

Map design © 2021 East Grampian Coastal Partnership

FORMARTINE – AN INTRODUCTION

Sir Samuel Forbes of Foveran wrote in the early 18th century; "but whatever land lies between the rivers Ythan and Don, one hears called by the name Formartine among the inhabitants who disdain to consider themselves as belonging to Buchan." As a seat of authority, Formartine has its origins in the old Celtic / Pictish age of chiefs and petty kings but following the displacement of the powerful Comyn family by Robert the Bruce, the latter's supporters were to become the major landholders, such as the Hays, Sinclairs and Stewarts.

Fast forward to a United Kingdom when the Ythan became famous as a source of pearls and salmon; the Kellie Pearl even made its way into James I's new crown. The 18th and 19th centuries saw the advent of middle-class landlords comprising soldiers, lawyers and academics who would continue to foster that distinct Formartine community which embraced advances in farming and fishing.

Come the twentieth century, residents sought to protect their geomorphological and natural heritage, declaring their ancient sand dunes at Forvie a National Nature Reserve from 1959. These days, Formartine's coastline attracts tourists and seals rather than fishermen, but the memories of its agricultural and maritime heritage remain in the landscape.

Formartine

1309

Neolithic residents settle at Forvie, creating cairns for their dead, and mining flint at the Den of Boddam. **2500-2000BC** Bronze Age settlers erect kerb cairns in the Sands of Forvie. Battle of Cruden Bay/ Ardendraught between the forces of Malcolm

> II, King of Alba, and the soldiers of 17-year-old Canute, son of Sweyn, King of Denmark. The slaughter is such that the leaders declare a truce and set up a chapel, later dedicated to St. Olaf. Patrick de Berkeley is granted the lands of Belhelvie by Robert the

Sir Gilbert de la Hay, 5th Earl of Erroll, becomes first Lord of Slains. Robert the Bruce grants him the Comyns' old estate near Cruden Bay. Hay is also made Constable of Scotland, a title that remained in the family for centuries. Sir John de Bonneville granted the barony of Menie by Robert the Bruce.

David II, son of Robert the Bruce, grants William de Fodringay a charter for Belhelvie estate. Sandstorm destroys Forvie Village. Thomas Kennedy of Kinmuck is made Constable of Aberdeen by Alexander Stewart, Earl of Mar

following the Battle of Harlaw. Kennedy builds a castle on the hill of Ardgith above Ellon, later the site of Ellon Castle. Andrew Buchan is granted the lands of Auchmacoy by James IV.

Old Slains Castle, built by Thomas de la Hay c.1390s, is blown up with gunpowder on the orders of James VI following Francis Hay, the 9th Earl of Erroll's involvement in the Spanish Blanks conspiracy and his defeat of the king's forces at Glenlivet. Patrick Maitland becomes the commissioner for the production of pearls in the Ythan and the Don rivers, appointed following the discovery of the Kellie Pearl the previous year.

The largest and best were to be gifted to the king, James VI. Sir John de Turin of Foveran is made a baronet by Charles I. Knockhall Castle, near Newburgh, is gutted by fire. The Udny family is saved by Jamie Fleeman, their jester, who raises the alarm. Fleeman also rescues the huge charter chest by heaving it out of an upper window. Ellon Castle is built for owner, James Gordon, who had purchased the estate of Ardgith in 1706.

3rd Earl of Aberdeen, George Gordon purchases Ellon Castle to house his favourite mistress, Penelope Dering, who gives birth to an illegitimate son, Alexander Gordon.

The York Buildings Company, owners of Belhelvie since their forfeiture from Earl Panmure following the 1715 Jacobite rebellion, go bankrupt. Harry Lumsden, president of the Aberdeen Society of Advocates, purchases Belhelvie Lodge. Lumsden and his wife Catherine McVeagh had five sons, and numerous descendants who were either in the military or the law.

Anderson, a local exciseman. Death of Captain John Innes of Newburgh, and 41 of his crew off

Girdleness, in whaling ship the Oscar. Innes is buried in the old Holyrood Cemetery, Newburgh. General George Turner of Menie commissions city architect, John

Smith to design his new mansion house in the Scots Baronial style.

Formartine & Buchan Railway Line opened creating a route between

Captain John Thomson, resident of Shanghai House, Newburgh, dies of

by Arthur John Lewis Gordon, laird of Ellon Castle. Businessman

construction, the equivalent of £60,000 in today's money. The hall

is completed four years later in the Tudor Gothic style, of Peterhead

Founding of Cruden Bay Golf Club and construction of Cruden Bay

Hotel, approximately on the site of the early medieval battle with

four survivors of the shipwrecked coaster, Lesrix off Hackley Bay's

It is a wintry night with high seas, but Ingram persists, discovering

James McBey dies in Morocco. His wife Marguerite donates most of

his works to Aberdeen Art Gallery, which still houses the collection

Dyce railway station reopened, as councillors realise it is needed for

Aberdeenshire Turings, becomes 12th Baronet of Foveran. He is the

American businessman and future US president; Donald Trump buys

the Menie estate and turns it into a golf resort. General Turner's

old mansion is renamed MacLeod House from Trump's Scots-born

Ellon Academy opens on its new site; its new address Kellie Pearl Way

the Kelly Burn near Methlick in 1620 and presented to James VI by

Provost Thomas Menzies of Aberdeen. The pearl became part of the

Redevelopment of the Udny Arms Hotel, Newburgh, and opening of

commemorates the huge Ythan pearl discovered at the junction with

nephew of war-time codebreaker and mathematical genius, Alan Turing.

Sir John Dermot Turing, lawyer and author, descendant of the

that ten of the crew had already been washed away. Ingram is

jagged coast with the help of his 12-year-old neighbour, George Ross.

and philanthropist, James Carnegie donated half the funds for

granite, designed by William Davidson, a local architect.

Logie Buchan Memorial Bridge over the

Ythan opened. The project took over a

century to be realised but was helped

by a legacy from Miss Mary Cruden, the

minister's sister in 1891. The concrete

commemorating the fallen of both wars.

A Collieston man, Richard Ingram rescues

awarded a gallantry medal by George VI.

Dyce to Fraserburgh rail freight closed.

mother's maiden name.

Scottish crown jewels.

the Trellis Café.

the airport and offshore helicopter services.

Passenger services on the Formartine Line are closed.

Sands of Forvie declared a National Nature Reserve.

bridge features two bronze plagues

on the balustrades near the centre

the Danes.

1975

1979

1984

Aberdeen, Fraserburgh, Ellon and Peterhead.

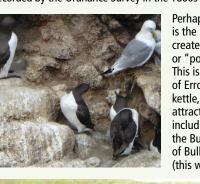
Smuggler, Philip Kennedy's death in Collieston, fatally wounded by

a lung infection while at sea on the Omar Pasha, a cargo ship bound for Australia. His concern for the ship during the dangerous passage through the Southern Ocean near Antarctica (pre-Suez Canal) saw him pacing the deck for ten days, resulting in a cold which; "settled on his lungs and carried him off". His grave is in Foveran Kirkyard. Sir Harry Burnett Lumsden of the Corps of Guides, son of Thomas Lumsden of Belhelvie, retires to Belhelvie Lodge from a glittering career in the Bengal Army. Harry is credited with inventing the word; "khaki" to describe the muddy colour of his troops' uniforms.

Artist James McBey is born at the smiddy just outside Newburgh, the illegitimate son of James McBey Snr, farmer at Mains of Foveran. Brought up by his grandmother, but resented by his mother Annie Gillespie, McBey would go on to be an official war artist with General Allenby's troops in Egypt. Founding of Newburgh-on-Ythan Golf Club. Foundation stone of the Victoria Hall, Ellon laid on land donated

which would have provided some shelter for rowing boats coming from smuggler Hell's Lum next to St Catherine's Dub

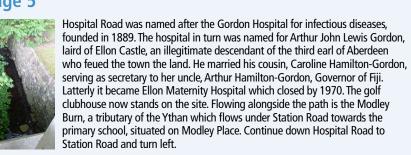
was said to be 200ft in length and 40ft in height, found to contain stalactites and stalagmites, testifying to centuries of dripping moisture within. Cairds' Cave below Clochtow farm was recorded by the Ordnance Survey in the 1860s as having gypsies living there.



erhaps the most famous geological feature in this area s the Bullers of Buchan, a collapsed sea cave which r "pot" where the sea churns violently on stormy day ncluding puffins and razorbills. So popular was it, that the Buchan Line had a halt opened at the fishing hamlet of Bullers of Buchan in 1900 to accommodate sightseers (this was closed in 1932).



Walk A



There are many fine mansions on Station Road, but the most prominent building is the Victoria Hall, fully completed in 1902 in the "Tudor Gothic" style, built of Peterhead granite, designed by local architect William Davidson and Aberdeen practice, Jenkins & Marr. Intended as a public hall, library and reading room, it also noused the armoury for the local volunteer militia who donated funds. Arthur Gordon gave the land at minimum feu duty and chose the name in honour of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee. Philanthropist Andrew Carnegie donated £475, equivalent to nearly £60,000 today which was matched by the hall committee's fundraising efforts. The hall still operates today and is also home to





Continue along Station Road, crossing Bridge Street, then pass the Library and Parish Church Centre until you reach the Square, dominated by the war memorial. You may have noticed the Tolbooth pub opposite the Baptist Church on Station Road; the name is a nod to the former site of Ellon's 18th century Tolbooth & Prison now occupied by an estate agent. The rubble-built gable on Long Close which actually runs from the Square to the car park at the rear of the pub, eatures the coat of arms of James Gordon, the Edinburgh merchant who purchased the Ardgith estate in 1706. building the 18th century Ellon Castle He died around 1752, either before or

after selling the estate to the "Wicked

arl" of Aberdeen, George Gordon.

You can stop here and visit the Coffee Apothecary café just across the Square, otherwise, carry on along Castle Road to view Baillie Gordon's walled garden and the remnants of his castle. You will pass a granite trough "for the refreshment of weary beasts" donated by Eleanor Vere Boyle (née Gordon), youngest aughter of Alexander Gordon, another of the 3rd Earl's legitimate sons. "E.V.B." was a famous illustrator and painter, and the wife of Richard Boyle, youngest son of Lord Cork. She died in 1916. Follow the Deer Dykes (from 1854) which enclose the castle policies and public playing fields, until you reach an entrance. Cross the playing field diagonally to the left and you will see the corner of the walled garden. The latter is run by volunteers and for a small fee you can visit. Dating from 1715, the formal garden also includes 19 English yew trees thought to be over 500 years old.



Prominent on the hill above the garden is the remaining façade of Baillie Gordon's castle, which replaced the old Fortalice of Ardaith, built by Kennedy of Kinmuc in 1413. The name is a corruption of the Gaelic Ard-Gaoth, meaning windy peak. The present "castle" was built in 1927 which incorporated the old stables o Ardgith, the 1851 extension on the old castle being demolished in that year. Return to the Square via the path through the Medical Centre carpark, veering left onto Schoolhill Road, then walk into town again via Market Street, passing the New Inn, and returning to your start point.



People & Society

Formartine Personalities

• REAR ADMIRAL STEVE RITCHIE - George Steven "Steve" Ritchie, CB, DSC, born in 1914, in Burnley. His grandfather was a native of Collieston. Steve became famous as Hydrographer Royal to which he was appointed in 1966. He was D-Day veteran and had trained with the Special Boat Service. In retirement, Steve introduced boules to RICHARD "DICK" INGRAM - Native of Collieston, awarded gallantry medal by George VI

storm in 1942. Dick and his young neighbour, George Ross, constructed a breeches' buoy to rescue the surviving crewmen from the boiling winter seas. REV. ALEXANDER FORSYTH – "Beloved" minister of Belhelvie, fascinated with chemistry, and one of Scotland's forgotten inventors. Forsyth invented the percussion cap mechanism for rifles; in 1805, he was invited by the Master of Ordnance to perfect his invention for use by the army. Sadly, his work went unrecognised until his death in 1843.

for saving the lives of four men from the stricken coaster, Lesrix at Hackley Bay during a



Caroline Hamilton-Gordon in 1885, having been her uncle, Arthur Hamilton-Gordon's private secretary in Fiji. Gave land for Gordon Hospital and Victoria Hall, providing the latter at a reduced feu duty. FRANCIS HAY, 9TH EARL OF ERROLL - Catholic nobleman who intrigued with King Philip

of Spain in 1592 to organise a Spanish invasion of Britain and restore the Roman religion. The plot foiled, Francis escaped to the Netherlands, the family seat at Old Slains blown up on King James VI's orders. By 1596, James had forgiven him.

 JAMIE FLEEMAN, "THE LAIRD O UDNY'S FEEL" - James Fleming, aka Jamie Fleeman, the "Laird o' Udny's Feel", was the last professional "court jester" in Scotland, Born in 1713 near Longside, although simple and dowdy-looking, Jamie was possessed of a razor-sharp wit and great physical strength. Best known for his dying wish "dinna bury me like a beast".

MARY HAY, COUNTESS OF ERROLL - Hereditary countess who made New Slains the base for a notorious Jacobite spy ring, reporting to the exiled Stuart court. Mary was also Lord High Constable and Knight Marischal of Scotland. Jamie Fleeman was one of her agents. Though married, she died childless in 1758, succeeded by her great-nephew James Boyd-Hay. GENERAL GEORGE TURNER KCB - Decorated soldier, laird of Menie, grandson of George

Turner of Turnerhall. Won the rare army gold medal for his conduct at the Battle of Orther 1814 during the Peninsular Wars. Commissioned city architect John Smith to build Menie House in 1835. Knighted in 1862, two years before his death. JAMES MCBEY - Artist from Newburgh. Illegitimate son of Foveran farmer, James McBey. Brought up by his grandparents at Newburgh Smiddy, later moved to Aberdeen. First

Moved to Morocco with American wife Marguerite Loeb. Died in 1959. • JOHN MATHER, SURVEYOR OF MADRAS - Son of Robert Mather, Newburgh's miller. Bequeathed funds to educate "20 poor fishermen's sons" annually on condition they joined the merchant navy afterwards; left provision for poor boys in Fyvie and Foveran to be prepared for college study, and £20 annually to admit 6 lame or sick to Aberdeen Infirmary.

drawing accepted by Royal Academy in 1905. Worked as war artist with BEF in Egypt.

DAME EVELYN GLENNIE (born in Methlick 1965) Percussion musician who studied at Ellon Academy and The Royal Academy of Music in London. World renowned performer including at the London Olympics opening ceremony. Deafness has not prevented a prodigious career DR. JOHN S. SMITH - 1940-2004 (JSS or 'Big John') was born in

the most distinguished Arts student in the University. John was a long-time member of the Geography Department, University of Aberdeen researching shoreline change, beaches, salt marshes, botanical studies, local history, land-use, and archaeology. He was involved in renovating and managing Tarradale House near Muir of Ord, the ancestral home of the eminent geologist Sir Roderick Murchison. In the late 1960s he joined two expeditions to carry out fieldwork on Scandinavian shoreline changes travelling to the Arctic Circle and the Russian border. Author of several ground-breaking beach reports for the Countryside Commission, John also acted as Honorary Secretary Dr John S Smith to the Deeside Field Club For over thirty years.

Aberdeen and attended the Grammar School before graduating

Scottish Geographical Society Silver Medal and the Lyon Prize for

from the University of Aberdeen. He was awarded the Royal

History & Places

Formartine agriculture and farming

Formartine ranges north-westerly from the coast to Turriff, between and beyond the catchments for the Rivers Don and Ythan. Ellon and Oldmeldrum are also key market towns. Its total agricultural area is 78,000 hectares, of which 43,000 hectares is arable, making Formartine the largest expanse of prime agricultural land amongst Aberdeenshire's six administrative areas. Crops include malting barley, wheat, oats, field vegetables, soft fruit and potatoes. One agricultural business in Formartine is both the largest potato producer and second largest carrot grower in Scotland; - processing, packing and despatching its produce direct to supermarkets straight from the farm. A grain store near Whiterashes can store 65,000 tonnes. Although there has been a shift towards cropping in recent years; cattle, sheep and pig production remains important in Formartine. Average farm holding size in the area is around 50 hectares, skewed by a large number of (largely equestrian) smallholdings, with owner occupation at 83%.

Farming in Formartine is characterised by enthusiastic uptake of on-farm value-add (such as organic oats), direct marketing and renewable energy generation (wind, biomass and anaerobic digestion). The area also hosts global food & drink brands Mackies and Farm woodlands in Formartine total 4200 hectares.

New planting in the 1990s under the Grampian Forest Challenge Scheme has created some of the highest performing commercial forest stands in Scotland.

Wildlife & Environment

Wildlife & Nature



Forvie is the only National Nature Reserve situated in Formartine, covering 1,000 hectares of coastal habitat including the tidal channel of the River Ythan. The estuary, flowing out at Newburgh includes the now famous "seal beach" where a huge colony of grey seals bask on the sands. The estuary is also home to many wading birds such as dunlin, ployer, sanderling, redshank, shelduck, which feed on the invertebrates such as mud shrimp which are exposed at

The clifftop and dune flora, which includes acid-soil-loving thrift, sea plantain, saxifrage and cowslip, provide nesting space for four different species of terns. The Ternery has been based to the south-east of Newburgh for at least 150 years. The sandwich tern, with its black cap and tuft, black legs and beak is usually the first to arrive in late March, followed by the little tern, which has a yellow beak and legs, and the arctic tern, with a red beak and legs, in April. Lastly the common tern, the most recognisable of the breeds, larger than its Arctic cousin, but again featuring an orangey-red beak and legs, comes to roost in early May. Their clacking, squeaking cries as they communicate with each other echo over their grassy nesting sites.



fulmar (a cousin of the mighty albatross) actually give the terns some protection from animal predators and birds of prey. The grey-beaked fulmar also will spit out the foulest-smelling oil if Early autumn sees the arrival of many of the small passerine birds to Forvie on their way to

The nearby nesting of larger gulls such as the kittiwake and herring gull, as well as the

Africa for the winter, including willow and sedge warblers, spotted flycatcher, and the wheatear. The latter arrive in Britain in February, usually spending time in Ireland and the west, and leave around September via the coast. 2021 saw the rare visit of a pair of black terns to Forvie; unlike the sea terns, these birds,

categorised as "marsh terns" prefer freshwater environments. The black tern, which has greyblack wings and tail, a black beak and black cap, was captured on film displaying stunning aerial



mussels, at low tide. In the 1980s, the eider population reached 6,700, a peak that has never been repeated, especially after a sharp decline from 2006 onwards. The Reserve staff continue to monitor this complex issue, which includes females skipping a breeding season, and ducklings failing to fledge. Changes in the climate undoubtedly contribute to the decline in numbers.

The Ythan stretches 39 miles from source at Ythanwells to sea at Newburgh; the name is Brythonic in origin, cognate with the word eithin, modern Welsh for gorse. Features three main tributaries, Fordoun – which drains west of Fyvie - Little Water – enters at Methlick, draining from between Turriff and New Deer, and the Ebrie Water, which drains southwards rom Auchnagatt. Another smaller, but more famous tributary is the Kellie Water, which drains from the Haddo estate, joining the Ythan just below the Tanglandford Bridge. It was here in 1620 that a huge freshwater pearl was retrieved and presented to James VI by Provost homas Menzies of Aberdeen. The "Kellie Pearl" was made part of the royal crown of the United Kingdom, described "for beauty and bigness, [as] the best that was at anytime found in Scotland." Menzies was granted "14 chalders of victual about Dumfermline, and the custom

Wildlife & Environment

of merchant-goods in Aberdeen during his life," according to historian Alexander Skene. Sadly, Menzies died before he returned from London, but King James appreciated the gesture to such an extent that he commissioned Aberdonian merchant, Patrick Maitland to manage the production of pearls on the Ythan and the Don, reserving the largest and best for himself.



people were well-versed in the art of earl fishing and were experts in carefull shucking the mussels which contained them as the shellfish itself could die easily once opened. Equipped with a glass-bottomed jug or tin, the "pearler" would wade into the mussel-beds, looking for the ugliest, oldest looking specimens, then push them Forvie provides a huge amount of variety for wildlife watchers all year round, the beaches are out of the mud with a suitable stick, before accessible on foot from the reserve visitor centre at Collieston and the Ythan Bridge car park at popping them open to reveal their prize. Newburgh. The seal beach is viewed from the Beach Road carpark just below the golf course. Visitors are warned not to approach the seals to avoid causing them distress or injury.

The older and grittier the mussel, the better the pearl was likely to be, as the mussel produces "nacre" to envelop any foreign body within its shell, which in turn creates the shiny gem. The highest price paid for an Ythan pearl was £90 - around £11,200 in today's money - in 1862 by a Mr Unger, an Edinburgh merchant.



near Methlick by Dr Fowler of Ellon in 1892. Today, however, the stocks are small and local anglers are not permitted to keep any they catch. The main piscine product of the river nowadays are three varieties of trout, including rainbow, brown and sea trout. Pike and perch have also been found. Smaller fish such as stickleback and minnow provide sustenance for the tern population. The Ythan Fishery targets sea trout and finnocks by means of fly fishing, with bait, net and boat fishing banned. Anglers must purchase a permit and report all their catches, with the season running from April to October. A limit of two trout per day can be retained.

The Ythan was also famed for its salmon; the largest ever caught was 44lb in weight, landed



the latter are often feral descendants of escapees from fur farms. A project in the early 2000s to protect the voles involved tracking the mink by creating natural rafts in the river, which would retain an imprint of their distinctive footmarks, indicating they were in the area. The mink would then be trapped and removed. Although funding stopped in 2009 for this scheme, vole numbers massively improved, demonstrating its effectiveness.



Vildlife & Environment

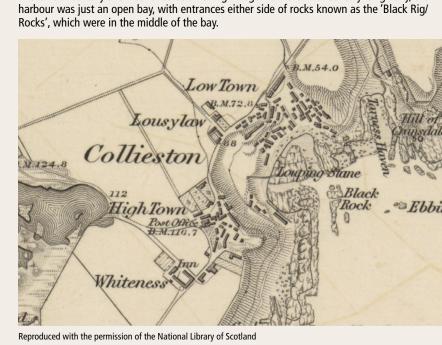
Collieston Harbour

History & Places

south the sand dune system of the Forvie National Nature Reserve. Collieston (Collestowne) grew following the abandonment of Forvie after the great sandstorm in the 15th century and flourished as a fishing village from the 17th century. Originally, the

Collieston Harbour is the first safe haven in over fifteen miles of coast north of Aberdeen. It marks

a noticeable change in the coastal landscape with cliffs and rocky bays to the north, and to the



haddock and whiting, and they proved to be a popular delicacy for export south. The whole village was involved in fishing, and it was recorded that the number of pupils at school dropped by half during summer as they collected mussels and dug bait for line fishing. By the 1880s there were some 50 open fishing boats and 200 fisherman based in the village. The newer and safer decked fishing boats required a pier to land their catch, and in 1894, after much debate about the risk of sand build up in the harbour, pier construction started which closed off the eastern approach to the bay. Despite a 'sand flushing' tunnel under the new pier, the harbour subsequently started to silt up, and this, coupled with new larger steam trawlers working out of Aberdeen, resulted in many of Collieston's residents moving to the city from 1900. By the mid-1920s there were only a dozen fishing boats left in Collieston and by the end of World War 2 the pier had fallen into a poor state of repair. Since the 1980s much repair work

The village made its name through Collieston Speldings which were salted and sun-dried



History & Places

Formartine's cave-ridden coast with high cliffs and secret inlets was the ideal playground for smugglers. It was believed that 10,000 gallons of spirits were landed illegally every month. The hamlet of Oldcastle was such a notorious site for burying smuggled goods that once during a dance at a nearby farm, the ground gave way beneath the crowd, casting the unfortunate dancers in amongst hidden barrels of whisky and gin.

The most famous smuggler of the 18th century was Philip Kennedy, a farmer at Ward of Slains. On 19 December 1798, he, his brother John and a number of local farmhands awaited a consignment of Holland gin from the Crooked Mary. The cargo came ashore at Cransdale Head, but the group were surprised by local excise officer, Anderson, and two tidesmen. The workers scattered, John was cut down by Anderson's cutlass, but tall, sturdy Philip grabbed the tidesmen and held them down. He refused to

acquitted of murder. John survived his brother by 44 years; their graves in Collieston kirkyard are

The most feared exciseman in the Northeast was Malcolm Gillespie, who boasted he had seized 10,000 gallons of contraband spirit from Collieston during his tenure (1801-07). Despite his

the only reminders of this brutal time. TE Lawrence, with thanks to the TE Lawrence Society

Wildlife & Environment

Walks introduction

Walk A

Stage 2

A more impressive sight

railwav viaduct, which

Aberdeen to Fraserburgh

and Peterhead, beginning

Branch was added in 189

and passenger interchange in Ellon. Ellon Station closed in 1965 to

passengers, and the remaining route from Dyce to Fraserburgh was

finally axed in 1979. The riverside path naturally turns to the right

as you reach the foot of the bridge, climb the wooden steps to the

railway bridge which reaches the Formartine & Buchan Line path.

Walk onto the bridge and view the Ythan on either side before

heading back into the town on the tarred path.

As you walk towards the "new" town of Ellon, to the

west side of the viaduct there are a mix of old and new

houses; nearest the field there is a nice barn conversion

which stands on the site of the old cattle mart which

stops at Station Road, requiring you to cross over.

Keep an eye open for the blue cycle track sign for

appears on the 1899 Ordnance Survey map. The path

Auchnagatt as this takes you onto the other half of the

Central Auction Mart now occupied by modern houses.

Station Brae runs parallel with the path at this point,

leading to Ellon's Station Hotel. Dating from 1891, still

in private ownership today, the hotel was just behind

the main platform. You can see the old platform's stone

remains as you pass by. To your right a few feet further

Keep on to the end of the depot fence and turn right

on is the council depot, formerly the railway goods yard.

down past the golf course and exit the path at Hospital

Road. Use the pedestrian crossing near the clubhouse to

reach the far side of the road. Turn right and follow the

path along the east side of Hospital road.

old railway. Next to that path is the site of the larger

creating a larger freight

Stage 4

carried the Formartine

& Buchan Line from

in 1861. The Boddam

is the three-arched former

ELLON CIRCULAR

Distance: 2.97miles / 4.78km

Max elevation: 85ft / 26m

Time: approx. 1hr 25min

Terrain: grass, gravel and tarred paths, pavements

Walking routes have been added to this map to encourage those who would otherwise just use the guide to browse over a coffee table. There is so much to

see and do around the coast, only a taste of the area is possible in these walk The route way marks on the front and narrative instructions on the reverse of

this map should be sufficient to find your way around but it is always advisable

to have an accurate map to hand and plan your day with care, especially being

Ellon is one of Formartine's market towns surrounded by agricultural hinterland, divided from its

neighbouring parish of Logie-Buchan by the River Ythan. The derivation of Ellon is the Gaelic word

for island, as the old town was only accessible by the ferry at Boat of Logie in centuries past. Ythan

William Comyn, Earl of Buchan and his descendants lived in Ellon until Robert the Bruce seized their

possibly originates from the Brythonic eithin meaning gorse. Justiciar (medieval Lord Advocate),

properties during the period of slaughter in 1308 dubbed "The Harrying of Buchan". Today it is a

Start at the Riverside Walk carpark off Market Street. This is approximately the site of William

Comvn's 12th century motte and bailey castle. The old bridge was built in 1793, funded by the 3rd

under the road bridge soon passing the dog friendly cafe. The new Meiklemill footbridge comes into

view over the Ythan on your left. It replaced a wooden crossing which accessed Meiklemill Primary

School. The path rises to meet the route that

crosses the footbridge, turn left then right to

continue along the side of the river.

Earl of Aberdeen, replaced in 1941 by the new road bridge. Facing the river, turn right and pass

thriving town, home of craft brewer, Brewdog and many other local businesses.

nindful of weather conditions and public transport timetables.

Geology & Geomorphology

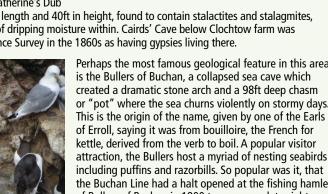
Forvie National Nature reserve contains one of the most extensive dune systems in the UK. The golden sands are the remains of prehistoric sediment deposited by the melting ice sheets of Scandinavia and North America around 10,000 years ago. The beaches and dunes from Girdleness up to Fraserburgh are all part of the same system. As the sea levels changed over millennia, the sediment was blown back onshore, creating massive sandy cliffs, narrowing the Ythan estuary, making it navigable for the Neolithic and Bronze Age settlers of Forvie.



The dunes themselves were stabilised by the growth of marram grass, a dry-loving plant which thrives on the sun and binds the sand grains with its roots, which tap the deep supplies of water inside. This in turn encourages the development of organic matter, and the growth of other grasses and plants such as crowberry, liverwort, ragwort, mosses and lichens. The grassy tops of the dunes were then sturdy enough to build houses on, as the remains of an early Iron Age hut settlement at Forvie testifies. However, the rigidity of the sands was always subject to wind and wave action. Contrary to

popular myth, rather than a curse or demonic supernatural action, this is how Forvie village was eventually swamped by sand, beginning in 1413 due to extreme weather conditions precipitated by the eruption of Chinese volcano, Changbaishan-Tianchi, (again, not Hecla as some mistakenly believe) creating huge waves and high winds across the world. The cliffs, formed of granite, vary in height

and are pocked with caves all along the Formartine coastal strip. The caves made life easy for smuggiers in the 18th and 191 centuries, their fantastic names recalling this dramatic period in local history, e.g. Sharnie Cave south of Collieston, was a favourite, the mouth being close to a cluster of rocks known as the Poor Man ships anchored offshore. Further north, the Carline was reputedly the haunt of witches.





History & Places

Golf and Tourism in its Heyday Formartine's sandy coast creates ideal conditions for golf links. Newburgh's laird, John Udny of

links between the river and the Foveran Burn in 1888. Their 9-hole course was lengthened to 18 holes in 1912 by course-designer John McAndrew. Newburgh attracted such luminaries as the Crown Prince of Siam, who stayed for a week in 1897 at the Udny Arms Hotel to learn golf from resident professional, Robert Taylor. In 1994, the club purchased land to the south of Foveran Links and re-extended the course to 18 holes, having been a 9-hole course again from 1919. Glen Andrews were the designers of this now challenging championship course of 6423 yards. Seven years after Newburgh-on-Ythan opened, the Great North of Scotland Railway company purchased land at Port Erroll, near Slains, the seat of the Earls of Erroll, on which to build a hotel and golf course. Included was a new railway station on the Boddam branch line which would be called "Cruden Bay", as would the hotel. This would capitalise on the romantic,

Udny was the prime mover behind the Newburgh-on-Ythan club, sited directly on the estuary



rugged image of Aberdeenshire sold to tourists of the late Victorian and early Edwardian eras. Golf had already been played on Wardhill to the south of Cruden Bay since the 18th century, as the existence of a ballot box dated 1791 demonstrates. The experienced local golfers were able to make extra money as caddies for members and visiting professionals at the new club. The smaller 9-hole St Olaf course was opened in 1897, lowed by the main course in 1899, when the

The first resident professional at Cruden Bay was George Duncan, a farmer's son from Methlick who won the 1920 Open Championship. He was known for his fast, decisive style, hitting the ball as soon as it was on the tee. Yet it was visiting pro, Harry Vardon from the Channel Islands who won the opening tournament in 1899. A six-time Open champion, Vardon beat other famous golfers of the day such as James Braid and J.H. Taylor, all of whom feature in Cruden Bay club's photographic archive, dressed in tweed plus-fours and usually smoking pipes or cigars. Women too were welcome to play on the St Olaf course. Florence Stoker, wife of famous Irish author and theatre manager, Bram Stoker, spent much of her holidays on the course with the local lady players while Bram stalked about the beach, dreaming of vampires.

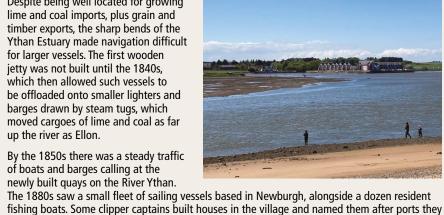
The Cruden Bay Hotel was clearly inspired by Slains in its red granite Scots Baronial style, creating an imposing view above the golf course. Residents would alight at the railway station and take an electric tram right to the hotel door. Described as splendidly equipped" with "spectacular views", the hotel boasted 365 rooms, a ballroom, smoking ounge, tennis court, bowling and croquet greens, attracting the cream of society.

However, this stunning hotel with its added sporting attractions was not enough to make it a success. The rail link was closed to passengers in 1934, leaving visitors to take a forty-minute ourney by car. The tourists were replaced by Canadian soldiers during WWII, who left the uilding in a ramshackle state. Although the hotel was demolished in 1951, the golf club was saved by flamboyant Aberdeen stockbroker, Quintin Murray. Local lawyer and keen golfer, John lennie saw to the paperwork and became the club's new captain. He would later standardise the amateur golfing handicap system, making him globally famous in the sport. The club continues to attract visitors to this day, but nothing remains of the once glamorous hotel.

History & Places

The Port of Newburgh

Newburgh is a large village on the wide sandy estuary of the River Ythan and dates back to 1261 when a charter was drawn up by Lord Sinclair establishing a settlement there. The village was a centre for salmon fishing, and by the 15th century became a small port trading in timber and wool. Its dues were cheaper than Aberdeen harbour which infuriated the larger harbour, and in 1573 Newburgh's trading vessels' sails were confiscated by the Aberdeen Town Council. Despite being well located for growing



risited, for example Shanghai House, Santa Cruz and Sydney House. In 1828, Newburgh became the first port in Scotland to have a Lifeboat Station, then called the Shipwreck Institution. The RNLI, as the Institution became, based a lifeboat in Newburgh until 1961, when it moved to Peterhead. In the 1950s Newburgh remained an active port with quays and a mill. The Ythan Estuary had

to be dredged continually to maintain access to the quays, and with the growth of the ports at

Aberdeen and Peterhead, much of its economic base had declined by the 1970s.



and can be seen when arriving at the sands from the nearby carpark to view the seals.

History & Places

A Brief History of Formartine

Formartine is a district within modern Aberdeenshire, but its origins lie in early medieval times as the "Thanage of Fermartyn", ruled by a thane, the title having evolved from the Celtic toiseach or clan chief. Formartine included the land from the Rivers Ythan to Don, north to south, then west as far as Kinkell, which was in the Thanage of Kintore. The main seat was Fyvie, in existence as a fortified residence as early as 1211

By Alexander III's reign, Reginald de Cheyne was the Thane of Fermartyn. Following Cheyne, John Comyn, Earl of Buchan held the land, but following his cousin, the Lord of Badenoch's murder by Robert Bruce, the Comyns were systematically wiped out from the Northeast, their property given to Bruce's loyal supporters. Bruce's heir, David II, settled Formartine on his elder sisters, Mathilda and Margaret, but once the Stewarts were in power, the infamous Wolf of Badenoch, Alexander Stewart, Robert II's son, passed Formartine onto James Lindsay, Lord Crawford. Thereafter, the property split again under Crawford's daughters, who settled the portion in Fyvie on one Henry Preston, whose name is preserved in Preston's Tower at



More information can be found through looking out for

district which also contained Ellon. Both Fyvie and Ellon were popular destinations for the royals, especially for court hearings. One of the most significant took place in David I's reign. Around 1132, the monks of Deer, an 8th century monastic foundation on the banks of the River Ugie, came to press their claim to the land on which their monastery stood, in the face of demands from local toiseachs for feu duty. The King was shown written evidence from the margins of their most precious possession, the Book of Deer, their portable gospel manuscript, where various land grants had been recorded. This manuscript later became famous when it was discovered in 1860 by Henry Bradshaw, Librarian to Cambridge University, who recognised that the "notes" were written in an early form of Scots Gaelic, confirmed by his friend, Mearnsbased Cosmo Innes of Durris House.

Aside from the different landlords, Formartine was still recognised by the locals as a cohesive

By the 15th century, Ellon, which had centred around the Comyns' motte and bailey castle on the banks of the Ythan, would be revived by Thomas Kennedy of nearby Kinmuck in 1413 when he was appointed Constable of Aberdeen by the Earl of Mar following the Battle of Harlaw. Mar was the illegitimate son of the Wolf of Badenoch yet had carte blanche from his uncles Robert III and the Duke of Albany. Kennedy built a stone castle on the hill of Ardgith, not far from the site of the castle ruins which stand today above the formal gardens and the deer park. The town would grow as goods came to and from Aberdeen via the ferry at Boat of Logie on Slains by this time was in the possession of the Hays of Erroll, the estate having been seized

from John Comyn, Earl of Buchan and given to Gilbert de la Hay, one of Bruce's allies in 1309. Ironically, Gilbert's grandmother, Iodina was a Comyn. His maternal great-grandmother was Marjorie, daughter of Fergus, the last Pictish toiseach of Buchan, so he already possessed good rights to the title. The Hays would marry into the families of Glamis, Philorth and Huntly as well as the Stuarts. Indeed, it was those royal connections which allowed Francis Hay, the 9th Earl, who plotted to return Scotland and England to Catholicism with Philip of France, to be pardoned by James VI in 1596. It was that loyalty which put many families on the losing side in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms (i.e. the Civil War/ Covenanters' Wars). Religion split the district, particularly during a little-known rout of Covenanter/Presbyterian forces at the Tarty Burn by the Royalist laird of Tipperty in 1644.

William Keith, 7th Earl Marischal, leader of the local Covenanter militia, had sent forty dragoons to loot the properties of Tipperty, Atrochie, Raineston and Tarty as their owners were supporters of Charles I, and therefore enemies. Innes of Tipperty called on the young lairds of Gight and Haddo, of the powerful Gordon clan, who brought a cavalry of eighty men to repel the Covenanters, which they did with ease, seizing the men's weapons and driving them off back to Aberdeen. Forfeiture of lands during the Jacobite Rebellions also resulted in a change to the landholding personalities of Formartine. Lord Panmure lost Belhelvie to the York Buildings Company which subsequently went bankrupt, causing many forfeited estates to be bought up by middle-class families. Belhelvie was purchased by Aberdeen advocate Harry Lumsden. His descendants went

on to shine in military, legal, educational and medical sectors. His granddaughter Louisa Innes Lumsden would pioneer higher education for women, being among the first female Cambridge graduates; head of St Leonards, a preparatory school for girls aiming to enter St Andrews University and, in her old age, a militant suffragette based in Aberdeen. The coming of the railway in 1858 would link Formartine and Buchan to both Inverness and Edinburgh, allowing the affluent to move out of Aberdeen, and tourists to enjoy the new golf courses at Murcar, Royal Aberdeen, Newburgh and Cruden Bay. Newburgh had already developed from a fishing village into a seaport for importing coal from Fife and Midlothian, and transporting grain grown in the rich local soil.

for several decades also used to transport passengers to and from Murcar Golf Club on the site adjacent to the brickworks. A staff of 100 could produce five million bricks, 1.75 million drainpipes and other clay items per annum. Sadly, by 1920, the clay gave out. The 21st century saw American businessman, Donald Trump cashing in on the golfing heritage of the area by constructing his course on the Menie estate which dated back to the 14th century when Sir John Bonneville was made baron by Robert I. Yet despite the controversy, this development may have precipitated further nearby housing developments on the old Strabathie site and elsewhere. Even within the last five years, plans have been seriously considered to reconnect Ellon to Dyce by rail, such is Ellon's importance as a commuter town. Formartine, though the name may not be familiar to all its residents, is still a vital contributor to the

Northeast economy

The clay seam which bordered the ancient granite of Aberdeenshire was also exploited. Having

moved to Strabathie on the very edge of the district in 1898. They built a light railway which was

exhausted the works at Clayhills, Seaton and then Torry, the Seaton Brick and Tile Company

FORVIE COASTAL WALK Distance: 4.6ml / 7.4km

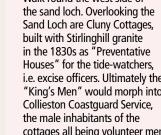
Max elevation: 148ft / 45m Time: approx. 1hr 40min

Walk B

Terrain: grass, sandy, gravel and tarred paths, pavements Linear route from Forvie National Nature reserve visitor centre to Newburgh or retrace route back to start, and double the allocated time.

The landscape of Forvie is reflected in its name, derived from the Gaelic word "feur" meaning grass. This is Formartine's only Nature Reserve, covering 1,000 hectares of property including one of the UK's most extensive dune systems. The offshore winds continue to shape this 5,000-year-old landscape which is home to a huge variety of flora and fauna, including Newburgh's seal colony. Beginning at the visitor centre, which is a mile west of Collieston, take the marked path to the Sand Loch, a small, naturally formed body of water. On the route are many informative signboards concerning the plants growing in the reserve including crowberry, marsh orchid, and creeping

Stage 2 Walk round the west side of





to another volunteer who had climbed atop the pole to catch it. By the 1930s the pole had moved to "Peerman's Brae", i.e. the clifftop above the rocky outcrop called "Peer Man" (i.e. "poor" in local dialect) and the coastguard station relocated in Collieston itself. Incidentally, according to Ordnance Survey records, the "Peer Man" is meant to resemble a crouching pauper.

Carry on walking round to the coastal

A cluster of inlets and rocky coves lie below the coastal path demonstrating how easy it was for daring smugglers to hide their small rowing boats in places such as North and South Broadhaven, near Marywalls, a huge granite outcrop. The names illustrate the concerns of ancient inhabitants, e.g. Sharnie Cave, a suitable place to hide contraband, as the sharn referred to the build-up of guano, or bird droppings which would discourage investigation by tidesmen. The Rawn, a thin finger of rock has two possible origins; rann from Gaelic, which means promontory, and rawn/raan from Scots and Old Norse, meaning fish eggs. A rather evocative coastal nook called Corbie Holes is recognisable from the path, its steep cliffs home to corvid nests. corbie being the Scots name for a raven.







Following the path around the bay via some small wooden footbridges across the moorland, the route passes three other coastal rock formations, Needle Eye (a steep rock with an elongated hole resembling a needle's eye); Black Hole (another dark little nook), and The Smithy. According to the OS Name Book of was a folk-memory of the medieval village of Forvie? Apparently carved and dressed stones had been found, indicating a structure of some

which devastates the area. The other legend concerns three sisters who are cheated out of the estate of Forvie by a male relative and set adrift on a boat. The sisters issue a curse against the villagers for ignoring their plight "Let naught be found in Forvie's glebes/ But thistle, bent and sand." The truth of the village's disappearance is somewhat more prosaic. Forvie did have a long life as a settlement; the remains of fishbones and flint spearheads in the sands testify to Mesolithic or hunter-gatherer people having lived here 6,000 years ago. Later kerbcairns evidence the burial practices of the first farmers, whose descendants were still there in the early 15th century







retrace their steps or continue west inland towards Waterside on the River Ythan. On the path through the moors which represent the old village site are nore information boards with relevant data. Soon he River Ythan is visible as the route leaves the moor and follows a farm track past some old steel containers to the wood near the visitor car park.

the "Laird of Udny's Feel", Jamie Fleeman, is also visible from the road up to the Northwest. Once in Newburgh, head to the Trellis Café on Main Street, which makes an excellent final stop. It is not recommended walking on the road from the Waterside Bridge nature reserve carparks along the A975 back to the visitor centre carpark. It is far more pleasant to retrace your steps back along the



eople & Society

History & Places

Kellie Pearl Way, the road from B9005 to Ellon Academy, is named after a large pearl

tributary of the Ythan entering near Tanglandford Bridge outside Methlick.

author, John Milne suggested; mòr dhun, "before the big hill".

The present Baronet of Foveran; Sir John Dermot

codebreaker and developer of the Bombe

Turing, is the nephew of Alan Turing, the wartime

computer. Sir John's father, John Ferrier Turing was

The Buchans of Auchmacoy received a charter

from James IV in 1503, but the family had been

in the area for at least three centuries. The first

a clerk to the Bishop of Aberdeen 1207-28.

Patrick Lyon; Lord Glamis, murdered Patrick

Johnston of Mosstown, Belhelvie in 1601,

reputedly on the steps of old Belhelvie Church

Glamis was indicted for the crime, but never

convicted, having been pardoned by James VI.

Ellon's Victoria Hall was paid for thanks to

In 1930, T.E. Lawrence, the hero of the Arabs,

was stationed at RAF Boddam under the name

Collieston, which was no more than a glorified

Shaw. He and two friends rented a cottage in

Some images captured by the NASA Rover on

The pipeline from the Forties oilfield comes

There was a nine hole golf course, designed by

Tom Morris and opened in 1900, on the cliff south

west of the Sand Loch at Collieston. It closed with

the advent of WW2, and the land was then used

near Grangemouth.

for tank training.

Mars have been called the Sands of Forvie due

to the similarity with its Formartine counterpart.

ashore near Cruden Bay and then runs to Kinneil

a generous donation by philanthropist and

reference to a Buchan was Richard "de Boughan"

found in the Ythan in 1620 which was presented to James VI by Thomas Menzies, Provost

of Aberdeen, which was then inserted into the Crown of Scotland, Kelly/Kellie Water is a

Formartine / Fermartyn may originate from Gaelic; fear mòr tàin meaning "the great cattle

herdsman." Others associate it with; bwuch-an, "cattle place". 19th century antiquarian

industrialist, Andrew Carnegie. He pledged half of the funds needed to pay for the project,

Lewis Coutts of Ellon, whose father was a sanitary inspector, served in the Great War,

then became a student at Aberdeen University. However, Coutts' political stance and

involvement with the 1926 National Strike brought him into conflict with the university

authorities when he claimed the right to complete his exam papers in his native dialect,

arguing that the rules said students could write in English, Latin, or their own language.

Harry Burnett Lumsden, grandson of Harry Burnett of Belhelvie, a career soldier in the Benga

uniform had been dyed in river mud to be less conspicuous in the sandy landscape, the colour

Army, founded the Corps of Guides, a group from the Afghan region in 1846. The Guides'

was adopted by the Bengal Army as a whole. The name, "khaki", in Hindi meant "dust".

Coutts failed in his bid, but he would inspire MSP Alasdair Allan to do the same and

successfully presented a doctoral thesis written entirely in Scots.

Did you know?

Alan's elder brother.

Turra Coo A case of civil disobedience in Formartine propelled an unsuspecting ruminant into the national

Defying an order to pay the newly introduced National Insurance for his farmhands, Lendrum farmer Robert Paterson was fined for non-compliance and visited by Sheriff Officers, intent on seizing an asset in lieu of his liabilities. The beast now celebrated as the Turra Coo was impounded by the Sheriff Officers and destined for sale at auction. No local auctioneer would officiate, so the auction never took place, and in a further show of solidarity with Robert Paterson, a public sale arranged subsequently in Turriff town square under the auspices of an auctioneer brought in especially from Aberdeen; descended into chaos and disorder. The startled dairy cow in question seen taking off along Duff Street at the height of the riot. In December 1913, the Turra Coo was transported to Aberdeen, reportedly by train, and was eventually sold. The buyers, local farmers themselves, promptly handed it back to Robert Paterson

and the beast saw out its remaining days quietly and rather more conventionally at Lendrum.

In 2010, a life-size bronze statue was erected to the memory of the Turra Coo at the corner of High

Street and Main Street in Turriff. Well worth a visit!

Toll roads All of us today make use of the same roads that in the not too distant past made up the toll road network where the user would have to pay a fee to use that stretch of road. You are also likely to pass one of the 400 or so surviving toll houses scattered across Scotland's landscape, such as this one found in Ellon. There would have been a similar one at the Toll of Birness where the

road to Fraserburgh branches off the

horses and wheeled vehicles.

A90 to Peterhead. In 1795, Parliament gave permission for turnpike roads to be introduced in the County of Aberdeen. Trusts were appointed that comprised of local landowners to oversee the construction and maintenance of the turnpike pads. The first was started in 1796, and the last one was finished in 1855. As a result, neon and goods were able to travel on good surfaces, and faster, around the county. The term turnpike historically related to having physical barriers at checkpoints to prevent inauthorised passage. Complaints against the toll system were far from uncommon throughout their history and for

Toll roads under law were not allowed to charge pedestrians, so tolls were only charged on

For the lower classes who had to walk, tolls were therefore no obstacle and opened up the

In 1859 an inquiry into the state of Scotland's public roads eventually led to the end of turnpike

freedom of movement for Scotland's poor in search of new opportunities.

roads and responsibility passing to County Councils.

many people the cost of paying far outweighed any benefits.



The unstoppable force of nature that is Dame Evelyn Glennie grew up on a farm near the Formartine

Jniversity in 2021.

Helping out from an early age by feeding the livestock, tending lambs, collecting eggs and picking tatties, the young Evelyn also found time to follow in the footsteps of her musically talented parents On moving up to the 'big school' – Ellon Academy – she took a shine to percussion instruments. rofoundly deaf by the age of twelve, Evelyn freely acknowledges the support and encouragement

she received from her teachers to develop her talents. Remarkably, by the age of 15 she had already set her sights on becoming a professional solo percussionist. At the time, such a thing barely existed, borne out by the threadbare repertoire available to her – as pointed out when auditioning for the Royal Academy of Music in London aged just 16. Nothing daunted, Evelyn set about expanding the ince then, her stellar ascent to become the world's pre-eminent solo percussionist has seen her perform on the world's biggest stages, yielding over 100 international awards including the Polar Music Prize presented by King Carl XVI of Sweden in 2015. Dame Evelyn – since 2007 - is now also an award-winning composer and broadcaster and has invented several new percussion instruments. The Glennie Aluphone featured in the opening ceremony of the 2012 London Olympics, in which she Strongly committed to mentoring young musicians and a wide array of international charities, Dame Evelyn continues to perform across the world. She was appointed Chancellor of Robert Gordon

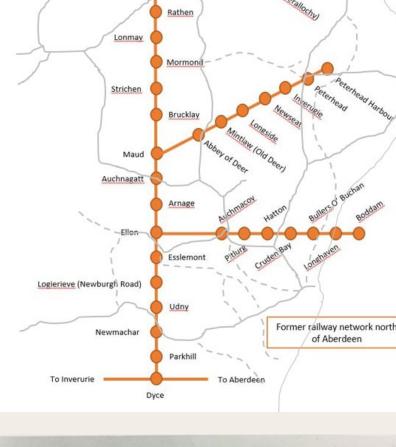
The Formartine and Buchan Railway Co. (part of the Great North of Scotland Railway from 1866), was set up in 1861 to operate a new 29 mile railway line from Dyce to Mintlaw. A 13 mile branch line section from Maud to Peterhead opened the following year. In 1865 the final 15 mile section linking Fraserburgh to Maud was opened, providing a much needed link with Aberdeen.

Ellon station became a junction when a new line opened between Ellon and Boddam stopping at Auchmacoy, Pitlurg Hatton and Cruden Bay. There was even a tourist halt at the Bullers of Buchan. In 1899,

connected to the station there by tramway. Most of the promoters of the new railway lines were farmers who wanted a means to get their produce and livestock to market. Traffic also depended on the

service continued to Peterhead until 1970 and Fraserburgh until 1979. In the late 1980s the tracks were lifted and the mainline and branch routes now form the Formartine and Buchan Way, used for walking and cycling. The line from Ellon to Boddam has

been dismantled.







path which can be accessed behind he Cluny Cottage and continue south.

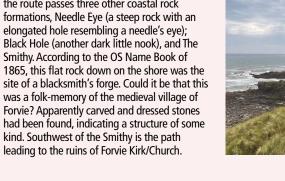




teep cliffs on either side, it is wiser to descend at the set of steps cut into the rocks at the south side of the bay, as the northern steps have worn away. The name derives from hag-

lea, meaning a peat field which has been broken up, perhaps referring to the ancient actions of the Ice Age climate. Since Victorian times, Hackley has been popular with sunbathers, swimmers and other water sports enthusiasts, but the whole coast has been notorious for shipwrecks including the Santa Catarina, the Spanish warship reputedly supplying the 9th Earl of Erroll with guns; the Lesrix, the coaster which broke in two at Hackley Head in 1942; the SS Brightside, a cargo steamer carrying cement which ran aground in 1945, and North Shields' steamer, Ocean Prince, which became stranded in 1906 near Newburgh.

Walk B



Situated in the centre of the "Sands", the once cultivated area of Forvie village, the small rectangular ruin consisting of dry-stane walls is believed to have been the parish church. In existence from the thirteenth century, according to the Chartulary of Arbroath, Forvie Kirk was built on an earlier monastic site dedicated to Adomnan, Abbot of Iona and St Columba's biographer. The kirk is also at the centre of the epic legend which appeared in a Victorian book of poetry concerning the fate of Forvie, as a demon comes to the village disguised as a priest, causing gossip to circulate and villagers to turn against each other, until they realise young girls have been going missing and the "priest" is to blame. When the villagers expose his evil, he calls to the winds and brings a sandstorm

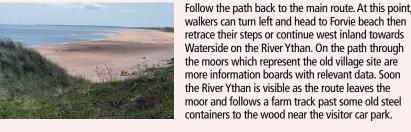
when the village was swamped by sand The death of Forvie as a settlement began in August 1413, when extreme

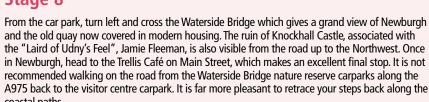
tides and high winds precipitated

smothering the church. By the end

of the century, the sand had eclipsed

by an oriental volcano's eruption











coastal paths.



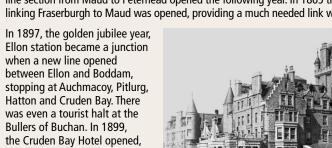


town of Methlick with her parents and two older brothers. by taking piano and clarinet lessons.

repertoire herself, initially by handwriting letters to composers she found in a yearbook listing. memorably and energetically led 1000 drummers during Danny Boyle's epic production.

let go until Anderson brought the blade forcefully down on Almost blinded by his own blood, he scrambled up and managed to run the mile from the coast to Slains Manse. He burst through the door and collapsed on a deas, a type of settle; with his last breaths he cried, "If aa had been true as I, I widna be dying now!" Unsurprisingly Anderson was success, he turned to crime, and was hanged at Aberdeen for forging treasury bills in 1827. Only a change in tax laws ended smuggling in the UK.

History & Places A brief history of the local railway



herring fisheries and tourist trade, both of which were seasonal. In less than 50 years, the lack of passengers had become an issue. Despite nationalisation in 1948, the British Railways Board closed the branch line to Peterhead for passenger services shortly afterwards, similarly the mainline services in 1964 as part of the Beeching cuts. Freight



