



The Kinnoull Tower at Perth

On the Bonny Banks o' the Tay

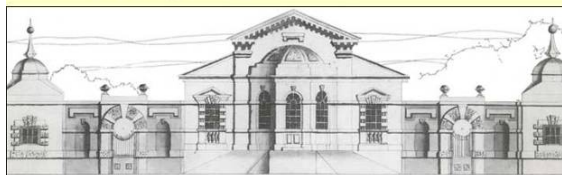
The River Tay is Scotland's longest river, and the sixth longest in the United Kingdom. Its source is only 20 miles outside of the west-coast town of Oban from where it flows eastwards through the Highlands and meets the North Sea at Dundee, a journey of around 100 miles (160km). To many it is famous for its salmon fishing, but it is also the setting for some of Scotland's finest follies.

To celebrate Scotland's noblest river this month's Bulletin takes a brief look at a handful of the follies that are located along its banks. There are many more. In fact Scotland is home to some of Britain's finest follies, many of which are set in beautiful and dramatic locations, and most of them are easy to visit. There is, for example, no offence of trespass in Scottish law so there is an automatic right to roam almost everywhere if you respect the wishes of landowners, protect crops and wildlife, and adhere to the Countryside Code. So instead of rushing off to the Seychelles this year, why not put a copy of H & M *Follies* in your car and visit a few of them. If you do, please take a few pictures of the follies and send them (and any historical facts that you discover) to us at the usual address.

Andrew Plumridge
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The Trustees of The Folly Fellowship
cordially invite you to
The Twentieth Annual Garden Party at
The Menagerie at Horton,
Northamptonshire,
on Saturday, 16 August 2008.

The Menagerie

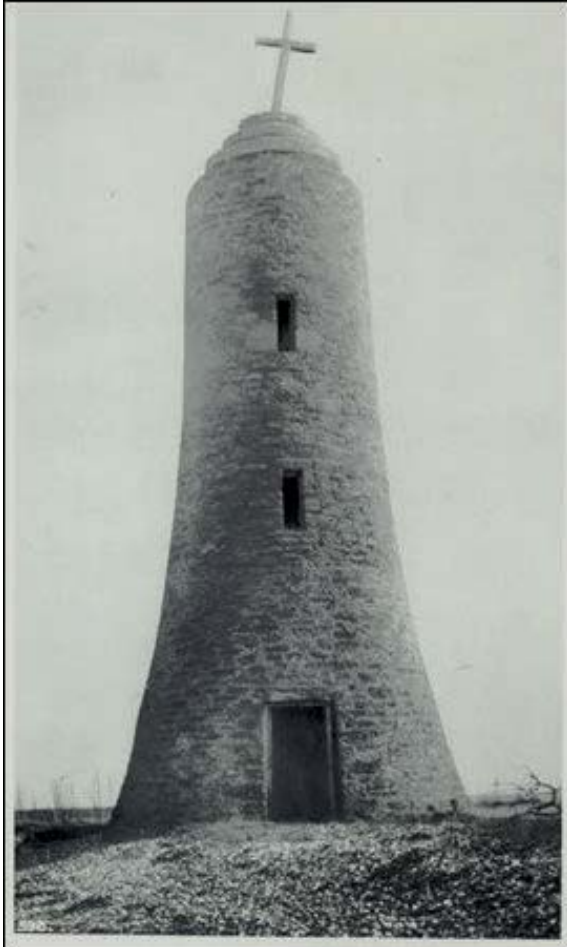


at Horton

Bring a picnic lunch, meet friends, enjoy the sumptuous gardens, the shell grotto and the new and old follies, and then join us for Pimms and light refreshments at the end of the afternoon. Tickets will go on sale shortly, but reserve your place now by writing to andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk.

Guid auld Lucky Scaup

Until a few years ago an unusual structure stood on a small shale mound at Tayport, at the mouth of the river Tay. It was known by the name of *Lucky Scaup*, with scaup meaning 'scalp' in the local dialect. Little is currently known about the structure except that it was erected at sometime during or after 1861 by Admiral Dougall when he demolished the ruins of a salmon fisher's bothy on the island and reused the stone his tower.



The Scaup Tower was used as a marker for ships in the North Sea who were looking for a safe haven. It was about 10m (33ft) in height and had a spiral staircase that led to two intermediate floors. The island itself is also of interest, being one of five along this section of coast, and believed to have been created from stabilising ballast dumped from sailing ships leaving the docks at Perth. The island became a popular place for local people to picnic on and enjoy the tower and its view, something that is reflected in Jean Heggie's ode *Goodbye tae Lucky Scaup*, which was written on 12 February 1979 when the tower was finally demolished:

When I was just a lassie
Wi' a knapsack on my back,
We set oot frae the first point
Tae go tae Lucky Scaup.

We waited till the tide went oot
And on a lovely summer day,
Nae stockings, just a pair o' shane,
Tae walk across the Tay

We a' went aff in happy mood,
Singing a song in turn,
Running across in oor bare feet,
Tae cross the "Cleekie Burn".

We landed safe on Lucky Scaup,
Nae happier could we be,
For, looking roond about us
There was miles and miles o' sea.

We gethered shells and stanes and wulks,
Dug oor bare feet in the sand,
And lookin' back across those years,
Ah! Life was simply grand.

The tide was startin' tae come in,
It was then we made oor way,
A day well spent on Lucky Scaup,
On the bonnie banks o' Tay.

So it's goodbye tae guid auld Lucky Scaup,
It seems ye've had yer day,
You'll be sadly missed by lots o' us,
When we look across your way.

For each time we look across the Tay,
There will be an aufy gap,
The view just winna by the same,
Withoot the Lucky Scaup.



Further research into the history of the tower is under way, and all findings will be published in the magazine in due course. In the meantime, if anyone has any photographs or knowledge of the tower, please write to the editor at the usual e-mail address.

The Tentsmuir Icehouse

Salmon fishing has been a major business in Tayside for more than 1,000 years, and been a feature of international trade for half of that time. In the beginning the salmon were harvested with sweep nets dropped in a wide arc from the stern of a rowing boat and slowly drawn

ashore. The captured salmon were then preserved in salt and put in wooden barrels before being exported to the Netherlands and France.

In the 1740s, traders changed their method of preserving salmon, choosing instead to boil fish that were caught in the spring and seal them in small barrels (Kits) filled with vinegar. Kitted salmon was then sent to London in sailing Smacks for speed: salmon caught in the summer months was still salted in the traditional way. By 1786, the merchant John Richardson of Pitfour started to send salmon to London packed in ice collected from the Spey during the winter. It was a huge success and pushed up the price of salmon at Billingsgate Market. As a result a number of ice-houses were erected along the banks of the Tay, including a large one on the Tentsmuir Estate.

The Tentsmuir Icehouse was probably built around 1800 and was originally set into the ground to protect its walls from the heat of the sun: its roof was likewise covered with soil so that grass would grow on it and perform the same function, but most of this has eroded away. Despite this, the building remains one of the more magnificent examples of the icehouse in Scotland.



Folly of the Month: The Kinnoull Tower at Dundee

Standing atop the appropriately named Tower Hill on the back road to Newport (Perthshire), are the remains of what was a 70-foot high folly known as the Waterloo Tower. From its raised location the tower commanded a fabulous view of the Tay estuary and would have been used as a landmark by mariners at sea.

Although its name suggests that the tower was built in honour of Wellington's famous victory at the Battle of Waterloo, it was actually erected much earlier than that. It probably dates from the 1760s and was commissioned by Thomas Hay, 9th Earl of Kinnoull (1710-87) to emulate the romantic castles perched above the Rhine in Germany. By the early 1800s it had fallen into disrepair and was eventually restored in 1815 by Mr Dalgleish of the nearby Scotsraig Estate. Having done so, it was he who renamed the tower in honour of the Great Duke's triumph over the Emperor Napoleon.



Standing on the summit of the 400 feet high hill, the tower is partly hidden by trees. At one time any tree growing nearby would have been quickly felled to maintain the tower as a landmark to ships entering Tayport. The tower was also painted black so it could more easily be seen against the skyline. It originally contained a wooden staircase giving access to a bartizan (overhanging turret) on one corner, thus allowing it to be used as a belvedere and watch tower. One such observer was the Duke of Edinburgh who, according to the tablet over the door, visited the tower on 30 June 1863.



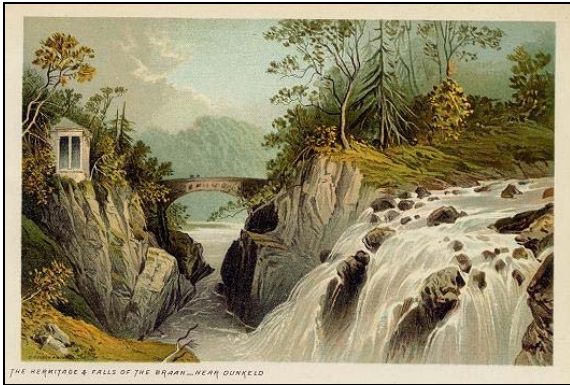
The Hermitage at Dunkeld

The Dukes of Atholl are associated with a number of follies across Scotland, including the Hermitage at Dunkeld House. It is a tiny building erected in 1757 by John Murray as a gift to his uncle James, the 2nd Duke, and set at a dramatic part of Black Lynn Falls on the River Braan, which feeds into the Tay nearby.

The Hermitage was one of a number of follies at Dunkeld, most of which have been lost, including a Chinese Temple of 1753 and a Temple of Fame from around 1757, both designed



by Robert Morris, and a group of follies at Craig a Barns. It was originally an ornate building with a circular outer room and an inner chamber covered with mirrors to reflect the waterfall wherever you stood inside. Its shape also amplified the sound of the water rushing beneath the building, adding to its sense of drama. In 1785, however, the 4th Duke decided to remodel the folly and asked the young James Playfair to provide ideas. The final scheme included an interior that was painted by Charles Steuart to show scenes from the life of the second-century Gaelic bard Ossian. After that the Duke renamed the building Ossian's Hall.



In 1821 the building suffered its first bout of vandalism and was set alight, although only minor damage was caused. In 1869, vandals returned to finish the job and placing dynamite inside to blow it up. Thus it remained until it was eventually rebuilt and is now maintained by the National Trust for Scotland.

The new Dunkeld House is used as a hotel. Its grounds still contain two grottoes: the eastern one has a domed chamber and is sunk into the banks of the River Tay, while the one on the west (below) has an elliptically domed chamber with a rustic Gothic arched front. Both date from the mid-1750s, and were designed by Robert Morris.



Gobbets

❖ Last week the Trustees visited Broadmoor Tower near Friday Street in Surrey, only to find that it had been fenced off. It means that it is no longer possible to visit this delightful boundary marker to the Evelyn Estate, or enjoy the view that it once

afforded towards Leith Hill and the surrounding north-east Surrey countryside. For some time now there have been arguments locally about who owned the tower, so our guess is that it has been resolved. Who knows, perhaps the owner might be encouraged to invest a little money into its repair, or at least trim back the trees so they don't cause it any further impact damage?

❖ The latest edition of *Follies* magazine (issue 70: Summer 2008) was distributed this week, so if you have not yet received your copy, please write to hpeters@toucansurf.com.

❖ Remember that you can download all of the back issues of *Foll-e* and much more besides at www.follies.org.uk. The Trustees see the website as an important way of keeping in touch with you and want to use it more. Among the ideas being discussed are a county register of follies that are open to the public, a chat room, and facilities for paying your subscription online. So be sure to check the website regularly to see just how much it contains.

Forthcoming Events

Sunday, 15 June 2008 – Tour of Painshill Park, Cobham, Surrey with Iain Gray. Further information given in the leaflet posted in February or from Iain Gray at 020-8870 4567 or gg@candycollect.co.uk

Sunday, 29 June 2008 – Open Day at Pelham Place, East Tisted, Alton, Hampshire, in aid of the Army Benevolent Fund. Details available through andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk.

Sunday, 13 July 2008 – Tour of Derbyshire follies. Further details from Joy Cotton on 01332 705165.

Saturday, 16 August 2008 – Annual Garden Party at Horton Menagerie, Northamptonshire. Details and tickets from andrew@follies.fsnet.co.uk.



Picture credits: Kinnoull Tower – *The Dunalistair Hotel*; Lucky Scaup and Tentsmuir Icehouse – www.tayport.org.uk; Kinnoull Hill engraving from 'A Souvenir of Scotland', 1894; Kinnoull Tower – www.flickr.com (stone-faction); Dunkeld Hermitage – NTS; Dunkeld engraving from 'A Souvenir of Scotland', 1894; Dunkeld Grotto – Martin Pettinger; Horton Menagerie – www.gartenreisen-laade.de (secret gardens).