



## Tomintoul Museum

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**W**elcome to Tomintoul Museum, the highest Museum in the Highlands, at 1164 ft (that's 354 metres) above sea level.

In 1976, as part of the celebrations to mark Tomintoul's bicentenary, there was an exhibition of historic items from the area, which took place in the old Village Hall. A large number of objects were assembled, including many of the old household items which you see on display in the museum today. This event was so successful that in 1978 it was decided to approach the then Moray District Council, with the suggestion that the Council open a museum in Tomintoul to house the collection. The Council first leased, and then acquired, the former Spalding Bakehouse, the building in which the museum and tourist information centre are now located.

At the outset, a reconstruction of a farm kitchen, with traditional open fire, was installed in the front part of the building, and in 1979, the second part of the building, where the bakery ovens had been located, was adapted to contain displays about local wildlife, the history, climate, geology and landscape of the area of Tomintoul and Glenlivet. At the same time a display about peat cutting was added alongside the farm kitchen, peat being the traditional fuel in many rural areas until the mid-twentieth century. Traditional hand-cut peat is now almost unknown in this area, but commercial peat-cutting by machine is undertaken on a large area of moorland close to Tomintoul.

On 17<sup>th</sup> January 1984 the BBC broadcast a short film "The Scottish Kitchen" as part of their 'Play School' programme for young children. A short display on this filming, which was done in the reconstructed Farm Kitchen, can still be seen in the museum today.

In 1986, the museum expanded again, with the addition of the reconstructed 'smiddy', or blacksmith's workshop. This is in a separate building, which you can reach by following the signs between the two main areas of the museum. The smiddy fittings, tools and contents were a generous gift from Raymond McIntosh, the last working blacksmith in Tomintoul.

During 1996 and 1997, residents of the Tomintoul area took part in a community-based research project, culminating in an exhibition entitled '*In Heath and Heather. Tomintoul and Glenlivet ... Portrait of a Place*'. This was incorporated into the permanent displays in the museum, and received an award from the Environmental Initiative of the Scottish Museums Council. The engraved sandstone plaque, honouring this award, is also on display.

Other current displays cover a wide variety of subjects, including a photographic exhibition with pictures of local flowering plants and animals; and the local climate, focussing on popular winter activities such as skiing. The Lecht Ski Centre, just a few miles from Tomintoul, receives many thousands of visitors during the height of the skiing season. The museum also features a photograph album with pictures of the Tomintoul area in times past, from which you may order copies of the photographs.

We hope you enjoy your visit with us. Improvements and additions to the museum are always progressing, and we hope that visitors and residents of the area will continue to return to the museum and find plenty to interest them and to enjoy. Please speak to the custodian, or write to us, if we can be of further help. You will find details of how to contact us on the information sheet, and on our website. Please take the time to sign our visitor book, and thank you for visiting our museum.



**Produced by The Moray Council Museums Service, in partnership with  
Volunteers from Tomintoul Museum, and the Friends of the Falconer Museum.  
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