BELHELVIE BANTER



EDITION 8 SEPTEMBER 2011

Belhelvie Banter

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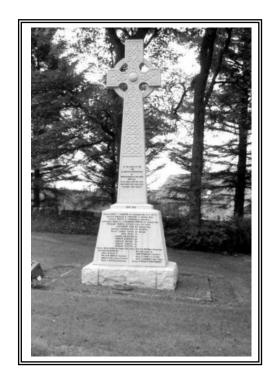
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Copy date for the next issue is: 4th November

Our front cover in this edition features
Potterton resident Mal
Allcroft who had a 'hole in one' at Newmachar
Golf Club in June.
See page 43 for more.

Picture: Belhelvie War Memorial. See article on page 41 by Malcolm Ross



EDITORIAL

Where has the summer gone? Or perhaps that should be when was the summer? But for all we complain and are obsessed with the vagaries of the British climate one thing remains constant - if you put the effort in then the garden flowers will reward you with a show of colour to gladden any heart.

I am sure you appreciate the work being done by the Better Balmedie group and the Community Council and have enjoyed the fruits of their labours visible throughout the Parish settlements. We take particular delight in seeing "the boat" resplendent in its new-found role as this was donated by a parishioner following an appeal here in the Banter. So thank you, it is a joy to see. Sadly, we can only reproduce in black and white.



Of importance to us all is the ongoing proposal to create an 'Energetica Corridor'. Some years ago, Aberdeenshire Council started work on the idea of creating an energy corridor between Aberdeen City and Peterhead. This led to a plan under the title 'Energetica' which in draft form has been circulated to interested parties with responses due by 23rd September. The Energetica planning guidelines cover the area from Bridge of Don through **Blackdog, Belhelvie and Balmedie,** before continuing north to Peterhead.

Although the plan does not apply to householder planning applications, it is clearly of importance and will affect all of us in one way or another.

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AUTUMN NATURE NOTES – BALMEDIE COUNTRY PARK

By Sarah Gosden, Coastal Ranger, Aberdeenshire Council

As I'm sitting in my office writing this I'm looking through thick fog out of the window. What happened to the summer? Hopefully as we go into autumn the sunshine will return. No matter what the weather, though, it is always worth a trip to the park and beach.

The swallows will be leaving to return to their winter habitats in Africa and the geese will be coming back from their summer grounds further north in Spitzbergen, Iceland and Greenland. Whilst they don't usually feed or roost in the park they can be flying overhead in their characteristic V formation or "skein". The two most commonly seen geese are pink-footed and greylag. The greylag was once the only goose that bred in Britain and it is the ancestor of the white farmyard goose. For a spectacular view of geese visit the Loch of Strathbeg in early morning when they rise or at dusk when they return to roost.

Back in the park the warm wet weather is already stimulating fungi to fruit. Fungi, or mushrooms and toadstools, comprise more than just the fruiting body we are familiar with seeing above ground. Underneath the soil many fungi have huge networks of threads or "mycelia". When conditions are right these produce fruiting bodies above ground, which produce spores. A very easy one to identify is the puffball. These start off as white balls about 3-6cm wide and as they mature and produce spores inside the ball they turn brown. When ready, the slightest knock, even a drop of rain, will cause the spores to "puff" out of a hole in the top of the ball, hence the name. There are many other fungi to be found in the park, some are edible and some can make you seriously ill. Unless you are absolutely sure about your identification you should not pick and eat them – just leave them for others to enjoy finding, or for the many animals that dine on them. In fact, you can quite often see teeth marks left on the mushroom by animals such as voles and mice.

Another important food source for wildlife as we head into autumn is seeds and berries. Many of the wildflowers will be turning to seed now. Whilst it is illegal to pick wild plants it is fine to collect seeds. Why not have a seed collecting day and plant an area of your garden with wildflowers? The butterflies and bees will be grateful.

As most wildlife is preparing for winter by eating or returning to warmer climes, the grey seal is a bit of an anomaly in terms of reproductive biology. Most animals take the opportunity of spring to reproduce – with the prospect of plentiful food supplies over the summer to enable the baby to grow big and strong and to sustain the mothers of mammals who need to produce milk. The



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Victoria Hall, Belhelvie, Aberdeenshire, AB23 8YR Tel: 01358 743053 Mob: 07887 536987 www.victoriagarage-belhelvie.co.uk grey seal, however, for reasons unknown, will mate and pup in autumn. Seals have occasionally hauled up on the sand at Balmedie. It is usually too busy on warm summer days but on a quiet autumn morning you may spot an apparently abandoned grey seal pup. It is probably not abandoned, its mum is probably off having a well deserved rest or feeding herself so she can provide the necessary milk. Please do not approach the seal – if the mother sees or smells you she will abandon her pup. If the seal pup is obviously injured or sick then the advice is to call the SSPCA. If you are concerned about a seal pup but cannot see any injury please leave it for a tidal cycle (12 hours) and if it is still there on your return, phone the SSPCA.

But by far the most important thing happening at Balmedie Country Park in the autumn is our annual litter clean up and survey event – Beachwatch. Every year since 1993 the beach at Balmedie, sometimes all the way to the Don and all the way up to the Ythan, has been cleaned and surveyed by volunteers. The information gathered from these events is passed to the Marine Conservation Society and is vitally important in the fight against marine litter. I am always looking for volunteers so if any of you can spare an hour or two on Sunday 18th September please get in touch. I can be contacted on 01358 751337, sarah.gosden@aberdeenshire.gov.uk. Not only will you be helping to keep Balmedie beach clean and safe for wildlife and visitors, you will be contributing to a global initiative to reduce the amount and impacts of marine litter. Hopefully see some of you then.

BALMEDIE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS GROUP

They say it's never too early to start planning for Christmas and this is certainly true for the Christmas Lights Group. Preparations are already under way for the Christmas Switch-on, which will be held on Saturday 19th November. Further details will be available nearer the time, look out for information on local notice boards or join our facebook group, "Balmedie Christmas Lights Group"

Several fundraising events will be happening over the coming months: coffee mornings, children's discos and second hand book sales.

We are always on the look out for raffle prizes for our fundraisers and further stock of second hand books. If you are able to help, have any suggestions or would like to become involved with the group then please contact: christmasgroup@hotmail.co.uk.

We would love to see some new faces at our meetings which are held every couple of months in the Whitehorse and are very friendly and informal.



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CATCH A FALLING LEAF....

Well surprise, surprise the promised barbeque summer forgot to put in an appearance- yet again!! Never mind with the kids back at school we may yet get an Indian Summer!!

Sadly, the nights are drawing in and thoughts are turning to the autumn. For doctors this means planning for the seasonal 'flu campaign and looking forward to seeing many coughs and colds in addition to the usual workload, what fun!!

However carrying on the theme of looking after yourself, darker nights and cooler damp weather should not stop you getting out and about and enjoying exercising. Wrap up warm and savour the fresh air, there will be some lovely crisp mornings to enjoy as well as the wet and windy days with the leaves blowing when, once back home, your cheeks will be aglow and you'll feel fantastic! So NO EXCUSES keep up with the exercises and don't allow all the hard work to go to waste.

With the poor weather you may feel "what's the point?", and "why bother?" Sorry to nag (we get special training!), but if you are active you not only feel better but tend to BE better as well and not need to see the doctor so often. You will also be likely to be on fewer medications and feel much better about life. So keep going with your 10,000 steps a day!

However, there are a few important points to remind you at this time of year. As I mentioned we will soon be giving the annual 'flu jabs again. So if you are 65 or over, or will be 65 by 31st March 2012 you are eligible for the annual 'flu jab. People under 65 are eligible if they have diabetes, heart disease, a past history of stroke, asthma requiring regular steroid therapy, and conditions that require drugs that suppress the immune system. This list is not exhaustive, but if in doubt please contact your GP surgery to check.

Another, one off jab, is also offered to the over 65s and younger patients



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with illnesses, and this is called the Pneumococcal Vaccine. This protects against a bug call Streptococcus pneumoniae, which is a common cause of chest infections in susceptible patients. This jab is well tolerated and is often given at the same time as the 'flu jab. Please contact your GP surgery for more information if you think that you should have this.

Sadly the NHS does not offer the 'flu jab to most people under 65, unless you work in healthcare, and then your employer will provide it. If you think that you'd like a 'flu jab please contact some of the private providers for it. Most pharmacies offer the 'flu jab and the cost is coming down as there are now a number of providers. Your GP cannot offer this service as the stocks we have are "ring fenced" for the targeted population.

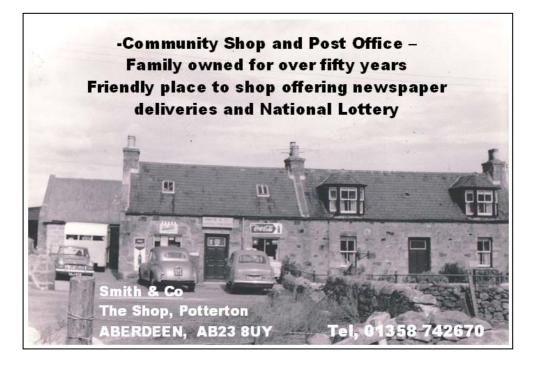
Finally some advice about the common cold, it is NOT cured by antibiotics and most people will not need much more than fluids, paracetamol and time to get better. Please do not rush to the doctor at the first sniff or cough; we will just give the same advice. That been said, if you have a very high temperature, rigors (feeling cold and shivery then very hot and sweaty), chest pains when breathing or coughing, then you SHOULD see your GP. Fortunately, most of us fight off the cold after a few days.

I would also not spend a fortune on the huge number of remedies available. Paracetamol and, if you are on no other medications, a decongestant will ease the unpleasant symptoms, and you need little else, other than time and patience I'm afraid.

So enjoy the autumn, play conkers, and kick fallen leaves and catch one falling off the trees when you're out and about. Keep exercising so you'll be able to indulge a little at Christmas, it's just around the corner..!!!

Dr Alasdair Forbes







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BELHELVIE CHURCH

After the summer break, most of the organisations and groups at Belhelvie Church will be starting up again in September, and our services go back to their usual time of 11am from Sunday 21st August.

We're a congregation who are proud of our past but looking to the future, and offer a warm welcome to all who come to visit with a chance to chat together over tea and coffee after the service. We have provision for children and young people on Sundays and also during the week, we have an active choir and guild, a young woman's group and Bible Study groups as well as one-off courses looking at Christian basics.

Belhelvie Church Social Committee are holding a Craft Fayre in the Forsyth Hall on **Saturday 17th September from 10:00am till 12:30pm**. There are still a few tables available. And a Christmas Coffee Morning on **Saturday November 19th from 10:00am till Noon.** There will be the usual sales tables offering a variety of goods.

There's a good variety of social events organised through the church and towards the end of the year we work hard in our Right Christmas campaign to raise funds for charities – home and away – who really need a present at Christmastime. There are lots of ways to plug in to what we're doing – keep an eye on our Facebook page for more information or speak to the minister, Paul McKeown - 01358 742227 or pmckeown1@btconnect.com if there's anything in particular you would like to know more about.

SWRI

Our WRI meetings recommence on Wed. 14th Sept.2011. Our speaker for the evening is the owner of the Crystal and Gem shop, Ellon.

We meet as usual in the comfortable lounge of Eigie House, Balmedie at 7.30 pm. We welcome any new members. Come along for a chat and a cuppa; our new syllabus is varied and interesting. The lounge is always warm and parking is no problem; access for wheelchairs is by a ramp at the front door. We look forward to seeing you.

Elaine Strachan

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TALL SHIPS - JULY 2011

Shaunnay Walker a pupil at Bridge of Don Academy has been selected to sail the Lerwick to Stavanger leg of the Tall Ships Race this summer. She will form part of a team representing 'Ocean Youth Trust Scotland'. The races are designed to encourage international friendship and provide young people with the opportunity to sail. The races are held annually in European waters. To qualify for the race, 50% of the crew of each ship are aged between 16 and 25.

OCEAN YOUTH TRUST SCOTLAND

is a world leading youth work charity, delivering an annual programme of residential youth work voyages aboard its fleet of sail training vessels. We sail with young people from a wide range of backgrounds throughout Scotland and beyond from 12 to 25 years of age. In most cases these young people will have no previous sailing experience.

We believe that all young people, regardless of circumstance or ability should have the opportunity to realise their true potential in order for them to live healthy, fulfilling lives – making a positive contribution to their community and to society in general. Our voyages are inherently safe, however the unpredictable nature of sail training presents real and honest physical, mental and emotional challenges. It is a genuinely life changing experience with many unique learning experiences.

We operate three sailing ships and take around 1,000 young people to sea each year. Our sail training voyages provide the opportunity for selfdevelopment through the experience of adventure under sail.

Through a combination of shore-based preparation, planning and a residential water-based voyage, we help young people recognise the benefits of change. Whether this change is a natural part of their progression to adulthood or a desire to improve their surroundings and prospects, all participants find new skills and strengths. The Trust is committed to



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providing opportunities for young people regardless of circumstance or ability. Approximately half of the young people sailing with the Trust receive some form of financial assistance with their berth fees.

OYT Scotland is unique in being the only national, voluntary youth work organisation of its kind in Scotland. Around 140 volunteers contribute over 48,000 hours of voluntary work annually towards the objectives of the Trust. OYT Scotland has developed a very strong training and development culture and as a result the principle of lifelong learning is deeply entrenched. The Trust is a recognised RYA (Royal Yachting Association) Teaching Establishment with an excellent reputation and an award winning, world class training programme providing its volunteers and staff with a unique set of hard and soft skills to meet the demands required to deliver high quality youth work at sea.

BALMEDIE FRIENDSHIP GROUP

The Friendship Group meets on Tuesdays 2-4pm every 2 weeks in the lounge of Eigie House, Balmedie. Our new programme begins on 30th August and runs through to the middle of December when we have our annual Christmas party.

Anyone aged 50 years or over from anywhere in the parish is welcome to join us.

See DIARY PAGE for our programme

For more details please contact:

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Mr Vic Deans, President Mrs Margaret Murison, Secretary 01358 743634 01358 742285

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Advance notice that the **Annual Fair Trade sale and Open House** at Bonnyton Farmhouse - (at the end of Bonnyton Road) Pitmedden will be on **the 9th--13th November** Wednesday-Sunday from **10am-10pm**

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BALMEDIE VILLAGE GALA

Despite poor weather conditions, for the second year running, the gala had an excellent turnout with everyone enjoying the range of entertainments available. The gala was opened by the procession from the leisure centre to the school and was led by pipers from Grampian Police and a unit from the Ellon Fire Department. Rev. Paul McKeown made the opening speech and awarded prizes to the 5-a-side winners, painting competition and the fancy dress competition.

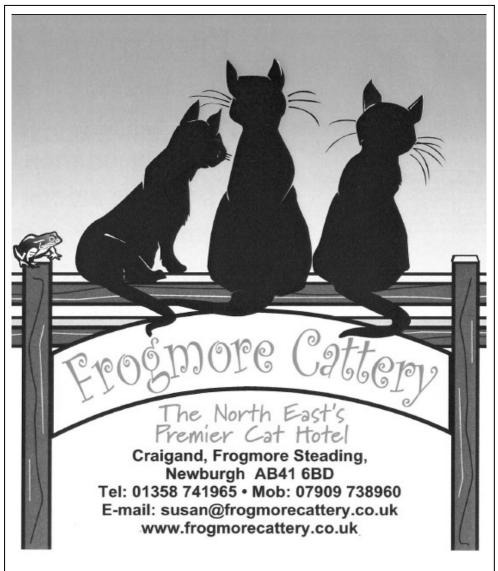
This year we installed a marquee in the grounds to house the barbeque which was run by the Co-op and the bar which was run by the White Horse and both were very well attended and proved very popular. We had a number of outside stalls, which unfortunately had to be abandoned due to the weather but there was plenty of choice of stalls inside the school.

The two main features were the Mr Bug Show and The Puppet Show. These were run to a packed audience and will clearly be a feature of future galas. The Balloon Man also proved to be a great attraction and was like 'The Pied Piper' with children following him. The wide range of types of stalls were well attended and did a brisk business. The tea room in the canteen was again a very popular location where everyone enjoyed a cuppa and some home baking. The gymnasium saw a number of demonstrations throughout the afternoon and everyone supported our raffle by buying tickets for the vast range of prizes.

The Gala is run as a community involvement event and the monies which we get is donated to local deserving causes. Last year we gave contributions to Balmedie House and to Eigie House as well as a sum to the Primary 4,5 & 6 football teams which allowed them to purchase a set of goals as well as other badly needed equipment. A number of other local causes benefited from contributions and we are now starting to consider possible areas which would benefit from this year's money. If you run or know of an organisation which could benefit from a cash boost these please write me an e-mail and let me know and we will consider it along with the other suggestions.

Finally, I would like to thank all the Gala committee who worked tirelessly to make the event a success and to the villagers who once again turned out despite the weather and made such a memorable day.

Wishart McBride Chairman e-mail: wishart@wishart21.orangehome.co.uk



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Susan Barrowman

BETTER BALMEDIE

Since the last issue of Banter, Better Balmedie has been busy in the Polytunnel and around the village. We have planted flower beds, tubs and planters with a mixture of summer bedding plants – some from Aberdeenshire Council and some that we have grown ourselves in the Polytunnel. It was very satisfying to sell plants that we had grown from seed at our Plant Sale and at Balmedie Gala. We have now planted seed ready for our autumn flower beds and have been successful in keeping last year's primroses to be replanted for over-winter colour.

Our team of grass-cutters has been working tirelessly around the village, mowing areas of grass around the planters.

As there is no funding this year for a full-time village orderly, Aberdeenshire Council gave Belhelvie Community Council a small amount to employ a litter-picker over the summer months. BCC handed this on to us and there is now a student working around Balmedie until September, backed up by Better Balmedie members.

With the help of Aberdeen Forward we now have 3 compost bays at the back of the Polytunnel for group use.

The Polytunnel has been full all summer; we had a good strawberry crop, several varieties of vegetables and a large crop of tomatoes ripening now. The Polytunnel gives us a chance to learn about growing all sorts of plants; that is why we always welcome new members to try their hand at growing, help with watering, weeding and enjoy a cuppa and a natter!

Work on the dry-stane wall beside the football courts is progressing; it will feature a seat created by our volunteers.

On Saturday 27th August Better Balmedie will be holding an Open Day at the Polytunnel, to give everyone in the village a chance to see what we are doing. There will be a plant stall and refreshments, so we hope to see lots of Balmedie folk there.

Better Balmedie will soon have its own website, which will be completed by end of August. Have a look on www.betterbalmedie.org

We have a great team of volunteers, but we would love more people to get involved in Better Balmedie, so if you have an interest in gardening or helping to keep our village looking good, please do get in touch! Contact Better Balmedie on 01358 742557 or rosie.inform@lineone.net

Rosie Nicol

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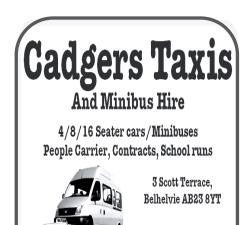
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Opening times – 10am to 4pm on Wednesday to Saturday

In addition to relaxing in front of our wood burning stove with one of our home bakes and freshly made hot drink you will be surrounded by our display of arts and crafts made by talented local people. If you have a hidden talent why not approach us to display your products.

We are staffed entirely by volunteers, some who travel from as far away as Westhill. Working as a volunteer enables people with stressful jobs to be part of a team in a less pressurised environment. We provide a much needed meeting place in the local community for locals and visitors to the area.

We are always on the search for volunteers and no offer of help will be turned down. If you are considering volunteering with us do not hesitate. Contact us either by phone or email. You will be welcomed to the team and supported by an experienced volunteer while you are learning the ropes. Why not check out our website.

www.tartsandcrafts.co.uk

Phone: 01358 742002 <u>Info@tartsandcrafts.co.uk</u>

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THE GIFT OF LIFE

To give a pint of blood and know that it might save a person's life is a rewarding feeling. Imagine how someone who has given over 130 pints would feel. My Dad is that someone. I'm sure he is not alone in having donated over 100 pints but it makes me proud that he is one of them.

From childhood Dad suffered nosebleeds. They would often occur at the most inconvenient times like when he was dressed for a special occasion or driving. My Grandad also had to tolerate nosebleeds so Dad thought this was just something he had inherited.

At the age of 20 he had to have an operation and this experience made him realise the importance of giving blood. As soon as he was able he decided to become a donor and gave his first pint of blood at 21. By coincidence after he became a regular donor the nosebleeds became less frequent and now he can't remember when he last had one.

The actual procedure of donating blood takes approximately 30 minutes. The health of every donor is paramount and they receive a health check before giving. People over the age of 17 can donate and may continue to do so up to the age of 65 if they remain healthy. The body compensates almost immediately although it is suggested for approximately 12 hours after donating stressful activities should be avoided.

In recent years with the worry of contracting Aids and Hep B there has been a drop in the number of donors. You can't get any disease from donating as everything used is packaged and sterile and needles are never re-used. Hospitals hope that people will realise this and that along with the thorough checks that are carried out their health will not be put in jeopardy by the simple procedure of giving blood.

'Not enough time', is the most common reason used for being unable to donate. Most hospitals have at least 5 blood donor sessions per week with the ideal amount of 200 pints being received at each one. Some even operate an appointments system for convenience. There are mobile units that travel to villages and towns giving people every opportunity to donate. The shelf life of donated blood is 35 days and it cannot be stockpiled which is why fresh supplies are needed every week.

It is very easy to take things for granted and just expect blood to be accessible should we need a transfusion following an operation or accident. Fortunately, thanks to the unselfish generosity of our unsung heroes, blood is usually available.

There is no synthetic substitute for blood, nor is there a source other than volunteer donors. Holiday seasons, especially Christmas and New Year are when donations run dangerously low. This is often the time when most blood is needed as car accidents increase during this period. If people are going away for the holidays a simple solution would be to donate before they go. It could be the best Christmas present they have ever given.

The amount of blood required varies depending on its use. The following are a few examples:

•	Bleeding ulcer	3-20 pints
•	Heart By-Pass	5 pints
•	Heart Transplant	8-10 pints
•	Kidney Transplant	2-4 pints

Road accident Anything up to 50 pints

A premature baby could require 20 transfusions of 3 teaspoons of blood for the first 24 hours of its life. Hospitals need to have a good supply of blood standing by for every baby born to give it the best chance of survival.

My Dad has now donated for over 40 years and the only time he was unable to do so was when he was involved in a car accident. He has made a remarkable recovery and is well enough to continue making regular donations. He has acquired many rewards through the years from a bronze badge to a crystal paperweight but his greatest one is the knowledge that his blood will have saved lives.

To most girls their Dad is a hero, I'm glad to say that mine is too.

Sylvia Buchan

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Editor's note on Blood Doning: As from 11th July, 2011 Aberdeen Blood Donor Centre, Foresterhill Road. AB25 2ZW has run a Monday to Friday appointment system.

Call 0845 3017 270 to book your preferred time.

Monday: 8.30am - 3.30pm Thursday 8.30am - 3.30pm Tuesday: 12.30pm - 7.30pm Friday 8.30am - 12.30pm

Wednesday 12.30pm - 7.30pm

Encouraging donors to donate by appointment will allow them to staff both whole blood and platelet sessions appropriately over the extended opening hours and ensure that you are not faced with any unnecessary waiting time. While you are strongly encouraged to book a donating time, 'walk in' donors will be advised of the next available appointment, but this may mean a short wait, if a session is fully booked, or you may be offered an alternative appointment day and time which better suits your schedule.

BELHELVIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

At the time of writing this article we are in the first week of the local trades holiday and no doubt last weekend saw a mass exodus of people flying out to warmer climates. For those still at home, the weather has been its usual mixture of fair to poor and I'm sure that we are once again resigned to an average summer.

Members of the Community Council have had a very busy time with a number of projects that took our time and attention.

Following our AGM we were delighted to be able to welcome a number of new councillors to our ranks which should enable us to tackle the various projects now in the pipeline.

We have been working in conjunction with Formartine Partnership on a "Planning for Real" project, which started off last September with our 'Potterton Project'. We have now carried out local meetings in each village to



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Moss-Side, Parkhill, Dyce, Aberdeen, AB21 7AS further refine your comments and these are currently being prioritised to allow us to draw up our 'To-Do' list.

Another major project, which we undertook was the planting of bedding plants around all the villages. These bedding plants are donated to us by Aberdeenshire Council and we are grateful to them for this opportunity to add colour and beauty to our villages. This year we were severely hampered by bad weather but thankfully we have now completed this and the various beds and tubs are beginning to fill out into masses of colour. We were assisted in this task by a number of members of the public and I would like to thank them for their help. We always welcome community involvement in any of our projects.

Another project which we have achieved is to install benches in Belhelvie & Potterton and we are now waiting to have these placed on site for us.

In June we piloted an exercise in conjunction with Grampian Police whereby the local community liaison vehicle visited each of the villages to encourage better interaction between the public and the police. This was attended by a member of the community council and whilst the public turnout was disappointing, we are in the process of trying to plan another similar event in the Autumn and will be advertising this, once arrangements have been made.

June also saw the Balmedie Gala taking place on a rainy Saturday; however this did not dampen the spirits of the villagers who turned out in great numbers. We took part in the Gala with a stall, and three of our members are on the committee of the Gala. Once a final total has been established we will advise this and also what causes the money has been donated to.

One bit of good local news is that the Easter Hatton Landfill site are now nearing the completion of the removal of 'Tabletop Mountain' and have been busy reducing the height of this to allow it to blend in with the topography of the surrounding land. The final stage of seeding the area is about to take place and we are assured by the operators that we should have grass growing on the site by the end of this year.

Wishart McBride. Secretary



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PARISH THREADS EDGES.... Mary Cane

It was early this summer when pulling nettles, that we uncovered scrap iron, well past its 'any use at all' date. It had long been at ease and off duty on the edge of the garden. A place where the paths are less tended, wheelbarrows are left parked and the chickens scratch. Years come, years go.

It could be said that edges are where things are allowed to be more themselves...less contrived, more relaxed, as at the edge of a photograph, a room, a conversation with a friend or even a road verge at Balmedie, where the Northern Marsh Orchid still thrives.

The parish of Belhelvie is on the edge of the City of Aberdeen. Once separated by half a day's travel, it is now but 10 minutes away, part of the interface between city and countryside. Offering its farm produce and fish has given way to supplying the city with raw materials for roads and buildings. The Parish now also provides space for industrial storage, landfill and recreation.

Utilitarian city edges are generally unloved by the population, but it's possible that these places of essential function can develop a charm of their own if treated with the respect they deserve..... Priorities change, the aesthetic ideal alters. Daniel Defoe described the Lake District as: '..the most barren and frightful landscape I have seen', reflecting the public's taste of that time.

With a garden wedding in the offing and having heard the world price for scrap had risen, we decided to tidy up. We began by prising a 600-gallon oil tank out of its comfortable nettle and leaf-mould nest. Levering it onto rollers we inched it along to the trailer and shoulder-shoved it up the ramp, before carefully driving the few miles down the dual carriageway, to the land of Pink Panda. As one rounds the corner to the scrap yard, the view ahead is a shock. It is as if some metal world has been torn apart to reveal its rusty interior. It's an alternative landscape – piles of discarded metal are hills, valleys, gullies and ridges, bluffs and cliffs. Against the blue sky, the oranges, reds and browns of iron oxide, combine to be a visual delight.

The routine for getting rid of the load is simple, but not to us. As in every workplace, the staff are oblivious to the strangeness of their daily routine. We stop and look around, taking in the unusual surroundings. A workman on the ground nonchalantly crooks a finger to direct us forward. We inch nearer the mountain of scrap and bump onto a metal surface. High up in the crane cab we are spotted, and a newspaper is put down. The big machine focuses, and down swings the grab. We sit in the car and hold our breath, ducking as it clunks down onto our trailer freight. Whoof... with its three prongs it has



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pierced the thin iron of our big tank, locked on, whisked it up into the air and flicked it .. yes flicked it, as if it were a teensy crumb on a finger .. away up onto the pile of rusting junk. From where we are cowering, shocked at the precision just demonstrated, it now looks the size of a sugar cube. We get a 'thumbs up' from inside the crane, and we back away from the danger zone.

As we drive the empty trailer home, we discuss the experience of seeing the machines we use in a new way, not with their polite veneer of glossed enamel and plastic...but as their real selves ...jagged corrodible objects.

Back to tidying the edges at home and we debate what use our plentiful stinging nettles could be in the wider world. We know they are food for caterpillars, and make a passable soup. They can also be a source of fibre, but the market in nettle cloth fashion has yet to take off. Apparently though, in times of austerity, it was retted like linen, and woven into cloth as soft as bunting to wrap a baby in.

CUBS

In June this year, 20 of the Balmedie Cubs joined with 70 other District cubs for a weekend camp at Haddo House.

The cubs spent an enjoyable day constructing their own swords and armour ready for a mock battle to re-enact the 600th Anniversary of the Battle of Harlaw. Fighting was ferocious on both sides but Donald, Lord of the Isles, was once again sent home, to think again. The cubs retired to a welcome campfire, a fully spit roasted hog and refreshments.

The picture shows the cubs in full armour, before combat was joined.



From the beginning of the Autumn term there will be Cub Scout packs meeting on Monday and Tuesday nights (6.30 – 8.00pm) at Potterton Community Centre.



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KEEPING OUR COMMUNITIES SAFE

Formartine Police asked what their local priorities should be and they were told:

Anti-social behaviour particularly vandalism, antisocial driving and underage drinking.

What they have done so far is:

- Reduced vandalism by 30% and increased the detection rate by 34% in 2010/11.
- 20 drivers have been given a warning under Section 126 Anti-social Behaviour Order which means that any repeated antisocial driving offence can lead to seizure of the vehicle being driven. 16 were men in Turriff between 16 and 24.
- They took a leading role in 'Motorfest', the aim of which was to encourage responsible road use by all, but particularly young people.
- An operation in the Turriff area to focus on under-age drinking.

2. Speeding and Parking,

- Over the last three months speed enforcement has taken place in many key sites and 50 traffic offences have been detected in these area.
- Speed surveys are also carried out at the behest of several Community Councils and the result fed back, and action taken when enforcement proved necessary.
- Issues were highlighted at many of our primary schools and with the support of the Community Planning Group leaflets were distributed to parents highlighting the dangers of inappropriate parking these were well received and followed up with positive publicity and support in the local press.

3. Community Focus - that a visible police presence was important.

- Between 20-30 attended the 10 week block of Friday night football for young people in Ellon. This is the second year of this successful programme.
- Attendance at Oldmeldrum Sports and Turriff Show.
- Use of the Community Initiative fund to sponsor Ellon Junior Rugby club strips.
- Police surgeries in the smaller communities.

It is heartening to report that in the recent 'Aberdeenshire Citizens' Panel Survey respondents felt that crime had reduced in their area. Extracted from LPT July

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Look out for the catalogue NEOS 2011 will run from 10 – 18 September

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At After School Club children receive a snack when they arrive and are then free to choose from a range of toys and activities, including football in the gym hall, puzzles and board games in the small hall, DVDs, craft activities and other toys in the community lounge.

At Breakfast Club children may help themselves to toast or cereal, choose to play with their friends in the lounge or play computer games or watch a DVD in the TV room.

Fees Breakfast Club £4.00 After School Club ½ session till 4.30pm £4.00 Full session till 6pm £7.00

For further information or to enquire about spaces contact the club on 07920 295508

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CORGI







3RD BELHELVIE BROWNIES (POTTERTON)

...have been very busy since we last wrote...we've been camping.

Staying with Brownies in tents was a new experience for many of our girls. Our theme was the Royal Wedding. We made wedding cakes, we fixed the jewels back onto the crown, we made tissue paper button- holes, rescued the wedding rings from the magpies, made Royal Wedding wall hangings, designed our own stamps, while still finding time to pitch tents and cook for everyone. As well as having a great time, 11 camp interest badges were gained.

On election night we have to meet elsewhere, so all the Brownies had a great time on the trampolines at Ellon. The leaders were even brave enough to have a wee shot much to the amusement of the Brownies. This was such a hit with all, that we are likely to do again.

The Brownies organised their own fashion show. They thoroughly enjoyed planning their outfits and doing the narration.

For our end of term District celebration we joined other Brownies, Rainbows, Guides and Rangers at Daviot Scout camp site for a campfire at which everyone enjoyed singing their hearts out. A great time had by all.

Katherine Hebron-Scott

1ST BELHELVIE RANGERS

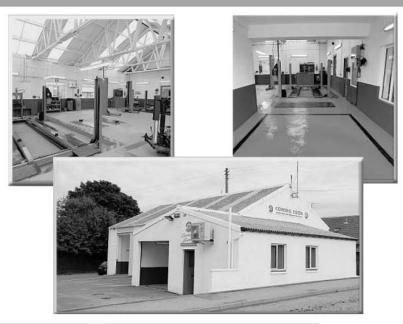
The Rangers have been enjoying their summer break after being busy with exams. This term we will be starting the Duke of Edinburgh Award and hopefully planning an overnight or weekend trip. It will be up to the Rangers whether we camp or stay indoors but since it might be winter when we go, I'm hoping for indoors! If you are a 14 to 26 year old woman and are interested in joining us then drop me an email or give me a phone. We meet fortnightly on Thursdays in Potterton.

I'd like to say **thank you** to the two people who volunteered to audit our accounts; Stephanie and Ann. This was a great help and is really appreciated.

Any other volunteers are always welcome no matter how much time you can give us.

Susan 01224 703335 s.osbeck@rgu.ac.uk

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BELHELVIE WAR MEMORIAL

Erected under the organisation of the Royal British Legion the Belhelvie War Memorial commemorates the dead of two World Wars. The Royal British Legion was formed in 1921 to look after the welfare of veterans and to organise remembrance of those who had died. To create memorials over the whole country was a major task, roughly 60,000 have been erected. The idea was that every casualty was to be remembered on a memorial in his home town or village, but this was not so easily done. Establishing the names was itself a mammoth operation since there were no central records. The army, which covered most of the casualties had over 100 record offices at the start of World War 1, although by 1921 there was a bit of centralisation with all the Highland Regiments being in one record office in Perth. To get an idea of the scale: by the end of World War 2, one and three quarter million Commonwealth casualties were recorded.

Individual records should list the serviceman's next of kin and should be updated, but there are 2 variables here; firstly there was no consistency in the definition of next of kin; and secondly then as now, there were occasions when family relationships meant that the information was unreliable.

The first "Poppy Parade" was held in 1919 and I cannot discover when the Belhelvie memorial was erected but it must have been a moving occasion when those remembered would have been known to most people present. 90 years on, that link is not as strong, so now when our minister reads out the names, the home village is stated which gives the name more meaning. Establishing this was done by looking up the name in the Commonwealth War Graves Commission website (cwgc.org). This lists the name, regiment or service, place of burial, and age. Looking further, you can find details of parents or widow and sometimes a personal message. It was therefore quite sad to find with one or two of our names that only the barest service details were given. Possibly the soldier had run away from home or the next of kin had died or moved away. These names would have been picked up by the local British Legion committee, which had to rely on local memory to ensure that no one was forgotten.

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ACE in the HOLE

Mal Allcroft of Denview Crescent, Potterton (*see picture on cover*) had a memorable 2nd round match during the 4 round Club championship on the Hawkshill Course at Newmachar Golf Club in June. He had a hole in one at the 9th.

Ex RAF man Mal, who started playing golf when he came to Elgin in 1993, tells me that a player hits the ball directly from the tee into the cup with one shot maybe 3 or 4 times a year at Newmachar. Perhaps that is so but holes in one are extremely rare, and while there may be an element of luck involved, skill definitely increases the probability.

We hear of special events where a hole-in-one contest attracts prizes as expensive as a new car, or cash awards sometimes reaching \$4 million. Actuaries at such sponsoring companies have calculated the chance of an average golfer making a hole in one at approximately 12,500 to 1. So I reckoned that Mal must have had some special celebration back at the 19th!? but he replied modestly "It just goes down as a 1 on the card, and I left a few bottles for the boys on the bar"

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Opportunities exist for Adults, both male & female, to train as Beaver Leaders, Scout Leaders and for those who wish to share their hobbies as Skills Instructors.

We currently cannot meet the demand for places at Beaver Scouts by a long way and have got to expand to avoid disappointing many youngsters. Trainees will work alongside established leaders to gain the experience they need to run a Colony. Each Colony will have a minimum of three Leaders. If you think you can commit a regular 90 mins. after school or early evening, get in touch and discuss it some more. If you want to "Try Before you Buy" that's fine too.

Boys & Girls can become Beavers from their 6th to 8th birthdays. There is currently a long waiting list to join Wednesday Beavers.

We currently have a vacancy for a trainee Scout Leader to join our Troop which meets on a Wednesday evening and some weekends. Trainees will work alongside established leaders and will join an existing team. Scouts are for Boys & Girls from age 10 and Explorers from 14.

We also run two Cub Packs meeting on Monday & Tuesday evenings. Cubs are for Boys & Girls aged from 8 to 10 years.

To discuss either Leadership opportunities or to find out more about our Beavers, Cubs, Scouts or Explorers call us on 0774 384 4040 or email balmedie.scouts@btinternet.com

BALMEDIE CRAFT CLUB

The craft club starts back on the 25th August.

We look forward to welcoming back our regular children and some new ones. We will be busy once we start back with lots of seasonal crafts leading up to winter. We've plenty of new ideas and lots of new materials. We want to thank everyone who donated to our chocolate stall at the Gala and thanks to all who came along to support us on the day.

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Little Bouncers	46	Bob Deans Painter & Decorator	30
Jazzercise	26	BPD Builder	26
Murcar Golf Links	2	DG Painter	28
Zumba	44	Nu Look Windows	26
		Prompt Plumbing	20
PETS & THEIR NEEDS		Reid Plumbing	12
Ardene House Vet	8	S Young Decorators	28
Frogmore Cattery	18	Trade Advisor	36
Lady & Tramp Pet Grooming	16		
Positive Paws	20		

QUICK CONTACTS:

Emergencies -Fire, Police, Ambulance, Coastguard	999 or 112
Police - Non Emergency Calls	0845 600 5700
National Gas Emergency Service	0800 111 999
Scottish Water (Water Supplies and Emergencies)	0845 601 8855
Electricity	0800300 999
NHS 24 (Calls from 6pm to 8am)	08454 24 24 24

COUNCIL	
Aberdeenshire (General Enquiries)	0845 608 1207
Cllr Gifford	01651 869493
Cllr Hendry	01358 743091
Cllr Johnston	01651 851198
Cllr Loveday	01651 872591
Balmedie Library	01358 742045
Eigie House	01358 743506
Community Centres - Bookings (Belhelvie and Potterton)	01358 727910
Balmedie Leisure Centre	01358 743725

CHURCHES		
Church of Scotland	(Rev Paul McKeown)	01358 742227
Congregational Church	(Rev. Andy Cowie)	01224 703248
Catholic Church	(Parish Office)	01224 626359

SCHOOLS		
Bridge of Don Academy		01224 707583
Emergency Contact	0870 054 1999	PIN 011020
Balmedie Primary		01358 742474
Emergency Contact	0870 054 4999	PIN 021290
Ellon Academy		01358 720715
Emergency Contact	0870 054 4999	PIN 021040

DOCTORS	
Danestone Medical Practice	01224 833866
Ellon Group Practice	01358 720333
Oldmachar Medical Practice (Jesmond Drive and King St)	0845 337 0510
Scotstown Medical Practice	01224 702149
Udny Surgery	01651 842204

	Dates for your Diary	
September	D D1 1 III C1	
Sat 3	Better Balmedie Visit to Tillypronie House Gardens + tea Meet there	2pm
Sun 4	Guild Dedication Service Belhelvie Church	11am
Sun 11	Invitation Communion Service Belhelvie Church	11am
Tues 13	Friendship Group Talk on bees with honey tasting Eigie House	2pm
Wed 14	WRI Speaker Owner of Crystal & Gem Ellon Eigie House	7.30pm
Sat 17	Belhelvie Church Craft Fayre in the Forsyth Hall	10.00 -12.30
Sun 18	Beachwatch 2011 Annual beach clean-up Meet outside old visitor centre	10am
Mon 19	Belhelvie Community Council Meeting Balmedie School	7.30pm
Wed 28	WRI Whist - all welcome Eigie House	7.30pm
Fri 23	School holiday BoDA	
Mon 26	School holiday BoDA, Balmedie primary	
Tues 27	Friendship Group Beetle Drive Eigie House	2pm
Thurs 29	Better Balmedie Talk the Importance of Bees Balmedie School	7.30pm
October	1	1
Sun 2	Harvest Service Belhelvie Church	11am
Fri 7	End of School term Balmedie Primary, BoDA, Ellon Academy	
Tues 11	Friendship Group Entertainment by Scolty group Eigie House	2pm
Wed 12	WRI meeting Eigie House	7.30pm
Mon 17	Belhelvie Community Council Meeting Venue TBA	7.30pm
Mon 24	School term starts Balmedie Primary, BoDA, Ellon Academy	7.50pm
Tues 25	Friendship Group: Bridges of the River Dee Eigie House	2pm
Wed 26	WRI Whist and Sales table Eigie House	7.30pm
Thurs 27	Better Balmedie Talk – Roses Balmedie School	7.30pm
November	Detter Danniedie Tark – Roses Danniedie School	7.50pm
Tues 8	Friendship Group: Entertainment by Donald Skinner, Eigie House	20.00
Wed 9	WRI Meeting Eige House	2pm
Sun 13	Remembrance Sunday Belhelvie Church	7.30pm 10.50am
		10.50am
Mon 14	In-service day Balmedie Primary, BoDA, Ellon Academy	
Tues 15	In-service day Balmedie Primary, Ellon Academy	10.00
Sat 19	Belhelvie Church Christmas Coffee Morning Forsyth Hall	10.00 -noon
Mon 21	Belhelvie Community Council Meeting Venue TBA	7.30pm
Tues 22	Friendship Group Talk Birds of the Ythan Estuary Eigie House	2pm
Wed 23	WRI Whist Eigie House	7.30pm
Thurs 24	Better Balmedie Talk Intro to Rock Gardening Balmedie School	7.30pm
Sun 27	Christingle Service Belhelvie Church	6.30pm
December		
Sun 4	Service of Lessons and Carols with the Bon Accord Silver Band Belhelvie Church	11am
Tues 6	Friendship Group Talk Historic Ellon Eigie House	2pm
Tues 13	Friendship Group Christmas party White Horse Inn	2pm
Mon 19	Belhelvie Community Council Meeting Venue TBA	7.30pm
Fri 23	Term ends Balmedie Primary, BoDA, Ellon Academy	•
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