

BELHELVIE BANTER

Balmedie: Whitecairns : Belhelvie : Potterton : Blackdog



EDITION 33

DECEMBER 2017

Picture by Aimee Beattie P4

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EDITORIAL

Well it's here. Winter. Not one of our top-rated seasons for many reasons. My family, however, seem to think it's the most exciting season. Nightmare weather, colds, flus and icy roads all seem to pale when compared with the delights of Halloween, Fireworks, sledging, Pantomimes,

Nativities, Christmas, New Year and in our case three birthdays! So, I hope that you too are managing to concentrate on the positives of the winter season and looking forward to all it brings.

We had a huge positive response to our art competition for P4-7 Balmedie School pupils who were set the task of designing the Banter cover for this edition. Choosing a winning design from all the excellent entries seemed like an impossible task, but we eventually managed to come to a decision. The winning entry, which you can see on the cover, is by P4E pupil, Aimee, whom I look forward to meeting when I pop into Balmedie School with her prize. Well done Aimee, your cover design will be seen in over two thousand homes in the Parish! Some of the runner-up designs can be seen on page. What a wonderful effort by the artists at Balmedie School!

Our aim is to bring you news from across Belhelvie Parish, so, if you would like to contribute to Banter, please get in touch. We are delighted to have a new volunteer as part of our Team, and would welcome anyone else out there who would be willing to help us produce Banter. If you would just like to meet the Team and see what we're about, do come along to the Belhelvie Banter AGM – it's 7pm at The White Horse on Wednesday November 22nd. All welcome!

We would be nowhere without the volunteers who help to distribute Banter for us four times a year. Led by our Distribution Manager, Paul Collier, they are a formidable team, out in all weathers on every wee country road. Thank you to you all. We are also indebted to our advertisers who support us by regularly advertising with us, our contributors who willingly share their events and thoughts – and not least to you, our readers, who offer us positive feedback and make the hard work and sleepless nights all worthwhile.

A very big thank you goes from me to Alan, Shuna, Paul, David and Philip, without whose wonderful support, I'd be bleary-eyed and Banter-less.

Our best wishes to everyone in the parish for a wonderful time over the festive season – and a great start to 2018. See you in the Spring.

Jess Petrie, Editor

BELHELVIE BANTER AGM
Wednesday 22nd November 2017
7.30pm in the White Horse
All Welcome!



OUR NEW RECRUIT

We are delighted to welcome [Philip McHardy](#) our newest volunteer to join the Banter Team. Philip is a mechanical engineer by trade, but he also runs his own website design company (Red Doodle). He has kindly agreed to manage the Belhelvie Banter website and let it sing and dance. We are very grateful to him for his skills, his enthusiasm and his youth!

Philip has lived in Balmedie for fifteen years, and says he loves it here. His favourite pursuit (apart from working on Banter!) is walking Balmedie Beach or around Belhelvie countryside with his dog, Fergus, who, as you can see, enjoys meeting the locals. We are very grateful for your support Philip – thank you!



BANTER DATES 2018

BANTER DATES 2018				
Edition:	SPRING (Ed 34)	SUMMER (Ed 35)	AUTUMN (Ed 36)	WINTER (Ed 37)
Deadline for articles & adverts	Friday 19th Jan	Friday 20th April	Friday 20th July	Friday 19th Oct
Delivery begins	Saturday 17th Feb	Saturday 19th May	Saturday 18th Aug	Saturday 17th Nov

INDEX OF ADVERTISERS			
GARAGES & TRANSPORT	Page	RETAIL (continued)	Page
Cadger's Garage, Belhelvie	32	Pauline Wood Antiques	8
Cadger's Taxis	8	Peterhead Fish Company	32
Moir's Taxis	42	Potterton Shop	12
Newburgh Motors	42	Shades of Blue and Grey	22
GARDEN SERVICES		The Store	36
Newmachar Tree Surgery	34	SERVICES	
Parkhill Garden Centre	*IBC	Aberness	9
HEALTH & BEAUTY		AWJ Caravan Services	42
1st Class Foot Care	43	Designability Scotland Ltd	56
Dickies Pharmacy	60	Flowerpots Childcare	30
D. Leal Chiropodist	6	Leigh Alexandra Soft Furnishing	16
Eliz Ann Ross Physiotherapist	43	Links Nursery	30
Brookes Carter Clinic	28	Lokal Loksmith	42
GLAM	43	Mark's Valeting	58
Hairshack	12	McKenzie Print	26
Kay's Nutritional Healing	9	MSD Design Ltd	14
Kingseat Dental Care	50	Pets Crematorium	6
LEISURE		Red Doodle	53
Cock & Bull	36	Robert Lamb Architect	34
Highland Hustle	22	Village Childcare	6
Inverurie Panto	*BC	TRADES	
Murcar Golf Club	28	Anderson Joinery	42
Newburgh Golf Club	16	Carle's Sheds	16
Whitehorse Inn	*IFC	Don Tarmacadam	31
PETS & THEIR NEEDS		George Shearer – Wee Jobs	22
Animal Nanny	43	Gough Decorators	25
Lady & Tramp Pet Grooming	26	Jason Gordon Decorating	29
Positive Paws	8	K F Watson Electrical	18
RETAIL		MacLeod Joinery	6
Beachside Coffee Shop	44	Michael Duncan, Builder	46
Bridgefoot Organic Farm	9	North East Oil & Gas Services	56
Flowers by Tx	44	Reid Plumbing & Heating	29
Granite Grill	17	Steven Young, Painter	58
*FC Inside Front Cover *IBC Inside Back Cover *BC Back Cover ***Copy deadline for Spring Edition: Friday 19th January2018 email: belhelviebanter@live.co.uk			

BELHELVIE COMMUNITY TRUST

The role of Belhelvie Community Trust is to support and create projects that people will enjoy throughout the parish of Belhelvie. In other words, helping to make things happen. If you would like to join the Trust, membership is free and meetings take place on 4th Monday of each month at Whitehorse Hotel.

The Sand Bothy

In September, The Sand Bothy, which is run by Belhelvie Community Trust, was awarded 3 stars by Visit Scotland in recognition of our exhibition about Balmedie Beach and Country Park. They were full of praise for the photography, display and information. We are very proud to get this recognition, as only 2 years ago the building was empty and derelict and it is now in use again, with its kiosk, workspace and informative displays. Over the winter we will be developing our information, creating leaflets about several features of the beach.



The kiosk has been open at weekends over the summer and the response from the public has been very favourable. At the end of October the kiosk will close for the winter (unless we get a sudden heat wave), but the Bothy itself is bookable at any time for workshops, meetings, classes etc. We will soon be sitting down to discuss our plans for next year: we aim to have a programme of classes and workshops relevant to the Beach and Country Park. This year we had visits from 4 schools in June. Learning from that experience, we will be inviting more schools next summer.

The Sand Bothy kiosk will close over the winter, from the end of October, but the building will still be available for groups or clubs that may need a meeting place. The Sand Bothy could not operate without its band of volunteers and Belhelvie Community Trust is very grateful for all the hours of work and enthusiasm they contribute. If you would like to join us, you will be very welcome, whatever your skills, from painting to IT, from craft to finance, from marketing to running a group. If you have any ideas about classes and workshops and groups you would like to see at The Sand Bothy, please get in touch. Find us on Facebook or on info@thesandbothy.co.uk Santa will be at The Sand Bothy on Sunday 10th December.



A Look Inside the Sand Bothy – photograph by local photographer, Neil Donald

Balmedie Beach Wheelchairs

Volunteers from Belhelvie Community Trust and The Sand Bothy are working with Aberdeenshire Council on an exciting project that will make our wonderful beach accessible to more people. The plan is to raise funds to buy all-terrain wheelchairs and a hoist, and perhaps even create accessible toilets for people with complex disabilities. Aberdeenshire Council has already agreed to us using one of the big sheds on the way to the beach. Discussions and planning will continue over the winter and we will have more news for you in the next edition of Belhelvie Banter. If you are interested in helping with fundraising, or in any other way, please get in touch.

Balmedie Sensory Garden

Plans for a sensory garden in The Magnificent Sevens Woods have been in the pipeline for a long time, and the future unsure. However, staff from Aberdeenshire Council have now met with members of both Belhelvie Community Council and Belhelvie Community Trust to discuss plans for the woods and funding to create a garden. We will have more news for you in the next edition of Belhelvie Banter. If you could help develop the garden, please get in touch.

Volunteers Wanted



Belhelvie Community Trust is looking for a new Minutes Secretary to take over from our present minutes secretary from January onwards. Laura Lafferty has held the post for the past two years and has done a great job of recording our meetings and keeping us right. Many thanks to Laura, and best wishes for the future. If you are good at note taking and prepared to give a little time each month, we would love to hear from you.

Health walks take place every Thursday morning, starting at 10 at Balmedie Library. They were started throughout Aberdeenshire and beyond by Paths for All. Health Walks are aimed at people who have experienced illness, or have on-going health problems or would just like to get out and about for a short walk. To be successful, the walks need leaders to organise and lead the walks. Free training is given by Paths for All. For our scheme to be successful we need more leaders...if you could help by spending just a day training and an hour or two a week...please get in touch.

Rosie Nicol

Secretary Belhelvie Community Trust 01358742557 rosie.inform@lineone.net

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BALMEDIE SCHOOL

*Teacher **Steven Milne** lets us know what is happening at Balmedie School.*

Well the nights are drawing in and Christmas is fast approaching – it's that lovely relaxing time of year! Let me take you back several months, to when the new school year began. It's always an exciting time, especially for the new primary one children. Routines are quickly established and friendships forged.

A significant date at the beginning of term one, was when we welcomed back the M & M Theatrical Production Team. In 2016 they performed 'Alice In Wonderland', but this year it was 'The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe'. (When I wrote M & M as a daily assignment, the class thought they were getting sweets! - No such luck!).

The four-person team of Jo, Gill, Dan and Rob had been performing C.S. Lewis' famous novel around the U.K. for six months and it was super. The costume/scenery changes were polished and slick. All the P1 – P7 children were engrossed from the moment the play opened with the sound of an air raid siren wailing out its warning. Audience participation featured, but the play was faithful to the original story and the climactic sword fight was so authentic that the children were mesmerised.



After the hour-long production, the four actors participated in a question/answer session with the children. During this exchange, Jo confided that she'd recently broken a finger during the fight scene when a sword had been swung a bit too vigorously! The show had gone on regardless. We've already booked M & M Production for next year's offering – 'The Secret Garden'.

From L to R: Dan, Gill, Rob and Jo.

Each 'house' at Balmedie School works hard to be the best they can and gain points for their team. The competition is fierce so we have to say a big Well Done to Keir, who have the first term's house challenge.

Our P4 to P7 pupils were delighted to take part in Banter's competition to design the front cover of this winter edition. We hope you like the winning entry!

We at Balmedie Primary, hope everyone has a fantastic Christmas period and a wonderful 2018 when it arrives.

Steven Milne

A wee note from the Banter Team - The work involved in producing The Belhelvie Banter is all done voluntarily. At the time of going to press, the information within this edition is understood to be correct, but no responsibility shall be attributed to the Banter Team for any errors. We do our best! Thanks to everyone for supporting us.



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Belhelvie Christmas Tree



of Remembrance

Last year, the festive season saw the first 'Belhelvie Christmas Tree of Remembrance' in memory of those who have passed away, are living abroad, or those who could not be around for the festive period. The community decorated a tree with baubles and joined in with some family carol singing led by the Belhelvie Church Choir. Residents came together to sing, share stories, enjoy warm mince pies and non-alcoholic mulled wine. It was a joyous event and the feedback was that people wanted to do it again.

This year we would like to develop this initiative further by planting a 'living' Christmas tree in the middle of the village opposite the T-junction with a fixed power supply. This will enable the project to become an annual tradition with the tree lit up throughout the festive season. Planning ahead, we will be able to plant the 'living' Christmas tree but don't think we will be able to connect to the power supply in time for this festive season - however like last year, we will have the tree lit for the carol singing event.

Fundraising

A small group of volunteers have started fundraising with a **target of £2000**. Most of the money raised will pay for the fixed power supply however there are initial construction costs and of course the fairy lights! Could you help with a donation - it all adds up!

We have set up an **on-line fundraising page** - see link below. You can also hand-deliver your donation (and collect a bauble to decorate) from Cadgers garage during their opening hours Monday to Friday 8am until 6pm anytime from now until 5th January 2018. Cadgers Garage Telephone 01358 742284.

<https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/behelviechristmastree>

Decorating the Tree

This year we are suggesting the community decorate the tree during daylight hours over the weekend of Saturday 16th December and Sunday 17th December - however if you wish to do this earlier you are most welcome.

Again, this year we will have some remembrance baubles available for you to collect and decorate yourself - these can be collected from Cadgers garage. Otherwise you are very welcome to make your own bauble (or you can purchase baubles from many of our local trusted retailers 😊!!)

Christmas Carol Singing

The Christmas Carol Singing will be held on **Sunday 17th December at 7pm**, around the Christmas Tree (opposite T-Junction in Belhelvie village). The singing will be led by the Belhelvie Church Choir and we will share warm mulled wine (non-alcoholic) and mince pies.

Get in Touch

A special request for anyone who would be able to help plant the tree when it arrives – please get in touch 😊 If you would like to help with this project or have some other ideas for the village of Belhelvie please get in touch with either:

Raymond: raymond.m412@gmail.com **mobile: 07526601925** **or**

Annie: annie.grant@hotmail.co.uk **mobile: 07848 805992.**

We wish to thank everyone who is helping make this project a reality!

BELHELVIE BOWLING CLUB

The Bowling Club is now closed over the Winter months but will re-open in the Spring when new members will be most welcome.



If you would like to know more, contact the secretary Marion Donald on 07729 817718 or email marion.donald@btinternet.com. You can also get information on our website: www.belhelviebowlingclub.com.

Marion Donald

HAIR Shack



Opening Hours:

Monday	Closed
Tuesday	9.30am - 7.30pm
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MASSAGING BABY

Maggie continues her series for young Mums.



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average improvement in weight gain was 47%.

The long term effects included healthier children with better cognitive skills and better self-esteem than their unmassaged counterparts. Tiffany Field had organised grand-parent volunteers to massage the premature babies. Not only did the babies benefit, but the volunteers (who also received massage) had an overall improvement in health.

If premature babies can have such great benefit, why not massage all babies?

Babies can suffer from stress, tension and anxiety as do children, teenagers and adults. The balance between stress and relaxation is so important for all of us to regain or maintain health.

Some stress is necessary for that 'get up and go' so, baby's body produces stress hormones to help prepare for birth. This gives baby the necessary energy and also sets up baby's brain ready for learning and memory afterwards.

Just-born-baby now needs a message to reduce those stress hormones! Touch is the first signal to baby that he or she is safe (*and it is ok to start learning*) followed by seeing mum and hearing her heartbeat. Babies who miss these cues can have long term problems due to the extended period of time they are under stress. It has been demonstrated in many studies in different societies, that babies who are nurtured are less violent and aggressive. Touch helps with bonding.

Baby will love having all massage e.g. back and tummy. Massaging baby feet will help relaxation and relieve colic. Massaging baby toes can help baby sleep....

Turning down anyone's stress setting is beneficial and a more relaxed baby is a healthy baby!

Maggie Brooks-Carter



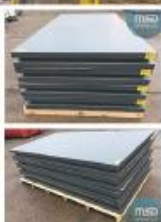
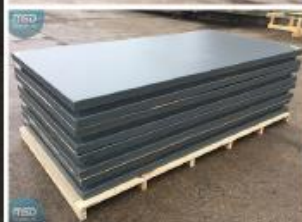
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In the last issue of Banter we reported on a Lego Club in Ellon and suggested it might be a good idea to have this in our community... and that's just what's happened!

Thanks to volunteers, Balmedie Lego Club now takes place at the Beachside Coffee Shop every Monday from 3.30 to 5.00pm.



It costs £1 for each session, and an adult must accompany all children. The weekly £1 contribution will go towards buying more Lego for the club, but if there's anyone out there who has spare Lego to donate, that would be most welcome too.



BALMEDIE CHRISTMAS LIGHTS



The Christmas Lights Group was formed in 2009 and at the start had a large enthusiastic group of volunteers and a full committee. Over the years, volunteer numbers reduced and it was decided to disband the group.

Since then, we are delighted to say that Diane Cassie has come forward as a willing volunteer to try and keep the Christmas Lights going - she made Christmas lights in Balmedie happen last year. The hope was that others would come forward to help, but so far, Diane is still going it alone. Ideally a small group of volunteers is needed to help with organisation and fund-raising.

Is there anyone out there who can help? There are enough funds to provide Christmas Lights this year, but after that, Balmedie Christmas Lights will be no more. Would any local businesses be willing to offer some sponsorship?

It would be such a pity not to carry on the wonderful work done by Diane and the previous group of volunteers. If you are willing to help in any way, do contact Banter by email or phone Diane on 01358 743114.

Please help make Balmedie glow a Christmas time!

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POTTERTON WALKING GROUP



It was mid 2016 when the Potterton Community Group started to discuss the possibility of forming a walking group following requests from the community. So an initial meeting was held at the Stead Inn on 26th August 2016 at which 13 residents attended. It was decided

that walks should take place on a Tuesday afternoon with the first scheduled for the 6th September at which 10 attended. It was a lovely walk around the backhill of Cran with sunny weather. Since then date the group has met every three or four weeks visiting areas north and south of Aberdeen.

There have been 16 walks prior to this article being written with another planned for the 3rd October 2017. The normal attendance has been 9 and so far there has only been one walk where we got soaked. The weather has been normally sunny and it has been good to get out to stretch our legs and to enjoy the local scenery, coffee and fine pieces at local cafes and sometimes beautiful wild flowers, a glimpse of a dipper or a kingfisher or a skylark. All these and more have been enjoyed on the various walks which are not too strenuous, the longest being about 5 miles.



One of the notable walks was a walk along Balmedie Beach on 1st November 2016 walking north towards the new golf course where we observed a young seal on the beach. Another walk we enjoyed was one from the Rowantree car park to the summit of Bennachie on 11 July 2017 - for some in the group it was their first ascent.

ZUMBA GOLD

Every Monday 9.45 – 10.30am in the Forsyth Hall (behind Belhelvie Church)
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For further info contact: Janette 01358 742100



and a walk up Scolty was undertaken in misty conditions. However that just makes the coffee and cake taste better.

We were grateful that the Sand Bothy was opened especially for us for the walk along Balmedie beach. There has been much to be thankful for so far with the walks undertaken, it has been good to get out and get to know folk from the local community whilst visiting local sites of interest. The walks are open to all and are held every 3 weeks on a Tuesday afternoon. For more information please contact

me at aberdeenschenk@gmail.com



Chris Schenk

Potterton Community Group

POTTERTON INDOOR BOWLING CLUB

The Potterton Indoor Bowling Club opened its doors for the first time on Sunday 1st October with 12 local residents turning up to join in an afternoon of bowls. The afternoon was very successful and the group has continued to meet on Sunday afternoons from 2-4pm at The Potterton Community Centre.



The group would like to thank the Northfield Bowling Club once again for the kind donation of 2 bowling carpets, blocks and bowls to allow this group to get off the ground and they hope to welcome the Northfield Bowling Club in the near future for a game.



Further details can be obtained from John Hutcheon at johnhutcheon1@gmail.com or phone 01358 743463.

Caroline Anderson PCG

ADVERTISE WITH BANTER

A5 PAGES	SINGLE EDITION	FOUR EDITIONS
Whole back page advert	£120	£100 each ed.
Whole page advert	£90	£80 each ed.
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Small Ad	£13	£13 each ed.

MEN'S SHED

Anyone interested in helping to establish a local Men's Shed?

Some time ago the Potterton Community Group (PCG) asked the residents to identify areas that they would like to see the group address. One of the suggestions given was establishing a local Men's Shed.

What is a Mens Shed? According to the Scottish Men's Shed Association (SMSA) it is "*...a permanent meeting place where lots of good community and healthy 'self and group determined' experiences take place. They take place by 'everyday' people with 'time on their hands' willing to act with the skills they already have within their local community....*" Put more simply it is a place for retired people to go where they can meet people, work on projects and maybe fill some of the gaps that may find exist since retirement from the workplace. The "sheds" are normally divided into two areas, a workshop where work can take place on woodworking or metalworking projects, possibly for the benefit of the local community and a "social" area where members can call in for a coffee and a chat.

Based on the request from the Potterton Community, the PCG has carried out some initial work visiting existing Men's Sheds and looking at potential local sites. But before we progress the project further we need to gauge the level of support for the venture. We are looking at a **Men's Shed for the Belhelvie Parish** (Potterton, Belhelvie, Balmedie, Blackdog, Whitecairns and the local area).

Anyone who is interested and prepared to work on this local Men's Shed project please contact: Bernard Humphrey: 01358 742622 or bernardhum@btinternet.com
If there is sufficient interest shown we will then organise a meeting to decide on the way forward.

Bernard Humphrey
Potterton Community Group

POTTERTON POP UP CAFÉ



Come along to the Stead Inn, Potterton and enjoy a cuppa and a catch-up. Here are the dates for your diary. All welcome!
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Saturday 27 January 2017
Saturday 24 February 2018
Saturday 31 March 2018

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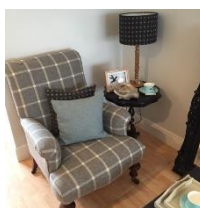
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BELHELVE COMMUNITY COUNCIL

It's been a busy period for the Community Council (BCC) with a number of issues progressed. Here is a synopsis of the most significant issues:

We convened a meeting with the planners & developers (Castlehill Housing Association) concerning the proposed 220 homes at the south end of Balmedie adjacent to the Chapelwell estate. Representatives of Aberdeenshire Council (AC) and local residents were also in attendance. Concerns were raised over the access provisions to the building site which appeared to be through the existing roads in Chapelwell. A request was made at the meeting for AC to consider the provision of a new road to be built to the west of the site to allow for the safe movement of construction traffic to the proposed building site. Since this meeting the BCC has been made aware of another development proposal, which includes 48 new houses, running down the west side of the Brethren Church . It is possible that this development will happen before the Castlehill development which will alleviate the afore-mentioned access issues.

We have again communicated with Aberdeenshire Council planning department on the remediation of both the Westerhatton Landfill Site (that's the one with the unsightly netting stanchions) and the Bruntland Borrow-pit at Whitecairns. Both cases have received enforcement notices which appear to have been extended again. We have recently voiced our dis-satisfaction with this prolonged situation on both of these sites.

The wildflower garden projects at Potterton and Belhelvie have now been completed along with phase 1 of the Magnificent Seven landscaping, pathing and wildflower project. Phase 2 of this project, which will include a sensory garden. will be progressed in the new year. This phase of the project will be a collaboration with ourselves, Belhelvie Community Trust and Better Balmedie.

Representatives of Transport Scotland and the AWPR gave a presentation at our August meeting. Progress has been hindered with the wet weather but we expect the Balmedie-Tipperty section and the grade separated junction at Balmedie south to be completed around year-end, assuming no more weather disruption.

We met with AC's Planning Department to review their proposals for the forthcoming 5-year local development plan. This informative consultation will be followed with public consultation meetings in line with their external roll-out process for the plan.

Our funding request to the Formartine Area Committee to assist with the organisation of the annual Christmas Fayre has been declined. Unless alternative funding can be sought soon it is unlikely that this event will be possible this Christmas. This event has been sponsored in the past by the White Horse Inn with funding assistance from the FAC .

Finally if anybody locally has an idea for a community project that will enhance our area please feel free to contact us on our email: belhelviecommunitycouncil@hotmail.com Meetings are held on the 3rd Monday of each month, in Balmedie School during term-time – otherwise in the Whitehorse Inn.

David Wallace Secretary BCT

PARISH THREADS

The day we met Dream Angus



*Dreams to sell, fine dreams to sell,
Angus is here with dreams to sell.
Hush now wee bairnie and sleep without fear,
For Angus will bring you a dream, my dear*

Scotland had Dream Angus before Roald Dahl's Big Friendly Giant. Angus is the Celtic god of dreams who goes about the country with four birds flying around his head delivering unsettling dreams of love. Most of us receive dreams that fly higher than our ability to wrestle them into reality. Leaving a rather large office and workroom-tidying job we drove to Bennachie the other day. We hadn't been up to Mither Tap for a few years. Normally as you know there is a breeze up there, at worst there's a cold driving drizzle but that day we were lucky. There is a devotional aspect to a summit climb. On Mither Tap cloistered trees open up to a long pious walk. Then over the brow comes the reward of the imperious summit view. Then there is the submissive plod up the slope our heads bent in supplication. While I walked, I was thinking of a friend. From Australia, she came to stay with us along that well-trodden path of forbear searching. A keen reader at home, she had discovered the books by Nan Shepherd and was captivated by those tales of grit and glitter up on the high plateau. She dreamed of seeing where Nan Shepherd had walked and to feel in a poetic and lyrical way where she 'entered into the hills'. When she arrived our friend enjoyed seeing the new slippery fiver with Nan's head on it but that's as close to Nan as she got. Knees that so enjoyed reading about the Cairngorms in Melbourne, were completely unable to climb any of the paths to the actual Cairngorms. She could not make her dream of Nan into a reality.

Reaching the barbican entrance to Mither Tap's inner fortress I looked to the west. There was Belhelvie and if I squinted there were my overcrowded shelves and my worktable. The height gave a better perspective so they didn't look so cluttered from up there.

Lately I have been outwitted by my own things. Travelling can muddle ones memory and it can take a while to recalibrate. It's hard to remember the location of the stapler/grater/leaf-blower or even recall what they look like after a long time away. This was witnessed by one of our children this year and I didn't like the look I saw in his eyes, a mix of LOL and OMG as his mind jumped to the future.

Maureen from the Balmedie Library has found me a philosophy book where the 'thingness' of things is explained. Things or 'tings' from the Scandinavian are what we can experience with our physical selves... a doorway we can go through, a spoon to be touched by hand and lip or a Balmedie sand dune the children can slide down. Objects on the other hand, the book ever so quietly confided to me, are things that have ceased to be used. In my home surroundings, objects have accrued and accreted, on floors, on shelves and even in doorways. I leant closer to hear and understand. The 'thing' that once beckoned, the philosopher continued as an 'object' now blocks... Ah-ha.

Sitting up there on the volcanic granite plug with tea and cake in the fresh-air there was nothing that blocked.

From that high vantage point none of the A.W.P.R. could be seen but there are stretches that are now linked into a curving pale gash across the county. On the way back down the devils causeway, I realised that we can be nourished by other people's journeys, so by Hosie's Well I picked up a small stone to take to Melbourne. At that moment four black grouse whirled out of the heather and that's when we knew Dream Angus was with us.

Mary Cane



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Training is now scheduled for existing volunteers. Once training is completed, we will be visiting various public events, volunteer organisations and groups throughout the parish to raise awareness of the group. Volunteers are still needed for both Responder and non-responder committee roles. Please get in touch if you would like to get involved.

Defibrillators are automated portable electronic devices that automatically diagnose a potentially life-threatening cardiac arrhythmia in a patient, allowing the heart to re-establish an effective rhythm. These are designed to be simple to use for the layman with no medical background. When applied to the victim, voice commands and screen messages guide the user step-by-step through the process and the intelligent technology will only allow it to shock a 'shockable' heart rhythm.

At the moment, we have four defibrillators across the parish: in Balmedie at The Sand Bothy and at the Leisure Centre, in Potterton at the Community Education Centre and in Belhelvie at Cadger's Garage. When the defibrillator at The Sand Bothy has been used, please notify The Sand Bothy contact. Otherwise, if any of the other defibrillators are used, you should notify me. As funds are raised, it will be possible to add to the number of defibrillators, and cover other costs like responder kits. Donations and fund-raising ideas are always welcome. I am determined that our community should benefit from this worthwhile project so would be grateful for support.

You can contact me on 07789 965236 or marcandrewwood@gmail.com

Marc Wood

NEED MEDICATION OVER THE HOLIDAY PERIOD?

Dickies Pharmacy in Balmedie is **CLOSED** Sunday 24th, Monday 25th, Tuesday 26th December then Sunday 31st December, Monday 1st and Tuesday 2nd January, re-opening again for normal hours on Wednesday 3rd January 2018. Be prepared!

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SCOUTING IN BELHELVIE PARISH

"We had a great time" was what Parents were met with when picking up their sons and daughters after the Gordon Gathering 2017 camp at BA Stores. There were 1400 Cubs, Scouts and Guides camping for 2 night at the beginning of September. Additionally 500 Beaver Scouts arrived to participate on the Saturday. Well done to Balmedie Leaders for not only making the camping possible but also for running seven of the hundred great activities available to members.

When I get the chance to visit the Beavers, Cubs, Scouts and Explorers at their weekly meeting, I am always surprised and delighted at the exciting, challenging, diverse and fun activities the Leaders are delivering time and time again. This is reflected in the strong numbers attending all the sections and is testament to the dedication and engagement of all our Leaders.

The Cooperative Community Fund is ongoing and we would ask residents who shop with the Coop to go online and choose us to receive their 1% Community dividend whilst collecting their own 5%.

We continue to seek land within the Parish to develop for Scouting and wider community use. Anyone in a position to offer us land and wish to discuss further should get in touch.

Balmedie Scout Group is for Girls and Boys and caters for ages 6 through to 25. Beavers (age 6-8) are very popular with a long waiting list. Beavers meet on Wednesdays at Balmedie School.

Two Cub Scout Packs meet in Potterton CC Mondays or Tuesdays for ages 8-10.5. Scouts also meet in Potterton CC on a Friday evening and cater for the 10.5-14 ages. Explorer Scouts are a self programmed Unit for 14-18 year olds and generally meet on Tuesday evenings in Potterton CC. All welcome.

Scout Network are for young adults aged 18-25 who also take up volunteer roles within the Group. They form a Gordon wide unit and meet as required. Their members can undertake the Queens Scout award programme which is similar and can be undertaken concurrently to the Duke of Edinburgh Gold scheme. Our Group continues to grow with around 100 young members and 20 Adults.

Adult opportunities are also available for keen volunteers with our Scout Group.

For all Scouting enquiries please call 07743844040 or email balmedie@gordondistrictscouts.org.uk

Ian Thomson
Group Scout Leader
1st Balmedie Scout Group

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1st BELHELVIE RANGERS

The Rangers are now meeting fortnightly on Tuesday nights in Balmedie and everyone is new so it's a good time to join us. We're starting back into the dark nights so we kicked off the term with a chocolate fondue on the Trangia outside by torchlight. It wasn't raining very hard so we managed to light the match and barely got wet!

Suggestions for this term have mainly been craft focussed with sewing and knitting as possibilities. In December, we will be making a light up Christmas card using LEDs and no wires – just lots of electrical tape. We'll also be looking at what camps/ events we want to attend next year.

Rangers is open to young women 14 to 18 years old; no previous Guiding experience required. It's only £3 per meeting. If you are interested in joining us, please get in touch: give me a call (01224 703335) or drop me an email (s.osbeck@rgu.ac.uk).

Susan Osbeck

BALMEDIE FRIENDSHIP GROUP

The Friendship 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 Eigie House lounge from 2-4pm and have an interesting mix of musical entertainment and talks. We are always happy to meet new members.

Here are the details of our programme starting this Winter:

5 December	Talk by Ian Bell
19 December	Christmas Party
16 January	Kathleen Hadden entertains
30 January	Celia Walker: 'A Trip to Japan'
13 February	Ray Meres Entertains
27 February	'To be arranged
13 March	Bon Milne & Friends
27 March	Bingo
10 April	Talk by representative of The Maggie Centre.

For more details please contact: **Margaret Murison** Secretary 01358 742285
or **Vic Deans** President 01358 743634



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BELHELVIE SWI

We are well into our Autumn programme and before this is published we will have had our 91st Birthday celebration. We had a taste and try evening where everyone brings along a dish of their choice, either savoury or sweet, and we all have a taste of as many as we can.

The December meeting is to be our usual table decoration making evening - usually a very relaxed and fun evening. If you wish to join us, bring along a container which would suit your Christmas table and a candle if you so wish. The flowers, greenery and oasis are all supplied. It is usually a very enjoyable evening so do come along.

Our first meeting in the New Year is Wednesday 10th January when we have Mr. Donald Montgomery returning to give us a talk and demonstration on how to use a defibrillator. We meet at Eigie House Balmedie at 7-30pm on the 2nd Wednesday of the month. There is parking and easy access with a ramp if required. Please do come along and see what we're all about!

SWI WHIST

The whist numbers are going down and we are at the stage where we are seriously considering cancelling the whist evenings altogether. This would be very sad as the regular players really enjoy the game and also the chat and friendship. We are not serious players so if you have played whist in the past. why not come along to Eigie House on the 4th Wednesday of the month (apart from December) and join in for a bit of fun? The cost is £2 and 50p for raffles. Tea, sausage rolls and cakes are supplied. What a bargain! Any further information please contact me on 01358743173.

Elaine Strachan

PARENT & TODDLER / MESSY PLAY GROUP

at Balmedie Congregational Church

This group runs every Friday morning 9.30 - 11.30am at the cost of £2 which includes juice & snack for children and tea/coffee for adults.



Some weeks we have a wide variety of toys and other weeks we have Messy Play. Lots of fun is to be had with foam, painting, water, sand and so much more. Hope to see you there! Please phone 07850235215 if you need to know more.

Diane Cassie

BALMEDIE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

11am every Sunday at our Church building in Rowan Drive, Balmedie

A Scottish Charity – Number SC 022803

Sadly, we have suffered three incidents of damage since we officially started to use our new building. Apparently this last episode was caused by local young children. It is so easy to concentrate on bad news.

But we have good news - our numbers are growing. Our **Kids Craft Club** has grown, it meets Wednesdays 6.30pm till 7.30pm. For details telephone Catherine 01358743114. We have a regular **under 5's Group** every Friday morning at 9.30am. For information on this phone Diane on 07850235215. We have a **Ladies Group** every Wednesday 11–12noon and, after Christmas, we plan to start our **Boys' Brigade Company**, with a Girls' Association (boys and girls will be welcome in our BB Company). Feel free to come along to all groups.

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

With Christmas Eve being on a Sunday, this year we will be glad to see you at either of our Services: our Family Service at 11.00am and at 11.00pm, our Watch Night Service, which finishes just after midnight. It will be a candle lit service, with a very peaceful atmosphere with carols and readings, followed by hot Christmas pies.

SIERRA LEONE

Our Church still supports 'orphans' in Freetown, Sierra Leone, but also a new project there, helping single mums on the streets. Ebola is perhaps past, but the effects on families continue. Breadwinners of families have been lost and many are now homeless. We have responded to the various disasters in the world, through Tearfund.

CHRISTMAS FAYRE

We are holding a Christmas Fair on Saturday 2nd December from 11am till 2pm. We have a variety of Stalls and of course teas and coffees and some 'home bakes'.

Finally, we have had our Opening Service. People travelled from across Scotland to join us and the sermon was preached by Rev. Anne Robertson, Minister at Danestone with greeting brought by Rev. Malcolm Muir, Secretary of the Scottish Congregational Fellowship. We thank all who came to support, including Councillor Paul Johnston and Alastair Brodie, Director of Kids Action, the Charity that cares for the orphans in Sierra Leone, which our Church has supported since the Civil War some 17 years ago.

Most people, who have visited our building, are pleasantly surprised that the building is not as small as it looks from the outside. During the summer, we held a Mini Gala, Our thanks to all who came and supported and organised – not least Neil, the Manager of the Co-op for cooking the burgers.

Our **Under 5's Group** has run through the summer. All parents and children under 5 are welcome 9.30am till 11.30am any Friday. This group will continue throughout the winter. For information phone Diane on 07850235215. See the Banter Dates page for details of other groups.

BALMEDIE CRAFT CLUB

The Craft Club runs every Wednesday 6.30 - 7.30pm (term time) in the Balmedie Congregational Church hall. All school age children welcome, £1.50 per week. Each week the children make various crafts - painting, designing and also some weeks we do baking.

Diane & Catherine 01358 743114

POTTERTON CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

1st Sunday of each month at 6.15pm at Potterton Community Centre

Our Christmas Eve service will be at Potterton CC at 7.30pm. We will have traditional carols and lessons. As always, it will be children and family friendly.

At harvest time this year, we sent our donation to TearFund to help those affected by the terrible disasters, hurricane victims in the Gulf of Mexico, but also typhoon victims in the Philippines and the dreadful situation of Myanmar, where almost a million Rohingya Muslims have had to flee for their lives.

That was unacceptable 2000 years ago when Jesus and his family had to flee to Egypt. It is unacceptable today when Christians are persecuted and killed for their Faith in parts of the world.

As we approach Remembrance Sunday and as we remember those who gave their lives for us, we also remember the 6 million Jews who died because of their faith. That was unacceptable. It is also unacceptable today when people of other faiths are killed and made homeless because of their faith.

We live in sad times - the lessons of WW2 and WW1 have been lost.

There are millions of refugees in the world today, women, children, babies, the elderly being made homeless, ethnic cleansing.

What should we do? Perhaps we feel we can do little to help in far away places.

BUT locally, do we make incomers to our community feel welcome? My mother came from Fittie, and incomers were still outsiders 60 years on.

How do you treat others?

Here to serve God and our community.

Rev. Andy Cowie 01224 703248



PLAYERS WANTED –ALL AGE GROUPS

Our football club, Middlefield Wasps was founded in 1968 and is based in Balmedie. We are looking for players to strengthen our squads for the ADJFA Leagues for all age groups. We have training development 2 evenings a week. Home games are at the Beach Park, Balmedie (generally on a Sunday).

If you are interested in joining any of our development teams, please visit our Facebook page and send us a private message.

CHRISTMAS at BELHELVE CHURCH of SCOTLAND

Ten years ago, Belhelvie Church started a campaign that we called “Dreaming of a Right Christmas”. We asked ourselves what was important about the season and what frustrated us about it, and we challenged ourselves to slow down a little, rethink our spending and do a little fundraising so we could give folk who really needed it some kind of Christmas present. To us, that seemed far more in keeping with the true meaning of Christmas.

Folk really took the idea to their hearts, and since 2007 we’ve managed to raise over £33,000 to give away at Christmastime. We’ve supported projects working with infants and children in Bangladesh, Kenya and Malawi, as well as local projects like the Cyrenians (working with the homeless in Aberdeen), Monty’s Maggies Appeal, Street Pastors and the Archie Foundation.

In 2014, given that we’re in the middle of a big fundraising drive to help develop our buildings, we decided to split Right Christmas proceeds between our chosen project and our own Development Fund until that work was completed.

CYCLING WITHOUT AGE



This year, we’ve been inspired by the story of a young man in Falkirk who took elderly folk out for a cycle on a specially made ‘trike’ (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-qzHn9jZNDc> or google ‘Amazing Humans elderly cycling’). We’re aiming to raise funds that will help Balmedie House to buy such a trike, allowing residents to get out and enjoy the fresh air in this lovely part of the world we live in. The costs are going to be in the region of £8000, but with the right support we can make a good dent in that figure this Christmas.

Please keep an eye out for ‘Right Christmas’ events over the next month – including a Quiz Night, Movies, Gingerbread Village and Christingle Service - and support them as best you can. If you’re interested in being a cycling volunteer, we would love to hear from you and please keep your eye out for more information in the New Year as the project moves forward.

We have some lovely Christmas services coming up which will give you a chance to pause in the middle of the rush and reconnect with the reason for the season. You’re more than welcome to come along at any time and join us.

So on behalf of the congregation, can I wish you every blessing for Advent and Christmas and the year that lies ahead.

Forsyth Hall Annexe

We, at Belhelvie Church, are planning to build an annexe to the Forsyth Hall in the near future and want to make sure the building will be well used by the community. If you are involved with any groups regularly needing either a mid-sized hall for hire (20-30 people) or a smaller community room (up to 10 people) please speak to our minister, Paul, on 01358742227.

Rev Paul McKeown 01358742227
pmckeown1@btconnect.com

Coming Up at Belhelvie Church

(Please also check the Banter Dates for your Diary page.)

Saturday 18th November - Christmas Fayre in The Forsyth Hall from 10.00 a.m. – 12.00 noon. There will be a great selection of quality, seasonal items for sale plus refreshments and a Prize Draw.

Saturday 25th November – Gingerbread Village. Bring your creations to The Forsyth Hall for setup between 1:30 and 3:30. Grand opening at 4pm

Friday 1st December - Right Christmas Quiz Night – 7:30pm, The Forsyth Hall. This is always a great event and well supported. Cost is £5 adults and £3 for children/concessions. BYOB

Sunday 3rd December - 6:30pm Christingle Service. A lovely all-age service, part of which is held by candlelight. Don't know what a Christingle is? Come and find out! This is an especially popular service with children.

Tuesday 5th December – Coffee Haven Drop In Café 10-12. The Forsyth Hall

Sunday 10th December - 11 am. The award-winning Bon Accord Silver Band lead our service of readings and carols.

Friday 15th December – 7:30pm – Showing of 'It's A Wonderful Life' for Right Christmas.

Saturday 16th December – 3pm – Showing of 'Home Alone' for Right Christmas.

Please check out our website: www.belhelviechurch.com for more about what's going on in our church and follow us on Facebook for the most up-to-date information.



COFFEE HAVEN (Pop Up Café)

First Tuesday of every month from 10.00 to 12.00 in the Forsyth Hall, beside Belhelvie Church. Home bakes, teas and coffees, all for a donation towards our Sponsored Child appeal. All welcome!

Marianne Wray

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Christmas is fast approaching and we would like to thank all our customers for their continued support over the past 12 months and to wish you all a wonderful Christmas and Happy & Prosperous New Year. As in previous years we will be selling Christmas crafts, Snowman soup and Reindeer food. If you wish to hold a private Christmas function in the coffee shop please contact us. we will try to accommodate any requests and provide catering too.

www.balmedieleisurecentre.com
or our Facebook page Balmedie Leisure Centre



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NEW FLORIST IN THE HEART OF YOUR COMMUNITY

To cope with the increasing expectation and rising demand for care, most practices now employ a triage system to try and get the patient an appointment with, or perhaps phone advice from, the right health professional. As GP numbers have fallen, and resource has been directed to hospitals, practices have had to use other professionals to help. This is why we now have Advanced Nurse Practitioners, Nurse Practitioners, Paramedics and Pharmacists who can prescribe, as well as a newer group, the Physician Associate. Many of you will have already met some of these newer professions.

The receptionist is now faced with a huge array of different appointment options and so it is important to understand the need for them to ask more questions than before. The practice, that is the doctors, want them to try and help you by getting you an appointment as quickly as possible, with an appropriate professional. A recent RCGP Scotland survey confirmed that a significant majority of patients would prefer to see a doctor, but sadly there are not enough GPs to meet this preference, so you may well find that you have a consultation with another health professional.

I do hope that this has given a little insight into the challenging job that the Receptionist does and why you are now asked more questions. Honestly, they are not doing it to be nosey or to share with colleagues, they are just too busy for that! It is an important part of how practices are now required to work, and helps the doctors and other health care staff do their job well and get the patient the help they need as quickly as they can. So please be a patient patient!

I hope I have helped you to understand why you are being asked for some details about the problem you have, as this will help us help you!

Finally, stay active, don't overindulge too much over the Festive Season, and a Merry Christmas and a Happy New year to all!

Dr Alasdair Forbes

BALMEDIE NETBALL WANTS YOU!

Come and play netball for some fun, to keep fit and make friends. Did you play at school or college years ago? Never played but want to try?

No problem – come and join us! Our sessions are coach-led and cover basic skill development and court play. Each week we learn/ practice new skills, having fun, making friends. There is absolutely no age limit. All we ask is that you are over 18. We welcome all fitness levels and abilities.

We meet at the Balmedie Leisure Centre every Tuesday at 7.15pm. Call Mandy Ballingall on 07939 042124 if you would like to come along or need more info.

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Body slams and suplexes returned to Balmedie as WrestleZone ramped up the action. The family-friendly pro-wrestling showcase at the Leisure Centre had six top matches for the

event, involving grapplers such as Mr. P, Chris Archer (our very own Balmedie Boy), Crusher Craib and many more. For those of you who couldn't attend I'm afraid you missed a cracker of an evening!

I am pleased to advise that at long last we have achieved another ambition - the opening of a new outdoor pre-school play area, and much needed additional storage space for the main hall. It's been a long time in the planning but finally children, who attend our pre-school classes, now have an extra special outdoor play area. Jane & Emily, who run our twos group classes, say, 'It's fantastic for the children to be able to play and have space - they absolutely love it'. Providing children with opportunities for play provides so much more than a few minutes or hours of 'fun'. Play also allows children to relax, let off steam and develops social skills



But we are not finished there; our next project has just started and should be completed within the next six to seven weeks. This is the complete refurbishment of all toilets and showers. We will try to keep any disruption to a minimum, but please be vigilant, as some toilet areas will close temporarily and others will change gender. New signage will be fitted as each refurbished area is reopened.

If that's not enough, we have been tidying up the area at the rear of the Leisure Centre. Our intentions are to secure and make better use of the land whilst we fundraise to develop it further. If any of our neighbours have concerns about the work then please feel free to contact any committee or staff member.

Lastly, thanks to all those who attended our very popular Holistic Weekend. We have so much on the go - please keep checking our website for what's on. And don't forget our Lego club that runs every Monday after school.

Contact us on 01358 743725 or email balmedie_leisure@btconnect.com

We are also on Facebook and our website is www.balmedieleisurecentre.com

Bill Murray Chairman

BILL REID – A Life Well-lived

March 1930 - 13th August 2017

Bill loved the outdoors life; and everything he achieved in life he achieved through a lot of hard work and dedication. “haud gaun while ye still caun” he’d say.

William Alexander Reid “Bill” spent his early years in Kennethmont before moving to Belhelvie where his father worked Muirton Farm. Bill was an only child, and he used to joke that once they had him, they realised he could never be bettered and there was no need for any others!



Bill followed his father into the farming life and in 1948 he and Ian Barron founded the Belhelvie Young Farmers. He served on the Kirk Session from 1974 and as an elder right up until last year. Bill trained and served as a special constable; and his ability and local knowledge was put to good use as a founder member of the Belhelvie Community Council serving for well over 30 years, and for many years he ran the Parish-wide Garden Competition.

It was there I first met Bill. Now, there was a fair smattering of ‘incomers’ on the Community Council but Bill could always be relied upon to give a very measured view on local issues as he not only had a vast catalogue of local knowledge he shared it with his trade mark couthy wit and wisdom. I used to tease Bill and the late Bill Mitchell as they could be relied upon to identify the location of any planning application. “Oh! Aye that’ll jist be a full weet hole, I suppose” which to the farmer’s eye might translate to mean that the ground might well only be suitable for a retirement bungalow!

It wasn’t all work and no play for Bill because he was a talented accordionist and with the Bellevue Electrotones played for many years, at weddings and dances. We also shared many happy times listening to live Jazz, we were the ‘Jazz 7’, and ventured as far as the Isle of Bute in search of live music. Although Bill was never happier than when he had sight of Bennachie. The only time I remember Bill lost for words was when the “Jazz gang” turned up in full, black tie, evening dress for a farm supper at Muirton! Bill was a bit of a storyteller and had won prizes at Young Farmers. His tales of working with animals are legendary he had a great affinity with the land and he worked hard on the arable side. If you happened to be out when he called he left his “calling card” at the gate – a bag wi’ a couple of neeps! His reputation spread to the studios of Grampian Television where he appeared on

“The Way It Was” interviewed by Gerry Davis while viewing old cine footage taken by Capt. Loutitt of Ardo House. His films were of events and folks in the Parish.

Bill, was known to many for being the “late” Bill Reid, it took him some 9 years of courtship to marry WinKee, and he was still feeding pigs when guests were going past the road-end on their way to HIS wedding! He was frequently seen playing catch up with the school bus. And there was the time, because he was running late, he came to pick WinKee and her sister up from Belhelvie after a day in town, in the tractor with a transport box with a crate on it! And he would arrive at Community Council, by the skin of his teeth, unfold his minutes from his inside pocket and look round as if he had been there waiting for us!

How would I sum up Bill Reid? Simple - “the salt of the earth”. Bill loved being part of this community. He had a keen interest in everything that was going on, and had an all-embracing knowledge of local affairs. He was a great listener, sometimes a man of a few words his maxim being “*it’s better to look stupid than open your mouth and prove it*”. Yet, when he did you could be assured it was a worthwhile contribution to any discussion.

His life well lived is a legacy, of joy and pride and pleasure, a living, lasting memory our grateful heart’s will treasure.

Audrey H. Jeffries

SEASON’S GRITTINGS

The **Big Yellow** Grit bins are provided by Aberdeenshire Council, in places where the pavements may be slippery or where vehicles may have difficulty.

These bins are regularly refilled during the winter months, but it is up to us – the public – to grit the pavements and roads. This grit is not for use on private paths or driveways. All you require is a spade and the wish to assist others. Could you be the person to help spread grit in the next bad weather? Don’t expect any thanks and there is certainly no remuneration, other than the warm feeling of knowing you have helped make other people’s lives easier. So next time you see someone gritting your road, thank them, it’s **you** they are helping.



According to Aberdeenshire Councils website **there are no legal issues preventing members of the public clearing snow from public footways.**

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ABERDEEN OFFSHORE WIND FARM UPDATE

Offshore construction of the European Offshore Wind Deployment Centre (EOWDC) started in October with the installation of our innovative suction bucket jacket foundations scheduled for the end of November. This is an exciting development for the project and as part of this, we will be inviting you to join us on Balmedie Beach to view the installation live. During the same time, you are welcome to drop into the Sand Bothy for some refreshments and information on the project too. We will announce the date of this event soon.

Onshore, construction of the substation and the cabling is making good progress.

We also continue to be out and about in the community and supporting good causes and local events. We were delighted to support the Wild about Aden festival, Techfest's STEM festival and the STEM Ambassadors UN Global Goals Summit at Ellon Academy. In October, we visited ABSafe, a North-East charity dedicated to safety education while we also welcomed MPs David Duguid and Colin Clark, Councillor Jim Gifford and the Chair of the Blackdog Resident's Association Philip Mann, to the substation site.



Suction Bucket Jacket Foundation being assembled in Newcastle.

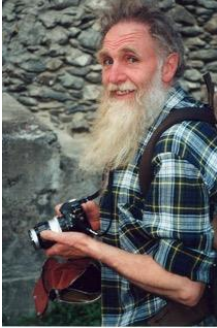
We have also been supporting the Blackdog Resident's Association with their application for Landfill Tax funding which they recently received for community improvements.

In September, we announced that we have committed to a £150,000 community benefit fund which will be paid annually throughout the lifetime of the wind farm. Once the wind farm is operational, this will be available to the communities associated with the project, in the shire and the city. Soon, you will have the chance to contribute your thoughts and ideas on how you believe the funding can be best implemented and utilised. In the coming months we will host community consultations. We will be in touch soon with more information on this.

Visit our website at <https://corporate.vattenfall.co.uk/eowdc> or contact me, Natalie Ghazi, Local Liaison Officer, at 07814 763090 or natalie.ghazi@vattenfall.com

Natalie Ghazi

NATURAL BELHELVIE



Well Belhelvie-ites, are you all ready and raring to go as we approach the big day; oh yes do not forget to sweep your chimney; I have great difficulty in getting soot stains out of my red suit! (Yes, we note the familiar festive facial hair in the photo here, Bob.)

Most of you will no doubt be content to sit and read the Banter cover-to-cover, snug as a bug by the fireside, but life goes on in the great outdoors regardless. A brisk walk is now the 'thing to do' for a whole raft of reasons, so out you go.

Your Editor frequents Sweden and, just for your pleasure, she appears to have come back with a plane full of birds. No, shame on you not the blond Nordic type, but thrushes. While our summer visitors have gone south on their winter hols, we are raided by 'Vikings' just like the invasions of yesteryear. But, don't panic, don't panic, these northern raiders will only rob your gardens of berries, and so you can sleep safe in your beds.

We have two resident thrushes in the UK: the lovely old song thrush and the less common mistle thrush, but during the back end months of the year we get large flocks of both the redwing and the fieldfare arriving on our shores. They are both members of the thrush family and at a quick glance you might confuse them with one of our native species, but the redwing; the smaller of the two, has a distinctive red patch under its oyster, and this is very noticeable when it flits about on the ground or in a tree. It also has a light coloured stripe through its eye and that is another 'give-away feature to look for. The fieldfare is softly grey on the head and above the tail, while its wings are dark brown, both species do of course have the standard 'thrush' spotted breast, but the fieldfare has a tinge of orange in the top half of its tummy.



Both birds may be seen in large flocks and more rarely on their own, they sometimes go about together but normally keep themselves to themselves. During the summer there are a very few records of either species as breeding in Northern Scotland, but not hereabouts. They mostly all fly back across the sea and nest in coniferous forests in Scandinavia. They are predominantly berry eaters and once they arrive with us they will make a bee-line for trees such as the rowan, and a heap of them will

descend and strip the tree of its fruit. They are particularly fond of common whitebeam berries; a relative of the rowan. This has larger bunches of berries and provides more energy value per berry. Oh incidentally here is an interesting fact for you to tuck away somewhere. Before the birds leave on their journey to Scotland, they feed up avidly in order to give them sufficient energy for the flight. One of their favourite foods in Scandinavia is a tree known as Swedish whitebeam (a close relative of both the rowan and the common whitebeam). Anyhow, off they fly and eventually reach this part of Scotland, that being the most easterly part of the mainland is where they make landfall. They will land and confer: 'Phew, what a flight, I am exhausted' or something like that, and then they um well they sort of um 'do the business' - with great relief! On occasion, a few years later up pops a Swedish whitebeam tree that has grown from the seed deposited by the birds! Amazing eh?

Both species do come into gardens if there are berried shrubs and or trees available. Later in the winter once most of the berries have been gobbled up, they will also eat fruit and they are partial to fallen apples that have lain on the ground and become soft. So if you have an apple or two that has gone beyond eating, leave it outside and the birds might enjoy it.

The very best of wishes to you all for the festive season and onwards into 2018. Oh and a home-made mince pie would be very much appreciated on the evening of the 24th. Enjoy the natural world out and about around Belhelvie.

Bob Davis



The advertisement features a central logo for 'Red Doodle' with a red dog head icon above the text. Below the logo, the tagline 'Web Design Made Simple' is written in a red, handwritten-style font. Further down, a paragraph states: 'Providing high quality, responsive website & email solutions with a simple, affordable pricing structure.' At the bottom, contact information is provided: 'info@reddoodle.co.uk', '01358 550 650', and 'www.reddoodle.co.uk'. On the left, a smartphone displays a website layout with text about responsive design and a list of services including 'Content Management System' and 'Search Engine Optimisation'. On the right, another smartphone displays a website layout with a dog icon, the text 'Red Doodle', 'MODERN WEB DESIGN MADE SIMPLE', and a 'LEARN MORE' button.

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Make sure that you put your
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number on the back of your
entry.

Deadline: Friday 24th November, winner announced on 2nd Dec



A panel will select the winning design and the winner
will be presented with a prize. The winning design will
be the EOWDC team's official Christmas card.

Contact: natalie.ghazi@vattenfall.com
for more information.

BALMEDIE LIBRARY

Library opening times are:

Monday 14.30 - 16.30
17.30 - 19.30
Tuesday CLOSED
Wednesday 14.30 - 16.30
17.30 - 19.30

Thursday 10.00 - 13.00
Friday CLOSED
Saturday 10.00 - 13.00

Please note, we have a new telephone number – **01358 281070**.

The first Wednesday of each month (term time only), from 14.00 to 14.30, there is a Rhymetime session for under-fives. Come along and join in the fun.

Our Knit & Natter Group is as busy as ever – come and join us at the library every Thursday morning from 10.30-12.30. They are a friendly group and would welcome new members.

The Summer Reading Challenge was a great success again and we would like to say a big thank you and well done to all the children who took part and made it such a success. The winners of the 'Design A Book Cover' Competition were Quinn Riddle, Magdalena Van Niekerk and Kailey Russell and our Star Reader was Zoe Shaw. Congratulations, you should be very proud of yourselves - we hope you all enjoyed the Prize Giving event at Woodhill House.

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.

For more information on Aberdeenshire Libraries, please visit www.aberdeenshire.gov.uk/libraries.

Like us on Facebook at <http://www.facebook.com/AberdeenshireLibraries>

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Maureen Muirden



CRAFT CLASSES AT THE LIBRARY

Can you knit, crochet or would you like to learn these skills? Come along to the Balmedie Library Monday evenings from 7 – 9pm where a group of crafters are willing to teach anyone interested in learning. Any age welcome, male or female. If *you* have a craft skill you would like to share please come along we would be delighted to see you.



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A WORD FROM THE DOC...

On The Frontline

The year is rapidly drawing to a close, and even before Halloween, the shops were filling with Christmas paraphernalia. I would hope with winter looming large that everyone who is eligible has had or booked their flu jab. This year it is possibly more important, as based on the experiences from Down Under, the current bug is quite nasty. It is expected that there may be many cases, so we are gearing up for a busy time and that will mean that many will meet the people who really are on the frontline of the NHS, the Receptionist!



The Receptionist is frequently the butt of jokes and considerable criticism from patients, and this is really quite unfair. This job has evolved hugely from the early days of the NHS, when it was often doctor's wife who filled the role. Gradually as GPs got together and formed partnerships a more formal job emerged as the workload started to rise and more patients were seen. Nowadays the job is extremely busy and a very demanding one at that. As a receptionist you need to answer the phone, make appointments, take details down for the doctor or nurse, give out results, keep an eye on the waiting room to make sure no-one has been missed, do filing, scanning, and deal with any enquires that patients have at the front desk. Away from the phone and front desk there is also all the prescription requests to process, requests for sick lines, forms from insurance companies for life insurance, lawyers wanting all the medical notes photocopied, forms for travel insurance cancellations, medical examinations and a myriad of other administrative things to attend to. All this needs to be attended to by the receptionist team, not to mention dealing with grumpy doctors too!

Patients expect a cheerful, helpful person at the front desk or on the phone, and I feel that for the most part the receptionists manage to achieve this, despite the volume of work. Patients, who do call for an appointment, expect, because they feel ill, that they are attended to as soon as possible. This can be a challenge for the staff, as patient expectation of what they feel they need is sometimes at odds with what is available.

Our political masters do not help the situation. By imposing targets for access and the number of appointments available for one to two days ahead, means that people who wish to plan ahead, say for a routine review of a chronic condition, have less appointments available to them. This is because most practices will keep a good number of appointments free for "on the day appointments" just to achieve the imposed targets. All practices will also have to offer online appointments soon as well, which may further affect those who do not use, or have access to, the Internet.



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WINTER DATES for your DIARY

DECEMBER

Sat 2	Christmas Fayre	Bal Congregational Church	11.00-14.00
Sun 10	Santa at the Sand Bothy	Sand Bothy at the Beach	See Facebook
Sun 17	Nativity Service	Belhelvie Church	11am
Sun 17	Belhelvie Carol Singing	Xmas Tree opp T- Junction	19.00
Sun 24	Community Carol Service	Balmedie Leisure Centre	16.00
Sun 24	Potterton Congregational Church	Potterton CEC	19.30
Sun 24	Watch night Service	Belhelvie Church	23.00
Sun 24	Watch night Service	Bal Congregational Church	23.00
Mon 25	Christmas Day Service	Belhelvie Church	11.00

JANUARY / FEBRUARY

Weekly

Mon	Golden Zumba	Forsyth Hall	09.45
Mon	Knit & Natter	Potterton CeC	14.30 -16.30
Thur	Health Walks	Start Balmedie Library	10.00
Thur	Knit & Natter	Balmedie Library	10.30-12.30
Thur	Pilates (for over 60s)	Potterton CEC	13.30
Fri	Mother & Toddlers	Congregational Church	09.30 -11.30
Sun	Indoor Bowling	Potterton CeC	14.00- 16.00

Fortnightly

Tues	Friendship Group (see article)	Eigie House	14.00
Tues	Arts and Crafts	Stead Inn, Potterton	19.30
Wed	SWI (see article)	Eigie House	19.30
Wed	1 st & 3 rd Wed of the month - Bingo	Eigie House	19.30

Monthly

1 st Tues	Coffee Haven	Forsyth Hall, Belhelvie	10.00-12.00
1 st Wed	Rhyme Time (Under 5s -term time)	Balmedie Library	14.00-14.30
2 nd Mon	Potterton Community Group	Stead Inn	19.15
3 rd Mon	Belhelvie Community Council	See article	19.15
4 th Mon	Belhelvie Community Trust	White Horse Inn	19.30
4 th Wed	Whist	Eigie House	19.30
Last Sat	Potterton Pop up café	Stead Inn	10.00-12.00

Youth Groups (during school term time)

Mon	Lego Club	Balmedie Leisure Cent	15.30- 17.00
Mon	Cubs	Potterton CEC	18.30-20.00
Tue	Rainbows	Balmedie School	18.00-19.00
Tue	Cubs	Potterton CEC	18.30-20.00
Tue	Guides	Balmedie School	19.00-20.30
Tues	Explorer Scouts	Potterton CeC	19.30-21.30
Wed	Beavers	Balmedie School	18.00-19.00
Wed	Rainbows	Potterton CEC	18.00-19.00
Thu	Balmedie Kids Craft Club	Congregational Church	18.30-19.30
Thu	Brownies	Potterton CEC	18.00-20.00
Thu	Brownies	Balmedie School	18.15-19.45
Fri	Scouts & Explorers	Potterton CEC	19.00-21.30



dickiespharmacy

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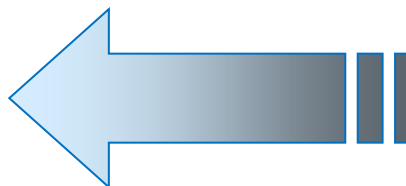
Tel No: **01358 741226**

Opening Hours: Monday to Friday: 9.00 – 17.30

Saturday: 9.00 – 12.30 Sunday: CLOSED

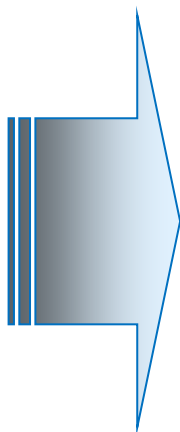
Prescription collection service from the following local surgeries:

- Ellon Health Centre
- Scotstown Medical Group
- Danestone Medical Practice
- Old Machar Medical Practice
(Jesmond & King St Practices)



Our services include:

- NHS and Private prescription Dispensing
- Medicine & Healthcare Advice
- Minor Ailments Service
- Smoking Cessation Service
- Treatment of Urinary Tract Infections in Women
- Gluten Free Scheme
- Emergency Hormonal Contraception
- Provision of Compliance Aids
- Offshore Medical Supplies
- Disposal of Unwanted & Expired Medicines



We stock a wide range of:

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Terramundi Pots, Perfumes, Greeting cards,

Gift Wrap & Bags.

New in stock:

Just Jo and Jo for Girls Jewellery!





The Parkhill team keep **Bird Food** very competitively priced by packing on site in to 1,3 & 6kg sizes, with even greater savings on 20kg bags

Exclusive - Parkhill Premium blend - especially for North East Birds. **A complete no mess feed with 12 ingredients** 20kgs for only £20.99



Keep warm this winter

Heat Logs, Hotties, Paraffin, Housecoal & premium grade Coals, Peats, Kindling and Hardwood Logs, all very keenly priced.



Real Christmas Trees - Grown in Scotland.

A choice of Nordman, Noble and Fraser Firs, also Blue Spruce. In a range of sizes depending on type from 2.5ft. to 12ft high.

Pot grown Christmas trees a choice of 4 types

Holly Wreaths Freshly made and decorated to your own taste, at very reasonable prices



Check out our **Christmas Shop**.

NEW continental lines exclusive to Parkhill Garden Centre.

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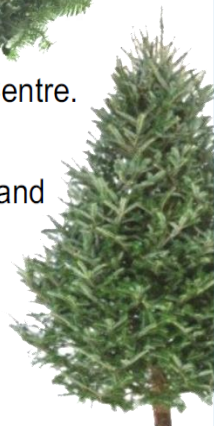
Friend us on face book to be first to hear of our offers and events.

Open 7 days - **Garden Centre 9am to 5pm. Tel: 01224 722167**

Coffee Shop 9am to 4.30pm. Tel 01224 724711

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