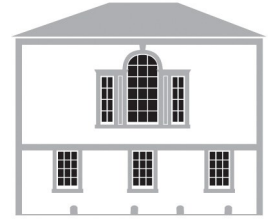


Footnotes

News from The Library of Innerpeffray

Summer 2024



The Library of Innerpeffray

A Scottish Charity SC013843

Opening Lines

In this issue of Footnotes, I'm delighted to bring you features that range from the pleasures of 18th century cookery to the joy of poetry, and events from Shakespeare performance to print-making, guitar music and storytelling.

I am indebted to Steven Dp Richardson for sharing his article that recalls a visit to Innerpeffray when Ted Powell was the Keeper (1987–2005). Steven explored the spices and recipes of Mrs MacIver's Cookery and Pastry (1789)—many thanks to Equinox and Prospect Books for permission to reproduce the article here. Jess Smith is making a most welcome return to Innerpeffray with **Summer Roads— songs and stories of the open road** next month—more details on page 4 and online. Tickets are available now.

Did you know we have a poet in residence this year? Jennie Turnbull led our poetry circle at last year's Festival and will be working on her writing at Innerpeffray as well as hosting events. You can join her for a poetry workshop this Sunday afternoon (30th June)—details on the back page.

We will shortly be announcing the programme for the **Innerpeffray Festival—A Way With Words** in September, keep 5th–8th September free if you can! There will be maps, storytelling, author talks and much more.

I hope you will find something of interest in this edition.

Best wishes, Lara

Sunlit Poetry and Music

The summer solstice fell on 20th June this year and at Innerpeffray we celebrated the sun's highest point in the year with words and music.

A big thank you to poets: Jim Mackintosh, Morag Anderson, John Glenday, Cáit O'Neill McCullagh, Gill Shaw and Jennie Turnbull and musicians: Gillian Fleetwood (Clarsach), Naomi Harvey (Song), Laura Wilkie (Fiddle) for a beautiful evening.



Mistresses MacIver and Dabdoub Nasser Shake Hands

Steven Dp Richardson



The air is brim with a refreshing pungency from sweet cicely blooms bursting along the road banks. Rattling, I race off the tarmac on my 1946 moss-green Copenhagen, past the old ford, past the farm cottage and out-buildings, down the pot-holed, plum-line Roman road. To my right I am less than a peltast's shot from the Strageath Flavian Roman marching camp; a broccoli field one year, swathes of wheat the next. In a cloud of dry late spring dust, I arrive at the gillie's brittle wood hut on the raised bank of the River Earn. In the lower pool there are sluggish grilse in the summer; good grayling in the winter.

Twenty metres high on the steep bank across the water perches the white gable end of Innerpeffray Library, beaming through the sycamore canopies - a pearl mounted in the ribbon sweep of Strathearn. I drag my dinghy from its stash between the bank and the field and rest my bicycle in its place. I adjust my canvas shoulder-bag, push out into the upper fast pool, and paddle to an eddy shaded by an orbled willow on the opposite bank. Ted, a past library custodian, reckoned I was the first person to row across the rapids for a read since 1939, when the ferry service a few yards up stream from Cobblehaugh Cottage was stopped.

Why this antiquated route? The longer road from my home in Muthill, though very beautiful, dips and winds through oilseed rape and battery hen barracks. I object to both; most of all, their odours are similarly rancid and stifling, only too intense when cycling. And besides, my less conventional route, if not eccentric, is the more poetic approach.

Why did I come? Books: the sweet must-smell of leather binding; brittle pages with contents that leave me feeling richly satiated. Specifically, antiquarian works relating to the matter of food: recipes, incidental literary references, fantastic monastic pseudo-scientific treatises on herbs, beasties and fowls, agricultural practices, and quack medical innovations.

Cookery and Pastry as Practiced by Mrs MacIver, A New Edition by Susanna MacIver (Edinburgh, London: 1789), looks promising for its range, from apothecary madness, to charming turns of phrase:

Take a pound of hartshorn shavings, nine ounces of eringo root, three ounces of isinglass, of chopin of bruised snails, ...two vipers, or four ounces of the powder of them, ...two Scotch pints of water, ...a mutchkin of Rhenish wine, half a pound of brown sugar-candy, the juice of two Seville oranges, the whites of three eggs... (Jelly for a Consumption); and, potch some eggs very nicely; ...earn some new milk; press the whey...

I find a recipe that catches my attention: *Spices, Proper to be mixed with any kind of seasoning*. I take notes. This appears to be a rather ubiquitous ingredient, being applied to soups for pigeon, hare, leek, onion, and *pease*; roast cod head; codling with ale and lemon zest; stewed sole; parton (crab) pies; potted eels; potted herring; beef a-la-mode; forced meet balls. Sun streams through the east window. Hot pine boards and honey-coloured book bindings mingle in aromatic melodies.

Enough for the day, I pack my pencils and emboss my notebook entry with the Innerpeffray Mortuary Society's emblem.

On my way back to the boat, I munch on a ramson flower head. This wild garlic blooms in profusion around the library grounds. White crowns in green grounds. I pick more to make my ramson fritters in tempura batter when I get home - if they survive the scramble down the bank and the boat journey in my pockets. I gather some sweet cicely leaves, too. This sweet herb is reasonably thought to have been introduced by the Romans to the Romano-British kitchen garden. Its profusion in proximity to an area

historically defined by a profound Roman presence perhaps bears testimony to this. A tomato salad with fronds of sweet cicely haloing a crown of ransom flowers, drizzled with a light olive oil is heavenly.

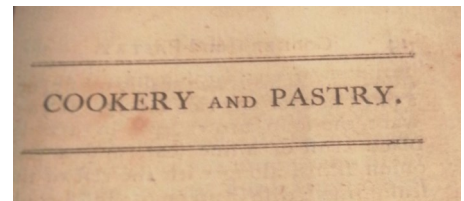
Cycling back through the green fields and hedgerows to my rural pile, I wonder how I might apply this spice mix myself. I've tested other 'kitchen pepper' recipes – similarly from 18th and 19th century cookery books – but they seem a bit harsh on the palate. I don't see any reason to doubt that these ubiquitous kitchen peppers owe their genesis to some *formulæ* of fifteenth century cookery manuscripts: *poudyr Lumbard*, or *poudyr fort*. Mrs MacIver, however, proves to have struck the perfect balance. Can it be adapted beyond providing her recipes with the MacIver idiosyncrasy? I remember Christiane Dabdoub Nasser's *Classic Palestinian Cookery*, and a rather splendid recipe she gives for a very simple and hearty meat and pea stew, *Yakhnet bazela*, made with either beef or lamb.

Back in the kitchen, I try the culinary cultural cross over. ...It works perfectly, and as a species of adaptation it is a completely outstanding dish served with either mashed potatoes with a pinch of dried sage, or parsnip pureed with lashings of butter. Mistresses MacIver and Nasser, shake hands.



This article originally appeared in Petits Propos Culinaire: PPC96 (June 2012), pp. 66-71

Many thanks to Steven Dp Richardson, Equinox and Prospect Books for allowing us to reproduce this article for Footnotes.



Mrs MacIver's Spices, Proper to be mixed with any kind of seasoning

(Metric equivalent inserted)

Take an ounce [25g] of black and an ounce [25g] of Jamaica pepper [allspice berries], two drop of cloves, and two or three nutmegs; beat them into a powder, and mix them all together, and put them in a box or bottle, so as they catch no air; and then you have them ready for seasoning any kind of sauce.

Place all the spices together in an electric grinder and process them to a fine powder. I take *two drop of cloves* to mean two cloves; I add three. I use two nutmegs; though it is an idea to partially crush them before processing with the other ingredients. Jarring the spice is as good as any *box or bottle*.

To read Steven's recipes using 'MacIver Spice' visit our blog <https://innerpeffraylibrary.co.uk/blog>

A facsimile edition of Mrs MacIver's Cookery and Pastry is available from the Library shop priced £20.

Coming Soon

Summer Roads—songs and stories of the open road with Jess Smith

The acclaimed author, storyteller and singer makes a most welcome return to Innerpeffray with an afternoon sharing her unique tale-telling and old ballads. Tickets priced 10 are available now.



Miguel Girão in Concert - Fairylore, The Northern Isles & Dance Music.

If you enjoyed the music of Tern in the Chapel last summer, do join us when Miguel Girão returns to perform his skilful blend of traditional and classical guitar music in August. Tickets £15, available now

New Scottish Baking

If Suzanna MacIver has tickled your taste buds, why not join us for **New Scottish Baking** with Sue Lawrence? We are delighted that the Friends of the Library have arranged for Sue to be at Innerpeffray on 28th September sharing her new cookbook and her new novel. Sharing her inspiration from Mrs MacIver's recipes and giving us the chance to taste some of the results Sue will also sign copies of **New Scottish Baking** in the Library after her talk.

This is the ultimate celebration of the amazing variety of Scottish baking. Acclaimed cookery writer Sue Lawrence introduces essential tips before going on to share 150 easy-to-follow recipes which will appeal to bakers of all abilities, and a chapter on baking with kids will inspire a new generation in the kitchen.

Save the date, tickets will be available soon.
Tickets available shortly



What's On at Innerpeffray



Sun 30th June, 2.30pm

Poetry Workshop: Where have we come from? / Where are we going?

Join Poet-in-Residence Jennie Turnbull for an afternoon workshop at Innerpeffray. Using the Library and its surroundings as inspiration and starting point we shall explore ideas of journey and travel, and see where the afternoon leads us. Suitable for writers at all levels. Bring a notebook and pencil. Strictly limited places, £25, [book here](#).

Thurs 11th July, 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. Full details and ticket booking [available here](#).

Sun 21st July, 2pm

Summer Roads: Songs and stories of the open road with Jess Smith.

The celebrated author, singer and traditional storyteller brings her unique tale-telling and old ballads to Innerpeffray. Tickets £10, [book here](#).

25th July 8.15pm - 11pm

NBMP Level 1 Bat Detector Workshop. We are delighted to host this training event discovering the nocturnal wildlife at Innerpeffray. For further details on the session and to book a place, click this link for the [Bat Conservation Trust](#).

Sat 3rd August, 3pm

Miguel Girão in Concert - Fairylore, The Northern Isles & Dance Music.

Miguel Girão performs his skilful blend of traditional and classical guitar music in the Chapel. Tickets £15, [book here](#).

Sept 5th-8th

Innerpeffray Festival: A Way With Words. Our annual festival returns with creative workshops, talks and family events. Full programme to be announced soon.

Sat 28th Sept, 7pm

Sue Lawrence: Book Launch and Signing. Join cookery writer and author Sue Lawrence to talk about how Innerpeffray inspired new recipes in her work, and to launch her latest historical novel. Samples of her delicious recipes will be available to try. Tickets available soon.

Sun 6th Oct, 2pm.

David Greig in Conversation. An afternoon in conversation with the celebrated author and playwright, talking about his newest book, *Columba's Bones*. Tickets available soon.

Coming up later in the year

23rd Oct—The Ted Powell Memorial Lecture

All ticket can be booked via our website, or by phone 01764 652819

9th & 10th Nov—Festive Fayre

20th Nov—Nunkie Theatre

30th Nov & 1st Dec—FOIL present Carols at Innerpeffray