



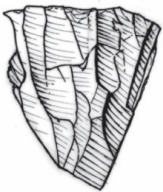
Drumoak & Durris NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the Summer edition of the Drumoak and Durris Newsletter

Mesolithic



Mesolithic Deeside

Mesolithic Deeside consists of an enthusiastic group of archaeologists, students and local volunteers investigating the river Dee area during the Mesolithic period, immediately after the last Ice Age 8000 – 4000BC. The inhabitants of Scotland at the time comprised of mobile groups of hunter-gatherers who left little trace of their passing so that the archaeological evidence is formed mainly of stone tools of flaked flint. The River Dee runs from the mountains and glens of the Cairngorms to the coast at Aberdeen, ancient stone tools found along its length attest to 10,000 years of human activity.

Deeside

Like other groups Mesolithic Deeside has had to adapt to a different way of working this past year or so. We haven't been able to get out into the fields as much as we would have liked but we have definitely been busy behind the scenes. We now have a Mesolithic Deeside YouTube Channel, where you will find more than 20 videos that you can watch and find out more about what we do and about the Mesolithic Period and the lifestyle of the people in this area at that time.

Following Covid rules and with the restrictions easing we did manage to get a few days fieldwalking before the fields were sown. These were very fruitful and over 3000 flints were found in just a few days walking.



This past year we were excited to receive a Highly Commended Marsh Award for Community Archaeology 2021 as well as other funding from a variety of sources.

We rely on donations and grants and have been lucky to receive funding from The Skinner Charitable Trust, Aboyne Games, Scotmid, as well as other private donations. It's so important for us to continue to receive donations so that we can carry on this valuable work, and we are very grateful for everyone who supports us.

Our next big, planned event is going to be Test Pitting at Kincardine O'Neil. Of course, strict Covid guidelines will be followed. This will take place 30th September – 4th October. This project has been supported by the Marr Area Small Project Fund, the King George V Wind Farm Fund and Bread of Life. We are hoping to have local schools involved as well as plenty of volunteers.



Our group is very friendly, all ages, both men and women, if you want to get involved with us then you will be made very welcome, no experience necessary as you will get plenty of help to get started. Getting out in the fresh air and getting some exercise is a bonus too.

You can find out more by going to our website www.mesolithicdeeside.org or our Facebook page www.facebook.com/groups/979549128814393/ and the videos can be found on <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCPiHRgICCeEIXkRJOOr9yawg/videos>

We are always looking for new volunteers so if you think this is something you would like to be involved in then you can contact us at mesolithicdeeside@outlook.org It would be great to see you!



*In God's grace, opening our doors and reaching out
to bring God's love, peace, and joy to all.
Why not taste & see?*



From the Manse – Rev Jean Boyd

Then God blessed them (*humans*) and said, “Be fruitful and multiply. Fill the earth and govern it. Reign over the fish in the sea, the birds in the sky, and all the animals that scurry along the ground.” (Genesis 1:28 New Living Translation)

The General Assembly of the Church of Scotland in May welcomed the fact that the Church no longer holds investments in oil and gas companies. This is a decision that had been taken recently, as a result of the ‘passion of the young people’ in the church who have campaigned for disinvestment from fossil fuels. A decision has also been taken not to invest in the future, in companies dealing in fossil fuels, unless their strategies align with efforts to keep global heating below 1.5 deg C.

This is a bold move, and not only does it demonstrate the determination of the Church to support good stewardship of the earth and its resources, but it also shows the overwhelming support for the youth and their involvement in deciding matters relating to the Christian faith and the Church.

The Church has not always valued young people as it ought to have done. All too often the Church has fallen short of encouraging and including the youth among us. Sadly, today there are few young folk active and committed in Drumoak-Durris Church. I write ‘sadly’ because I believe we as a church miss out on their voice as well as their enthusiasm and their opinions. I believe too though, that the youth miss out because, by not being involved in the church, they have little say in their local church by their absence and in their community as a result. They also forfeit much local and national heritage and tradition too.

Drumoak-Durris Church like all churches across the Church of Scotland are undergoing major reform, reform that is urgent if the church is to continue to serve local communities. Key decisions were made at the Assembly. For example, the Assembly agreed a deficit budget of £11m and noted that these losses are not sustainable in the foreseeable future. In response to these losses and also the decreasing number of ministers nationally, it was decided to cut the number of charges (parishes) by 2025 from around 1000 to 600. This means that there will be fewer ministers in the

Church but also fewer churches and larger parishes. There is much change ahead. Some change will be for the good and is exciting and some change ...well, it will be a different local church going forward. We need folk, young and old, to be involved in the local church if we are to be the best we can be as Christians and stewards of what we have. If you are young (no age-limit here!), why not come and find out more about the church and be part of the church as we go forward.

Creator and Sovereign Lord

Thank you for your many blessings to us

We give thanks for this day

and we give thanks for this world and your creation.

Help us to be good stewards of this earth and to look after it.

Help us to hear the voices of each person, young and old

And may we be open to change.

Guide us in your ways now and always...Amen



Amazon Smile is a great way to help and support Drumoak-Durris Church at no extra cost to you. All you need to do is personally sign up, going to this link

<https://smile.amazon.co.uk>

and click on 'Get Started'. Then at the top of the page there is a 'supporting' tab, which you click on, and you enter 'Drumoak-Durris Church of Scotland'. You should then be given the chance to select it, as your chosen charity. Any purchases you make at Amazon are then automatically registered for a donation to be made to Drumoak-Durris Church.

By shopping this way Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible purchases, at no extra cost to you. Easier still, try using the following link, which should take you directly to Drumoak-Durris Church.

<https://smile.amazon.co.uk/ch/SC033779>



Donations to Christian Aid

Thank you to all who kindly responded to our collection for Christian Aid.

A total of £386.76 was collected.

Drumoak-Durris Friendship Club 2021

As nobody could have predicted, this last year has been difficult and challenging for many people living through the Coronavirus pandemic, but particularly for those who live alone, it has been lonely and isolating.



Amy Wilson who leads the Drumoak-Durris Friendship Club, contacted her friends on the Committee to share an idea which she had to involve the Club's members during the long winter months, by knitting squares which, when completed, could be sewn into woollen blankets. Many were keen to be involved and Amy was delighted with the response. After a few months, the squares began arriving or were being collected

from those who were keen to contribute and, with a little help, Amy has managed to sew the squares together – making a total of 30 knitted blankets. These photographs show just how colourful and bright the blankets are and their unique designs. They range from cot blankets through to single bed sized ones and everything in between.

Amy contacted Shuna Dicks, Minister at Cults Parish Church who was delighted to receive the many boxes of blankets. On our behalf, Shuna is forwarding them to Mortlach Kirk in Dufftown who are one of the many collection points for Global Aid Network (or GAIN) which is a worldwide humanitarian relief and development organisation dedicated to bringing hope and tangible help to refugees and displaced people – particularly those who come into Greece and other parts of Europe.

Mortlach Kirk are appealing for all sorts of clothing, toiletries, toys, bed linen etc so the Minister there is delighted to be receiving these colourful blankets – knitted with love by folk in Drumoak and Durris.



Amy would like to thank everyone in the Friendship Club who contributed to this wonderful effort – we feel sure they will bring comfort and warmth to many refugees. Thanks also to those who didn't manage to knit, but donated wool and good wishes. We hope you are all safe and well and we look forward to being able to meet again.

Amy and the Committee

Messy Church, Jolly Tots and SPLAT



The Kirk Session have been thinking about how Drumoak-Durris Church should move forward with our work with families and young children. At the meeting in April, it was decided that Drumoak-Durris Church should give thanks for all the work that was done in the past but acknowledge that it is time to move on. It was proposed that we review our work with young people in the light of changes in society in the last 15 months and move forward to something new.

As a result, we will no longer be running Messy Church, Jolly Tots and SPLAT. Through talking with other church leaders, attending online webinars and informal discussions amongst ourselves we hope to be able to offer some new ideas in the future. It would be wonderful to hear from you, the young people and the parents about how we can work together with new ideas in the future.

Thank you to everyone

The Kirk Session wish to offer their thanks to all who contributed over the years to the success of Messy Church: to those who were helping in the evenings and to those who prepared the crafts at home beforehand, not forgetting the baking and food preparation. The whole experience was very rewarding and greatly enjoyed by all the families.

We also wish to thank all those involved in Jolly Tots and SPLAT for giving the younger children so much enjoyment and offering the Mums, grandparents, or carers an opportunity to meet and chat.

So, a very big thank you to everyone who has helped in any way with our work with young people over the years. We look forward now to discovering new ways of welcoming young people and their families into the church in the future.

Find us on 

<https://www.drumoakdurrischurch.org>

Spend Summer at Peterculter Golf Club

Enjoy the summer season at Peterculter Golf Club! We've got a brand-new chef, brand-new menu, and brand-new outdoor seating area, perfect for the light nights and drinks in the sun. If you're looking for a new place to grab a bite or enjoy a coffee with a friend, our Social Membership is the deal for you. Just £20 which gets credited back to your membership card to use in the Clubhouse.



We've got a range of different Membership offers available. Keep your eyes on our social media pages for hot new deals coming this summer including pro-rata memberships and no joining fee! Enquire today to find out more:

membership@petercultergolfclub.co.uk

Book a golfing staycation in Aberdeen! The Royal Deeside Ticket is a joint golfing offer with Peterculter, Banchory, Aboyne and Ballater. A great way to enjoy discounted golf along Royal Deeside. Check out our website for more information:

www.petercultergolfclub.co.uk

Played the course? Rate us on TripAdvisor: <https://rebrand.ly/5eyvez5>

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Drumoak Durris Crathes Bowling Club



In line with Scottish Government Guidelines, we were pleased to re-open the Bowling Club Bar on Friday 21st May. Our bar is staffed by volunteers from within our Club's bowling and social membership and we thank all those who give up their time to perform this task.

We are pleased to have installed a 50" television for the use of our members and this has been very beneficial during the European Football Tournament. The television was gifted to the Club by Sally Wight and Mitchell Durant, two of our social members and we are very grateful for their kind donation.

We have a nucleus of very keen bowling members and whilst we have recruited a small number of new bowlers, we are always ready to welcome many more to the Club. We have, in Drumoak, what is recognised as the best Bowling Club facilities in both Deeside and Donside and with our Social Membership now very much established, we would wish to 'up our game' and recruit many new bowling members.

Many of our usual activities have been curtailed by the Covid Pandemic. However, as we progress through the summer and into autumn we would hope to get back on a more normal footing. This would include the hire of the Bowling Pavilion. Anyone wishing to hire the Pavilion for functions is requested to contact Lena Sim on 01330 811374.

Dave Stuart

Club President

Durris School

Things are certainly getting back to normal at Durris School following our return after the second national lockdown.

All classes have been very busy this term with a whole school topic based on technology. We have designed greeting cards, saved eggs from a high drop, built boats, tackled the problem of flooding by designing floating gardens and coding our own games.

The project is going to conclude with the design and construction of a games arcade. This is based on the idea called Caine's Arcade

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=faIFNkdq96U> We will be recycling boxes and cardboard to create an arcade for children to use during the final few days of the Summer term. Children will be working collaboratively and creatively to produce something suitable for our playground play session to celebrate their creativity and realise the UN Rights of the child, Article 31 - The Right to Play.

We have also planned some special events for our P7 leavers - including a lock-in room, fancy breakfast and a water fight.

Restrictions and lockdowns have been especially hard on youngsters and we want to make happy memories for our children - filling their days with learning, fun and friendship.

Durris School has also enjoyed a return to our regular forest school sessions where we have been engaged in a range of learning activities. We created found art using the work of artist James Brunt as inspiration - <https://twitter.com/RFJamesUK> We also roasted bananas with chocolate buttons, created clay tree faces, made woodland assault courses and wrote poetry inspired from our time in the forest to name a few of our activities!

We hope that on our return to school in August, Covid-19 restrictions will continue to ease and we will be able to be out and about more in the Durris and Drumoak community.

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RIVER DEE RADIO

Have you ever thought about presenting a weekly radio programme from your home using a computer? Are you passionate about music, sharing information about your local community or creating a factual type programme? Well, River Dee Radio are looking for new presenters to join their team.

River Dee Radio have a studio based at the Banchory Legion but with the Studio being closed throughout the pandemic presenters have been gaining new skills from home and presenting programmes using their computers. At the moment we have presenters living in Westhill, Portlethen, Banchory, Inchmarlo and Aboyne all able to support you in creating your own show.

So, if you are interested in chatting about the possibility of creating your own programme just email riverdeeradio@gmail.com and then we will contact you.

If you are unfamiliar with River Dee Radio, we have shows covering all ranges of musical genres - classical, rock, country, soul, 60s, popular, dance, jazz to name a few. There are also programmes on sport, local events, community matters and looking back on events. Shows last either 30 minutes, 1 hour or 2 hours and are fitted into our weekly schedule.

You can tune into River Dee Radio in a number of ways. On your computer or smartphone, the best place to start is to access the website; www.riverdeeradiorocks.wordpress.com. There you can listen to the live stream, find information about the weekly schedule, and listen to previous programmes. There is also a weekly roundup of programmes if you've missed them and lots of information about downloading the app and links to Facebook and Mixcloud. If you download our app <https://tunein.com/radio/River-Dee-Radio-s274232/> onto your phone or computer you can listen to River Dee Radio at anytime, anywhere.

The internet-based station will be celebrating their 5th anniversary in October 2021, and we are hoping to celebrate with new presenters who will continue to increase our listener numbers.

HOMEOWNERS – IMPORTANT NOTICE

**In February 2019 the Legislation relating to smoke detection in your home changed.
All domestic properties in Durrus/Drumoak could be affected.**

You need to have the following: -

- **One smoke alarm installed in the room most frequently used for general daytime living purposes.**
 - **One smoke alarm in every circulation space on each storey, such as hallway and landing.**
 - **One heat alarm installed in every kitchen.**
 - **All fire alarms are to be ceiling mounted and must be interlinked.**
- **Carbon monoxide detectors are to be fitted where there are carbon fuelled appliances (such as boilers, fires, open fires, heaters, stoves, or a flue).**

The Regulations come into effect in February 2022.

**For a free survey and quotation, please contact: -
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Tales from the Riverbank by Robert Harper

Another difficult year for so many, continuing covid 19, trying to follow and keep up with ever changing restrictions, hard and distressing times.

On the river we were extremely fortunate to be able to carry on fishing and being allowed to have local anglers in the months following the opening of the 2021 season, February 1st.

Normally the cold start with lots of snow on the hills would have the lower beats on the river, excited about the spring fishing prospects. Alas following the icy low cold water during much of early February, the temperatures rose, boy did the snow melt! I cannot recall seeing the river over 6ft on our Lower Crathes height gauge for 8 consecutive days, plus during these days we had river heights of 14ft, 12ft, 11ft and 10ft. Although we did fish some of the days it was more going through the motions, the river was just too big. As the temperatures started dropping again river levels became good for fishing but very few salmon on the go. The cold snap continued, and the river dropped, no snow melt, no rain, the river was once again at low levels. Some fish were now appearing but most of the lower beats did not get close to them, the salmon were on a mission upstream, this continued during May and early June, most of the beats from Banchory up have thankfully seen and caught at least some salmon with a good number seeing above their 5 years catch average for this period. Thankfully Park have started catching a few fish this week, 14th June, perhaps the start of the grilse and summer salmon run, last season July was a good month especially for Park and Banchory Fishing's/Lower Blackhall. Seatrout are appearing now, hopefully in bigger numbers over the next few weeks.

So far, we have had a poor start to the season here on Lower Crathes, but the photograph shows a lovely 17lbs spring salmon, the day before from the same place we lost a cracking fish of nearly 25lbs, it was very close to the net, we had a very good look at it, but it wasn't to be, gone, bye-bye, another day.



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Drop-in Café

You will recall in the December 2020 edition of the Community Newsletter, I served formal notice of the dissolution of the Drop-in Café. In accordance with the Constitution of the Drop-in Café, I gave the required notice of a Special General Meeting and stated that 'if there is no contact made with me by 31st January 2021, I will start the process of closing down the Drop-in Café and its bank account'. No one made contact, and



so with the assistance and agreement of four of the members of the original Management Committee, the dissolution of the Drop-in Café has been actioned. If you have any comments or questions, please contact me.

Marion McNeil, Treasurer - marionmcneil24@yahoo.com Tel: 01330 811350

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[Drumoak & Durris Playgroup](#)

Drumoak & Durris Playgroup was excited to open a brand-new group that offers children, aged 0 – 3, a safe place to explore, play and build their social skills. Better still they are allowed to take an adult along to enjoy the peace and tranquility of the great outdoors on our doorstep! Our wonderful Play Assistant, Vivika, threw open the gates to the woods at Crossroads last month (May) as she welcomed children to our very first Outdoor Tots session.

In the beginning the children stuck close to their adults, clinging on to legs and cuddled into laps. But in just a few short weeks they have become bolder and more confident as they get used to being in the company of others once again. It is lovely for all to see, and they are back to bouncing around to Sleeping Bunnies once again!

A relaxed and informal group, the children have enjoyed everything from scavenger hunts to bubble discos, fairy door trails and a teddy bear's picnic – which drew the term to a close. We are so grateful to Crossroads Nursery and Forestry Scotland for granting us access to what is undoubtedly an outdoor haven.

All being well we are hopeful that the Toddler group will be able to return to the Portakabin after the October break - as the weather turns more inclement and makes the prospect of an outdoor group, with little people less attractive.

With any hope we can get both Creche and Tea & Tiny Tots (our baby group) back up and running again before too long. Of course, more groups mean that we need more people – both staff members and Committee volunteers.

In particular we are keen to identify someone who can take on the role of treasurer as the wonderful Fiona steps back from the helm. We'd be delighted if someone in the community, perhaps with a background in accountancy or bookkeeping, would consider getting involved.

We hope to be able to advertise officially for staff before too long, so keep your eyes peeled and please mention us to anyone who you think might fit the bill! We're always happy to take speculative enquiries.

With huge thanks to local legend, Logan from Deeside Photographics, who came along to take photos to help us publicise the opening of

Outdoor Tots. We're delighted to say he is holding an outdoor photo shoot on 26 July with a cut of the proceeds being donated to the Playgroup. Like many community groups we had to run our funds down to stay afloat during this period. We are truly grateful for his support for the continued kindness he has shown our group.

To enquire about spaces for your child, staff vacancies, volunteer opportunities, or to book a photography slot with Logan please contact: drumoakanddurrisplaygroup@hotmail.co.uk.

Photo credit, Logan Sangster, Deeside Photographics.



Peterculter Medical Practice Article 3

As we have moved into the summer months, we have also moved into Level 1 of Covid 19 restrictions in Aberdeen City and Shire. The Covid 19 vaccination programme is ongoing and anyone with any queries relating to this or with questions about the vaccines should access advice on the NHS inform website or by calling 0800 030 8013. We continue to ask our patients to follow government guidance on wearing face masks when attending the surgery and respecting social distancing. If you develop symptoms of cough or fever the advice to isolate and seek assessment either through the NHS inform website or by calling 111 remains unchanged (even if you have had two doses of the vaccine).

We are continuing to triage all our appointment requests. This means when you need to seek medical advice, we are asking you fill in an eConsult form on our practice website or, if you are unable to use the internet, give details of your problem to our reception team. A member of medical staff will then look at the information you have provided and offer you either advice or suitable appointment. We continue to see patients who need to be examined at the practice, as we have throughout the pandemic, and half of the appointments available to the triaging clinicians each day are face to face appointments. Due to this system, we no longer have waiting times for GP appointments, and we aim to respond with same day advice or the offer of an appropriate appointment whether you have contacted us by completing an eConsult form or by giving details to our reception team. Contacts after 1500 by either route will be reviewed by a member of the medical team and those judged to need it will receive a same day response. Those of you who have attended the surgery recently will be aware the practice building is undergoing some needed upgrades. We thank you for your patience as these works are completed and look forward to them being finished by the end of the summer.

Dr Jennifer MacDonald

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Crathes Hall – June 2021 update

Fundraising continues for the new Crathes Hall.

Many people in the Crathes community took part in the May Fundraising Challenge to walk or run 50 miles or cycle 100 miles. Those taking part walked a total of 1,415.51 miles, ran 100 miles and cycled 882.2 miles and raised the fantastic total of £1872.50.

Another Crathes resident then took up his own amazing challenge also in support of the new hall, a Benachie to Banchory ultra-marathon. Geoff Knight will run over the hills on the 26th June, accumulating over 50km during this challenge and is raising funds for the hall. Geoff has run over 400km and over 7500m of ascent since the start of May! If you'd like to read more about his story and donate to this cause, please visit the Virgin Money page below.

<https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/fundraiser->

[display/showROFundraiserPage?userUrl=GeoffKnight5&pageUrl=1#](https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/search/cause/?q=Crathes+Hall)

As well as easyfundraising <https://www.easyfundraising.org.uk/search/cause/?q=Crathes+Hall>
If you use Amazon, we have also registered with Amazon Smile to receive donations. You can access Amazon Smile directly <https://smile.amazon.co.uk> or through the easyfundraising site. In Amazon Smile, click on get started and input our charity number which is SC043007 (note all zeros not Os) then shop as usual. You will then receive confirmation of your donation. Any associated Prime benefits that are applied to that email address will be applied to your AmazonSmile account.

We are still busy working on our business plan and applications to trusts and funding bodies. Many trusts are concentrating on Covid recovery this year, so it is quite a challenge for us to find suitable donors and funders. If you know of any, please get in touch either via our website <https://www.crathes-hall.co.uk> or our Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/Cratheshall>
Meanwhile the hall has re-opened for regular user groups since 17th May and we are hoping that more events will be coming soon!

New yoga class starting at Crathes Hall on Monday's mornings from 21st June, 9.30 -10-30 with Oliver at Charcoal Yoga who also teaches in the hall on Wednesday night 7-8. Suitable for all. Contact him on charcoalyoga@gmail.com

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Park Bridge Update June 2021



Park Bridge Action Group and the Community Council attended the Infrastructure Services Committee Meeting at Aberdeenshire Council on 13th May, to make the case for strengthening the prioritisation formula for heritage bridges. We got our points across, but the formula was agreed as it stood. We are still trying to find out what this means for Park Bridge in terms of the timing of refurbishment work, but we are confident that it will happen at

some point. Meantime, Cllr Wendy Agnew has submitted an excellent case to Aberdeenshire Council to have the bridge re-opened to light traffic. She states that it should not be refurbished as an ornament, but for the purpose it was intended i.e. to carry light traffic from one side of the river to the other and allow communities to connect. We're hoping to arrange a site visit with relevant councillors so when they come to make decisions on the bridge they can have a better understanding of what's being discussed.

I don't know how other folks feel about the congestion that occurs in Peterculter every time there are roadworks, but I've taken to going round by Crathes as it's quicker and less frustrating, but clearly not the right thing to do for the environment. We desperately need the Park Bridge back in service.

PBAG are planning another community day to tidy up the bridge so keep a lookout on the Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/SaveParkBridge> or email us on info@parkbridgeactiongroup.com if you want to be kept up-to-date with progress.

Anne Shearer
The PBAG Team



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[Walking with Peter Richardson](#)

In common with other recreational groups our No Name Walking Group had to stop group walks between mid-December 2020 and mid-March 2021. Living in this part of Scotland we are blessed with a plethora of forest and riverbank trails which allowed us to keep fit, albeit in ones and twos rather than the numbers we've been used to.

Our last walk before the December 2020 lockdown was a 14km route which took us up and around Mona Gowan, Cairnagour, Scaulec and Glen Conrie starting from and finishing at Torranbuie which is about 1.5km due east of Lonach. We didn't visit, but one could, the site of the 13th century silver coin hoard found in 1822; this lies a few hundred metres west of Tom à Bhùraich.

We had a 3 month hiatus before 13 of us got out on March 16th, 2021. With no car-sharing there was some concern if we'd get parked in the small car park at Glenbuchat Castle, but we did. We walked along the minor road NW to Smithyford whence we turned up White Hill to Creag an Sgor. What was remarkable was the wind; lighter walkers were in danger of being blown to Kildrummy and stouter members were needed to anchor others. Although the sun was bright, and visibility was good to call the wind "a howling gale" would be an understatement

Two weeks later we hit the maximum number of participants, advised, or allowed, no-one is ever too sure of 15 on a walk from the wee car park above Birse Church. We went up the Fungle then down part of the Firmounth road before coming back via the Hill of Duchery.

There is a fine circuit from the entrance to Glenbuchat Lodge, up Broom Knowe to the source of Blacksnake Burn thence down to the ford across Littleglen Burn. It's always a trial to gain



height and then to promptly have to give it all back before repeating the exercise. We had lunch on Little Gael Charn with wonderful views in all directions. In the absence of wind and a bright sun, it didn't feel at all cold; indeed, all was right with the world as we came down Cacherlicyme Burn, below the Muir of Williehead. Glenbuchat Lodge has been extensively renovated and looks very attractive but those with a nose for curiosity might like to dig into the ownership of the estate.

By now we'd carefully built up our muscles after lockdown with a series of walks of about 15km before taking on Beann Bhreac, a Munro on the route past Derry Lodge. Someone with a warped sense of humour had described the route to the West Top as a path; in reality it is a running stream through the heather and undergrowth. The West Top is at 927m, but the real top is a full 4m higher and some 600m to the east. It seemed a good idea at the time to come down via Meall an Lundain and drop into Clais Fhearnaig but our advice with hindsight is "don't be silly." From an Lundain to Fhearnaig is about 2km downhill through deep, very deep heather with hidden holes and nooks and crannies and our Secret Shopper, who rates all our walks, took a lot of points off. Still, it did mean we didn't have the tedious trudge along the track from Derry Lodge to the Linn of Quoich car park. The walk was about 20km.

On the 25th of May, thoroughly warmed up by now, we went from the Water of Dye below the Spital of Dye to Charr Bothy, to Edendocher and then W'ly to Mount Battock returning via the Burn of Badymicks; the round trip was 28km. The cloud level was a fair way below Edendocher so much of the walk was in poor visibility but there was no danger as the tracks are all good. We passed one stalkers' bothy which isn't on the map with another newer and much grander

Somewhere in the mist is Mt Battock



affair a little way further west. There was no doubt which bothy was for the beaters and which was for the paying guests. The sun shone upon us on the summit of Mount Battock – for about ten minutes before a vicious hailstorm came from nowhere and sent us hurrying down the hill. A salutary warning for those who needed it that the Scottish hills can be dangerous at any time of year.

As has been described before our group alternates more arduous walks of 15km and longer with walks of 8km to about 12km which stick to level ground as far as possible, whilst getting amongst the hills and taking our time. So, we have had Auchallater to Loch Callater; the Seven Bridges in Ballater (identifying all 7 can be tricky); Dalmaik Church from the Glebe (so very redolent of history); Glen Tanar; Glen Dye to the reservoir or to Charr bothy; Linn of Muick from Spittal of Muick car park.

Our normal meeting place is in the car park opposite the Banchory Guide Hut, at, usually, 0800. We like to believe that we give people new to the group a warm welcome, contact Ronnie Mitchell, Peter Richardson, Alan Young or Joyce Paul. There's no charge but it's become the custom to make a donation which is then distributed to relevant charities such as the Mountain Bothy Association, Braemar Mountain Rescue, Scottish Ways and so on. There are few formalities; we make up a list of walks which we expect to do during the year, we send out emails ahead of time, we insist that each walker takes responsibility for him- or herself. Perhaps we'll see you one day.



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From the Editor

A great deal of thanks must go to all the contributors for the newsletter, without them, we have no news! Anyone can contribute to the newsletter, send in articles about what your doing, club outings, general interest, with photos and you may see it in the next edition!

With foreign travel off limits just now, more holidays will be taken in the UK, and we have seen an increase of people visiting the area which is good for local business. Not so good is the parking issues, blocking gates into fields, parking up in passing places on the narrow roads, increase in rubbish and other detritus left behind. Please wherever you go and whatever you do, leave only footprints, and think about where you are leaving your car. Recently we had cars blocking Park Bridge so people walking, people with children's push chairs and bikes had a real issue getting across as the cars had been parked right up against the concrete blocks.

Due to the Covid restrictions at the start of the year, we lost about 4 weeks so the next newsletter will not be until Winter. There is too little time between August and mid-November to get 2 newsletters out.

If you want to contribute to the next newsletter, please drop me an article at editorddnews@btinternet.com

Deadline for next newsletter will be Friday November 12th.

Many thanks
Kevin

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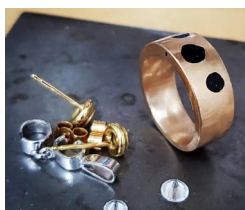


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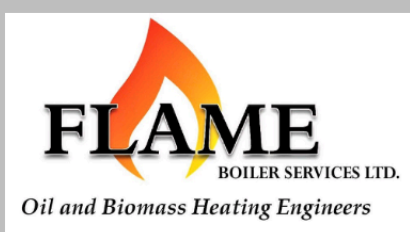
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DRUMOAK & DURRIS NEWSLETTER

This Newsletter has been published quarterly for over 20 years. Firstly as a community service by Drumoak-Durris Church of Scotland, and more recently by the Drumoak & Durris Community Group. It is produced and delivered FREE by volunteers to all households in Drumoak and Durris.

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