

Footnotes

News from The Library of Innerpeffray

Spring 2024



The Library of Innerpeffray

Opening Lines

We have had a very busy March, with record numbers of visitors. It was great to see many people taking advantage of the free entry for ‘**Madertie Month**’ and many thanks to the Friends who sponsored this. There is more news from the Friends of the Library on page 5.

We are now looking ahead to some of the special events we have lined up for the Spring—there’s a full list of talks, concerts and special events coming up on the back page. In early July we welcome the return of the ever popular Three Inch Fools with an outdoor performance of *The Comedy of Errors*, and later that month we are thrilled to have author, storyteller and singer Jess Smith talking about her experience of the travelling community in Perthshire.



Thank you if you responded to our survey about making some events available online as well as here at Innerpeffray. We are looking into making some of our events a mix of live and online.

In this edition I am pleased to re-introduce one of the discoveries of our Visitor Book investigation by Isla Macfarlane on pages 2–4. Isla has unearthed a new connection between Beatrix Potter and Innerpeffray meaning that extra Perthshire information has been added to the more well-known stories about the Potters time staying near Dunkeld.

I hope to see you at Innerpeffray sometime soon. Lara Haggerty, Keeper of Books

Patrons of the Library

We are most grateful to our 2023/4 Patrons.

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If you support us with an annual donation, it is now time to renew.

Would you like to support the Library by becoming a Patron? Patron subscriptions start at £10 per month and you can sign up on our website or call the Library.

The Library of Innerpeffray

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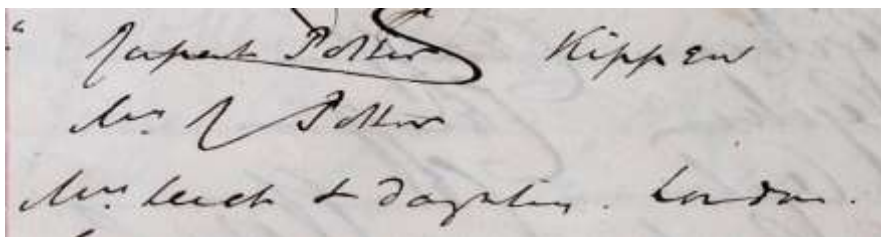
Beatrix Potter and Innerpeffray

Helen Beatrix Potter Heelis (1866-1943) is remembered today as a respected mycology expert, one of the most popular children’s authors of the Victorian period, and the creator of unforgettable fictional characters including Jemima Puddle-Duck, Mrs. Tiggy-Winkle, Squirrel Nutkin, and many more. Perhaps her most well-known book, *The Tale of Peter Rabbit*, was first conceived of while Beatrix was staying near Dunkeld in 1893. Writing a letter to the son of one of her former governesses, she came up with a story about “four little rabbits whose names were Flopsy, Mopsy, Cottontail and Peter.” Little did she know then that Peter Rabbit would one day become a household name!



The extended Potter family often travelled away from London between May and October, interested in the sport and the freedom offered by Scotland, with its plentiful shooting, fishing and opportunities for walking and photography. Beatrix Potter and her family spent many summer holidays in Perthshire, renting Dalguise House near Dunkeld every summer between 1871 and 1881. But before that, we know that they stayed with Rupert Potter’s father, Edmund Potter (1802-1883), near Alness in Easter Ross, and at Tulliemet House, Perthshire, in 1870. Excitingly, we now have evidence from the Innerpeffray Library visitors’ books that the Potters also stayed in Scotland in 1868 and 1869.

On the 26th August 1868, a month after Beatrix’s second birthday, the following signatures were entered into the visitors’ book:



“Rupert Potter and Mrs. R Potter, Kippen, and Mrs. Leech and daughter, London. “

Rupert Potter (1832-1914), Beatrix’s father, was a barrister and successful amateur photographer who married Beatrix’s mother, Helen Leech (1839-1932) on the 8th August 1863. The Potters were visiting with Helen’s mother, Beatrix’s maternal grandmother, Jane Ashton (1806-1884) and one of her daughters, Beatrix’s aunt – most likely the eldest daughter of Mrs Leech, Jane (1833-1876), who never married and remained close to home. Although Mrs Leech and her daughter write their location as London, Rupert

and Helen write that they were staying at Kippen Estate while visiting Scotland, rather than their usual London address. Although there is a village called Kippen in Stirlingshire, as below where the Potters wrote ‘Garvock’ to refer to Garvock House in Dunning, it seems more likely that they were referring to Kippen House, also in Dunning, which was built in the 1840s.



This postcard shows Kippen House, thanks to David Robertson for sharing this with us.

The following year, on the 13th August 1869, we find the Potters returning to Innerpeffray for a second time, this time accompanied by Reverend William Gaskell as well as Mrs and Miss Leech .

In the summer of 1869, the Potter family was again holidaying with Beatrix's maternal grandmother and aunt, as well as Unitarian minister and close friend of the family William Gaskell (1805-1884). It was common for the Victorian middle classes to "invite friends to join them on holiday," and the Potters frequently invited friends and family to join them in Scotland – "especially those who liked to fish and who would endure Rupert's endless photography sessions."¹⁴ Gaskell was a close friend and teacher of Rupert Potter's, having known Rupert's father Edmund since his university days. Indeed, Jenny Uglow, biographer of William's wife Elizabeth, states that William often joined the Potters on their annual summer holidays but never invited his wife to accompany him – she emphasizes that he "needed escape, less, one sometimes feels, from the city than from his growing family."¹⁵ It appears that he preferred spending his leisure time with the Potters rather than his own family.

Photograph of Reverend William Gaskell and Beatrix Potter, taken during one of "Rupert's endless photography sessions" in the grounds of Dalguise House



On this visit to Innerpeffray, the Potters recorded their location as both Garvock and London, indicating that their long-term residence was in London but at the present time they were staying in Garvock House while in Scotland.

The following month, the Potters visit Innerpeffray Library for the third time on the 6th September 1869. Their entries in the visitors' book reveal that although the Leeches were not present, the Potters were joined by Beatrix's paternal grandfather, Edmund Potter (1802-1883), who writes his place of residence as his Hertfordshire home, Camfield Place: It is clear from their three separate visits that Rupert and Helen Potter enjoyed their trips to Innerpeffray – dedicating time from two summer holidays to visit and on each occasion bringing a different visitor to see the library.

Innerpeffray was an accessible tourist destination from both Garvock and Kippen by carriage, train or even bicycle – it would take around three hours to walk or one hour to cycle to the library from either location on modern roads. Although Innerpeffray was still easily accessible by train from Dalguise House, they must have considered it too long a journey, as the Potters do not appear again in the visitors' books.

Noticeably absent from these visitors' book entries is Beatrix Potter herself! Aged two- and three-years-old at the time of the respective visits, Beatrix might have been left at home with her nurse rather than joining her parents and grandparents at Innerpeffray Library, though it seems fitting to imagine her there, surrounded by bibliophile friends and family who knew the importance of books. William Gaskell was chairman of the Portico Library in Manchester from 1849 to 1884 and was recorded as having borrowed more than 700 books between 1850 and 1859. And Beatrix often visited Camfield Place, where her grandfather, Edmund

Potter, had 'built a reading room and library which was kept well stocked with books and newspapers'. From an early age, she was an intelligent young girl who was encouraged by friends and family to love stories and books, and she also wrote that her 'happiest moments' were those spent in Scotland, so perhaps the Potters indeed brought their daughter with them while touring there.



As to the houses where they stayed, Kippen House is an imposing Victorian mansion, surrounded by extensive grounds. Having at one stage become a hotel, it is now a care home, where the residents are encouraged to help in the gardens. When the Potters stayed there it still belonged to the local Graeme family, for whom the original house was built. But the present house (as shown here) is probably larger than it was in the 1860s, having been sold in 1870 to Angus Turner, who made alterations and additions. He was married to a Miss Graeme and bought the house from her nephew. Garvock House also belonged to the Graeme family and remained in their possession until the early twentieth century. The tomb of the last Laird is in a nearby field. The house itself has an attractive Georgian façade, with the remains of an older building in evidence, and is probably much the same size as when the Potters stayed there.

The 'Dunning Parish Historical Society' *Newsletter* for July 1995 has an article written by Dr Malcolm Graeme which contains something of the history of both houses and of his family. Unfortunately, we know of no description of either house by any of the Potters, nor do we think that Rupert Potter photographed them. Indeed, without the Innerpeffray visitors' books, we might never have known of these additional summers that the Potters spent in Scotland.

Isla H Macfarlane is a PhD Candidate working with the Library of Innerpeffray and the University of Stirling. Her research focuses on nineteenth-century visitors to the library, as recorded in the library's visitors' books, which contain signatures from 1859 to the present day. This article also appeared in the *Beatrix Potter Society Journal* in 2023.

Sources and references

- Barbara Brill and Alan Shelston, 'Manchester: "A Behindhand Place for Books": The Gaskells and the Portico Library', *The Gaskell Society Journal*, 5 (1991), 27–36 (pages 27–28)
- Malcolm Graeme, 'The Graemes of Garvock & Kippen', *Dunning Parish Historical Society*, 12 July 1995, <<https://dunning.uk.net/news/1to36/mag12.html>>
- Linda Lear, *Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature*, St Martin's Press, NY, and Allen Lane, London, 2007; Penguin Books, 2008 (pages 12, 27–29)
- Isla H. Macfarlane, 'Beatrix Potter at Innerpeffray', *The Library of Innerpeffray Blog*, 2021 <<https://innerpeffraylibrary.co.uk/beatrix-potter-at-innerpeffray/>>
- Lynne McGeachie, *Beatrix Potter's Scotland*, Luath Press, Edinburgh, 2010

Now on sale!

Rome's Caledonian Corridor

As promised in the last issue, our latest booklet is now available from the Library and website shop, priced £7.



News from Friends of Innerpeffray Library

Friends of Innerpeffray Library is a registered charity, Scottish Charity No: SC 02354

Thank you to everyone who has joined or renewed their membership of the Friends for 2024. We are looking forward to an exciting season supporting the library.

Do join us if you can for the AGM and special Friends Tours this April.



Email: Friends@innerpeffraylibrary.co.uk

Friends Events coming up

Wed 10th April at 7pm Annual General Meeting followed by a talk from Library volunteer Gillean Ford: *The Dehler Family and Innerpeffray* Tickets available [here](#)

Thursday 18th April -2pm or 7pm *FOIL Tours with the Keeper* - exclusively for FOIL members, join Lara for a bespoke private tour of the new exhibition plus refreshments. Tickets strictly limited, available [here](#) or by calling the Library.

Sunday 9th June at 3pm in the Chapel—**Rosenethe Singers present Music for a Summer's Day**, a mixed programme including madrigals and Vaughan Williams. We are delighted to welcome the Rosenethe Singers back to Innerpeffray and this afternoon concert is sure to be popular.

Dates for your diaries

We have concerts lined up for the summer months and some special events too. We are thrilled to announce that acclaimed cookery author **Sue Lawrence** (below right) will return to Innerpeffray to talk about the special recipes she has incorporated into her newest book, inspired by *Mrs McIver's Cookery and Pastry* (1789) in the Innerpeffray collection. This takes place on Saturday 28th September at 2pm.

On 23rd October we hold the Ted Powell Memorial Lecture - this year we are delighted to have more Innerpeffray research unveiled as Isla Macfarlane will be speaking about her PhD on Innerpeffray Visitors (a taste of this in the article about Beatrix Potter in this issue of Footnotes).

You may remember the concert of Scandanavian and Scottish music from Tern last summer: group member Miguel Girao (below left) will be performing his skilful blend of traditional and classical guitar music in the Chapel in August. We hope you give him a warm welcome back to Strathearn.

Best wishes from the Friends Committee,

Joan Taylor, Convenor



We look forward to welcoming

In August, Miguel Girao, left

In September, Sue Lawrence, right



What's On - Spring / Summer Events Programme 2024

- Wed 10th April at 7pm **Friends of Innerpeffray AGM and Talk - the Dehlers of Innerpeffray.** Library volunteer Gillean Ford will share some of the remarkable tales of the Dehler family who lived in the Library in the 1940s. Tickets £10, FREE for FOIL members. [Book here](#)
- Sunday 14th April at 2pm Launch of **Rome's Caledonian Corridor**, our latest publication. Join Dr Gavin Lindsay for a talk about the Roman military in Perthshire followed by a book signing and optional walk to look at the landscape near Innerpeffray. Tickets [here](#)
- Thursday 18th April at 2pm and 7pm **Friends Tours with the Keeper** - exclusively for FOIL members, join Lara for a bespoke private tour of the new exhibition plus refreshments. Tickets available [here](#)
- Sun 2nd June at 2pm **Jim Jermyn - New Zealand's Alpine Wonderland.** World-renowned horticulturalist and former head gardener at Perth's Branklyn Gardens Jim Jermyn will share tales of alpine plant collecting in New Zealand. Tickets available [soon](#).
- Sun 9th June 3pm **Rosenethe Singers present—Music for a Summer's Day** we are delighted to welcome the Singers back to Innerpeffray to perform a mixed programme including madrigals and Vaughan Williams for what is sure to be a popular concert in the Chapel. Full details and ticket booking available soon
- Thu 11th July at 7pm **Three Inch Fools - The Comedy of Errors.** The ever-popular outdoor theatre company are back, and the clock is ticking as The Fools try to untangle an almighty mess in this farcical tale of twins and chaos. Tickets [on sale now](#).
- Sun 21st July at 2pm **Jess Smith**, author, singer and traditional storyteller brings her unique tale-telling to Innerpeffray.
- Sat 3rd August at 3pm **Miguel Girão in Concert - Fairylore, The Northern Isles & Dance Music.** Originally from the Portuguese Midlands and now based in Glasgow, Scotland, Miguel is a guitarist exploring the musical traditions of different corners of the world and fusing them with hints of classical and contemporary aesthetics.
- Thur 5th to Sun 8th September **A Way With Words—Innerpeffray's Festival of Books and Reading**
An exciting mix of talks, workshops, performances and participation, join us to celebrate the world of books and reading, with our theme this year: Travelling Tales
Full programme will be announced soon
- Sat 28th September at 2pm **Sue Lawrence—Scottish Cookery** Join Sue as she talks about her latest publication and to hear how Innerpeffray's 1789 book, **Mrs McIver's Cookery and Pastry** has inspired some new recipes.

Tickets and more details for all events available on the website. Book online at <https://innerpeffray-library.arttickets.org.uk/> or call 01764 652819 for more information or to reserve tickets.