

**the
smokin
bert cooper
band**

**"a little
bit of
what you
fancy
does you
good"**

**MIDMAR HALL
BAND and a BBQ
Sat 8th June
7:30pm 'til late**

Ticket includes delicious BBQ buffet

Licensed Bar (over 18s only)

**Tickets (in advance only) from :
www.ticketsource.co.uk/midmarschool or 01330 833910**

Dear Fellow Residents,

As I sat down to write this letter, one word kept going through my mind. Deadlines! I was uncomfortably aware that I had to meet a deadline, by which time this piece had to be with the editor. Whoever we are, whatever we do, we all have deadlines to meet. Pupils at school, students at university, farmers, businessmen and housewives. Each and every one of us has deadlines that we can't avoid. They are a part of life and they can bring quite a degree of stress into our lives.

I read an article a few weeks ago, written by a computer analyst who had a very comfortable lifestyle. He was about to embark upon a change of career, taking up a position with a national charity. The reason for his decision was that he wanted to escape from the pressures of his work. There were times when he had to work day and night to meet the deadlines that his company expected him to meet on a regular basis.

During the last few weeks the media has covered stories of those whose lives are frequently subject to deadlines that many of us would rather avoid. There have been a number of incidents when climbers have encountered life threatening difficulties in the mountains. Then, only last week we heard of the young man who was on a gap year in Australia. He had been out for a run and lost his bearings. Very quickly he ran out of water and in a period of some thirty six hours he suffered severe weight loss. In each case the rescue services found themselves confronted by the pressures of meeting a deadline. They knew that if their search was to prove successful then they had very little time at their disposal.

Deadlines and the stress that can accompany them can have an impact upon our well being. It is therefore important that we take time to unwind and relax in our leisure time. Within our community there are a number of activities taking place on a regular basis that provide the opportunity to 'switch off' from the challenges of our daily lives. Whether it be yoga or bowling, the book group or gardening club, an evening at the cinema or theatre; there is something that can help us make the most of our quality time.

Details of these and other activities can be found in the newsletter. Should you choose to join in any of these activities you will be made most welcome.

Alistair McRobb
Chairman Midmar Hall Committee

'Have a date with fate'....Cassablanca will be screened on Friday April 26 with cocktails & an air of sophistication.

MIDMAR SHEET MOVIES

ARE PROUD TO PRESENT...



SUN 17TH MARCH

10:30AM

ADMISSION £5 (£15 FAMILY)



FRI 26TH APRIL

8PM

ADMISSION £5 COCKTAILS!

MIDMAR HALL

DOORS OPEN 20 MINUTES PRIOR TO PERFORMANCE

REFRESHMENTS AVAILABLE

LIVE & SILENT AUCTION



27th April 2013
2pm Last bids 3.30pm
Midmar Hall

If you have any items or services which you could donate for auction, please contact either Pamela Black on 01330 833682 or e-mail on info@midmarhall.com.

Any items must be either new or 'as new' condition. No electrical items please. Items can be anything from bottles of wine to horse riding lessons! Trailers of logs to Driving lessons!

- Chance to view all items
- Place your bids
- Teas & Coffee and a fine piece to tide you over until the results are announced.

Entry £2 Adults and 50p children
Bidding numbers are £1 each

Please come along and join us on the day and help raise enough money to purchase window blinds/curtains for the Hall

Midmar's New Arrivals

Look what Christmas present Katy and Ewan Scott received just three days before Christmas. Baby Freida Lucy Scott was born on the 22nd December 2012. Human sister to Sweep the dog and Bagpuss! Congratulations to all of the Scott family.



Midmar's Puppy Pals

Here's the latest addition to Midmar's puppy population, Ella a beautiful, if a little cheeky Golden Retriever puppy who has joined the Dowell family. Ella is 10 weeks old and already thinks she owns the trampoline!



For any comments and queries regarding articles within the newsletter please contact the writer as the Hall committee does not take responsibility for content and accuracy of articles. Closing date for submissions to the June newsletter is 8th May 2013

UNDER FIVES

The New Year has started with a bang and Toddlers, Playgroup and Rising Fives has been as busy as ever with Toddler mums and tots coming from far and wide...

| <u>Monday</u> | <u>Tuesday</u> | <u>Wednesday</u> | <u>Rising Fives</u> | <u>Playgroup</u> | <u>Babies & Toddlers</u> |
|---------------|-------------------------|----------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------|
| 10:00-12:00 | 09:30-11:30 | 09:30-11:30 | For all pre school children | For all children 2 and a half + | For pregnant ladies, |
| Rising Fives | Playgroup & Toddlers | Playgroup & Toddlers | For more details please contact : | Please Contact: Pamela Black 01330 833682 | babies and toddlers |
| Midmar School | 11:30-12:00 | Midmar Hall | Barbara Harrison - 01330 860421 | <u>Musicmakers -</u> Contact-Louise Hunter 01330830061 | For more details please contact - Judith Doherty 07843377768 |
| | Musicmakers Midmar Hall | | | | |

New members welcome at anytime of year!

Here at Midmar Under Fives we welcome new members to all groups at anytime of the term. Feel free to join us and see what we are all about. The toddlers meet in the backroom behind the stage in the main hall. A chance for new mums to get out and meet other mums in the area. At presents we have several mums from Echt, Dunecht and Sauchen too! Plenty to see and do and tea, coffee, cake and snack also included.

facebook



Keep up to date with weather closures and other notifications by joining our group on Facebook.

Playgroup is held in the main hall and there are plenty activities to keep your youngster happy for hours! Crafts, playdoh, puzzles, toys, trampoline, climbing frame, dress up, stories, to name but a few !

Rising Fives is the next best thing to help your child in the transition from playgroup or nursery to primary school. Situated in the hall in Midmar Primary school, your child will get used to the routines and geography of the school within the safe and familiar structures of preschool activities.



Midmar School News

One Planet Picnic Win

Midmar School pupils are really excited that they have won a prize in the Eco Schools, Scotland, 'One Planet Picnic' competition. The prize is a trip to Mackie's Dairy at Daviot, Oldmeldrum, £100 towards the cost of transport and a free ice cream for everyone in school.

The children had to compile a menu for a picnic using as much local produce as possible. Eco Group planned the menu, then made the food for the whole school. The menu was vegetable soup, fresh bread, rhubarb and apple crumble and blueberry muffins. All the fruit and vegetables were grown in our school garden.



New Rotakids Members

Midmar School hosts a Rotakids Group, which is a junior section of Rotary. We are linked with Alford Rotary Club.

On Friday 22 February, nine pupils made their pledge to become Rotakids, in front of members of Alford Rotary Club. They were: Ben Morriss, Matthew Copp, Alex Laird, Jamie Trinder, Demi Ross and Chloe Lamb (all Primary 3); Chloe Crossland and Maia Dowell (Primary 5) and Niamh Cross land (Primary 7)



School Extension and Car Park

Work on an extension to the current school building is due to start in the near future. The extension will include an Office, Staffroom, small store and disabled toilet.

Forthcoming Events

Saturday 11 May 2013 – Fun Day from 10.00am

Saturday 8 June 2013 – Band and BBQ

with Smokin' Bert Cooper Band, Midmar



Grampian Police to hold Rural Crime Event at Thainstone

Grampian Police is holding a rural and wildlife crime event as part of efforts to reduce the likelihood and the impact of crime on rural communities in the north east.

It is aimed at those living and working in rural areas of Grampian

Rural areas can often be perceived as relatively crime-free, but nationally there is an increasing trend in offences such as poaching and theft.

The event will take place at Inverurie's Thainstone Centre on Saturday, March 23 and is free to attend.

Presentations by Grampian Police Crime Reduction, Wildlife Crime and Roads Policing Units will address these three key areas of rural crime. However there will also be a number of key stakeholders to provide delegates with a range of specialist information and advice. Industry experts in building and property security, countryside access, firearms licensing, species licensing and land ownership sectors will all be there, to name but a few.

Aberdeenshire Crime Reduction Unit PC Kev Marron said "Farms, rural businesses and communities may not regard themselves as targets for criminals due to their remote location. "However there is evidence of an increase in rural crime in other areas of the country especially thefts of scrap metals, machinery, gates, quad bikes, fuel, tools, trailers and even livestock. "The purpose of this event is to provide the necessary information, advice and essential contacts to enable communities to reduce the incidence of crime in the countryside and ensure the national trend does not become commonplace in Grampian."

PC Gavin Lindsay from the force's Wildlife Crime Unit said: "There is a developing link between rural crime and wildlife crime, with poaching in particular being linked with theft and related offences from rural properties.

"Some poachers will take the opportunity to target rural property if it is perceived to be vulnerable, whether they do this on the same day or on another occasion it is important not to provide the opportunity for crime."

The event will run from 9:30am to 1:30pm and refreshments will be provided.

To apply for a free ticket for the Rural Crime event or for further information, please contact Grampian Police on 0845 600 5 700, or e-mail: PC Lisa-Marie Dick at Lisa-Marie.Dick@grampian.pnn.police.uk

160th Echt Show

to rock to the most famous bagpipe group in the world

2013 is a very exciting year for the Echt, Skene and Midmar area as the Echt Show celebrates its 160th show. The Show is believed to have started out as a horse fair at the market stance behind the village pub (Echt Tandoori) in the 1830's. Echt Agricultural Association then held ploughing matches and Seed and Root Shows in the 1850's. The first livestock show was held in 1853 at the Market Stance. Fast forward 160 years to 2013 and the committee of eighty enthusiastic volunteers ranging in age from 17 years to our members in their 90's are gearing up to put on a whole weekend of celebrations.

Last year to raise awareness of the show a video for You Tube was produced. Search Echt Show Song on You Tube and it can be found. This year's You Tube video's theme is community and people, our own lyrics being sung to Robbie Williams "Candy". Thousands of red balloons with 160th Echt Show written on have been printed. Photos of the community with their red balloons have been taken for example the Postman, Fishman, Doctor, the school children, WRI, Brownies, the Echt Art Class. Companies have also been very supportive, purchasing a photograph. Well known personalities have also shown their support by having a photograph taken with a balloon. Dougie Vipond drummer from Deacon Blue and Landward Presenter, Nick Nairn chef and Landward Presenter (2007-2009), STV Grampian News Readers, David Sole, Alex Salmon, and the fabulous Emeli Sande have very kindly sent through their photos to name but a few. The video will be out at the end of May. The show weekend kicks off with possibly the most famous bagpipe group in the world raising the canvas in the Echt show ground. The Bagpipes with attitude and drums with a Scottish accent, The Red Hot Chili Pipers have been confirmed as the Friday nights entertainment. Taking their signature "Bagrock" sound to the masses, The Chillis have fast become a global phenomenon rocking far flung shores from Melbourne to Milwaukee and now this summer the metropolis of Echt! The Chillis are to perform on Friday 12th July with the 160th Show on Saturday 13th July. Full information is available on www.echtshow.co.uk or like the Echt Show Face Book page.



The Cottage Bar – The Midmar Inn (4)

In recent years there have been lots of examples of community enterprises starting up and continuing to run successfully, if you have time, try “googling” the Crook Inn (Tweedsmuir), The Butchers Arms (Ravensworth) and The Old Crown (Hesket Newmarket); The Old Crown claims to be the UK’s first cooperatively owned pub and has been up and running for nearly 10 years now. FoMICC (Friend of Midmar Inn Community Company) believe that these projects are all being successful because they are meeting the needs of their local communities.

Then there is that age old question, when any of us are about to take a risk, “What comes first, the chicken or the egg?”; similarly for the Midmar Inn, without a feasible business plan how can we be sure the business will be viable and attract investment, but why go to the effort and expense of creating a plan if we cannot at the end of the day, buy the pub?

So it was, at the end of last year, FoMICC came to the conclusion that we should use the time now to prepare a good business plan, rather than rushing it through later, hence we applied to Aberdeenshire Asset Fund for Communities for a moderate grant and are delighted to report that we have been awarded a sum of £10,000 to help cover the consultant costs to generate the plan. In January we kicked the project off and are currently in the data gathering phase, so far this work has included various lines of research into how similar business are operating and also we have engaged the services of the UK’s leading leisure consultant in this field, Jay Smith. Jay is presenter and consultant on the UKTV series “Save our Boozer” and has helped several community enterprises around the UK regenerate their local pub (his web site is <http://www.jaysmith.tv/biography.html>).

After several remote meetings and exchange of information during January, Jay came to Midmar for a day in February to take a look at the situation on the ground and our thanks go to everyone who made some time to meet with him during the day. His summary conclusion at the end of the session was that The Midmar Inn is *definitely* a viable business prospect.

For everyone who saw the reverse of our promotional flyer for the Pub as a Hub evening that FoMICC ran on 8th February in support of Village Hall funds you will also know that in support of the application we are making this year, to continue the Community Right to Buy we are currently re-surveying everyone in the local post code area to re-test support for the principle of re-opening the pub. We have not yet had all replies returned, but judging from those that we have had, we are delighted to report that support is still well over 80%, as it was five years ago.



Our second “Pub as a Hub” evening was again well attended, the theme this time was cocktails. We made our own Cocktail Bar and stocked it with every type of exotic liquid that we could lay our hands on and I have to say as a judge, (hic), that all the mixes that were put together were very *more-ish*. Thank you again to everyone who attended and helped with the preparations and on the night, it was a real community effort.



This article has been submitted by Rob Ferguson on behalf of FoMICC: previous articles and other information can be found on our website www.savethemidmarinn.co.uk.

If you wish to comment or provide feedback on the content of this article then my direct contact details are 01330-830038 or eMail rob.ferguson@aiexps.co.uk.



AWARDS
FOR ALL
SCOTLAND

LOTTERY FUNDED



The Midmar Piano Fund

Sun March 24th, 3pm - Pupils Piano Concert

Piano teacher, Ainur Poulsen, is holding her annual pupil's piano concert at the hall. Whilst this is primarily for relatives and friends of the pupils themselves, the concert is open to all.

Tickets are £8 for adults, £5 for U16 and U12s are free. The money raised will be donated to an orphanage charity based in Kyrgyzstan.

Tickets available on the door or available in advance from:

<http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/midmarhall>

Sat May 11th, 7:30pm - Violin Recital

featuring Djumash Durasaliev

Following his well received performance at Midmar Hall in October 2011 virtuoso violinist Djumash Durasaliev returns to perform a varied program of music by Handel, Brahms, Beethoven, Ravel and Suk.



Tickets are £12 for adults, £6 for U16 and U12s are free. Tickets available on the door or available in advance from:

<http://www.ticketsource.co.uk/midmarhall> or contact Jonathan Wilson (Tel: 01330 833910)

Have Your Say

If you would like to be a regular features writer or have an article or an event advertised in the Midmar Newsletter then please email or write and we will do our best to ensure you are in the next edition (June 2013) We are on the lookout for stories, articles and issues that you feel would be of interest to the residents of Midmar. please email Amanda at : midmar.newsletter@hotmail.co.uk or write to Amanda c/o Midmar Public Hall, Midmar, Inverurie, AB51 7ND



Midmar events

the smokin' bert cooper band "a little bit of what you fancy does you good"

MIDMAR HALL BAND and a BBQ

Sat 8th June
7:30pm 'til late

Ticket includes delicious BBQ Buffet
Licensed Bar (over 18s only)

Tickets (in advance only) from :
www.ticketsource.co.uk/midmarschool £12.50



HOTEL TRANSYLVANIA

SUN 17TH MARCH
10:30AM
ADMISSION £5 (£15 FAMILY)

Pupils Piano Concert

Midmar Hall
24th March
3pm

Tickets £8 & U16's £5
U12's Free
Tickets available on the door

| Day | Activity | Location |
|-----------|---------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| Monday | Badminton | Village Hall |
| | Rising 5's (for our pre-school children) | Midmar School |
| | Book Club (Last Monday of the month) | Various |
| Tuesday | Playgroup | Village Hall |
| | Toddlers | Village Hall |
| | Musicmakers (under5's music Class) | Village Hall |
| | After School Club | Midmar School |
| | Upholstery Classes | The Little Theatre |
| Wednesday | Bowling (October through to March) | Village Hall |
| | After School Club | Midmar School |
| | Brownies | Village Hall |
| | Yoga Flow: All Levels | Village Hall |
| | SWRI (2nd Wednesday of the month) | Village Hall |
| | Gardening Club (1st Wed of the month) | Village Hall |
| | Whist (4th Wednesday of the month) | Midmar Hall Millbank Boat Club Hut |
| | Playgroup & Toddlers | Village Hall |
| Thursday | Toddlers | Village Hall |
| | Mobile Library (fortnightly) | Hall car park |
| | Upholstery Classes | The Little Theatre |
| | After School Club | Midmar School |
| | Singing Group | Village Hall |
| Friday | Community Cafe (1st Friday of the month) | Village Hall |
| | Yoga Flow: All Levels Phone beforehand to reserve a place. | Mill of Lyncey Steadings |

s at a glance

| ion | Time | Further Information |
|-----------|--------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------|
| all | 9am -11am | Amanda Liddiard 833543 |
| chool | 10am -12pm | Barbara Harrison 860421 |
| | 8pm -10pm | Alistair McRobb 833715 |
| all | 9.30am -11.30am | Pamela Black 833682 |
| all | 9.30am -11.30am | Judith Doherty 07843 377 768 |
| all | 11.30am - 12pm | Louise Hunter 830061 |
| chool | 3.15pm - 6pm | MASC - 07503 670 454 |
| Byre | 7pm - 9pm | Kay Savoury 833515 |
| all | 7.15pm - 9.15pm | Alan Blackie 833482 |
| chool | 3.15pm - 6pm | MASC - 07503 670 454 |
| all | 6pm -7.30pm | Colleen Moir 833680 |
| all | 8pm - 9.30pm | Jess Winstanley 833539 Email: info@thelifestyleretreat.com |
| all | 7.30pm -9.30pm | Judith Stokoe 833719 |
| all | 7.30pm | Phyllis Baird 833586 |
| & wing | 7.30pm -10pm | Isabel Birse 833209 |
| all | 9.30am -11.30am | Pamela Black 833682 |
| all | 9.30am -11.30am | Judith Doherty 07843 377 768 |
| ark | 9.45am - 10am | |
| Byre | 10.30am-12.30pm & 1pm - 3pm | Kay Savoury 833515 |
| chool | 3.15pm - 6pm | MASC - 07503 670 454 |
| all | 7pm - 8pm | Louise Hunter 830061 |
| all | 10am - 12pm | Next dates 1st March, 5th April, 3rd May |
| hne | 9.30am - 10.40am | Jess Winstanley 833539 Email: info@thelifestyleretreat.com |

LIVE & SILENT AUCTION



27th April 2013
2pm Last bids 3.30pm
Midmar Hall



Violin Recital Featuring Djumash Durasaliev



Midmar Hall
11th May
7:30pm

Tickets £12 & U16's £6
U12's Free
Available on the door

Are You getting the best price for your heating oil?

This is how much Midmar Oil Club members are saving right now on their heating oil this winter:

| The Midmar Heating oil comparison ¹ | Prices | | Savings £'s | |
|------------------------------------------------|-------------------|--------------------|----------------------|--------------------|
| | 500l ² | 1000l ² | 500l ² | 1000l ² |
| Most expensive supplier | £389.92 | £758.10 | £54.60 | £87.29 |
| Least expensive supplier | £340.73 | £681.45 | £5.41 | £10.64 |
| Boilerjuice | £370.81 | £683.87 | £35.49 | £13.06 |
| Midmar Oil Club | £335.32 | £670.81 | The cheapest! | |

¹Five Aberdeenshire suppliers and Boilerjuice, quotes obtained on 18 Feb 2013

²Price quoted inclusive of VAT

Join the club - we need you and you need us!

www.oil-club.co.uk



VOLUNTEERING FOR HOME-START GARIOCH

Home Start
Support and friendship
for families

YOU can make a difference to a family in your community

All parents know that those early years before children go off to school are vital in a child's life and at Home-Start we believe parents have the key role in creating a secure childhood for their children. It's just that sometimes they need a bit of help **YOUR HELP.**

To find out more about volunteering for Home-Start
Contact - Mary or Susan on 01467 624801 or
e.mail: maryf@homestartgarioch.org.uk

Walk up a Thirst! (8)

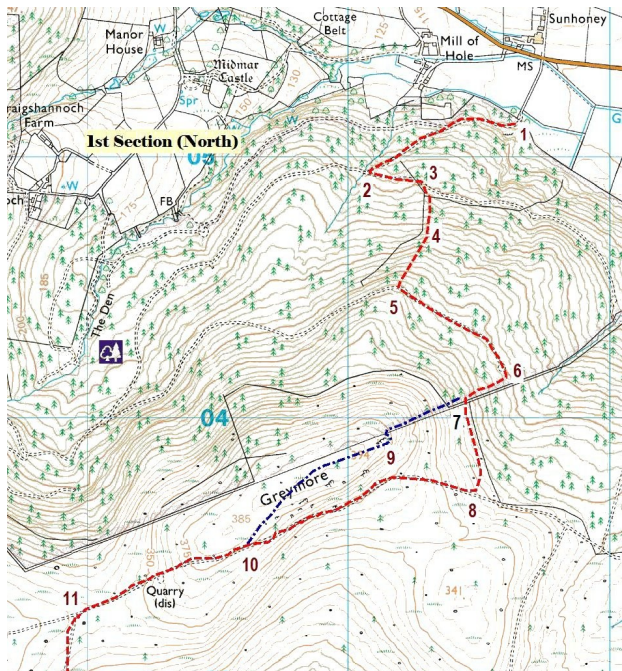
Amazingly, although I have lived in Aberdeenshire for more than 30 years I have never visited Raemoir Hotel. When I mentioned this to one of my neighbours, we both agreed it would be a good thing to find a route from Midmar, over the Hill of Fayre and finish at the hotel. I spoke to several others to see if they could recommend a route and everyone said, yes it is possible but when we got the map out nobody could tell me exactly how you get out of Midmar Forest on to the top of the Hill.

The good news is that on a glorious day, with temperatures hitting 12 degrees under a blue sky, we did find a workable solution and this is what I describe below, if it is not your favourite route my apologies in advance, I would be pleased to receive any feedback on better alternatives.

The vertical climb out of Sun Honey car park is about 900 ft (300m) and in several places straight up the contour, so be prepared in the first mile to take it steady. The distance is about 6.5 miles so this is a much longer walk than usual so carry provisions, an OS map, a compass if you have one and wear sturdy footwear. We took about 4 hours to complete the route in one direction that included a stop for lunch at the top of Greymore, we arranged for a lift to get back from Raemoir to Midmar. I did investigate bus options but sadly this turned out to be completely hopeless.

Inset Map 1st Section

- 1) Park in the Forestry Commission car park at Sun Honey, walk uphill from the car park following the main forestry road.
- 2) At the T junction turn left (ESE). After a short distance, where the forestry road is rising, but before it levels out again, you will have plantation forest on your right (S).
- 3) As the younger trees give way to more mature ones you can turn south off the forestry road but to confirm the location look for the end of an old stone wall running away up the hill along the old/new tree boundary. This wall starts about 10 yards from the road so look closely into the trees to find it. Walk up to the end of the wall and follow it uphill



leaving it on your right hand. Within 50 yards you will find a wide but overgrown foresting machine track that makes the walking easy even if the climb is steep.

If you cannot find this turn off, the alternative is to follow the main forestry road east to Greymore Burn where you should then turn right (SW) and head up slope leaving the burn and then a wall on your left hand until you re-join this walk route at six (6).

- 4) As you start to emerge from the trees the old wall that you are following will swing away to the SW but you must keep climbing straight up the contour in a SSW direction following the forest machine track.
- 5) When you reach the forest road turn left (E) and follow this until you reach what can only be described as turning circle for giants! Proceed directly across the circle and into the trees.
- 6) When you come up to the estate boundary wall, turn right (SW) and walk up the hill through the mature trees keeping the wall on your left side, on the other side there is mature plantation forest.
- 7) As the mature plantation forest (on the other side of the wall) finishes, look carefully at the wall where you will find a stone stile embedded into it and a second wall running away at right angles NNW to SSE.

At this point you have a choice of route as illustrated on the inset map.

The Blue Route (via 9 and missing 8) goes straight ahead from where you are now, up the hill keeping the main wall on the left but the climb is steep and in places difficult because of the uneven ground. The Red Route (via 8 and missing 9) crosses the wall using the stile and follows an easier route along a second wall (SE) to join a shooting access road.

- 8) Following the Red Route along the wall running NNW to SSE and as the shooting access road comes into view you can swing south away from the wall and join the road at any point, the walk through the heather to do this is not too challenging.

On joining the shooting access road turn right (W) and proceed up-slope.

- 9) Alternatively to follow the Blue Route, climb straight up the contour keeping the main wall on your left hand until you find a place where the wall is broken down and you can cross it easily and proceed up to the Greymore summit cairn. Provided the weather is clement, on balance I prefer this option because of the magnificent view you will get from the top. After leaving the cairn, to re-join the Red Route, walk SW then SSW to turn down slope at any convenient point.
- 10) The routes combine again, proceed in WSW direction on the shooting access road.
- 11) This is OS map grid reference NJ 69974 03255, the junction is very clear and you see it as you approach downhill and also, if you look away to the SW you can see the forest road leading to Raemoir running away around the east side of Brown Hill.

At the junction turn left (S) and proceed down-slope where you pass the remains of an extraordinarily well built croft/shelter on the left side of the road. This is clearly shown on the OS 1:50K map but not so obvious on the OS 1:25K.

Continue on this forest road for 2.5 miles to walk around to the south side of Myrie Hill.

Inset Map 2nd Section

12) You come up to Raemoir quarry very suddenly after a sharp right hand bend in the track. At this point you must have children and pets under control because the quarry edge is vertical and NOT protected.

Warning : I doubt anyone could be rescued successfully if they were to fall over the edge of the quarry into the water.

13) Walking downhill from the quarry, on your right you pass a cottage with magnificent views and then a header pond before reaching a group of farm buildings called The Green.

14) Pass through the farmyard between the buildings and then turn immediately right (W) on to a well defined, tree lined path.

15) After you have passed the house with 1954 on the front and a group of dressed stone farm buildings the path becomes a well defined track and turns south for a few yards.

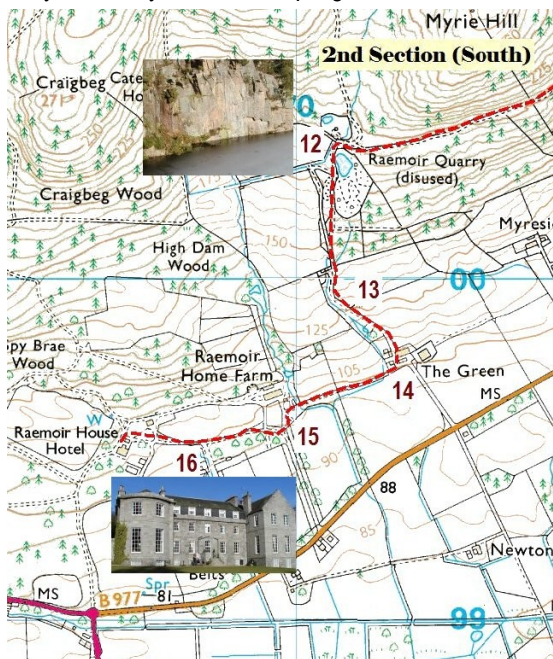
At this point there is a confluence of paths so turn sharp right (W) and then almost immediately at the next junction go straight ahead ignoring the turn north again on to the lesser path and continue west.

16) At this point your path joins the back drive up to Raemoir house so carry straight on (W) to arrive at the hotel that will come in to sight through the trees as you walk.

We were given a very pleasant reception by the staff in the hotel who opened up the door from the bar into the gardens for us so we could sit outside, supping pints of Deeside Brewery Macbeth beer (bottled) in the sunshine, truly, we could have sat there all afternoon. There is a place to leave dirty boots and gear in the main entrance porch if you go inside.

Our route map is not scaled so take OS Landranger Map 38, with you for additional reference information. This is a long walk and hence we have split our inset map into two parts missing the middle section to save space on the page. The total area is enclosed by Eastings NO69 to NJ73 and Northings NO99 to NJ06.

Article by Rob Ferguson : if you have comments/feedback on the content my contact details are Tel 01330-830038 or eMail rob.ferguson@aiexps.co.uk.



Seeds of Hope, and Promiscuous Veg!

After last year's apocalyptic growing season, we're full of hope, renewed enthusiasm, and enjoying the feel of compost in our hands again! All gardeners will understand the excitement of the start of the year, when we sort through our packets of seeds, reading notes we made from the last few years, and deciding exactly how many, and which varieties of seeds to sow.



Planning what to grow, and when, requires a certain amount of crystal ball gazing ... if you'd like two onions a week, 50 weeks of the year (assuming two weeks holiday), how many seeds do you need to sow? Easy! 100! But how many won't germinate, and how many won't survive because (a) the cat trampled on them, (b) the automatic vent in the greenhouse failed to open on the hottest day of spring, or (c) the crows pulled them out in the hope of finding something tasty to eat underneath? So, perhaps it's safer to sow 150 seeds?

Now, multiply that set of quandaries by all the varieties of veg that you're planning to sow, and it becomes especially tricky for those that can't be left to harvest at the same time, then store through the winter. Take cauliflower ... we want one per week from August to March, so approx. 30 caulis ... but if you sow them all on the same day, you'll probably find that they're all ready in the last week of July, and by mid August, the florets have expanded and two weeks later they're flowering. Oops!

Or lettuces ... we'd like one per week from June onwards ... so if we sow two per week we should be OK. But then we get three weeks of cold dark weather, followed by six weeks of brilliant sunshine and warmth (we can always dream!), and suddenly we have 18 lettuces ready on the same day! One more week, and they're all flowering, with leaves that are too bitter to eat. Disaster!



Now, multiply the above complexities by 100 or more families, all needing a variety of veggies in their box each week, and you start to understand why being a Vital Veg grower requires nerves of steel and a large dollop of hope and optimism! Judicious use of F1 vs open-pollinated varieties can help. F1's tend to produce vegetables of more consistent size or may ripen at the same time, whereas the open-pollinated varieties tend to exhibit more variation in size, ripening, and overall characteristics. F1's are very expensive, and you can't save the seed from your crop and get similar plants from sowing them the following year, as they're created by crossing two distinct parental types to create a certain type of offspring, so their seeds won't 'come true'.



Open-pollinated types have great potential, because we DO have the option of selecting the best plants throughout the growing season, leaving these to set seed, which we could save and gradually produce our own 'landrace' varieties, uniquely suited to our soil and climate. This sounds ideal, until we realise that many vegetables are quite promiscuous, and will readily cross pollinate to produce seeds that have little similarity with their parent! Brassicas (cauliflowers, cabbages etc) are particularly problematic, AND they're biennial, so it would take two growing seasons before we were able to harvest seeds.

So, as in life, we have to compromise, and use both F1's and open-pollinated varieties! To follow our adventures through 2013, join us at facebook.com/vitalveg, and share your gardening stories with us!

Anne Taylor, Vital Veg, North Tillydaff, Midmar, anne@vitalveg.co.uk

Image 1. Wendy sowing the first of 15,000 F1 leek seeds. Image 2. Home-saved open-pollinated pumpkin seeds. Image 3. Home-saved open-pollinated pepper seeds

Midmar Gardening Group

Well, the sun is shining at last and we gardeners are venturing out of doors into our gardens. Speaking personally, after about 30 minutes a hot coffee (maybe even something stronger!) is needed. Hopefully, we have seen the last of the snow, but who knows?

We finished 2012 with a beautiful dinner at Maryculter House Hotel and despite the ghastly weather most of us managed the journey.

We have a very interesting syllabus this year, beginning with a Quiz organised by our Chairman, Beverley Mackinlay. This takes place on the 20th March and should be good fun. Then on the 3rd April we have a much looked forward to talk on Squirrels by Stephen Willis, an authority on the red squirrel. We have made plans for outings to Fyvie Castle Gardens, Glen Tannar Estate, Gardens at Rhynie - all delightful places to visit.

Margaret Chapman, a stalwart member of the group intends to get busy soon in the community garden at the Hall. We are hopeful that some of you Midmar folk might be interested in joining Margaret as she makes the garden a showpiece for Midmar. If so please 'phone her at 833 707 so she can include you in the planning of the work to be carried out.

If the weather deteriorates again here is something which might make you smile -

"A perfect June day is when the sun is shining, a soft breeze is blowing, birds are singing and the lawn mower is broken." (from John Andrew's book of quotations.)

All outings etc. will be posted on the Notice Board and everyone who would like to come along will be made very welcome.

Happy Gardening.



Midmar S.W.R.I.

An exciting evening was enjoyed on the 9th of January when we were all whisked away to hot and sunny Brazil to attend the wedding of Isabel's son Gary. Isabel had wonderful pictures of the country, the people, the architecture and of course 'The Wedding'. The Groom wore his kilt and his Bride looked lovely. Isabel's outfit had a touch of tartan and somehow Strip the Willow was danced and enjoyed in spite of the heat. February's meeting was Taste and Try but this had to be cancelled due to inclement weather.

Our next meeting is on the 13th of March when Mr Bob Laing is to give a talk/slide show on British Birds. This is followed in April by our business meeting and then the final item on this year's syllabus is a talk by Laura Downie on her career in Welding on the 8th of May.

All these meetings are held at Midmar Village Hall and commence at 7.30pm. Please feel free to sample one of our evenings, everyone is welcome.



Midmar, Monymusk and Cluny Community Council

The last meeting of the Community Council was held on the 10th of January 2013. The next meeting is to be at Midmar Village Hall on the 21st of February commencing at 7.00pm. Minutes of meetings and a list of dates and venues are displayed on the notice board outside Midmar Village Hall. Anyone may attend meetings and can raise questions about local issues and problems. Recent meetings have included discussions regarding the erection of Wind Turbines in the area. Midmar Community Councillors are; Richard Fyffe 01330 833295 and Judith Stokoe 01330833719.

Wind turbines and Midmar

We all recognise the need for renewable energy. Around 10 GW of capacity has been earmarked for offshore wind development off Scotland's shores. That is the equivalent of 20,000 Midmar Tamnagorn wind turbines. Which poses the question what real value will industrial sized turbines in Midmar achieve and is it worth sacrificing our unspoilt landscape and environment?

Most people probably do not consider domestic sized turbines to be an issue, they are generally sensitively sited and directly reduce the energy consumption of their owners. However some current Midmar planning applications if approved will result in turbines the height of 15 double decker buses forever changing the sensitive and unspoilt landscape we all enjoy and cherish. The visual and cumulative impacts will be significant. Health and environmental concerns are real and documented.

Applications in planning:

Tamnagorn Midmar, 67 m/220 ft Turbine Planning reference: APP/2012/4215

Littleton Sauchen, 79 m/259 ft Turbine Planning reference: APP/2012/3532

Upper Sauchen 51 m/167 ft Turbine Planning reference: APP/2012/2162

Approved applications:

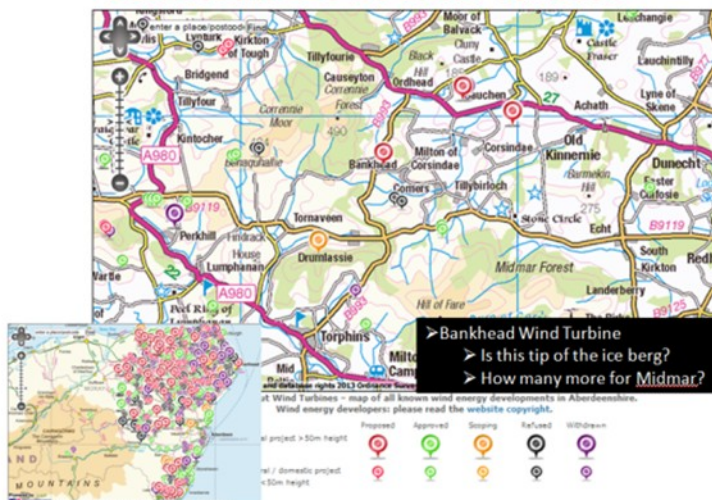
Auchmore Midmar 45.5 m/149 ft Turbine Planning ref: APP/2011/0216

Auchorie Midmar, 2 x 45.5 m/149 ft Turbine Planning ref: APP/2011/3257

In many respects we are simply custodians of Midmar and we need to remember that it is not just about you and I, decisions being taken now will impact on our children and our children's children. These are important decisions and it is right that we should consider the legacy that we are leaving behind. We need to invest in renewable energy but sensitive siting is important.

We do need to invest in renewable energy and the potential for offshore wind is huge and exciting, but if you feel that the Midmar wind turbine proposals are something that causes you concern, you can email Aberdeen Council Planning Dept, Aberdeenshire Councillors and MSP Denis Robertson to make your opinion known.

Bankhead 220 Ft Wind Turbine





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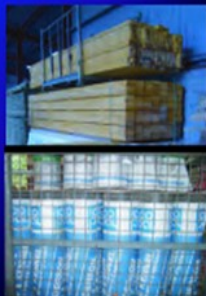
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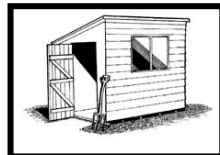
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