 2006 on the shore at Cowie, Stonehaven just below the Highland Boundary Fault which is a geologic fault that traverses Scotland from Arran and Helensburgh on the west coast to Stonehaven in the east. It separates two distinctly different physiographic regions: the Highlands from the

Lowlands, but in most places it is only recognisable as a change in topography.

table.framedImage5 {margin: 5px 2px 5px 2px;} table.framedImage5 td.framedImage { padding: 5px; }

-

Visit Stonehaven, the main county town of Kincardineshire and the Mearns, (Due to Local Government changes, Stonehaven now lies within Aberdeenshire).

-

Situated by the sea, 15 mile south of Aberdeen, Stonehaven is fast becoming one of Scotland's most popular coastal towns and plays an important role in attracting visitors to the Aberdeen City and Shire region of Scotland. Originally a fishing village built around the High Street, Stonehaven has grown to a population of around 11,000

The sense of history, with the impressive ruined fortress of Dunnottar Castle, the awe inspiring views of the sea and harbour, the friendliness of the local people, combine to make Stonehaven special and a must visit town when touring the North East of Scotland.

Beyond Stonehaven there are lots of interesting towns and fishing villages things to do and see around The Mearns. For more information go to [Beyond Stonehaven Website](#).

Coastal, Whisky and Castle Trails are popular with visitors to Stonehaven and the North East of Scotland.

Grassic Gibbon the distinctive voice of the Mearns

AN absolute must for visitors to the Mearns is the Grassic Gibbon Centre, dedicated to one of Scotland's greatest writers.

The author of the world-famous *Sunset Song* spent much of his life near the hamlet of Arbuthnott, a few miles from Inverbervie, and it was here that the seeds were sown for what is widely regarded as one of the masterpieces of 20th century Scottish fiction.

The Centre is a memorial to his life and works and allows visitors to become acquainted with the area and its history.

It stands at the heart of the community of Arbuthnott in which Gibbon spent his formative years, and which inspired his greatest writings.

Marking the fulfilment of a long-standing local ambition to recognise his achievement, the centre was established in 1991 by Arbuthnott Community Association with the approval of Gibbons' family.

Situated in close proximity to key landmarks in Gibbons' life -the croft of Bloomfield, the school and the kirkyard containing his ashes - the centre has permanent features which include wall displays, cabinets and an audio-visual facility tracing the author's life and work, reproducing rare family photos and manuscript material.

All are locally designed and an excellent informative 12-minute video presentation is a feature of the centre.

Unique exhibits include books, personal effects and mementoes of Gibbon. As well as original artefacts of social, cultural and historic interest.

Of special interest are two short stories, Clay and Smeddum, which have been published by the Arbuthnott Community Association. They are on sale exclusively at the Grassic Gibbon Centre.

In addition, temporary exhibitions are to be created regularly revolving around a central theme.

The centre is also committed to staging functions and live entertainment linked with Grassic Gibbon and the local community.

The centre contains a coffee shop and sells books and postcards, as well as a range of souvenirs and crafts created by local artists.

Visits of school parties and larger groups can be arranged by appointment. A supper menu is available on request.

Tel +44 (0)1561 361668

Kinneff - hiding place for the crown Jewels

THE Old Church at Kinneff, on the coastal route between Inverbervie and Stonehaven, was the secret hiding place for the Crown Jewels of Scotland for nearly 10 years.

Today, the church has been lovingly restored by hardworking members of a preservation trust, and is open to visitors.

Evidence suggests that worship at Kinneff dates back to Celtic times, and that possibly as early as the 8th Century a church existed on approximately the same site as today's building, which is situated just off the A92.

The Bishop de Bernham dedicated the Church of Kinneff in 1242, when Kinneff was properly endowed as a parish. Its rector was the Archdeacon of St Andrews who appointed a vicar to do the work of a parish priest.

Little is known about Kinneff in Reformation times except that the shortage of ministers prevented the appointment of a set-tied minister until 1613. James Rait had been the minister of the adjacent parish of Catterline before his induction to Kinneff in 1613. His short ministry of five years was followed by a 20-year ministry by James Strachan, a noted Royalist who was deposed by the Covenanters in 1639. He was awarded £100 compensation after the King came back in 1661.

Strachan was succeeded by the most famous of the ministers of Kinneff, James Grainger, whose monument is seen in its restored state in the west wall of the church.

The Scottish Regalia, better known as Scotland's Crown Jewels, more than anything else, sum up the independent character of Scotland with its own particular customs, traditions and history. So precious are the pieces -the sceptre, crown and sword - to the concept of Scotland that a clause in the 1707 Treaty of Union states that they must never be

removed from Scotland.

They were used for the Scottish Coronation of King Charles I at Holyrood in Edinburgh in 1633, but thereafter the policies of the King led to Civil War.

Oliver Cromwell seized power in England and King Charles was taken prisoner and eventually executed. The Crown Jewels of England were sold and melted down.

Although the Scots also disagreed with King Charles, his son was crowned King Charles II at Scone in 1651 with the regalia playing the central role in the coronation service.

The crown, sceptre and sword were removed to a safer place so they would not fall into the hands of Cromwell's troops. The coastal stronghold of Dunnottar Castle was chosen as the secure refuge.

However, the location was discovered and the castle was besieged. Due to the courage of the Rev Grainger's wife, the regalia were smuggled out of Dunnottar.

The most popularly known version of how this was done is that Mrs Grainger, bringing bundles of flax from the castle, had the crown concealed under her apron and the sceptre disguised as a distaff. Another tale is that the Crown Jewels were lowered down the castle rock to an old fish-wife or servant girl who, on the pretence of gathering tangles on the seashore, carried them off hidden under dulce in her creel.

The Rev Grainger buried the regalia under the floor of his kirk, and they remained hidden until 1660. Every three months Mr and Mrs Grainger dug up the regalia at night to air them before a fire to preserve them from damp and injury.

With the Restoration of King Charles II in 1660, the regalia were dug up and returned to Edinburgh. They are now displayed in Edinburgh Castle.

James Grainger died in 1663 and was succeeded by James Honyeman, the first of four generations of ministers of Kinneff. Their association lasted 118 years, and it was during their ministry that the church was rebuilt in 1738 on the same foundations.

Kinneff Old Church continued to thrive until the middle of the 20th Century, with electricity installed with a ceremonial switch on in 1953.

The Old Church ceased to be used for regular worship, and during the late 1970s there was concern that it would decay beyond repair. This led to the formation of the Kinneff Old Church Preservation Trust.

Not only was it important because of its association with the Scottish Regalia, but also because it was typical of many small rural churches.

With the assistance of public donations and grant aid, the hall was renovated in 1979.

Open to visitors every day of the week, 10am to 5pm.

Inverbervie - The man behind the Cutty Sark

THE Cutty Sark is undoubtedly the most famous clipper ship ever built, and thousands of visitors flock each year to see her at Greenwich. Her record-breaking exploits are well-documented, but it is perhaps less well-known that her designer was Inverbervie born Hercules Linton.

He was the son of Alexander Linton and Jean Anderson and was born on New Year's Day in 1836. His father was a Lloyd's Surveyor, and it fell to his maternal grandfather, Hercules Anderson, to bring the young Linton up.

Inverbervie's watchmaker ensured the young Linton got the very best education at Dr Chrystal's Private School at Arbuthnott, just inland from Bervie, and later at Arbroath Academy.

The budding shipbuilder then served his apprenticeship in Aberdeen before going to Liverpool where he qualified as a marine architect and surveyor. Linton's first appointment was in Newcastle, but he only stayed there for two years before forming a partnership with William Dundas Scott-Moncrieff.

It was this pairing which brought the world The Cutty Sark - the fastest ship of her time. The pair, based on Clydeside, were given the job of building the magnificent clipper by one John Willis. They had not built anything as big as a clipper before, and cut their quotation so much that by the time they had launched her they had gone bust.

The last remaining work on the vessel had to be completed at Leven in Fife, but it is a credit to Linton and Scott that she still survives today in London.

The vessel took her name from a line in Thm O' Shanter - one of the best known works of Robert Burns, Scotland's national Bard, whose father was also a man of Kincardineshire.

Tam, who drank too much John Barleycorn (whisky) was on his way home when he came across a group of warlocks and witches dancing to the music of the devil beside the Kirk at Alloway. Tam watched the hag-like witches and spotted a young and beautiful lassie whose name was Nannie. She was wearing nothing but a "cutty sark", a short shirt or chemise made of Paisley linen.

"Her cutty Sark, o' Paisley harn

That while a lassie she had worn,

In longitude tho' sorely scanty

It was her best, and she was vauntie ....

An' how Tam stood, like ane bewitch'd

An' thought his very een enriched.

Tam tint his reason a'thegither

An' roars out "Weel done, Cutty Sark".

An' in an instant a' was dark.

Fitted with 33 sails and 280ft in length, the Cutty Sark is something of a legend having plied the tea routes between Shanghai and the UK and the wool passages from Australia to London. Sold to the Portuguese in 1895, she did not return to Britain until 1922. She was restored and put back into service and in 1957 eventually found a permanent home in London.

Linton was not, however, around to see his beloved ship in London as he died in 1900. After seeing his business go under, he became manager of Gourlay's Yard in Dundee where he met the late Lord Kinnaid. It was at this time that he became a Fellow of the Royal Society of Antiquarians (Scotland).

Linton then spent time in Glasgow before heading for Southampton where he managed another shipyard. He returned to Montrose and retired in 1895 to his beloved Inverbervie.

A member of the Parish Church, Linton also served on the Town Council. His hobby was collecting pebbles from the beach - known as Bervie gates.

Linton died on May 15, 1900, in the house he was born in at No 4 (now No 3) Market Square, Inverbervie. He is buried with his wife in the Old Churchyard in Inverbervie.

He is remembered today in the Royal Burgh by a brand new memorial that takes the shape of the vessel's figurehead.

There is also a plaque above his former home and the burgh's Kondit Bakery has a special room dedicated to his memory above its coffee shop.

It contains details about the Cutty Sark and was initially set up to mark the 650th anniversary of Inverbervie.

As well as details on the Cutty Sark, the room is home to some artefacts on the Thermopylae -the Cutty Sark's faster rival - and some bakery exhibits from the period.

The room is open during normal bakery opening hours.

Inverbervie - Honoured by an ancient king

INVERBERVIE, half way between Montrose and Stonehaven, is a Royal Burgh and the tale behind it attaining that title is a fascinating one.

It is the perfect place for a peaceful rest, offering wonderful coastal scenery, end-less opportunities for boating or fishing, and a pleasant countryside for exploring at leisure.

Inverbervie is a pleasant place to visit to shop, eat and drink and offers a range of goods and services in an unhurried atmosphere.

The Royal Burgh has a caravan and camping park situated near the curved shingle beach. There is a sports centre and children's amusements including paddling pool and tennis, bowling, putting and crazy golf.

One of the principal features of the town is the parish church, a landmark which can be seen from afar. The church, a Gothic style stately and elegant building, was opened in 1837.

Inverbervie was granted a Royal Charter in 1342, when the 16-year-old King David I, the son of King Robert the Bruce, and his 16-year-old French wife, Johanna, were driven ashore on Bervie beach.

They were returning from France at the time and had been harried by English warships before being forced to run aground. In gratitude for his safe deliverance, the King bestowed a Royal Charter on the town.

But Inverbervie later lost its Charter and had to ask for it to be renewed by King James VI in 1595.

Also noted in Inverbervie's history is the year 1746, when the English Duke of Cumberland was on his way to Culloden. Mr Dow, minister of the parish, had heard that the Duke had laid waste to the village of Johns-haven, four miles south, on the suspicion of supporting Bonnie Prince Charlie's cause, and feared the same for Inverbervie.

The minister went and met the Duke near Benholm Bridge and was invited up into the Duke's carriage. On reaching the town, the Duke accepted the offer of hospitality and spent the night at the manse, thereby saving the town.

In 1800, a French privateer, "La Impregnable", captured several small ships off the coast and pursued others which took refuge in Inverbervie. The enemy was prevented from sending its boats to capture the vessels, and for two days and nights the Bervie Corps of Volunteers returned fire.

A French fireball fired in the action was for many years preserved in Arbuthnott Church and is now at Arbuthnott House.

During the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the Industrial Revolution brought great changes to the Royal Burgh. In 1787 the first power-driven flax mill in Scotland was erected in Inverbervie, the forerunner of a number of mills. The extra labour needed to run the mills resulted in a large increase in population throughout the 19th Century.

Communications were improved with the completion of the Old Bervie Bridge in 1799, the building of the present A92 road during the 1820s and the opening of the railway in 1865.

The early 20th Century saw a decline in population, but this has increased in recent decades with the introduction of new industries.

## Benholm Mill

BENHOLM Mill is an exciting, restored water-powered meal mill and visitors centre.

The first documented evidence of milling at Benholm dates back to the 13th Century. Benholm Mill, situated 13 miles south of Stonehaven just before Johns-haven, is the only surviving traditional water-powered meal mill in Kincardineshire.

Fully restored to working order, the mill is situated in a delightful rural setting with paddocks and ancient woodlands.

The machinery and milling process are fully explained through the interpretation panels and guided tours given by the custodian miller.

For an enjoyable day out, experience the wonderful atmosphere, sounds and smells of the rural life at Benholm.

Ideal for painting, writing, dreaming, relaxing, charity events and private functions the centre is open daily from 11 am-5pm Jun-Sep & May/Oct weekends. Admission is £1 for adults and free for children under 16 and senior citizens. No dogs are allowed. There is limited disabled access and coach parties are welcome, although booking is advisable.

As well as the working water mill, there is also the mill dam with ducks, a woodland walk, farm animals and a cafe and toilet.

The Cafe - open as above - offers a range of hot and cold meals, home bakes and ices.

Tel +44 (0)1561 361969

## Dunnottar Castle

Relive the history, the legend, the drama, of this most ancient Scottish stronghold.

Dramatic and imposing, on its cliff-top perch, near Stonehaven, Dunnottar Castle is a breath-taking sceptical; the ancient walls seem to breath history from every corner.

Between the 9th and 17th centuries the various fortifications were fought over many times.

For three centuries the castle was held by the Keith family who were Grand Marischals of Scotland.

There are many notable events in Dunnottar's past. In 1297 William Wallace burned alive an English Plantaganet garrison which was holding the castle. Much later, in 1562 and 1564, Mary Queen of Scots visited Dunnottar. The safe keeping of the Scottish Crown Regalia during a siege by Cromwell's Roundheads in 1650 is a famous historical event.

A famous event of a different kind occurred in 1685, when 167 Covenanters were imprisoned in terrible conditions. The Whigs vault where these man and women were kept can still be seen today as it was then.

After the rebellion of 1715, the property was fortified and soon fell into disrepair.

Beginning in 1925, however, an ambitious programme of restoration was undertaken by the first Viscount Cowdrey. This work is responsible for the present state of the castle, now maintained by the Dunecht Estates.

A wide variety of successive architectural styles is demonstrated, and the fully restored drawing-room should also be seen.

A free coach and car park is provided and as pleasant path leads to the castle.

A resident guide is in attendance and further information and postcards concerning this most interesting castle can readily be obtained.

Dunnottar Castle stands above the shore and can be reached via the A92 road about 1.5 miles south of Stonehaven.

Please note that because of steep access paths and flights of steps the castle is not really suitable for the disabled.

Hours of opening:

Third week of March to end of October:

Weekdays: 9.00am to 6.00pm

Sundays: 2.0pm to 5.00pm.

November to first week in March:

Weekdays 9.00am to dusk

Closed all day Saturday and Sunday

School parties and organised groups at reduced rates by prior arrangement with the Custodian, Castle Lodge, Dunnottar : Tel (01569) 762173.

#### Other places of interest

- Kinneff Old Church, Kinneff, by Inverbervie. Hiding place of Scottish Crown Jewels 1651-1660 from Cromwell's troops
- Mill of Benholm,  
Benholm, Inverbervie Tel: 01561 361969/01771 622906. Open: daily Jun-Sep & May/Oct weekends 11.00am-5.00pm. Working mill with waterwheel, completely restored. Cafe, walks, farm animals, demonstration plots.
- St Cyrus National Nature Reserve,  
St Cyrus, Montrose Tel: 01674 830736. Open May-Sept, various times, Please phone for details Visitor Centre, audio visual, marine life tank, dunes, cliffs and saltmarsh
- Catterline, by Stonehaven Picturesque old fishing village, seals can often be seen in the bay
- Dunnottar Castle,  
Stonehaven (2 miles south on A92) Tel: 01569 762173. Open: Easter-Oct: Mon-Sat 9.00am-6.00pm, Sun 2.00pm-5.00pm Nov-Mar: Mon-Fri 9.00am-sunset Ruined fortress dating from 12th century, spectacular setting. Scene of Zeffirelli's 'Hamlet'. Good walking footwear recommended.
- Fowlsheugh RSPB Seabird Colony,  
Crawton, by Stonehaven Tel: 01224 624824. Open daily One of the UK's largest mainland seabird colonies. Twice weekly boat trips from Stonehaven Harbour, May-Jul.
- Todhead Lighthouse, by Catterline A local beauty spot with many nesting birds
- Tolbooth Museum, The Harbour, Stonehaven Tel: 01771 622906
- Arbuthnott Church, Arbuthnott, Laurencekirk - Pre Reformation Parish Kirk with 13th century chancel
- Grassic Gibbon Centre, Arbuthnott, Laurencekirk Tel: 01561 361668
- Arbuthnott House & Gardens, Arbuthnott, Laurencekirk Tel: 01561 ??????
- Mearns Forest Walks, Drumtochty Glen, Auchenblae Forest walks, wildlife pond, picnic area, toilets
- Fasque,  
The Estate Office, Fettercairn Tel: 01561 340569 Open daily 1st May-30th Sep 11.00am-5.30pm Other times by arrangement only Home of William Gladstone, former Prime Minister

- Fettercairn Arch,  
Fettercairn Gothic arch built to commemorate Queen Victoria & Prince Albert's visit to Fettercairn in 1861. Gateway to the Victorian Heritage Trail.
- Fettercairn Distillery, Visitors  
Centre, Fettercairn Tel: 01561 340205 Open May-Sept, Mon-Sat  
10.00am-4.30pm One of the oldest licensed distilleries in Scotland Free  
guided tour and dram
- Montrose Air Station Museum, Waldron Road, Montrose Tel: 01674 674210
- Montrose Museum, Panmure Place, Montrose Tel : 01674 673232
- Montrose Basin Wildlife Centre, Rossie Brae, Montrose 01674 676336
- Brechin Castle Centre, Haughmuir, Brechin. Tel: 01356 626814
- Pictavia, Just of A90 to Brechin, Tel : 01356 626241

We would like to thank Angus Country press for permission to use much of the above copy.

Internet sites - links