

Midmar Newsletter

Published by the hall committee on
behalf of the Midmar community
Summer Edition
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Community Response to COVID 19

As everyone will be aware just before Lockdown an enthusiastic and proactive group of Midmar, Comers and Marionburgh residents delivered information to every household in our community. This information included contact details in case anyone needed help with shopping, collecting medication, walking the dog or just a chat. Of course this offer still stands. We also gave information on preparing for Lockdown which we hope was helpful...I'm not sure at that time we really knew what that would actually entail!

So, here we are now in the full throes of lockdown and this will mean different things to different people ranging from those who have been directly affected through illness, those working in essential services, those 'coping' with home schooling and those feeling a bit stir crazy. These are odd times indeed.

However one of the ways our community has risen to the challenge is arranging deliveries of supplies to 'The Caravan' at Uppermuir Steading. This really arose from an awareness that small local businesses would not longer be able to go to markets, getting supplies for us would be more problematic and to reduce the need to travel longer distances (and to the supermarket) thereby facilitating social distancing. Orders are delivered to The Caravan then you pop round and collect, wiping down with the wipes as you go. We have been communicating largely by the Nextdoor app so would encourage you to download that and join (we have 203 members in our group of 'Midmar Comers Marionburgh'). We have been running this from the first week of lockdown and we are now getting into a nice little delivery rhythm....even Charlie the dog is used to it!

Following some high level negotiation with companies The Caravan now receives regular deliveries from the, butcher, fruit and veg folks and the fisherman (although our local fish van has now resumed). The system is slightly different for each product:

Baker: The Highlanders Bakehouse did an excellent job delivering to the caravan, however, due to an increase in the range of offers to now include frozen products as well as bakery and flour, they now can deliver straight to your door. This is ordered and paid for online www.thehighlandersbakehouse.co.uk.

Butcher: We have negotiated that you can phone Graeme Barber butcher in Alford (01975 562400) by 10am on Tuesday and one member of our community collects all the orders on Wednesday morning delivering to the caravan. Your order will have a price on it (you can't get a price when you call as things need weighed) and you go online to pay (RBS, 83-15-14, 00109695). Cool boxes are in the caravan so your meat will remain cool until you collect it. The butcher also has other products (tins, tomato sauce etc) so it's worth asking. Please tell the butcher that it will be collected on Wednesday for Midmar.

Fruit and Veg: This is ordered from TPS (<http://www.tpsfruitandveg.co.uk>) - they are also on facebook. They are only taking telephone orders just now (and only for boxes but you can exchange an item in a box if you wish) and have asked that only one person places an order so Natasha O'Brien does this every Tuesday so orders to her by Monday 8pm please. Her number is 07713752541. You will be invoiced and pay online. Delivery days are a bit erratic but, at the moment, seems to be Wednesdays.

Fish: We have an agreement with Granite City Fish for delivery to The Caravan. You place your order by calling them on 01224 587065 and pay online after delivery. Please remember to say you required delivery to the Caravan in Midmar and again, cool boxes will be out for deliveries. We have had less orders since our own little fish van has now resumed his route. If you want the fish van to come to your house please ask and I'm sure he will include you in his route. He does come to Uppermuir steading so we can catch him and ask him to pop in to your house.

These companies are very grateful for our delivery system as they have been inundated with orders and it is attractive to them to have one delivery point for a number of orders. They have been very complimentary about this community initiative.

Lastly, we have registered as a community support with the COVID 19 Resilience Hub so if anyone contacts them from our community requiring support they will forward the request to us. If you know of anyone in the community who could do with some support (or indeed if you feel you need some) please get in contact...we also have access to a small pot of money if needed. This support is wide ranging so please don't be shy in coming forward and any request will be in confidence. Please contact Fiona Woodhead on 07909563042.

If anyone has any ideas on others things we could be doing to support the community please get in contact.

Take care, be safe, be happy and a very heartfelt thank you to everyone who has supported this project. We have most definitely stepped up...big party in the hall at the end of all this...perhaps next summer!

The COVID 19 Midmar, Comers and Marionburgh Community Group.





Farming during Lockdown

The farming community does not stop during any pandemic, work carries on regardless, every day. Livestock have to be fed and straw bedded, calving and lambing during spring months which can be day and night.

All calves and lambs are identified with ear tags and calves have passports with their individual number, date of birth, breed, dam and sire ear number. (no photograph so far!!!!) This is all for traceability.

Sowing of crops too, barley, oats. wheat, oil seed rape potatoes, turnips (swedes) and many other vegetables for human consumption.

Fertilizer is sown on grass fields to encourage the growth as cattle will be going out from their winter quarters to graze which makes the work load a little easier during summertime.

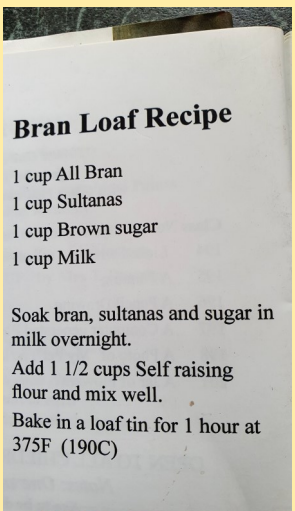
We had plans to repeat a visit to Mile End Primary school but sadly this was cancelled and the children were so disappointed, they love the contact with the lambs and feeding them. Lorrie (Bogindhu) takes one of her chickens and the joy for the kids to have the contact is so rewarding.

Hopefully next year!!!

Farming folk all across the country are so fortunate and thankful to be able to carry on as normal doing the job they love providing food for the nation.

Because Flour was so hard to find this is a Recipe to try, very good spread with butter when warm. Any dried fruit can be used like raisins, dates etc.

Isabel Birse



Bran Loaf Recipe

1 cup All Bran
1 cup Sultanas
1 cup Brown sugar
1 cup Milk

Soak bran, sultanas and sugar in milk overnight.

Add 1 1/2 cups Self raising flour and mix well.

Bake in a loaf tin for 1 hour at 375F (190C)

Echt & Midmar Churches

Perhaps, like me, you've stumbled across these words by American, Kitty O'Meara: 'And the people stayed home. And read books, and listened, and rested, and exercised, and made art, and played games, and learned new ways of being, and were still. And listened more deeply. Some meditated, some prayed, some danced. Some met their shadows. And the people began to think differently.

And the people healed. And, in the absence of people living in ignorant, dangerous, mindless, and heartless ways, the earth began to heal.

And when the danger passed, and the people joined together again, they grieved their losses, and made new choices, and dreamed new images, and created new ways to live and heal the earth fully, as they had been healed.'

The words were penned in the last few weeks during the pandemic, and since they appeared, they've been shared widely on social media, with Kitty O'Meara even being hailed as the poet laureate for our time. For some people, the sentiment she expresses speaks to that human desire in so many of us, which, in the face of unspeakable suffering, longs to identify and to hold on to each and every glimmer of promise.

From far reaching threat and disaster to growing waves of collaboration, joint enterprise, solidarity and support, O'Meara's words seem to capture something of the moment, as well as a fundamental hope and desire for positive change in the world.

Whatever our perspective on O'Meara's words, may we never stop dreaming dreams and seeing visions of better times to come and of what the world may yet be. As the writer of John's gospel reminds us, 'The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.'

Sheila Mitchell



Dear fellow residents,

As I attempt to gather my thoughts, regarding what I might say in this letter, I am determined to do my best to be 'upbeat'. Here we are, seven weeks into lockdown, still facing a daily barrage of statistics and figures that make grim reading. During these weeks we have had to change our routines and indeed our lifestyles. We have been told what we can and cannot do; where we can and cannot go. No visits to family and friends, no shopping expeditions into town, no meetings for coffee or lunch, no cinema or theatre. We can't even have a haircut!

Yet much has happened to keep our spirits up. Think of Captain Tom and his remarkable venture to raise £1000 for the NHS. Within days he became a champion of the people whose efforts raised in excess of £30 million! Then there are the hundreds of thousands who volunteered their services to help the NHS. Along with so many other individuals they are an inspiration to us all. As are folk in communities across the country. There has been a groundswell of acts of kindness and care as people in communities have reached out to help and support those who, because of age or infirmity, have to endure isolation on their own. This has been mirrored here in Midmar. We are grateful for all that has been done and thank those who have taken the initiative for all their efforts. They too are an inspiration.

On Friday of this week we celebrate the 75th anniversary of VE day. No doubt it will be a rather strange affair. No processions, no flags or bunting, no fly pasts, no concerts to celebrate the event. All we shall have are memories of what was endured to gain the peace people craved for. The war was over and done before I was born but I remember growing up surrounded by family members who had participated in it and others who stayed at home doing their bit for the war effort. Like many of you I have memories shared and stories told.

For those who remained at home the war years were a worrying time. The threat of bad news from the front and fear of bombing were constant. Yet through it all there were countless incidents which told of people's resilience and endurance. Some time ago I came across the story of a man whose shop had been bombed and left a ruin. As he stood among the debris the next morning, he set up a table and placed above it a sign which read: 'Everything lost except wife, children and hope. Business as usual tomorrow morning'. This is the spirit that has been shown time and again these last few weeks. It is what we all need to embrace if we are to replace the 'lockdown' with 'breakout'. When that eventually happens we should perhaps plan a special celebration for our community at the village hall.

Take care, keep safe,
Alistair McRobb, Hall Chairman

Cluny, Midmar and Monymusk Community Council

Although the regular meetings of the Community Council can not take place during lockdown both the Community Councillors and the Aberdeenshire Councillors are communicating by e-mails, telephone etc. There is a wealth of information and advice available and also funding for local residents suffering hardship from the impact of Covid 19. Aberdeenshire Council are still responding to emergency calls for road repairs etc. although things might take a little longer. Tillybirloch residents were very impressed when a telephone call regarding a damaged drain cover produced an able Council employee in two working days. The Community Council and Aberdeenshire enforcement officers are attempting to bring a successful conclusion to the current situation at Mill of Lyne. Unfortunately, this is one business apparently not in lockdown. Please contact Richard Fyffe tel: 01330 833295, Judith Stokoe tel: 01330 833719 or Ruth Wardle tel 07818290334 with any local problems or queries.

Cluny and Midmar Senior Citizens.

All Dressed Up and nowhere to go!!!!

Unfortunately all the plans made for our Summer Bus trip will be on hold.

We were to visit the Speyside Couperage, a stop at the Spotty bag shop and High tea at Boddam.

Our fundraising whists in March and April too were cancelled, with a bit of luck things can resume with the 4th Wednesday of September being the first whist.

Look forward very much to meeting up with everyone.

Isabel.x

The Men's Shed is obviously closed at the moment due to current restrictions, but we are bursting with enthusiasm to get up and running again and get some excellent chat going alongside with our activities. In particular we still need to remove the old shed carcasses but have been unable to get our teams together due to this 'bug', but will be on it as soon as we are allowed.

Bird boxes - Nigel Bennett came up with a great use for some offcut timber he had and produced self-assembly bird boxes for people to make at home, just in time for the nesting season. It's a fun project which will benefit wildlife and also provides some funds which we will put to good, local use. The first batch of 12 bird boxes have all been sold, and then there were some new requests, so Stefan put the kits back into production! Total count now is 18 sold, and we have a few left should there be any more takers. It's not too late to get the family making them, so please contact us if you are interested.

Tree planting - the Woodland Trust's trees have been successfully planted around the Hall. We had hoped this would be a Community activity but we just managed to scramble a few people together at the last minute before lockdown, so at least they are now in and growing. In spite of the dry weather most seem to be doing well and will eventually look excellent. They are a mix of native deciduous trees, including some nice cherry/gean along the embankment which will look a treat in Spring.



Beekeeping group - a couple of people have been keen to have their own hives. It's a great time of year for bees with the possibility of older hives producing opportunities for new hives across Midmar. If you are interested in finding out more please contact Susan Dutch via email sdutch@hotmail.co.uk

Community projects - the Men's Shed is looking for projects which will benefit the local Community, and so please do contact us with any ideas.

If anyone has garden equipment (mechanical or hand tool) that they need some assistance to get fixed, or serviced, we'd be happy to tackle it.

Also, if anyone is struggling with outdoor jobs that they need help completing, we are happy to see if we are able to assist.

Hopefully they will stack up and give us lots to do for the future.

If you want to find out more about the Shed and activities please don't hesitate to email us on midmarmensshed@gmail.com

Once all this is over we will re-convene and meet on a Tuesday evening in the Shed from 19.30 onward, and on a Friday morning from 10.00am - come along and have a cup of tea and discuss what you would like to do, even if it is just tea drinking.. **Everyone is welcome.**

Government Support During Covid-19

During these times of uncertainty, finding reliable, up to date and accurate information can be difficult, so we have summarised the main government initiatives to provide businesses and individuals with support to see them through this difficult time.

Bounce Back Loans

The Bounce Back Loan scheme helps small and medium-sized businesses to borrow between £2,000 and £50,000. The government has guaranteed 100% of the loan and there will not be any fees or interest to pay for the first 12 months. The government will work with lenders to agree a low rate of interest for the remaining period of the loan. The scheme will be delivered through a network of accredited lenders. Guidance on how to apply is given on the British Business Bank Website.

Business Support Grants

Businesses can now apply for grants to help with the impact of the coronavirus (COVID-19) via their Local Authority who will process grant applications. Councils will aim to make payment within 10 working days from receipt of a fully completed application.

From 5 May 2020, small business rate payers are eligible for a 100% grant on their first property plus a 75% grant on all subsequent properties.

Coronavirus Job Retention Scheme

Instead of making employees redundant, employers can furlough employees and apply for a grant that covers 80% of their usual monthly wage costs, up to £2,500 a month. The scheme has been extended by four months, to the end of October, backdated from 1 March.

Employers with employees on the payroll at 19 March 2020 who have subsequently put them on furlough can make a claim.

Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme

CBILS is a scheme introduced by the UK Government to provide finance to small and medium sized businesses which have been impacted by Covid-19.

The scheme is being administered through the British Business Bank.

A lender can provide up to £5 million in the form of:

- term loans
- overdrafts
- invoice finance
- Asset finance

Newly Self-Employed Hardship Fund

This fund is there to support those who had active businesses prior to the COVID-19 pandemic that are currently experiencing hardship. They must have become self employed on/after 6 April 2019 (with no self-employed income on their 2018-19 tax return). They must also have not been able to access support through other COVID-19 business support schemes. (For full details on eligibility see findbusinesssupport.gov.scot/service/coronavirus/newly-self-employed-hardship-fund)

Those eligible need to apply in their Local Authority area and may only apply to this fund once. The successful applicants are to receive a one-off payment of £2,000. If you receive the grant you can continue to work or take on other employment including voluntary work.

Rates Relief

The Government has released a package of support for businesses:

- a full year's 100% non-domestic rates relief for retail, hospitality and tourism
 - £10,000 grants for small businesses in receipt of the Small Business Bonus Scheme or Rural Relief
 - £25,000 grants for hospitality, leisure and retail properties with a rateable value between £18,000 and £51,000
- 1.6% relief for all properties, effectively freezing the poundage rate next year

Self-employment Income Support Scheme

The UK Government will support self-employed individuals (including members of partnerships) whose income has been negatively impacted by COVID-19 through the Self-employment Income Support Scheme. The grant will be 80% of the average monthly trading profits, paid out in a single instalment covering 3 months, and capped at £7,500 altogether. If you receive the grant you can continue to work, start a new trade, or take on other employment including voluntary work. The grant will be subject to Income Tax and self-employed National Insurance.

SME Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund

The Pivotal Enterprise Resilience Fund is ideally for businesses that can play a critical role in supporting Scotland's recovery but need some immediate support. It might be to get back up and running or to maintain or diversify your current operations. It will take up to 10 working days from application and appraisal to funds being released for approved applications.

Universal Credit and Statutory Sick Pay

To make sure people in work can take the necessary time off to stay at home if they are suffering from coronavirus or to prevent its spread, changes have been made to Statutory Sick Pay and how Universal Credit supports self-employed claimants. This includes:

- people who cannot work due to coronavirus and are eligible for Statutory Sick Pay will get it from day one of their illness
- Statutory Sick Pay will be payable to people who are staying at home on government advice, not just those who are infected

self-employed claimants on Universal Credit who are required to stay at home or are ill as a result of coronavirus will not have a Minimum Income Floor (an assumed level of income) applied for a period of time while affected

The government wants to ensure businesses are supported to deal with the temporary economic impacts of an outbreak of coronavirus. Employers with fewer than 250 employees will be able to reclaim Statutory Sick Pay for employees unable to work because of coronavirus. This refund will be for up to 2 weeks per employee.

The advice and schemes available are ever changing. You can stay up to date with information at [FindBusinessSupport.gov.scot](https://findbusinesssupport.gov.scot). This article was prepared by Grampian Accounting and is based on current

information available at the time of writing.

Follow our blog: www.grampianaccounting.co.uk/accounting-blog/

Finlay's Nepalese Adventures

So I'm home. After seven months in Nepal I've unfortunately had to return to the UK due to the repatriation of all Project Trust volunteers. So while I'm sitting here with very little to do I thought I'd update everyone on what I've been up to.

As you may know, for the last seven months I have been living in Nepal teaching English in a small rural village. The village where I was living is called Kalegaun. It sits on a small flattish area, surrounded on two sides by the Bheri river and in the bottom of a deep valley. The morning views were always stunning across the river to the steep forested slopes, or down on the paddy fields of the neighbouring village.

The school had ten classes with ages ranging from 5 to 18 years old. Class sizes varied greatly with the younger years having about 10 students to a class and older classes holding over 30 students. To begin with the language barrier made teaching quite difficult, but as my Nepali and teaching skills improved everything became easier, not just the teaching but we no longer had to be herded by our friends through the hundreds of mini festivals that popped up without warning. We would generally realise there was a festival about once a month when we showed up at school to find the whole place deserted in the middle of the week.

Another time we might find the school if not deserted then with a large chunk of the staff and students missing was when it rained. A morning with heavy rain or even just a cold, damp morning would have you greeted with maybe 15 students and 5 teachers in the whole school. Those days would be spent shivering in the staff room wondering where the 33 degrees heat from our first few weeks had gone.

But that was the exception rather than the rule, most of the time, especially in the late summer, autumn and spring, there was constant sun and it was warm enough to swim in the river, fueled by Himalayan melt water and during the first month this was a daily necessity just to cool down.

I have great memories of walking the Annapurna circuit, Tom carrying a drunken Nepali back to his house, even hunting desperately through the jungle outside our house for our new chicken who made a mad dash for freedom. And of course a delicious dhal baat (lentil curry), breaking up a bumpy, sleepless 19 hour bus journey. I don't quite have it in me to miss the busses but even so I can't wait to return and complete all the plans I had and of course to cook another meal in my homemade mud oven.





The Sounds of Silence

I read a children's poem the other day that really moved me. It made me think about how important sounds are to people of all ages. Also, how apt it is for us in lockdown when many of us are looking forward to hearing once again the sounds of our daily lives. The poem is called "The Sound Collector" by Roger McGough and tells the story of a stranger who calls on homes and takes all their sounds away in a bag, Sounds we all take for granted and maybe have even stopped hearing, like "The popping of the toaster" or the "crunching of the flakes ...the bubbling of the bathtub....and "the gurgling of the drain." I couldn't get this poem out of my head as I started out on my daily "lockdown walk" to Comers Wood and on through The Glen.

What are the sounds of Midmar? and what if they were taken away?

Jacket and boots on ,I started on my walk.

I didn't get very far before hearing the pe...eep of the forklift truck as it reversed at the Sawmill. Over the stile, through the squelching wet grass, up the field and into the woods.

It was a windy day, to say the least, and the sound of the wind whistling loudly through the trees was broken only by the crackling of the twigs breaking under my feet.

In the distance I heard the bleating of the lambs searching for their mothers.

The sounds I made began to change as I crunched my way under the huge Beech trees where the ground is covered with spent beech nuts.

As I made my way up through the area where the felling was done, I had to be alert. With many tree roots above ground, I could easily trip.

The woods were busy that day, with the constant 'coo..cooo' from the wood pigeons.

I was nearly knocked off my feet as a male pheasant suddenly appeared making a racket, crowing and running at speed down the hill....it must be Spring!

Through a meadow of violet and white flowers and I was on the safety of a wide path. All was quiet.

Now was the time for my poetry practice.

On my last birthday, I was given a book on poetry "Dancing by the light of the moon" by Gyles Brandreth. In it he advocates learning poetry for the over"60's". On my walks, I have conquered "Daffodils" by Wordsworth and am now in the process of learning Portia's Court speech from the Merchant of Venice, (cheating a little as I could remember some of it from schooldays). It's quite demanding with the "doths" and the "blesseths".

As I finished my rendition I heard a swishing sound and saw the branches of the trees swaying as two young squirrels played "hide and seek". Play was interrupted by the deep throaty sound of a tractor in the nearby field.

Down the road to Comers and over the bridge I heard the sound of the postie reversing from a delivery. Entering the glen, Daisy barked a welcome. Inside sheltering from the cold, she knew someone was on her patch...maybe she even knew it was me! I crossed the burn and listened to the water gurgling its way along the Glen.

On up the path with birds twittering in the trees, to the view of Bennachie.

I was just in time for the school playtime, but not this day... what was missing? The shrieks, shouts and laughter of the children. As I neared home and I heard the horn of the Fishman announcing his arrival. What a medley of sounds I'd encountered on my walk....and these sounds are the sounds I hear every day of lockdown. It took that poem to make me realise just how noisy our countryside can be! Back to the poem,....it ends with "the stranger, who never left his name, left us only silence, Life will never be the same."

How lucky we are here in Midmar to be able to enjoy all these wonderful sounds on our doorstep or better still by walking in our woods, enjoying even the sounds of silence.

By Ruth McRobb

Isolation, no Vacation

At the start of lockdown I thought this was going to be a holiday and I could sit on the sofa, watch Netflix all day and facetime my friends but when it started it was misery, it was like kids bootcamp because of home schooling.

When you leave school early to go to the dentist, you are so excited but being off school for weeks isn't the holiday I expected.

The sunny weather has helped us get outside and exercise, which is just as well because we are eating lots, the day just includes breakfast, lunch, dinner and endless snacks. We have been cooking, baking and learning new things. On a Thursday we clap for the NHS, I hope you join in too because they are doing a fantastic job.

There are certain perks of lockdown, its not all a bad dream.

You get to spend more time with your family, even though they can annoy you at times. I have time to play with my toys, we don't have to rush around to school and activities, you don't have to ask your teacher to go to the bathroom and we won't be getting a bad report at parents evening, mum and dad already know how we have behaved, there have been a few tantrums (not just by me and Logan) !

Thank goodness for the internet, facetime, skype and zoom.

How on earth could we have survived not being able to talk to our families, (now and again it's a little bit boring teaching my grandparents to use the internet) I have been using zoom for my drumming lessons and Brownies meetings as well as facetimeing my friends. I can't wait to see everyone in person.

I hope you enjoyed a glimpse into my lockdown life and remember Isolation is not a vacation!!
Faith Howitt P4 – Midmar School, 8 soon to be 9,

I hope I don't spend my birthday in lockdown!



A Bandodle Spring by Jessica Liddiard

I lay and daydream in the embrace of my bed
While the sun streams in like a river of gold
warming my face from over head
The day's spring beauty will be a sight to behold
I turn and curl while enjoying my slumber

Tip, tap, the noises start
Bang, slam, the crows awake
Thud, flap the wings on the window pane
Screech, scratch the talons rake
I roll and hide to continue my slumber

Like an angry cat I'm forced to wake
The noises of the sheep yowl and grate
Running round their golden track
The lambs begin to bleat and brag
Disturbing me from my peaceful sleep

Creak, crack, pop, bang
The tractor tumbles down the lane
Food's arrived and the lambs rejoice
For the farmer has come again
I sigh and dive so I can continue to hide

Soon enough the sheep join in
And once again the chorus begins
The spaniels begin to add their complaints
While the sheepdogs just sit and wait
I snarl and close my eyes

Cockadoodle doooooooooo!!
I sit up jolting and look around
The cockerel has come to town
I glare and continue to hate
Before snuggling down till late

The voices begin to roar
A chorus of dismal chords
The colours are serene and kind
Yet the noise is hardly sublime
I scream and snarl and turn around

Aaaaagggggghhhh!!
I hear from my mum who's had enough
We might as well all get up
After all it's 6 o'clock
What???
I turn and curl with the duvet over my head
I hate the springI just want my bed....Zzzzzzzz



Logan's Lockdown Diary

On the 20th of March my family and I all went into lockdown. At first, I thought, wow this will be a holiday, a great time to achieve something I couldn't before but then it turned into a rollercoaster of worry, confusion, laughs and overall odd family experiences.

My mum always tells me that there are pros and cons in every situation, the pros are that this gave me a lot of spare time, I felt like I was retired but the cons are I can't see my family and friends at all, thank goodness we have facetime and I can also talk to my friends on the game Fortnite.

Living in the country, I'm not exactly tight for space, we have been walking and cycling, I've been helping my dad flatten out the garden, removing all the sticks and stone. We also built a vegetable garden, got tadpoles, camped in the garden and toasted marshmallows on our camp fire.

I have my sister Faith to both annoy me and keep me company. We are mostly annoying each other but it is nice to have the company.

Our school uses an app called Seesaw and we get daily updates with our work. Home schooling has been tough, my mum is our new teacher, she needs a calculator and google to help with most of our questions and has Mrs Shepherd on speed dial, maybe when this is all over she should go back to school!!

Mum goes to Tesco once a week and always comes back ranting about people not going down the aisles in the right direction or not social distancing, she said "going shopping is not good for her blood pressure", oh mum!!

I hope by the time the next newsletter is out that we are back to normal, I hope you enjoyed my report, stay safe, stay healthy and have fun!

Logan Howitt
Aged 11
Midmar School





**Midmar Hall '100 Club'
Prize Draw
Membership Form 2020 - 2021**

**Midmar Village Hall
'100 Club'**
c/o Lynne Street
Auchintoul Steading
Midmar
Inverurie

For an annual subscription of **£15** you will be entered in to the monthly draw from June to April
First Prize: £30 Second Prize: £20 Third Prize: £10

The annual '100 Club' event to be held in May 2017 will have prizes as follows:
First Prize: £100 Second Prize: £50 Third Prize: £30 Fourth Prize: £20

(This form allows up to 5 members of the same household to enter)

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Postcode: _____

e-mail: _____

(your e-mail address will be used to advise you of the winners and to keep you in touch with '100 Club' and Hall events)

I enclose cash/cheque* for the annual membership of **£15** per person (payable to Midmar Hall '100' Club).

*Bank transfer details: Sort Code: 82 61 00 Account No. 00396512 (Please use your name as a reference).

**indicate payment method*

Signed: _____ Date: _____

**Please return completed forms to the above address as soon as possible
Tear off slip will be returned to you with your Membership Number.**

.....

Member Name(s): _____	Member No(s): _____
Member Name(s): _____	Member No(s): _____
Member Name(s): _____	Member No(s): _____
Member Name(s): _____	Member No(s): _____
Member Name(s): _____	Member No(s): _____

Signed: _____ Date: _____
(Organiser)

100 club draw

This year's winners of the big 100 Club drawer are:

1st Prize £100 - Ann Smith
2nd Prize £50 - Stewart Davidson
3rd Prize £30 - Leesa Souter
4th Prize £20 - Lynne Worth

Congratulations everybody!!

If you would like to be in with a chance of winning the grand prizes, along with the monthly draw for £30, £20 & £10 all you have to do is complete the entry form. Subscription is £15 a year and you are entered in to 12 prize draws!

All profits raised go towards the upkeep of the hall.

Needing a Takeaway Fix....

These local restaurants are all offering takeaway services. Let's give them our support.

You can find them on their websites, on Facebook or contact them directly for more details

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Echt Tandoori - Friday to Sunday - echttandoori.co.uk -
01330 860 601

Garlogie Inn - Friday to Sunday - 01224 743 212

Jaffs - Takeaway menu - 01330 860 808

Midmar School – Home Learning

We have now been home learning for six weeks. We miss seeing and interacting with the children face to face. Children are set daily literacy and numeracy tasks through an online app called Seesaw'. They are also set Health and Wellbeing and Learning across the Curriculum tasks which can be completed on that day or when convenient for children and parents. As teachers we recognise the challenges parents have of trying to work from home as well as supporting their children in their learning. Congratulations to both parents and children for engaging so well.

Here are some quotes from parents on home learning:

'My daughter and I look forward (sometimes with in-trepidation!) to opening up 'Seesaw' to get our tasks for the day then we sit next to each other working through the tasks hoping we get the same answer (and then she corrects me!). As time has gone on I have enjoyed going "off piste" to find alternative and different activities to facilitate teaching (the "make you own skeleton" was somewhat bigger than we anticipated!).

Before Lockdown there was little time (work/school/activities) for one to one time (often a little at bedtime or driving to activities) and when we did have time, as a parent, I competed against friends, iPads, toys, tv, homework. It has been a challenge balancing home schooling with work and there have been times when tempers and relationships have been strained however I have enjoying spending more time with my daughter and getting to know her better.

I have a much greater appreciation of not only the skills of teachers but the patience!

I'm not sure the feedback that my daughter was a joy to teach at the parents evening was entirely accurate.

'I thought I had quite a lot of patience but it turns out it's not enough to be a teacher!'

I have enjoyed spending more time with my daughter as we jointly and common goal of getting through the tasks for the day.'

'I realised that I don't actually spend that much time with my kids, between school, after school club and activities.

Home school initially was horrible, the kids didn't do anything they were told, they wandered off at every turn and the amount of times I heard "that's not how my teacher does it" added with the fact I couldn't remember half the stuff they were being taught.

Fast forward 6 weeks and we are in a routine, getting through the work and dare I say enjoying each other's company.

We have our bumpy days and I am looking forward to them going back to school but I will miss hanging out with them all day !'

'I think the question I have asked most is "Do you follow Mrs Shepherd to the bathroom to ask a maths question?" We think the real teachers have supported home schooling amazingly well and have made this difficult task much easier for us 'supply teachers'. On the whole, home schooling has been as much an education for me as the children and apart from a few disagreements, it has generally been an enjoyable experience.'

'When things go wrong, don't go with them.'

Some quotes and a poem from pupils:

'It was a good day for me and the lockdown is ok. I am glad that it is the weekend tomorrow!'

'I find I have less distraction working from home and I have started reading a lot more of my favourite books.'

'I get to see my pets when I am at home and I can play outside at break times on the trampoline with my sister.'

'Ruairidh says staying at home all the time is a bit boring and home schooling is a bit yucky but sometimes it's ok because I get to do school in my pyjamas!'

Lockdown

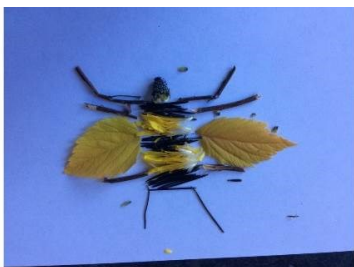
It's been hard,
It's been lonely,
Missing friends and family.
Mum and Dad have been
teachers!
At times, even preachers!

We have walked,
We have talked,
But most of all,
We have thought!

There have been tears
Of frustration and
Moments of jubilation!

The day will come when
We can be free,
Hug one another and
Be grateful for thee!

By Lachlan and Struan Criggie



Children in P1-P4 have been working on the theme of growing, related to the outdoor and children in P5-P7 have been focusing on the Human Body and Body Systems. Here are some examples of work they have done.

P1-P4 insects from natural materials found in their gardens and on walks and cycle runs. They have investigated how plants use water, sown seeds, made bug hotels and wormeries. Some have also been watching tadpoles hatch and grow into frogs.



Insects

Wormery

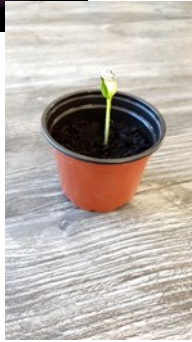


Bug Hotels

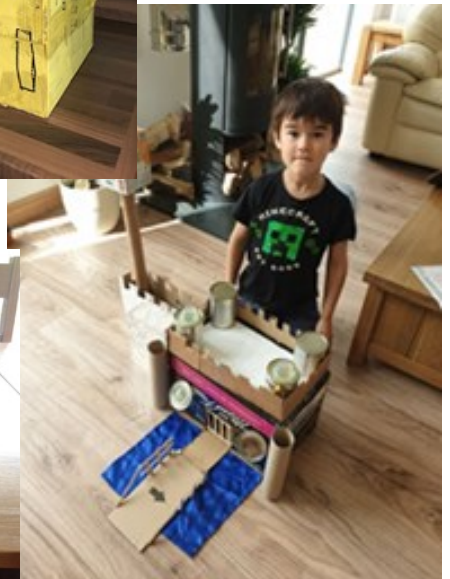


Colouring flowers

Growing Plants and Vegetables



Design and build a castle



Drawing familiar things from different viewpoints



Poem from the O'Brien Family

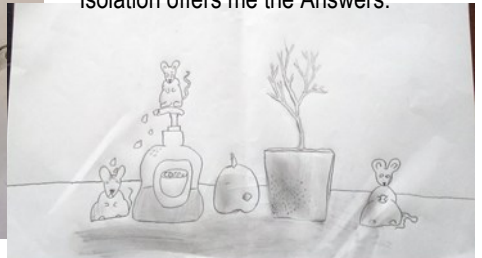
Isolated in our Home,
But not in our Hearts,
Isolated from 'The Virus',
But not from Nature.

Nature.
Our nourishment,
Our inspiration,
Our healing,
Our solace,
Our peace.

Isolation is ...
Time for Family,
Time for reminding and reconnecting to
our True Oneness,
The Unit,
We choose as our Family members.

Time to be,
Time to laugh,
Time to Love,
Time ... to observe our Fragile Fragrance
upon this Earth,
What is Your life all about?

Isolation offers me the Answers.



Learning how to set the table and napkin folding (P1-



The Human Body and Body Systems



Dissecting a heart



How the digestive system works



A model of the digestive system built on Minecraft



How long are our intestines?

We held a Virtual Fun Day on Saturday 2nd May, which included a toilet roll relay, children doing obstacle courses, beating the goalie. Counting how many netball goals they could score, baking, face painting and of course the necessary BBQ.



face paint



Thank You to our Secret Gardeners

Someone has done a fantastic job clearing the weeds and other growth at the roadside approaches. And some phantom gardeners have been tidying up the borders. A big thank you.

We had to do a bit of digging (pardon the pun) but I would like to thank Jackie, Jim & Hazel, Bea & Nigel, Geoffrey & Linda and anyone else in the community for all their efforts in the garden, it really is appreciated.

There is always plenty to do up there - tidying borders, weeding, even grass cutting. So if anyone wants to head up there and do something during their daily exercise please feel free to do so. You will need to bring your own gardening tools. Let Jim or Nigel know if you fancy



Midmar SWRI

Just to say " Keep calm and Coronna On " is not really adequate for the situation we find ourselves in at the moment. The S.W.I.is in lockdown like everybody else which means no meetings , no craft displays, no afternoon teas only telephone and computer information.

I cannot help thinking that the SWI survived two world wars but is temporarily halted by a virus.

However, we did manage to hold our annual "Taste and Try" evening where all members bring one of their favourite dishes for everyone else to taste. This was, as usual, a great success.

Another important event in the SWI calendar is the Bulb Show which was held on Saturday the 14th of March at Echt hall. There were some doubts, even then, as to whether it should be held in the current climate but it went ahead and was very successful.

Friday evening is when Echt hall is prepared for the show and it was made slightly more difficult than usual as our neighbour was involved in a car accident at Honeysuckle on her way home from work and my husband was called to help. This meant I was begging lifts from neighbours and fellow members, attempting to make a lemon drizzle cake at 11.00pm but it was Friday the 13th !!

Mike Stephen was to have been our March guest speaker but was unfortunately ill (not the virus) so an impromptu meeting was held with a quiz and plenty of tea , fine pieces and gossip. However, now we are in Lockdown like everyone else and can only look forward to happier times.

Judith Stokoe President Midmar SWI.

Newsletter Cover Winner

Congratulations to Jessica Liddiard for posing whilst her mother Amanda took a photograph of her lovely 'support our carers' rainbow made from recycled drinks cans.



Spring in Midmar

“The deep roots never doubt spring will come.” — Marty Rubin

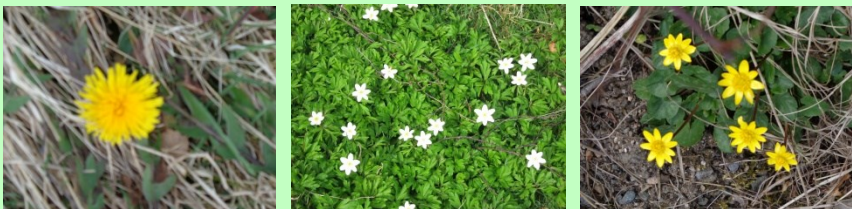


This is an unusual spring for the human population at the time of the 'lockdown', but it is apparent that nature, as manifested in plant growth and the habits of local wild life, obeying seasonal patterns, remains oblivious to human predicaments, and carries on in its own inimitable way. Even in this present global situation, perhaps, if we are able to notice this annual process of rejuvenation within the natural environment, we may gain some ephemeral comfort from the contemporary problems which beset our lives.

The birds can be heard in the early morning, heralding the start to the day- with absolutely no respect to the 'changing of the clocks'. Frogspawn appears in recently dug drainage ditches, and early blossoms appear on the blackthorn shrubs.

Already trees are manifesting their early buds, in distinctive shapes and hues of green, brown and black, and catkins appear on local hazel trees. Before long the gean trees will add their spectacular visual feast to the blossoming landscape and the gorse turns hillsides into a blaze of gold. Congregating wildfowl return to their spring sanctuaries, and the tapping of the woodpecker can be heard in the wood. Pheasants roam widely, at the start of the mating season, and the cooing of doves adds a tranquil note to our daily rituals. Hares can be seen racing along tracks and fields. The shrill cry of the buzzard circling the tall pines, can be heard in the forest.

If we cast our eyes downwards, towards the good earth, early blooms of dandelion, anemone, dandelion, celandine, to name a few, make a timid, and thankfully, predictable appearance.



In my humble opinion, echoing earlier quotations, as an observer to the manifestations of nature, even in this small corner of the planet, that, if left to evolve in its own manner, without human interference, it can glorify our environment.

Perhaps the current 'plague' may be interpreted by some as an example of what may happen when interference of the natural order of 'things' takes place. Perhaps lessons may be learned, that the health of mankind is contingent upon the environmental health of the planet.

‘Look deep into nature, and you will understand everything better’, Albert Einstein.

Faith Mackenzie

April 2020

Seasonal Veggie Tray Bake

This is an incredibly versatile dish and can be adjusted to suit the seasons (this is based on our May veg box from Vital Veg). As a main course the veggie tray bake is light yet filling at the same time. For extra protein add cubed goats cheese, feta, or sliced grilled Halloumi before serving. And for the extra hungry, a side dish of lentils or grains would go well with it too.

Alternatively, the veggies can be eaten as a side accompaniment for any meat or fish course.

Serves: 2

Cooking time: 30 mins

Ingredients:

1 small pumpkin, peeled, deseeded and cut into chunks

1 large sweet potato, peeled and cut into thick wedges

2 regular potatoes, peeled and cut into thick wedges

2 peppers (any colour), deseeded and cut into chunky slices

1 large courgette, thickly sliced

2 onions, cut into chunks

3 garlic cloves, finely chopped

½ tbsp whole grain mustard (more if you like mustard)

2 tbsp olive oil

1 tbsp lemon juice

200ml chicken or veggie stock

Salt & pepper

Handful of fresh parsley roughly chopped



Tip: if you are using different vegetables depending on the season always make sure that the hard or root vegetables go in for the first 10 minutes.

Method:

Preheat oven to 220C, 200C fan.

In a bowl mix pumpkin, sweet potato and potatoes with 1 tbsp olive oil and seasoning. Transfer to a roasting tin and put into the oven for 10 mins.

In a bowl mix together onions, peppers, courgette, chopped garlic with 1 tbsp olive oil, whole grain mustard, lemon juice and seasoning. Mix well to coat evenly. Add them to the pumpkin potato mix once these have cooked for 10 mins, making sure all veggies are spread into a single layer. Pour in enough chicken stock to cover the base of the roasting tin. Depending on size you may not need all the stock.

Roast for a further 20 minutes or until the veggies are lightly browned/ caramelised and cooked.

Scatter over the chopped parsley and serve. Hope you enjoy it! Beate Allerton

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If you would like to sponsor the newsletter prices are:

£10 for a business card size

£30 for a half page (landscape)

£60 for a whole page in colour (portrait)

The newsletter is non-profit making and is distributed four times a year to 230 homes throughout Midmar as well as being published on the Midmar Hall website, Midmarhall.com

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 Autumn Newsletter is 15th August this covers September, October & November events.

Please email Amanda at midmar.newsletter@hotmail.co.uk.

Thank you, Amanda

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Party timeShow time.....Tea timeMeeting room

Midmar Public Hall is available to hire....

Rates - £40 for half a day
- £75 for evening hire
- £500 for weekend hire

User group rates - £10 per hour for regular user groups meeting a minimum of once a month.

Deposit - a discretionary deposit of £250 is requested for some evening functions.

Facilities - Aside from the main hall & washroom there is an upstairs meeting room, back stage room and a kitchen.
We can offer a projector and screen in the main hall and the piano is available to musicians on request.



For bookings please call Mairi Black on - 01330 833371
or email her at - mairiblack@hotmail.co.uk




Are you a Landlord?

And aware that from October 2020 you cannot let out a property on a new tenancy agreement unless it has a band E or better Energy Performance Certificate (EPC) rating.


This is all to do with the Scottish Government's Energy Efficiency (PRS) Regulations being introduced this year.

Want to know more, need some impartial advice or an EPC renewal please contact your local Domestic Energy Assessor (DEA):

Midshore EP



**Domestic Energy Assessor
(for EPCs)**



Jim A Allan C Eng, M I Mech E

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"What's on in and around Midmar"

We also have our website:

<http://www.midmarhall.com>

Our website is always up to date on events and what's on at the hall and community.

You can also download extra copies of the newsletter.

Through the website you can contact us with any questions you might have about the hall, its use, hiring it etc. We look forward to hearing from you.

How do you like yours??

If you'd prefer to receive a PDF copy of your newsletter please let me know.

Email Amanda at midmar.newsletter@hotmail.co.uk with the email address you wish to provide and you can start receiving it electronically.

It is also published on the Midmar hall website midmarhall.com and can be downloaded from there.



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