Magical Mystery Tours with Pride of Passion FOR SCOTLAND

Moray - 51 Interesting 'Facts'

1 **Moray** is said to mean 'sea settlement' from *mori*an old Gaelic word. The ancient province of Moray gave its name to the Firth.

2 Opened in 1994, the **Buckie** Drifter Maritime Heritage Centre tells the story of the fishing communities of the Moray Firth coast. It is situated in Freuchny Road, Buckie.

3 "Spey casting" is a fly fishing technique, developed along the river for catching salmon, the fly line stays in front of you when you cast i.e. not an overhead cast. Tricky to accomplish but needed when there are trees behind you, like on the Spey !

4 The Nelson Tower, which overlooks **Forres** from Cluny Hill, is 70 Feet [21 metres] high. Its viewing platform, open in summer, affords open views of the Moray Firth to the North and Grampian Mountains to the south.

5 The Speyside Way is one of four official long distance routes in Scotland and runs 84 miles [135km] from Buckie to Aviemore.

6 **Fochabers** Folk Museum houses the largest collection of horsedrawn vehicles in north east Scotland.

7 The Spey valley is home of nearly 50 whisky distilleries resulting in the international reputation of Speyside malts as a whisky 'region'.

8 The river Spey is the third longest river in Scotland at nearly 100 miles [160km] long.

9 On top of Lady Hill, which rises to the southwest of Elgin and was once the site of Elgin Castle, is a 24m high (80 feet) monument erected in 1839 in honour of the 5th Duke of Gordon, the first Commander of the Gordon Highlanders regiment.

10 **Ramsay Macdonald,** Labour's first UK Prime Minister [1923] was born in Lossiemouth.

11 Ballindalloch Castle, known as the 'Pearl of the North' has been the home of the Macpherson-Grant family since 1546.

12 George McIvor, Executive Chef at Baxters of Speyside, was the first Development Chef to be appointed Fellow of the Master Chefs in 2005. Baxters has been a family run food manufacturers since 1868.

13 Sandstone from **Hopeman** was used in the building of the Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh which opened in 2000.

14 **Burghhead** still celebrates the ancient mid-winter Yule-fire festival known as 'Burning the Clavie' on 11th January (Old Yule Night) each year. The Clavie crew led by the Clavie King take it in turn to carry through the streets the blazing tar-barrel or Clavie, which is made from a whisky barrel and set alight with a burning peat.

15 The first of the noted 'Zulu' class of fishing boats was designed and built in **Lossiemouth** in 1879.

16 **Elgin's** castle was the reputed scene of King Duncan's murder by Macbeth.

17 Strathisla Distillery (1786) in **Keith** is said to be the oldest working distillery in Scotland.

18 The river Avon [pron. A'an] takes its name from the Scots Gaelic a*bhainn* meaning 'stream' or 'river'. It's root is equivalent to Avon in England, Afon in Welsh and stems from an Indo-European root-form which produced Danube and Punjab.

19 RAF **Lossiemouth** is the largest and busiest fast-jet base in the Royal Air Force and is home to three operational squadrons of Tornado GR-4s.

20 Tugnet Ice House at **Spey** Bay, is the largest in Scotland and was built in 1830 to store salmon from the River Spey before being packed in ice and sent to southern markets for sale.

21 Charles II returned to Scotland from exile in 1650 at **Garmouth** where he was obliged to sign the Solemn League and Covenant to gain the support of the Scots nobles.

22 **Kingston** was so named by shipbuilders from Kingston upon Hull who settled there in the late 18th century to capitalise on timber being floated down the Spey and duly produced some 300 ships, many of them clippers.

23 In an effort to protect salmon fishing rights a law was passed in 1868 to make 'fishing by forks' illegal.

24 The 'muckle spate of 1829' in the North East of Scotland has been recorded as the severest flooding in UK history.

25 The Findhorn Foundation begun in 1962 by Peter and Eileen Caddy and Dorothy Maclean, is now an internationally recognised centre of spirituality.

26 1977 saw the completion of a new mouth cut for the river Spey at **Kingston** to alleviate the threat of flood.

27 The battle of **Cromdale** saw the quelling of the Jacobite uprising when supporters of James VII were ambushed at night by the government killing 300 of their 800 force. The defeat is commemorated in ballad:

As I came in by Auchindoun,
A little wee bit frae the toun,
When to the Highlands I was bound,
To view the haughs of Cromdale,

I met a man in tartan trews,
I speir'd at him what was the news;
Quo' he the Highland army rues,
That e'er we came to Cromdale.

28 The old bridge at **Craigellachie,** a single, latticed span over the River Spey, is the oldest surviving iron bridge in Scotland. It cost £8,200 to build, outspending its original estimate by £200.

29 General James Grant [1720-1806] retired to **Ballindalloch** after a colourful career which saw him fight at Flanders, Culloden, Wolfe's campaign in Canada and serve as Governor of Florida from 1760.

30 There has been some speculation towards the end of 2005 about RAF **Kinloss** augmenting air traffic control services at Inverness, Dalcross Airport.

31 Charlestown of **Aberlour** is the home of the world's most famous shortbread Walker's! Joseph Walker moved to Aberlour in 1909 for expanded premises from Torphins in Aberdeenshire.

32 **Tomintoul** is thought to be the highest village in the Highlands at 1160 ft [354m]

33 As Rome was founded on seven hills, **Dufftown** was founded on seven stills and deservedly is called the Malt Whisky capital of Scotland!

34 2006 sees the 8th Spirit of Speyside Malt Whisky Festival celebrating the rich heritage of whisky-making, which is an integral part of the lives of the Speyside communities.

35 Telford's handsome, sandstone bridge over the Spey at **Fochabers** was partially swept away in the great flood of 1829. The current bridge consists of half the original stone bridge and a later cast iron bridge constructed by an unknown engineer in 1854.

36 Grant Lodge, situated in **Elgin's** Cooper Park, was the location of the last clan uprising in Scotland when in 1820 some 700 Highlanders of Clan Grant marched on Grant Lodge to protect Lady Ann Grant during an election dispute.

37 **Burghead's** Pictish Fort was one of the most magnificent centres of Pictish power. Dating from the 4th or 5th centuries AD the remains were so exceptional they were mistaken for evidence of Roman occupation.

38 **Forres** is one of the most ancient places in Moray, having been noted by the mapmaker Ptolemy almost two thousand years ago.

39 **Elgin** Cathedral is known as the "Lantern of the North".

40 **Forres** is closely associated with the name Macbeth, whose tale was told by William Shakespeare, giving rise to much speculation about the exact spot where the legendary eleventh century king-to-be met the three witches

41 The Auld Brig, **Keith** is a picturesque packhorse bridge built in 1609. It is the oldest bridge still standing in Moray and one of the oldest in Scotland.

42 In 1390 the notorious Alexander Stewart, "Wolf of Badenoch" and son of King Robert II, quarrelled with Bishop Alexander Bur, who excommunicated him for his unfaithfulness to his wife. In revenge the Wolf burned the Cathedral and the towns of Elgin and Forres.

43 **Auchindoun** Castle a ruined 15th century L-plan tower, was built by John Stuart, the Earl of Mar (c.1458-79). On his murder, the castle passed to Robert Cochrane, mason and favourite of King James III, who in 1482, was hanged from Lauder Bridge.

44 Although King Indulph (954-962) son of Constantine II, defeated the Danish King Eric of the Bloody Axe at the Battle of the Bauds on the Muir of **Findochty** (pronounced Finechty), in 961, he decided, like his father, to abdicate and enter a monastery.

45 The Biblical Garden at **Elgin** Cathedral includes all 110 ten plants metioned in the Bible.

46 **Cullen's** magnificent railway viaduct is now part of the national cycle route http://www.sustrans.org.uk/default.asp?postcode=postcode&town=cullen

47 Bottlenose dolphins have been a familiar attraction in the Moray firth for years. They are the most northerly population in the world.

48 **Findhorn** derives its name from the river at whose mouth it stands, where Findhorn is thought to derive from the Scots Gaelic *'white water'.*

49 RAF Lossiemouth employs around 2500 military and civilian staff to ensure its operational capability and proactively contributes to the Moray community.

50 Described as the 'tallest and most complex piece of early medieval sculpture in Scotland', Sueno's stone standing over 6.4m (21 feet) high at the east end of **Forres** in Moray, is arguably the most remarkable sculptured monument in Britain, dating to the end of the first millennium AD.

51 The Beatrice oil field, the first oil production in the Moray Firth area, is the only platform visible from the mainland.