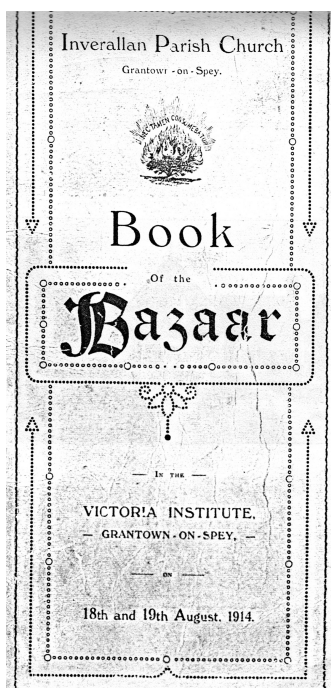


FAIRS, FESTIVALS AND BAZAARS

As there were brave men before Agamemnon, so there was a town of Grant before Grantown. Its ancient name was Freuchie or Castletown of Freuchie."

So began David Young's introduction to what was planned as Grantown's biggest ever bazaar in August 1914.



In his opening pages of the *Book of the Bazaar*, The Inverallan Minister continued,

In 1693, in the reign of William and Mary, an Act of Parliament was passed, in favour of Ludovick Grant of Freuchie, allowing free fairs to be held here, "whereunto all their Majesties' subjects may resort for buying and selling of bestiall, and all sorts of merchant commodities whatsumever that shall be brought thereto be any persones.

Whilst the fairs and weekly markets around "old" Grantown's Market Cross continued until they moved to "new" Grantown almost a century later, world events in 1914 meant that bazaar did not take place.

Bazaars, were popular in Grantown and became major fund raising events, such as that of August 30 1878:

in aid of the fund for a green for lawn tennis, croquet and bowling.

Or that of August 1926, to help pay of the outstanding debt of £650 from the construction of the Cromdale Bridge.

With the Foundation of New Grantown in 1765 came the Founder's assertion that the site would attract the fairs and markets of the Neighbourhood. An advertisement two years later identified no less than nine such fairs, including Lady Fair, Hallow Fair and Figgat Fair. The latter of course is known to many Grantownians having recently been revived for a while following on from Square Fair some thirty Years ago.

Whilst Bazaars largely represented fund raising and Fairs were commercial in origin, Festivals which grew in popularity in the thirties were designed as celebrations. Such was the festival of August 1931 as reported in the Aberdeen Press and Journal

GRANTOWN AT ITS GAYEST Pageant and Queens of Festival. Grantown had a spectacular demonstration entirely to its liking yesterday, when visitors were introduced in the Square by the Amenities Association to a display of all the attractions of the town as a holiday resort.

Even more spectacular would have been the *Grantown-on-Spey Festival of Britain Week* which ran from July 22nd to 29th 1951. This was perhaps matched by Grantown's 250 celebrations only 4 years ago. There have been numerous other festivals, flowers, cycling, drama and of course music; with 2019 represented by Strathfest in March, the Fiddler of Strathspey in September and Feis Spe in October.

The Grantown Society meeting on March 15th 2019 was set up to tell something of such Fairs, festivals and Bazaars as these.