

Midmar Newsletter

Published by the hall committee on
behalf of the Midmar community
Winter Edition
Issue 40 – Winter 2020





Midmar School has a 'new look' logo. Our original hand-drawn logo has been digitally updated; colour and a border have been added. We really like it and hope you do too.

We welcomed two new teachers this session. Miss Laura Dow joined us in August and is teaching P4-P5. Mrs Jayne Miller arrived in September and is teaching P1-P3. School ethos and wellbeing of pupils, staff and families have been the main focus areas since school restarted in August. Pupils, staff and parents have worked to update our school vision which is 'Working together to grow, inspire and achieve'. We have also revised our Values which are: Kindness, Trust, Honesty, Fairness, Resilience, Responsibility and Respect.

Scots Verse Competition

All children took part in this competition which was judged virtually. The winners were Frankie Morrison (P1-P4) and Faith Howitt (P5-P7).



Macmillan Cancer Support.

A total of £212.12 was collected and donated to the Skene Branch of Macmillan Cancer Support. Money was raised by; families hosting virtual afternoon teas and making donations, Katie Woodhead baking cakes and her mum selling them at her work and from our apple harvest. We sold apples, apple jelly and apple chutney to parents.

Harvest Assembly

Our collection for the Aberdeenshire Food Bank was very generously supported by families. Organisers of the Food Bank were extremely grateful to receive our donations and ask people in the community contact the school if they feel a family requires support. We can then pass the information to the Food Bank organisers.

Earl Haig Poppy Appeal

A short Assembly was held on Wednesday 11th November, which included 2 -minute silence. Video footage of Hazel Howie playing the bagpipes at the Midmar War Memorial was shown. Thank you to Rev. Sheila Mitchell for allowing us to use the video. A total of £43,30 was collected for the Earl Haig Fund.



Stop the dog poo

Stop allowing dogs to poo in our school grounds and the
road verges

You can get fined

£100

For leaving your dog's poo



Dog poo spreads diseases...

HOWDY Y'ALL!

Get ready to meet the Good, the Bad and the Ugly in the new Midmar Murder Mystery for 2021!

Look forward to joining the Midmar Players in a giant Wild West hoedown and help the Sheriff arrest the no-good varmint what's done the dastardly deed!



WATCH THIS SPACE.....

Newsletter Cover Winner

Congratulations to Isabel Birse for this editions cover photograph, what a fabulous sky!

Light at the end of the tunnel?

Midmar Hall during the Pandemic - in line with the Scotland's Strategic Framework for COVID-19

While we have been settling into life guided by the new COVID Protection Levels the hall committee have been considering how to safely welcome the community back through our doors using the guidance found in the link below.

(taken from the Scottish Government strategic framework document; <https://www.gov.scot/publications/covid-19-scotlands-strategic-framework/>).

While we are in level 2 we are hoping to work out how to enable the exercise groups to restart and we are considering how we might safely screen a movie.

Once we move into level 1 a new version of the community cafe and pub are something to look forward to. Reimagining life in level 0 seems too exciting to contemplate just now.

We have 2 hall users already up and running, Ruth Hardie has returned to give violin lessons on Monday evenings and Beauty at Eden is operating out of the upstairs room on Tuesdays and Thursdays, look out for the advert!

The hall benefits from a good wifi signal and 2 smaller rooms that can be hired as a work not-quite from home space. If anyone is interested in using the rooms please contact Mairi on 01330 833371.

We are also thinking about whether we can hold some socially distanced, outdoor, winter activities, in the months to come. Any ideas or thoughts please get in touch.



A Warming Tale

Around the start of 2019 the hall committee took the decision to seek funding to replace the boiler, which was coming up for its 20th birthday, and upgrade parts of the heating system in the hall. We sent off an application to the SUEZ communities trust which distributes funds via the Scottish Landfill Communities Fund which have been contributed by SUEZ recycling and recovery UK.

In November 2019 we were delighted to hear that we had been successful in our application and that we would be awarded funds to replace the boiler, renew and add to the number of radiators in the main hall and fit a state of the art heating control system enabling us to control each radiator remotely as well as set the heating to come on and go off from afar with the touch of an online keypad.

After a short Covid-induced delay works have been completed and we are getting to grips with hitherto unknown levels of thermostatic control.

The great hope for the new radiators in the main hall is that we will have a cosy warm hall without the noise of the old fan heaters which will allow all events, particularly on screen and stage, to be enjoyed more clearly and comfortably. The heating control system is already being put to good use as we are able to heat the smaller meeting rooms alone and without the need to pop in to check which radiators are on and which are off. The control system has many features that we will get to grips with over the next few months which should make heating the hall much more simple, economic and efficient.

We would like to say a very big THANK YOU to the SUEZ communities fund for supporting us and our dream team of professionals for making it all happen;

W.M.Stuart, heating and plumbing. Tel: 01975 562913
email: info@wmstuart.co.uk

Martin Begg, electrical services. Tel: 07708 577362
email: martybegg707@btinternet.com

Derek J Brown joinery ltd. Tel: 07759 882657
email: browndskb@btinternet.com

A log-fire-warm-welcome awaits at the Men's Shed

We're very happy now that we've got a wood stove up and running at the 'Shed' and we are now prepared for the winter nights - although we are not meeting currently due to the Covid restrictions. However, it will be a great meeting place once we're all up and running again.

Fantastic funding has also been received from the Co-op as part of their charity initiative an support for local communities, and the Shed is now able to progress a number of projects including the connection of electricity, which will remove the requirement to fire up the generator just to get the lights on.

We have also been most fortunate, thanks to a contact from Inverurie Men's Shed, in acquiring a number of tools and equipment together with a band saw. However pride of place will now go to wood-turning lathe that, following minor refurbishment, enable the crafting of things of wonder..

Some of the trees that were planted at the side and rear of the Hall in spring have survived remarkably well, and some have not, so we will be replacing some this winter. If you are gardening and plan to remove any small trees then do not hesitate to contact us and we can perhaps help remove it for you or collect it from you, to help create some more woodland near the Shed.

Welcoming vibe - the Men's Shed organisation was set up to encourage the getting together of men as it has been noted that many people develop health issues including loneliness and inactivity as they get older. Simply meeting other folk on a regular basis, having a cup of tea, a chat and maybe taking part in any activity has been shown to have really positive effect on your life.

Many of us at Midmar's Shed don't even admit to being older, never mind old, and there is a really positive vibe about the place. Why not come and try is one day? It may be a few weeks or months before we get going again, but it certainly adds some variety to my life.

Please contact us via midmarmensshed@gmail.com or call me on 01330 860462.

There is also lots of information on the website <https://midmar.uk>

David Smith
Chair of Midmar Men's Shed.

Echt & Midmar Churches

I remember hearing an academic from the university of Aberdeen talk about an early ascetic group in a desert area of Egypt, called the Desert Fathers and Desert Mothers. Beginning about 300 AD, these communities of men and women lived a monastic and contemplative life, whilst also weaving baskets and cloth as a means of supporting themselves.

The interesting thing is that writings and sayings from the time reveal just how much these men and women struggled with their vocation. They described, for example, the phenomena of the 'Noonday Devil' – the time of day when their concentration, motivation and ability to study, work, think and write seemed to be sabotaged by forces outwith their control. Of course it's no surprise that (somewhat predictably) the Noonday Devil would tend to rear its head across the hottest part of the day!

Yet the Desert Fathers and Mothers' solution to the affliction of the Noonday Devil was an intriguing and, it seems, practical one. When prayer and contemplation were difficult, they resorted, quite simply, to weaving their baskets.

It is an interesting story, and it offers fascinating insight into human nature and the importance of perseverance. For any of us, perseverance in the face of difficulty is surely a remarkable quality. When the going gets tough – as it can for us all – we probably have our personal equivalents of weaving baskets; of doing what has to be done in order to get by, or to get through those particular hours or days or months or years...and out the other side.

The last few months have brought incredible stories of resilience and perseverance, and of people showing remarkable strength and determination in the face of unprecedented difficulty. I wonder whether we should celebrate and prize more than we tend to, the dogged, day-to-day resilience that most of us try to embody, because whatever our journey, whatever the path we're on, our resilience is surely a shared characteristic of what it means to be human, and what it means to be in community, one with another.

Sheila Mitchell



Dear fellow residents,

During my last year at Primary School I sat opposite a poster pinned to the classroom wall. In an armchair sat a man and alongside him were his two children, a girl and a boy. Underneath the picture were the following words: 'Daddy, what did you do in the Great War?' This made me wonder if a similar question might be asked of us by future generations. Namely, 'What did you do during the time of Covid 19?' If such a question were to be posed, no doubt it would generate a galaxy of answers such as the following: I

In the early days exercise seemed to be of paramount importance. Some cycled, others ran, but most walked. Not only was it exercise, it provided an opportunity to encounter others and to engage in conversation, albeit at a distance. In the heart of the countryside this proved to be a welcome diversion. How fortunate we country dwellers were. Not so fortunate those in inner city areas, nor those who found themselves trapped in high rise flats.

Most activities, however, took place indoors. Many spent too long on the computer or in front of a television screen. Some read so much that they eventually tired of it. Some survived on a diet of sudoku, crosswords and jigsaw puzzles. Others took the opportunity to 'deep clean' their homes. Things that had been hoarded over the years were boxed up. Books, cd's, dvd's and knick knacks acquired so long ago. Clothes, long abandoned and no longer in fashion. The problem was that we soon ran out of space to store our unwanted items. Charity shops and Council recycling centres were closed; ready to go, our throwaways had to linger a little longer with us.

Eventually the lockdown was eased and we were able to engage in activities of a different nature. People left their homes to meet friends for coffee or lunch. A game of golf or outdoor bowls became the highlight of the week. Slowly things began to improve but within a relatively short time we began to face a new set of restrictions..... These are some possible answers to the question I raised earlier.

At the time of writing this a series of regulations are coming into force. Some areas are facing a new lockdown as shops, restaurants and pubs are having to close their doors.

Christmas appears to be under threat. No one can say with confidence how the festive season will be celebrated. Most are hoping that at the very least they will be allowed to spend time with their family on Christmas Day. Unfortunately it appears that the hall will play no part in festivities this year. This will disappoint many, especially so as the hall has had a major refurbishment over recent months. However, let's look on the bright side. Once we are over this pandemic the hall will, I am sure, come back into its own as a vibrant focal point for our community. 1 Looking on the bright side; make the most of the festive season.

Alistair McRobb, Hall Chairman

The approach to winter in Midmar

"I'm so glad I live in a world where there are Octobers." L.M. Montgomery .

Perhaps, in the current global circumstances, there is not really much reason to be jolly, but there are compensations. Nature, at this time of year, is trying to do its very best to cheer us up, and if we open our eyes and hearts to its visual treats, it will succeed.

There is a temptation, perhaps, as the equinox approaches; as the days grow shorter; as the weather becomes colder and wetter and windier, to take comfort in indoor pursuits. In the occasional bright day, however, if we venture over the threshold, to take a wander in the local highways and byways, the autumn colouration rewards us for our intrepidity in braving the great outdoors.

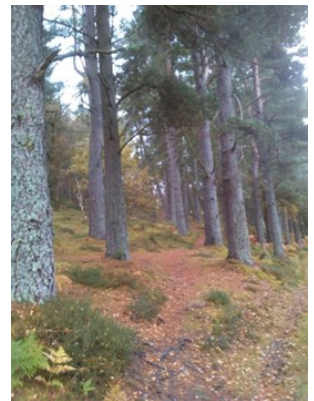


The canopy of local deciduous trees such as beech, rowan, birch, willow, ash and gale reveal their splendours at this time of year. Underneath our feet the carpet of leaves is testament to the season.



In some areas of local woodland are clinging on to their foliage, and the hillside is a visual melange of ochre, tan and grey, contrasting with the evergreens.

In other areas, the trees have abandoned the struggle to hold on to their foliage, and the picture is already wintry.



Whatever the season; whatever the weather; whatever is happening in the world, the local woodland paths beckon us to enjoy the mysteries of Nature they hold.

"Rebellious leaves going out in a blaze of glory, setting trees aflame in riotous color. Reluctant surrender to rumors of coming winter." — John Mark Green, Taste the Wild Wonder: Poems

Faith Mackenzie , October 2020

How about our Community trying to plant 1000 trees across Midmar in 2021?

As a Community why don't we expand upon the good work some landowners and farmers are doing for commercial/environmental reasons and plant even more trees in Midmar ourselves?

It might not save the planet but every little helps, and we will help develop a more attractive and wildlife-friendly community.

The Men's Shed has created a draft plan to be developed further by various people and groups in our area. It ranges from simple 'tree nursery' ideas based in people's gardens to create a stock of healthy, local trees for replanting, to the transfer of unwanted trees to new locations.

We are also in contact with the School to give access to trees for children to plant in their garden, or other appropriate place, complete with name-tag so that in years to come a particular tree can be known by that person's name. Imagine a towering oak or beautiful silver birch associated for generations with that child.

We are also interested in finding suitable locations in which to plant trees. This can range from a patch of unused garden or waste ground to replanting of previous copses or farm boundaries - with consent and permission of course.

If you would be interested in working with and helping develop this Plan, or offering areas of ground on which we can plant, then please do not hesitate to contact the Men's Shed via email midmarmensshed@gmail.com





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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



Sponsoring the newsletter

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 March 2021 edition is Feb 15th.

This covers March, April & May events.

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

Thank you, Amanda



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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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