

BELHELVIE BANTER

Balmedie: Whitecairns : Belhelvie : Potterton : Blackdog



EDITION 21

DECEMBER 2014

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EDITORIAL

A hard act to follow is Audrey Jeffries who has guided and edited the Banter over the past five years. Yet here I am, for my sins, all set to join the Banter team and do my bit to help keep you informed about all that's going on in our parish. I would like to thank Audrey for the tremendous support she has given during this hand-over period – and also for the hard graft she has put in over the last 20 issues of the Banter.

It has been the realisation of what is currently being achieved by various groups in the area that has prompted me to do my bit. It has been interesting to see community ideas taking off and growing, like little acorns into oak trees. In the process, barriers have been broken down (or worked around) and projects that have seemed impossible at the start have come to fruition – all thanks to the hard work and perseverance of those in Belhelvie parish who are willing to get involved. The articles from various community groups in this edition of the Banter bear testimony to just how much there is going on – always with the promise of exciting things to come.

At this time of year, we are especially grateful to the Balmedie Christmas Lights Group. Their on-going efforts mean that we can enjoy not only the streetlights and decorations in Balmedie, but also the new permanent Christmas tree.

I would like to welcome into our team, **Paul Collier**, who has agreed to be our new Distribution Manager – thank you Paul. We are, however, still very short of distributors. We are particularly looking for volunteers who would be willing to deliver in the Sheils, Orrock, Whitecairns or Balmedie areas. If you would like to do your bit and help us out, please contact Paul on 07825216233 /Jess on 07763314579 or email us at belhelviebanter@live.co.uk.

My thanks go to the Banter Team for their support and for welcoming me on board. We would all like to wish you and yours a Happy Christmas and a wonderful New Year to follow.

Jess Petrie, Editor

Photographs on this edition's cover:

- Red Squirrel by P. Cairns
- Sweetie Wreath by Jonathan Holt



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Tarts and Crafts is hosting lots of exciting events! Quiz nights, event specials, craft fayres ... and with so much more to come, watch this space!

You must be proud! We wouldn't be here without our brilliant volunteers and you, the community! However, we are always looking for volunteers and understand that the greatest gift is time. If you can find even half an hour of your time to donate, the value of that half an hour is priceless. If you are interested in getting some more information about volunteering with us email info@tartsandcrafts.co.uk.

Delicious! We have a new café menu, so pop up for a cuppa and 'affa' fine piece.

Always something new! Last month we started the 'Craft Focus Group', which is hosting its first event "The Magic of Christmas Five Pound Fayre" on Sunday 23rd November 12 noon to 4pm. All handmade craft items for £5 or less, Christmas stocking fillers, teacher gifts, Christmas decorations, Secret Santa gifts and lots more! We are also hosting the first Christmas "Meet and Make" event on Wednesday 3rd December 7pm – 9pm. Get in touch for more information.

Perfect for a good catch up! The cottage is a lovely relaxed venue to host meetings and interest groups. We host several groups and offer fair community rates. If you would like to use the cottage for your event or suggest a group you would be interested in attending at the cottage, get in touch today.

Please 'Like' and 'Share' "Tarts and Crafts" using facebook and have a look at the new website www.tartsandcrafts.co.uk which is being updated.

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year 2015!

Tarts and Crafts Café and Gallery, Eigie Road, Balmedie, Aberdeenshire, AB23 8YF T: 01358 742002 E: info@tartsandcrafts.co.uk Facebook: Tarts and Crafts

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THE RETURN OF THE RED SQUIRREL



SAVING
SCOTLAND'S
RED SQUIRRELS

Staff from the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels (SSRS) project are appealing to readers of the Belhelvie Banter to help with their important work. Over the summer SSRS carried out surveys for red and grey squirrels across a huge area, including around Belhelvie.

Numerous woodlands were surveyed across the wider Aberdeenshire countryside.

Project Officer Stephen Willis said, "We wanted to get a clearer picture of where red squirrels were still to be found. We have a reasonable number of records from the public but we need to survey every wood in any given area."

The survey involves a simple but effective method. Squirrels can be surprisingly elusive, so it's not just as simple as going to look for them. The project places small wooden boxes in the woods. They are filled with tempting treats and have a mesh front so that animals can smell the food inside. The only way in though, is for an animal to lift the lid of the box. As it is only mammals that manage this it is a great way to survey for squirrels. As the squirrel feeds away it brushes its back against a small sticky pad inside the lid. This collects hair samples that can be identified as red squirrel, grey squirrel, pine marten or mouse when viewed under a microscope.

Red squirrels are found throughout the area- we know of them at Grandhome and Parkhill and in woods around Newmachar. They are not alone though, as the non-native grey squirrel is found in many of the same woods. SSRS found grey squirrels in woods near Potterton, but need to know if they are found in other areas as well. Can you help?

As SSRS enters its third phase, our work in Scotland's northeast will continue to focus on targeted and co-ordinated trapping of grey squirrels. Trapping figures were encouraging last year, helped in large part by members of the public hosting a trap in their garden. This trap loan scheme has been a great success for the project. Nearly 300 households across the region have participated at one time or another, and it has made a real difference.

With an increase in our trapping coverage we have seen some extremely encouraging results. At Hazlehead Park on the edge of the City, which used to be home to a huge grey squirrel population, we are seeing signs of the red squirrel population recovering. One of the project's Grey Squirrel Control Officers has even started catching red squirrels in our traps for the very first time. The reds were all released unharmed. Many people who have hosted traps on our behalf have started to see reds back in their gardens now too, often after an absence of many years.

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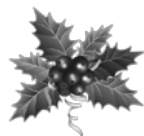
The last date for submission
of text or adverts

for the Spring Edition is
Friday 30th January 2015
email:

belhelviebanter@live.co.uk

We take this opportunity
to wish all our
advertisers, contributors,
distributors and readers

a
MERRY CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR



CAN YOU HELP???? Belhelvie Banter
depends on willing volunteers to deliver it -
only four times per year! We currently need
people to deliver copies to their neighbours
in each of these areas: Whitecairns South •
Rocks Road • Orrock • Sheils • Ardo. If you
could deliver about 20, Please contact us at
belhelviebanter@live.co.uk

We are heavily reliant on the public to report their squirrel sightings of both reds and greys via the website **www.scottishsquirrels.org.uk**. Autumn and winter are a very busy time for red and grey squirrels, so keep your eyes peeled in your garden or when you're walking in the woods.

The Project is keen to improve our coverage in the area. If you would like to join our trap-loan scheme then please feel free to get in touch with Project Officer, Stephen Willis. One of the Saving Scotland's Red Squirrels staff can come and meet and talk you through the process.

We can be reached by email on **swillis@scottishwildlifetrust.org.uk** or by phone on **01224 266526**.



On the 15th October, two community organisations in Balmedie received generous donations from the Co-operative in Balmedie, which they raised at the Summer Fete barbeque held at the Leisure Centre. Our picture shows manageress Arlene Calder presenting sums of £600 to Shona Buchan, Manager of the Leisure Centre and £500 to Cathy Laming of Better Balmedie outside The Co-operative.

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THE JOY OF NO-EL

Unbelievably it is nearly the end of 2014, and it has been a very memorable year. We are still a United Kingdom, well until the next Referendum comes along! The Commonwealth Games and the Ryder Cup were great successes and Scotland is well and truly on the world map.

Closer to home things are a bit more challenging, with the well-documented issues about funding and turmoil at ARI, and now Christmas looms large, what fun!

So why No-el? Ask my better half and she will tell you my love of a bad pun! The word “no” is such a small, easy to say word, but can sometimes be the hardest word to say. Many parents will be coming under pressure to buy their children the latest toy advertised on the TV, huge lists for Santa will be taking shape, and the pressure “to keep up with the Joneses” is huge, but saying no to some things is just as important as saying yes. Indeed it may be more important as it could have significant benefit in later life.

So what am I going on about, and how on earth does this relate to health? I am tempted to say “not sure, I’m making this up as I go along”, but I do think that there is an important relationship here.

As you know I am always nagging about being active, eating and drinking sensibly and assuring you that better health flows from this. I do believe that some of the skills needed to make this easier are learnt in childhood, and this is where an appreciation of the word “no” comes in.

As a parent you know that if you indulge every whim of your little darling, you just end up with, in most cases, a chronically dissatisfied, spoilt child who does not really appreciate what they have. You soon learn that however unpopular it makes you as a mum or dad, that saying “no” is at times very important, as children need to learn limits and boundaries, and this helps them grow up into more responsible adults. So refusing to buy certain toys, not allowing sweets all the time, and keeping visits to the burger bar as a treat can really help develop good habits which will have health dividends later on.

If you are lucky enough to learn the value of no, then you will have less trouble saying “no” to that extra cake or biscuit or to going out for drinks when you know you should be doing study or even “no” to the tempting high sugar, high fat tasty foods on special offer in the supermarket. This means that you are more likely to be able to have more choice and be able to take these things as an occasional treat, but not every day. In the long run you will feel better, are likely to have better health, and be less worried about fitting into your outfit for the office party.



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I must stress that this is not the sole factor involved in what we doctors call “Health Behaviour”, but it is an important one of the many and it does fit my bad pun! The development of ill health is a complex mix of factors from both within a person and without, that is nature and nurture both contribute. However the ability to learn about “no” and the contribution towards the concept of self-control and ability to with stand peer pressure is important. This may help avoid much misery when in middle age you cannot see your toes when you look down and are warned about developing Type 2 Diabetes by your Dr!

So I hope I have tickled your cerebrums and given you a little to mull over with your warm wine this Festive Season and that you enjoy a fantastic Christmas and a prosperous New Year when it comes, and reassure you that you can say “yes” some of the time!

PS remember to book your ‘flu jabs (age 65 and over and younger if in an at risk group) if you haven’t already done so, and if you hit 65 before the end of March you should also get your once off Pneumococcal jab as well! See the article did have a point, NEEDLEless to say!! I should be PUNished.... ok I will stop now!!

Dr A. Forbes

SWEETIE WREATHS FOR SALE

Looking for an unusual gift or decoration this Christmas? Each large wreath is made using 2 and half tubs of Celebration chocolates. All proceeds from the sale of the wreaths will go towards the cost of this year’s Street Lights.



Wreaths cost £25. To place your order, please phone **Anne on 07513 476362 or Fiona on 07740 714821**. Alternatively you can send us a message via Balmedie Christmas Light Group Facebook page. Smaller wreaths will also be available - and a photo of these will be on our Facebook page soon.

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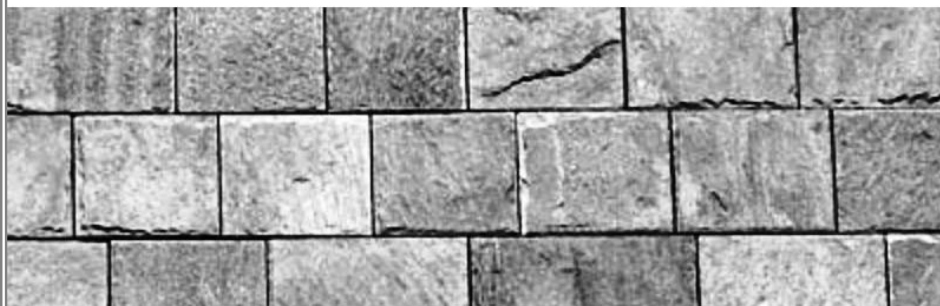
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BETTER BALMEDIE

As the gardening year draws to a close, we have been busying ourselves indoors at the polytunnel, saving plants to overwinter indoors, and generally tidying up and putting things in order for a new season. The planters around the village are still looking good, in their mellow autumn colours, but very soon we will be clearing them out to plant up for the winter with the next delivery of plants kindly donated by the Council. We are, as always, enormously grateful for this continuing resource. As we near Armistice Day on 11th November, we are pleased to have been able, in this particular commemorative year, to have worked on our 'poppy' planter (with its 'Lest we forget' inscription) opposite the Chapelwell development, on Eigie Road.

Litter picks by the Better Balmedie group and friends are ongoing. We organised one around the village on the 1st November. Eighteen people took part and between us, we collected four wheelie bins of litter and household waste in just over an hour. Our village orderly does a great job all year round, but it's good if we can all give her a helping hand. The blue-lidded recycling bins do seem to be making a difference, but there are still many dog poo bags left lying or hanging on bushes. Most folk do dispose responsibly, let's make it 100%.

Upcoming litter picks are usually well advertised; so do keep a lookout for the next one. You would be very welcome and we have all the necessary equipment to keep you clean and hygienic!

On the whole, support from the village has continued to be most heartening, and for that we thank you all. A particularly big thank-you must go this time round to our local Co-operative store. Not only has it co-funded our next bench, for shoppers (and others) to rest their weary limbs, but in addition, our group has recently been the grateful recipient of a £500 donation from the shop. Perhaps you spotted a photo in the local press of the occasion where we, along with the Christmas Lights Group were handed these most appreciated donations? Thank you indeed!

We will continue to meet monthly over the winter, at 7.30p.m. in the library, on the last Thursday of the month. Our AGM took place on 30th October, when activities over the winter were planned – so watch this space! We also meet in the polytunnel on Wednesday and Saturday mornings, from 10 o'clock until midday. Newcomers to the group, and visitors, are always most welcome, so if you would like to find out what we do, feel free to drop by! (The polytunnel is situated behind the Leisure Centre).

Kathleen Laming

For more information visit:

www.betterbalmedie.org or
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or contact Rosie Nicol at rosie.inform@lineone.net / 01358 742557

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BALMEDIE SCHOOL CHRISTMAS FAIR

Balmedie School will be having a Christmas Fair on Saturday 6th December 2014 from 10.00 am to noon.

Come along and share in the Christmas fun! The children will be selling their Christmas craft and there will be tea, coffee and refreshments for all.

Hope to see you there!

Alison Conner
DHT Balmedie School

WORLD'S BIGGEST COFFEE MORNING MACMILLAN CANCER SUPPORT

Can you believe that the grand total of £1965 was raised at the MacMillan Coffee Morning organised by **Mary Watson** at Homestead, Whitecairns on 26th September? This is the fifteenth year that Mary and Hebbie Watson have hosted this event at their home to raise money for MacMillan Cancer Support.

Mary would like to thank her wonderful band of helpers, without whom, she says, it would not all be possible. A big thank you too to everyone who visited to enjoy the wonderful homebakes and cuppas, and so generously donated to help make this annual event such a success.

OLD BELHELVIE and NEWBURGH BOOK

Since the last edition of Banter I have been joined by a co-author! Janet Jones is now writing Newburgh text while I am concentrating on Belhelvie Parish. I have heard from some local residents with information, pictures and anecdotes, but am sure there must be more people out there with local knowledge.

So, I am still on the lookout for any material which could be included in the book. Your memories will help to bring text to life! If you can help in any way, or would like to have a chat about the book do please get in touch. I look forward to hearing from you

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ABERDEEN BALGOWNIE ROTARY CLUB

Most people have heard of a Rotary club, and some of you may have an idea of what it is. You might be right but Rotary is sometimes wrongly stereotyped so I wanted to take the opportunity to tell you about Rotary and, specifically, the club that is closest to you, the Rotary Club of Aberdeen Balgownie.

One of the most common misperceptions is: *“Rotary is a group of old men who meet every week for a meal and a chat but do very little over and above that”*

Our club is currently 30 members and growing, made up of a variety of ages (one of our recent Presidents was 27), genders (nearly 50% of our previous Presidents were female) and races. We represent a variety of professional and personal interests as we share broad common interests, namely ‘to give something back and help others’ and fellowship.

Yes, we meet for a meal (and it’s a good one too....) and yes, we do require you to be a member, but that’s only to ensure that you can commit to a modest dedication of time to the club and what we do.

And we do quite a lot, both on a social level and for good local and international causes:

- Kid’s Out, an annual one-day gala for over 500 Primary School children with special needs.
- Supporting the annual Ryan Nicol Memorial Award for two outstanding Oldmachar Academy pupils.
- Organising and funding “Local Hero” awards for adults who have provided outstanding service to the Bridge of Don community
- Organising the local heat of the annual Rotary Primary School Quiz, this year won by Danestone
- Selecting and funding two outstanding young people from the local secondary schools for a week-long adventure training and leadership camp
- Offering “Mock Interviews” for school leavers in Bridge of Don.
- Running the Rotary Thomas Blake Glover Scholarship, a unique student exchange scheme which we initiated 16 years ago with Rotary clubs in Nagasaki in memory of the 19th century entrepreneur who grew up here
- Support for Mwingi School, Embu, Kenya through visits and contributions of books and sports equipment
- Funding and purchase of Rotary “ShelterBox” to provide essentials for a needy family in the event of an overseas disaster.

Chances are you've bought tickets, or at least seen the annual Bon Accord Centre Car Raffle. We take part in that too, along with other clubs in Aberdeen as well as raising funds for charities of our own choice such as CLAN, ERSKINE, British Heart Foundation, RNLI and Rotary's own Polio Eradication. Last week, we held a coffee morning at Rubislaw Church Centre, selling cakes, bottles and Christmas items. This was a great social event and we raised over £800 for causes selected by the Club.

We meet each week for a meal and have an invited speaker. Within the last few months we have welcomed speakers from Fairtrade, Aberdeen Art gallery, oil companies and Aberdeen Dolphins to name but a few. In addition, our club have theatre trips, race nights we are making final preparations for our Burns night. We also have active curling and golf teams.

I'd imagine at least some of these things might be news to you, so how does it sound? We are always keen to add new members to our club and I can assure you of a warm welcome.

The Rotary Club of Aberdeen Balgownie meet every Thursday at the Mains of Scotstown Inn, Jesmond Square East, Bridge of Don, AB22 8WT at 6.00pm for 6.30pm. Alternatively, why not contact our secretary Graham Donaldson on 01224 744144 or just follow the links on our website, most easily reached just by googling "Aberdeen Balgownie Rotary".

Malcolm Ross PRESIDENT, Aberdeen Balgownie Rotary Club 2014-15

OPPORTUNITY TO TRAIN AS A DRY-STANE DYKER

Belhelvie Community Trust is hoping to get funding to arrange a training course in dry-stane dyking. If we are successful, the course will take place in late March/early April 2015. Trainees will learn all about dry-stane walling while re-building a stretch of broken-down dyke in Balmedie. If you have ever wanted to learn this ancient craft, from one of Scotland's most experienced wallers, then please get in touch. Places are limited so contact me soon!

Rosie Nicol 01358 742557 or rosie.inform@lineone.net

PARISH THREADS

The Future is Exciting

Someone told us they'd heard that years ago an Owl flew into our kitchen and perched above the fireplace. It sounds like a children's story doesn't it? 'The Owl who lived on the Mantle-piece'... Maybe it really happened. It's true there are Owls in the garden here. We have seen young ones hopping around the lawn on summer evenings and they do seem less orientated. I could imagine one dark night the door could have been left open and in the morning when the family got up there he was, blinking over the Rayburn.

I try not to be nostalgic for a time when we knew less about the world. Constantly being reminded of great changes can be wearing. Even having to adapt to small changes is tiresome. It can feel like the very earth is shifting. Take the missing Linda for instance. Linda has been at the Belhelvie quarry office more or less in charge of things as long as we can remember. A reliable part of parish life. This year when we went to fetch our usual ton of sub-base she wasn't there. Gone. There was a man in her chair to and in front of him on the desk was this helpful sign: 'Still not Linda'.

Over in Africa we hear the ancient handshake greeting has been changed to a hand over the heart gesture in an effort to stop the spread of the Ebola virus. How very touching is that act of un-touching.

Our traditional greeting: Hello from 'Halloo!' the old call from the hunting field, only arrived with the telephone (in the thirties here at Ardo). The new technology provoked this startled call that was used to urge on the hounds. I think when the phone rang it felt as if the outside world might have been about to intrude or when calling, your voice was in danger of going off who knew where. I still feel a bit like that with our current telephone and broadband issues. Our signal comes and goes. 'Hello... goodbye...hello'. Video clips of dogs or dolphins on social media sites come in uninvited to gobble up our gigabytes.

Work on the long awaited bypass has begun in the parish. Trees are being felled and land cleared. The sandy south of the parish will be re-landscaped. Men wearing more layers than an onion are directing traffic with their 'Go' and 'Stop' lollypops. Lorries are carrying stone hither and thither. The land is being cut to the bone. It's no use me pursing my lemon lips in my ivory tower though because easier road access to cities is needed; at the very least so someone can come and fix our wi-fi problems. Commerce is important, it's the way forward.

That reminds me of a story about commerce that could have been set here in Belhelvie. Once upon a time three men called Bat, Bramble and Cormorant were in the wool business together. They borrowed money to invest in a ship to export the woollen cloth to... Edinburgh, let's say.

Unfortunately the ship sank...on the sand bank off Balmedie I shouldn't wonder...ruining all three of the businessmen. Which is why, the Bat, to avoid his creditors, only comes out at night, the Cormorant is always diving to salvage the wreck and the Bramble snatches wool wherever it can.

It was a long way to Edinburgh by road then; quicker by a ship (although they had to avoid the sandbanks). Fifty years ago this summer the road bridge over the Forth was opened to make the journey easier. Our neighbour Jeremy from East Cannahars says he watched the bridge construction from the ferry when he travelled to school in Edinburgh. Before 1890 when the rail bridge was opened, Edinburgh would have been a mere folk tale for people living here in Belhelvie. Everyone had to make do with the parish for entertainment... such as misplaced birdlife.

The poet Wallace Stevens said:

"A man and a woman are one.

A man and a woman and a Blackbird are one."

I like that don't you?

Here's to a healthy heart and a wet glass.

Mary Cane

BELHELVIE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

Landfill Tax. Local Environmental Projects

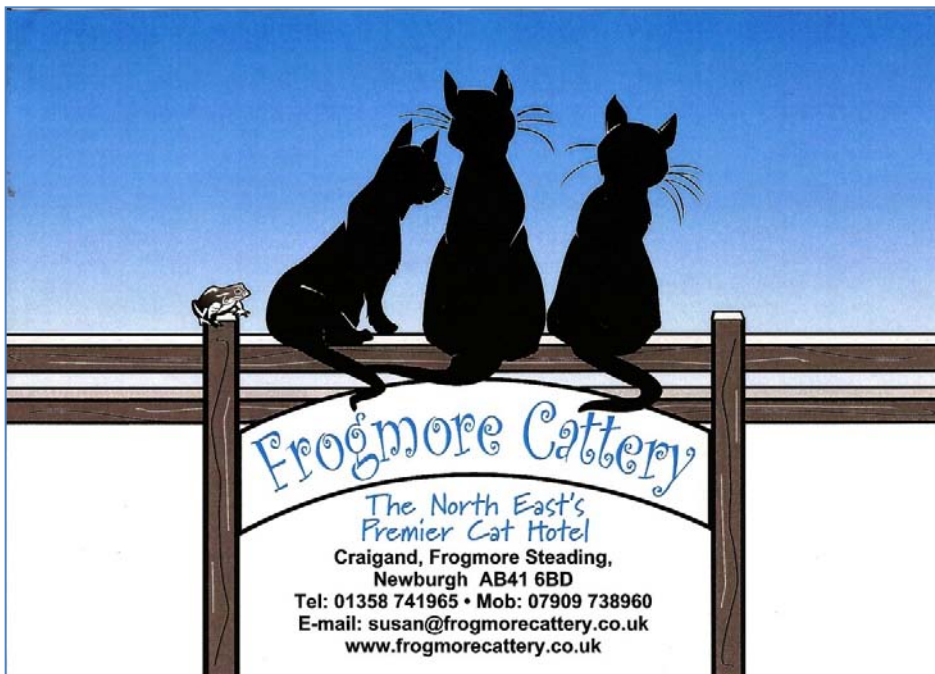
Progress is on-going regarding community projects which will be financed largely through landfill tax payments claimed from the Easter Hatton landfill site. Aberdeenshire Environmental Forum are progressing the registration of applications to Entrust and it is hoped that all viable projects will be registered by the end of November.

There are now 12 projects being considered, and these comprise: 2 seven-a-side football pitches at Balmedie links; the upgrade of Belhelvie football and play area; the upgrade of Potterton football pitch; 600 square metres of wildflowers at Scott Terrace, Belhelvie; 1,900 square metres of wildflowers at Panmure Gardens, Potterton; 350 square metres of wildflowers at Blackdog Football and Leisure Park plus gardening equipment; sowing of wildflowers at Balmedie Magnificent 7 Woods and the repair of the dry stone dyke; the creation of a sensory garden in Balmedie; creation of energy efficiency projects at Balmedie Leisure Centre; creation of car park and path at Tarts & Crafts; installation of finger signposts in Balmedie.

These works entail extensive planning and research and we appreciate the on-going support and co-operation we have received from Aberdeenshire Council (Ellon Area Office) and Taylor Environmental, Easter Hatton Landfill Site.

A further update will be made available in the next issue of 'Belhelvie Banter'.

David Watson, BCC Secretary



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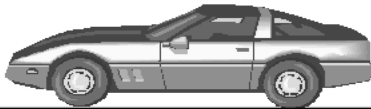
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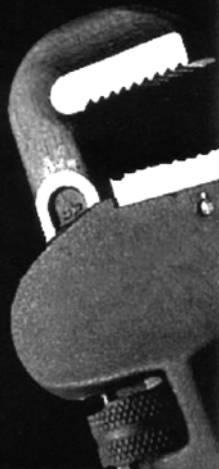
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CHRISTMAS AT BELHELVIE CHURCH

I start this article with a picture of the Best Christmas Present Ever....



At the age of nine, I'd set my heart on a Raleigh Chopper when I saw my friend Alan Scott zooming about on one in the local park. In the era before iphones and X-boxes, a Chopper was the present we were all desperate to have.

I dropped a few hints to my mum, never really thinking that she'd pick up on them for I knew Choppers were dear and I didn't think it'd be a realistic option. But there, leaning against the sofa on

Christmas morning, was a fire-red Raleigh Chopper. I couldn't have been happier. The best present ever!

It was a mild Christmas Day and I was really keen to have a shot of the new bike so my dad took me down to the local park to have a go and while we were there, something happened that I'll never forget.

My dad contracted polio when he was just six, and since then he's had to wear a metal calliper on his right leg to allow him to walk. This was just an unspoken fact of life in our house and he never let it hold him back; but his disability did limit what he was able to do with us – no hillwalking, no football and no cycling.

But not that day! I couldn't quite believe it when he asked me if he could have a turn. He threw his good leg over the bike, unlocked his calliper so it could bend, and set off on his way down the path, wobbling and grinning like a loon. I'd never seen him ride a bike before and I've never seen him do it since. I know now that as a thrown wee boy with polio, he was determined to try and do what the others were doing, even if it meant more spills than thrills, and he stuck at it until he learned how to keep his balance. So he could cycle – I'd just never seen him do it.

When I look back at that wee episode in my life, it stands out to me as a time when my dad entered my world in a way that took me completely by surprise. Why did he do it? I'm guessing it was because he wanted to share my happiness and be a part of it.

I relive that story every Christmas because, for me, it's a vivid, personal picture of what I think the first Christmas was about – God entering our world, becoming one with us, in a way that we could never have imagined. Breaking through all kinds of barriers just to be with us. *That's the God who's at the centre of our Christmas festivities.*

There's a lot going on in our church in the build up to Christmas and we hope to see many of you come along over the next couple of months, but in the meantime can I wish you and yours every blessing for the Season and all the best for 2015.

Paul McKeown (minister)

BELHELVIE CHURCH's RIGHT CHRISTMAS CAMPAIGN

Since 2007 our Right Christmas campaign has raised over £30k to give away to projects working with people in need. We've supported an educational project in Bangladesh, an orphan-rescue project in Kenya and a maternity hospital in Malawi. More locally, we have supported The Cyrenians, Monty's Maggie's Appeal and Street Pastors.

This year we're splitting our efforts between the ARCHIE foundation – supporting sick kids in the North East – and our own church's development fund. We are planning some major work in the new year to both the Forsyth Hall and the Church and are going to have to save hard to make it happen. More about that in 2015!

CHRISTMAS EVENTS AT BELHELVIE CHURCH

Saturday 22nd November

Christmas Fayre in The Forsyth Hall from 10.00 a.m. to 12.00 noon. There will be a great selection of quality, seasonal items for sale plus refreshments and a Prize Draw.

Sunday 30th November

Christingle Service - 6.30pm A lovely service for all ages, part of which is held by candlelight. Don't know what a Christingle is? Come and find out! This service is especially popular with children.

Friday 5th December

Right Christmas Quiz Night – 7.30pm in The Forsyth Hall. This is always a popular event, so book early to avoid disappointment! Cost is £5 adults and £3 for children/concessions. Tickets from Jean McLeish on 01358 742142.

Sunday 7th December

The award-winning Bon Accord Silver Band will lead our carols - 11.00am.

Sunday 21st December

Nativity Service in the Forsyth Hall – 11.00am

Wednesday 24th December (Christmas Eve)

Community Carol Service (Held in Balmedie Leisure Centre) – 4pm. An informal, fun service aimed at folk with younger children.

Watchnight Service – 11.00pm. Half an hour of carols followed by a short, candlelit service to bring in Christmas Day.

Thursday 25th December (Christmas Day)

Christmas Day Service – 11.00am. A short service to welcome Christmas Day. Children are encouraged to bring along a new present to show us!

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Carols by Candlelight:	Sunday December 7th at 3pm
Christmas Vigil Mass:	Wednesday 24th December 8 30pm
Christmas Day Mass:	Thursday 25 th December at 9.30am

BALMEDIE CRAFT CLUB

Balmedie craft club is on a Thursday night 6.30pm – 7.30pm in Balmedie School. All Primary School children are welcome. We have lots of fun creating, making and sometimes baking. We have lots of different themes and the children enjoy making special items at Easter, Mothers' & Fathers' Days and of course Christmas, the favourite time of the year. The cost is £1.50 per night and we also have a tuck shop.

Catherine & Diane 01358 743114

SWRI (RURAL)

The clocks have gone back an hour and now it's dark by 6pm. Even though the weather is still mild, the trees are dropping their leaves, so winter is definitely approaching. Dark winter nights can be lonely, especially if you are on your own, so why not come along to the meetings held by the Scottish Women's Rural Institute (SWRI). You will receive a warm welcome in comfortable surroundings at Eigie House lounge, where we meet.

Our programme for December, January and February is varied with a demonstration, talk and a visit from a local charity representative. We meet the second Wednesday of each month at 7.30pm. The hostess for the evening provides a cuppa and cake/ biscuit. Our meeting dates and events can be found in the Diary Dates in this Banter.

We look forward to seeing you! If you have any transport difficulties please ring 01358 743173.

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CUB SCOUT SILVER AWARD



Matthew Scott, last month, was the latest in our Cub Scout group to receive his Silver Award - the highest award in Cub Scouting.

What a great effort Matthew. Congratulations on such a tremendous achievement!

1st BELHELVIE RANGERS

We've certainly been busy this term. We have been trampolining at the Meadows Centre in Ellon where we helped with 3rd Belhelvie Brownies before getting to try some fun games ourselves. We've also been for a snowboarding lesson at the Aberdeen Snowsports Centre in Garthdee. The Rangers had good fun and managed to stay upright most of the time! Keeping with the winter games theme, we will have been curling at Curl Aberdeen by the time this goes to print.

As Christmas comes, we will be planning a Christmas party and some crafts as well. We haven't got any plans for the New Year yet so why not join us and help us decide? If you are a young woman aged 14 to 26 years old, you could join as a member. Don't worry if you've never been in Guiding or don't know anything about Rangers; we'll make you feel welcome.

Now would also be a great time for anyone 18 years+ who is looking to improve their CV, to join Girlguiding as a volunteer. Volunteering doesn't have to be weekly! How much time you give is really is up to you and it's a great way to make new friends in the area.

Rangers meet fortnightly in Potterton and each meeting costs £3. Please give me a call or drop me an email if you want to come along or if you are interested in joining as a leader. I can be contacted at 01224 703335 or s.osbeck@rgu.ac.uk

Susan Osbeck



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BEACHSIDE COFFEE SHOP

After several years of planning, fundraising & crossing our fingers, Beachside coffee shop finally opened its doors on the 15th May 2014. We are a purpose-built extension to Balmedie Leisure Centre, with seating for up to forty people. In addition to our regular menu packed full of paninis, jacket potatoes, sandwiches & homemade bakes, we cater for children's parties, functions and events.

We are extremely proud to announce that in October 2014 we received our first quality award from Visit Scotland! The award was the Taste Our Best award and we hope it will be the first of many.

Here at Beachside Coffee Shop we are passionate about helping charities and worthy causes. We began with an afternoon Tea for Two event on the 1st August 2014. This raised a total of £168 for Breast Cancer Care. Next, we took part in the World's Biggest Coffee Morning for McMillan Cancer Care, on the 26th September. Thanks to those who donated cakes for this event at which we raised an impressive £259.83.

Before we knew it, Halloween was here! We dropped the cobwebs, invited the witches and carved the pumpkins for our Halloween Trick or Treat event. Tickets sold out in no time. Everyone had a ball - The Coffee Shop was alive with spooky games and everyone enjoyed hot chocolate and cookies.

On the 14th November 2014, we held a Cupcake and Onesie Party for Children in Need. Children were invited to decorate their own cupcakes, while wearing their favourite 'onesie'.

With Christmas fast approaching, we recommend that you pencil in to your diary the 21st December. From 11.00am to 3.00pm Santa will be here at Beachside Coffee Shop, making this an event not to be missed! For every ticket sold, we will donate £1 to Cash for Kids charity (via North Sound 1).

Beachside Coffee Shop will be supporting the Balmedie Leisure Centre fundraising event: An Audience with Maureen Smith, on the 20th November 2014 – Tickets are still available.

On a final note we would like to say a HUGE THANK YOU to everyone for all the support we have received since we opened our doors for the first time. We hope to see you all again soon.

Tracy & The Beachside Coffee Shop Team

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BELHELVIE COMMUNITY TRUST

The Belhelvie Community Trust (BCT) has now been in existence for 11 months. It was set up to serve the parish of Belhelvie - Belhelvie, Potterton, Balmedie, Whitecairns and Blackdog and all other dwellings in between the villages. Its aim is to support existing projects, clubs and organisations and to develop new projects as identified by residents of the parish.

Although still very much in its infancy, BCT is starting to make headway with some projects:

- Land has now been identified for the creation of a Sensory Garden in Balmedie
- Plans are progressing to re-open the former Rangers' hut in Balmedie Country Park
- A little living Christmas tree has been planted outside Balmedie Leisure Centre. If looked after, it will grow into a permanent feature for years to come. If you live elsewhere in Belhelvie Parish and would like to help install a living tree in your village, please get in touch.
- Funding is being sought to improve the garden area surrounding Tarts and Crafts

BCT is now looking for members. By signing up as a member you don't have to do lots of work or attend lots of meetings, you will simply be confirming your support for the work that the Trust is doing. The BCT membership form can be accessed at: belhelviecommunitytrust.wordpress.com

If you have an ambition or dream for improving your locality, why not bring it to a meeting or to our attention. Even little things can make a difference and can be best achieved by people working together.

Meetings are held at Tarts and Crafts on the 4th Monday of each month.

Audrey Jeffries 07814 254 301

Rosie Nicol 01358 742557

BALMEDIE LIBRARY NEWS

The first Wednesday of each month (term time only), we have a Rhymetime session for under-fives. You can read more about this in the following article by Diana Peers, our Rhymetime Leader. Please note that the sessions now run from 2.00pm to 2.30pm. Do come along and join in the fun!

Our very popular Knit & Natter Group meets every Thursday morning from 10.30 to 12.30. They have been very busy knitting for the Special Nursery and the Seamen's Mission. So, if you enjoy knitting or would like to learn, come along and join this very friendly group. You will receive a great welcome, along with a good blether over a cup of tea/ coffee and the usual 'fine piece'.

We would like to say a big thank you to all the children who took part in this year's Summer Reading Challenge - you certainly kept us all busy.

The Challenge was a great success. Well done to all our competition winners - we have your stories on display in the Library. We were really impressed with all the entries to the story competition and thoroughly enjoyed reading them - definitely some budding future authors there! Carry on writing lots and of course reading too.

Why not step into your local Library and find a whole new world where our helpful staff will assist you to get the most out of your library experience. We look forward to seeing you.

Have a lovely Christmas and a very happy 2015

Balmedie Library is open:

Monday: 2.30 – 4.30pm 5.30 - 7.30pm

Wednesday: 2.30 – 4.30pm

Thursday: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Saturday: 10.00am – 1.00pm

Closed: Tuesdays, Fridays and Sundays.

Maureen Muirden 01358 742045
balmedie.library@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

For more info on Aberdeenshire Libraries: www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries.

RHYMETIME at BALMEDIE LIBRARY

On the first Wednesday of each month, from 2.00 to 2.30pm, under 5s and their parents and carers have lots of fun joining in with rhymes, songs, short stories and going on "fun-filled adventures" in Balmedie Library. All different themes are covered, from Farm, Jungle, Circus, Fairytales, Nursery Rhymes, Holidays and many more. It's supported by Surestart and encourages families to get involved with all the fun.

On Wed 1st October, we met Incy Wincy Spider and all his spider friends, Miss Muffet, and the pussies in the well. All the children were very good at moving the spiders up and down the "spouts" (rainmakers) and bringing out the sunshine with their bells. Not one youngster was scared of the spiders, unlike Miss Muffet. However Miss Muffet did help to pull the pussies out of the well. On November 5th it was a Magical, Sparkly Theme with lots of bright colours.

Rhymetime is suitable for babies, with small percussion instruments, toys and props and lots for them to see and listen to, and for toddlers and children up to age 5 with more percussion, props and fun ways to interact. It's a great confidence-builder and a wonderful opportunity to make more friends. There is also a fantastic selection of books and it's an ideal way to introduce your child to the library and the joy of reading.

We look forward to seeing you all at Rhymetimes. Next date is Wednesday the 3rd December at 2.00 - 2.30pm.

Diana Peers

Once upon a tune - Rhymetime Leader

www.onceuponatune.co.uk

BALMEDIE FRIENDSHIP GROUP

This group is open to all residents over the age of 50 who reside in the parish of Belhelvie. We meet every second Tuesday in the lounge of Eigie House lounge from 2-4pm and have an interesting mix of musical entertainment and talks. There is a small charge to cover refreshments and a raffle. New members are always welcome. The programme until March is:

2 December	Inverurie Rotary Glee Club
16 December	Christmas Party
13 January	Joe Cowan Entertains
27 January	Mike Stephen - 'A passage to Corfu'
10 February	Ray Mears Entertains
24 February	Talk by Ian Bell on The Tapestry of Scotland (part 2)
3 March	Golden Girls
17 March	to be advised

For any further information please contact:

Margaret Murison - Secretary 01358 742285

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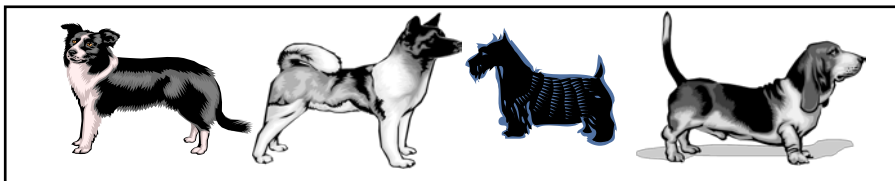
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BELHELVIE NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH

The Belhelvie Neighbourhood Watch is still running. There is not much to report in this issue and as no-one has requested a meeting, updating here in The Banter is ideal.

There has been one incident reported in the papers with Balmedie Quarry having a break in and tools going missing.

The darker nights are with us now, with winter fast approaching. Please remember to lock doors behind you in houses, garages and sheds. The police do say that the main aim should be to make your house less desirable to a would-be thief. Why not look online for a dummy CCTV camera?

Do remember to contact the police on 101 with information on anything seen regarding break-ins, or 999 if it's actually happening.

Remember that you can join the Neighbourhood Watch scheme online via www.neighbourhoodwatchscotland.com - join there and then search for the Belhelvie section. I still have plenty of stickers you can display to show you are part of the scheme. If you need any, drop me an email on paulcollier6@me.com and I'll send some to you.

OPPORTUNITY TO TRAIN AS A DRY-STANE DYKER

Belhelvie Community Trust is hoping to get funding to arrange a training course in dry-stane dyking. If we are successful, the course will take place in late March/early April 2015. Trainees will learn all about dry-stane walling while re-building a stretch of broken-down dyke in Balmedie. If you have ever wanted to learn this ancient craft, from one of Scotland's most experienced wallers, then please get in touch. Places are limited so contact me soon!

Rosie Nicol 01358 742557 or rosie.inform@lineone.net

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*IFC Inside Front Cover

*IBC Inside Back Cover

***Copy date for Spring Edition: Friday 30th January 2015

e mail: belhelviebanter@live.co.uk

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	Dates for your Diary		
Sun 30 Nov	Christingle Service	Belhelvie Church	6.30pm
December			
Tues 2	Friendship Group Rotary Glee Club	Eigie House	2.00pm
Wed 3	Rhyme Time	Balmedie Library	2 - 2.30pm
Fri 5	Right Christmas Quiz Night	Forsyth Hall	7.30pm
Sat 6	Christmas Fair	Balmedie Primary School	10 - noon
Sun 7	Bon Accord Silver Band	Belhelvie Church	11.00am
Sun 7	Carols by Candlelight	St Columba's RC Church, BoD	3pm
Wed 10	Dickie's Pharmacy Christmas Shopping Night		3.30 - 7.30
Wed 10	SWRI	Eigie House	7.30pm
Mon 15	Belhelvie Community Council	Balmedie School	7.30pm
Tues 16	Friendship Group Christmas Party	Eigie House	2.00pm
Fri 19	Last day of School term	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon	
Sun 21	Santa Visit	Beachside Coffee Shop	11am–3pm
Sun21	Nativity Service	Forsyth Hall	11.00am
Wed 24	Community Carol Service	Balmedie Leisure Centre	4.00pm
Wed 24	Christmas Vigil Mass	St Columba's RC Church, BoD	8.30pm
Wed 24	Watchnight Service	Belhelvie Church	11.00pm
Thurs 25	Christmas Mass	St Columba's RC Church, BoD	9.30am
Thurs 25	Christmas Day Service	Belhelvie Church	11.00am
January	2015		
Mon 5	School resumes	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon	
Tues 13	Friendship Group Joe Cowan Entertains	Eigie House	2.00pm
Wed 14	SWRI	Eigie House	7.30pm
Mon 19	Belhelvie Community Council	Balmedie School	7.30pm
Mon 26	Belhelvie Community Trust	Tarts & Crafts	
Tues27	Friendship Group Mike Stephen Talk	Eigie House	2.00pm
Wed 28	SWRI Whist	Eigie House	7.30pm
Thurs 30	Better Balmedie	Library	7.30pm
February			
Wed 4	Rhyme Time	Balmedie Library	2 – 2.30pm
Tues 10	Friendship Group Ray Mears Entertains	Eigie House	2.00pm
Wed 11	SWRI	Eigie House	7.30pm
Fri 13	Mid-term holiday	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon	
Mon 16	Mid-term holiday	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon	
Mon 16	Belhelvie Community Council	Belhelvie Comm Centre	7.30pm
Tue 17	In-service Day	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon	
Wed 18	In service day	Balmedie, BoDA, Ellon	
Mon 23	Belhelvie Community trust	Tart & Crafts	
Tues 24	Friendship Group Talk by Ian Bell	Eigie House	2.00pm
Wed 25	SWRI Whist	Eigie House	7.30pm
Thurs 27	Better Balmedie	Library	7.30pm
March			
Tues 3	Friendship Group Golden Girls	Eigie House	2.00pm
Wed 4	Rhyme Time	Balmedie Library	2 – 2.30pm