



# Drumoak & Durris NEWSLETTER

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Welcome to the Spring edition of the Drumoak and Durris  
Newsletter.

## LATEST NEWS FROM DRUMOAK CHURCH

Earlier this week, we reluctantly reached a decision to temporarily suspend the



building work on the refurbishment of Drumoak Church. This was not an easy decision, but it was the right thing to do after a series of unforeseen setbacks.

As previously reported, we embarked on this project with the belief that we were working with a fundamentally sound building. It turned out this

was not the case, and it has led to a great deal more work than had originally been planned.

Drumoak Church is a listed building, and this has inevitably restricted the options we have for the necessary upgrading. Working through these restrictions is taking more time and effort than we had originally envisaged. However, we are fortunate in that we have access to professional advice not only from our own team, but also from the local authority and Historic Environment Scotland, as well as from the General Trustees of the Church of Scotland. In addition, we shall continue to investigate the potential for further funding towards the increased costs.

Unfortunately, we cannot realistically estimate how long we may have to suspend the work, but are we disheartened? Of course we are! Are we giving up? No! Although that would be the easy option, it wouldn't be the right choice. Would we like help? Yes, if you can offer any help or advice, please do talk to us. Is there anything else you could do? Yes, please pray for the team working on this project, for the church building itself, and its continued presence – in all its forms - in this community.

*Marion McNeil, Session Clerk*



*Message from the Manse* - Is the winter finally over now? Well I see the bulbs coming up, the snowdrops are blooming as I write this, and the daffodils are appearing. I even saw a lamb the other day when I was out driving. It seems to have been a cold winter but now spring is in sight and we are looking forward to the warmer weather.

I wonder what you are looking forward to this spring. Perhaps it is the land coming to life again; the fields sowed and the green shoots coming up. Is it the longer days, or a special family occasion planned for the summer? Spring is a favourite season for so many.

Spring also reminds me of Easter. Easter, a time when we remember that Jesus was crucified for us. A time to remember and celebrate not just his death but that he overcame death and rose to life again. It seems incredulous does it not? No human can come back to life again once they are dead, and yet that is just what happened. Jesus rose again and is with us, through the Holy Spirit and we too can have the promise of eternal life when we believe this.

One of my favourite Easter hymns is 'There is a green hill far away.' As a child I attended my local church which had a green mound in the surrounding grounds. I recall standing by that hill as a youngster, wondering if this hill was the green hill in the hymn. Only later did I work out all the words of the hymn and realise it wasn't. Cecil Frances Alexander wrote that hymn and it is generally believed to have been inspired by a visit Mrs. Alexander made to a sick young person. Had some awkward questions been voiced? We don't know but out of this visit came a beautiful hymn which tells the story of the hope of Easter.

Wherever you are and whatever you are doing this spring, may you know of the hope that Easter brings. As nature begins to waken again and the bulbs come to bloom, may you know that God is there all the time. Be assured of God's presence through all of life and know too, his unfailing love for you. So here are some of the words of that famous hymn. Now can you remember the tune?

*There is a green hill far away, outside a city wall,  
where our dear Lord was crucified who died to save us all.  
We may not know, we cannot tell, what pains he had to bear,  
but we believe it was for us he hung and suffered there.  
He died that we might be forgiven, he died to make us good,  
that we might go at last to heaven, saved by his precious blood.*

*With love in Christ, Jean Boyd, Minister of Drumoak-Durris Church*



**S.P.L.A.T.** is an informal group, supported by the

local Church. We meet every Wednesday during term time for a noisy time of musical fun between 2-00 and 3-15pm. We sing, play instruments, dance and march together. We explore music and begin to recognise contrasts in music, such as fast/slow and high/low. Some of the songs stay the same every week, and others frequently change. We aim to be a friendly group, where we can get to know one another through chatting during coffee time. At 2-45pm we serve the children juice and a snack, then they have a craft activity and we put out toys for them, while the adults have a welcome cuppa. Come along on a Wednesday afternoon, and join in the fun!

For more information, ring Mary 01330 811593 or Fiona 01330 811900

### **DRUMOAK-DURRIS CHURCH OF SCOTLAND**

[www.drumoakdurrischurch.org](http://www.drumoakdurrischurch.org)

Find us on 

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

You don't have to be a member of the Church to come along to any of our services, everyone is welcome to join us! Services are held at 10-00am every Sunday morning in Durris Church on the 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Sundays of each month, and in Drumoak Church Hall on the 2<sup>nd</sup>, 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays. Then why not stay and join us for refreshments. There is always a crèche facility for younger children, and the opportunity for primary schoolchildren to join in with some activities. Both Durris Church and Drumoak Church Hall have a wheelchair available for use on arrival.

#### *Some dates for the diary*



Communion Service Invitation  
Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> May 2018  
10-00am Durris Church  
6-00pm Drumoak Church Hall



**Messy Church** will be not be meeting in April because of the school holidays, but it will be back on Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> May at 5-00pm in Drumoak Church Hall, and on Sunday, 6<sup>th</sup> May at 2-00pm in the Log Cabin at Durris. Messy Church will meet for

the last time before the summer holidays in Drumoak Church Hall on 2d June at 5-00pm. See you there!!



**DRUMOAK-DURRIS FRIENDSHIP CLUB** is a place where people can come and meet one another while having tea/coffee and a selection of tasty tray bakes. **On Monday, 7<sup>th</sup> May, the Friendship Group is having fundraising OPEN AFTERNOON.** There will be stalls for Bric-A-Brac and home-baking for which donations would be most welcome. We look forward to welcoming you to both events. Any enquiries please telephone Amy 01224 732575.

*An invitation to join us at Jolly Tots!!*

**Jolly tots** is so much more than just a mothers and toddlers group, it is a coffee shop that is open to everyone. It is about making friends and having fun. We open at 9-30am until 11-15am every Monday morning during term time in Drumoak Church Hall. There are toys and activities for the children, tea and real coffee for the adults. We make a small charge on entry to help cover our costs. It's a chance to meet people, have a chat and a cuppa. So why not come along – you would be made most welcome!

For further details please contact Mary Robertson, telephone 01330 811593

***Craft, Coffee and Chat*** - We're delighted to say that the Craft, Coffee and Chat group are now meeting regularly in each other's homes. We have a small but lovely group of ladies who enjoy a coffee and a chat – and some knitting or crochet too! Of course, this group is not exclusive to women and we do hope that in the future, some men may come along too – perhaps to enjoy some painting or just for the coffee & chat.

Please come along if you are interested in either learning a new craft, sharing your knowledge with others or just bring your knitting and have a chat! Coffee and homebakes are provided. If you would like more information, please contact Norma Menzies on 01330 844542 or Marion Nixon on 01330 811663.





## Walking Group by Peter Richardson

Drumoak-Durris walking group is an informal group of people who enjoy getting out into the hills and the highways and byways around Aberdeenshire and Grampian. In 2017, we had about 20 walks of varying lengths and difficulties and by mid-February in 2018 we had had a walk along the river bank from Potarch to Banchory and another from Inverbervie to Johnshaven.

In years gone by the group used to more or less pause for the winter months but we were walking in December 2016 - to Gelder Sheil - and again in February 2017 when we walked the Correen Hills circuit. Some of the walkers went on their own in January round the Hills of Fare, Kierloch and Pressendye, the point being that the weather was indeed mild in 2017.

Most of the walks are between 16km and 20km with one or two approaching 30km. An example of a longer walk was from Gairn to Corgarff via Loch Builg, where Martin, our young German church intern, paddled and was suitably shocked at how cold the water was in July. It's an interesting walk without much of an ascent and mostly on excellent Landrover tracks. It passes by Inchrory House, an imposing and recently renovated building which might be described as being in the middle of nowhere. Another longish walk took us up Glen Derry to the Hutchison Memorial Hut which is an example of an excellent mountain bothie; it has saved, if not lives, then at least one walker's feet from frostbite.

The walks have been enjoyable and interesting. On the relevant maps and physically in the hills there are very many long-abandoned sheilings giving testament to the hard, hard lives that many people lived. And talking of sheep, one incident, amusing at the time, occurred on a short walk from the Clachnaben car park to the bothie at Charr. Although it was in April the weather was most unkind with wind and sleet. Towards the end of the walk we were adopted by a stray lamb which was clearly very unhappy and wet and cold; some of us went to the nearby estate cottages where someone said they would send out the shepherd and, in the meantime, the best thing was to put in inside our clothes, next to the skin and warm it up. Amazingly, there were no volunteers for this duty.

One of our most demanding walks was the Lairig Ghru via the Chalamain Gap. You can look up the journals and accounts of a hundred and more years ago and become curious



about the economics of (allegedly) taking eggs on foot from Rothiemurchus to Braemar. In days of yore the path was probably better than it is today as it is reported that the men of Rothiemurchus used to clear the fallen stones and boulders every springtime. We walked it on a warm day in late May, enjoying the sights of teenagers and tourists in the briefest of shorts and occasionally sandals skipping gaily over the boulder field. Ah, youth.

We climbed a few Munros; Glas Tulaichain, Mayar, Dreish, Meall Odhar, Glas Maol, Mount Keen, Lochnagar, Geal Charn, Carn Bhac. But we are not a Munro Bagging group; they just happened to be on the route .....

We're always looking for new people to join our informal group so if you want to get out and about give Ronnie Mitchell or Peter Richardson a call.

Some photos from the walks

Loch Muick 13<sup>th</sup> March



Glen Doll 14<sup>th</sup> August



Charr Bothy 24<sup>th</sup> October



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### Information from Councillor Sandy Wallace

On Aberdeenshire Council, Drumoak and Durris sit within the Stonehaven and Lower Deeside ward. The ward has four Councillors and many of you would probably differentiate us by party allegiance. Another way to look at us however is by areas of interest. Very (very) broadly, one way to consider us is as either localists or strategists. My Conservative Colleague, Cllr Wendy Agnew, and our Lib Dem colleague Cllr Sarah Dickinson, while never losing sight of the policy issues, focus closely on local matters. Wendy is also Kincardineshire Area Chair.

My SNP colleague, Cllr Dennis Robertson like myself obviously remains alive to local considerations, but as an ex MSP has a close interest in equality issues and other policy matters. I represent Aberdeenshire Council on the CoSLA Economy and Environment Board and sit on the Council's Sustainability and Gypsy/Traveler Committees. My work commitments to my "real" job mean that I have difficulty attending evening meetings of School and Community Councils. In my opinion, a council where every member was a localist or where all were strategists would be the poorer for it. The balance is essential yet is arrived at purely by chance.

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### Anyone for Badminton?

The Drumoak Badminton Group meets at Drumoak School on Wednesday nights 1900-2100 during term time. It is a mixed group of age and ability, but it is for the enjoyment of the game we play for. The school has two badminton courts, so everyone gets a few games. If interested just come along on the night, first night is free then subsequent weeks will be £5. See you on the court soon!

Garden Advice from plant expert

Dr Jane Bingham

Mains Of Drum Garden Centre

Spring has Sprung

It's time to get growing...come and choose from our vast array of new and exciting stock. We have all your garden favourites: trees, shrubs, roses, herbaceous perennials, alpiners, fruit trees, veg and herbs. Our Collector's Corner is back for 2018 for those of you who are plant connoisseurs or simply looking for something extra special or unusual.

## Choosing plants

Our plants are of the highest quality and our hardy plants come with a two-year guarantee. However, it is vital to choose the right plant for the right place. You should ask: will the conditions in my garden suit this plant? Our award-winning team of plant experts are always happy to help you with your plant choices. We can also advise you on the correct compost, fertiliser, etc to use, to help your new plants get off to the best start.

Look out for our very own bespoke Mains of Drum fact-filled signs. These will accompany each plant and have all the facts you need to make the best-informed choices for your garden, quickly and easily.

## Magnificent Magnolias

Magnolias are much admired and prized for their stunning and spectacular flowers in spring, and yes, they can be grown here in the North East. Choose a sheltered spot that's not in a frost pocket with well-drained moist soil, and they will reward you with a breath-taking display of glorious flowers. *Magnolia grandiflora* is the most popular of the evergreen Magnolias flowering in flushes from summer to early autumn and thrives best when grown against a warm sunny wall.

Most non-evergreen (deciduous) Magnolias flower in spring before the leaves appear. The flowers buds are often as exquisite as the flowers themselves.

*Magnolia x soulangeana (Saucer Magnolia) has huge flowers up to 10in/25cm across! It is a good choice for our area as the flowers don't come out until May when there is less risk of a hard frost.*

*Magnolia stellata is called the Star Magnolia due to its dazzling star-shaped flowers.*

*Magnolia x loebneri covered in multi-petalled flowers is a real show-stopper. Magnolia 'Susan' is one of the best Magnolias for our climate. Lovely, deep magenta, fragrant flowers.*

*Magnolia 'Heaven Scent' has goblet-shaped, rosy pink flowers fading to pale pink with a magenta stripe.*

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**Maryculter Carriage Driving for Disabled** is a Riding for Disabled affiliated carriage driving group providing a wheelchair accessible activity (but also for ambulant passengers). We meet at Home Farm, Maryculter on Wednesday afternoons from May to September.

***We desperately need new volunteers.*** Whether you'd like to offer your baking talents as a tea lady, help maintain the bikes / carriages / trailers, support our disabled members, help exercise / transport the horses / join our committee . . . it's a great excuse to get together for a blether with a nice bunch of people!

Our pre-season training day for volunteers will be at 1pm, Maryculter Home Farm on 18th April with another practice session the following Wednesday afternoon, weather permitting.

The recent downturn has had a negative impact on our funding support. ANY opportunities to access grants, sponsorship or other fundraising ideas are gratefully considered as Group running costs are significant, horse care, insurance, equipment, training.....

For more information, please contact either Sarah Holtom (Secretary) 01330 811094, Kate Brockman (Group Organiser) 01330 811615 or Kees Witte (Treasurer) 01224 732738.

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## [Tales from the Riverbank by Robert Harper, Ghillie](#)

### **'Gruesome' weather on the River Dee!**

The first few weeks of the 2018 fishing season here on the river Dee have seen a few fresh salmon caught and a number of kelts. A 19-pound salmon from Park and a couple of 18- pounders here at Lower Crathes being the best so far. As we now know the worst of the end of winter weather has arrived bringing very difficult conditions not only on the roads but the riverside also – snow, wind, ice and *grue*.

Grue", you may ask, "what's that?" Well as you cross the Park and Durriss bridges during cold, frosty, low water wintry conditions you will see ice flows floating downstream. This ice state is called grue. How does it form? Firstly, river levels need to be fairly low, water temperatures close to freezing, and air temperatures during the night and probably day time also, below zero. The grue itself actually forms in the shallow shingle beds of the river that are covered by water. The colder the night time temperatures are the more grue forms and the thicker it becomes until it rises to the surface and then floats downstream. As you can see in the photo, following very cold conditions, thick grue that formed in the river bed now floats on the surface towards Aberdeen. At times of very heavy snow a type of *snow grue* can also form and yet another fascinating form of river ice is *pancake ice* (second photo) created by white froth as it floats downstream, joining together as it swirls with the water surface into quieter back eddies, turning the white froth into pancakes as it freezes.

During these icy spells fishing stops, as no matter how hard you try the fly/spinner and lines are repeatedly brought to the surface by the icy grue. So you can imagine that all the fishing done is in the blethers of fishers in huts and bothys over tea and coffee (!) Not surprisingly the biggest fish (tales) are caught during these times of rest!







DDCG's committee consists of a small group of locals who meet each month to discuss smaller issues within the community and who work closely together to arrange a variety of local events to suit all ages and essentially to bring everyone together in a fun way. Some events are fundraisers, and some are purely to encourage community spirit and a good opportunity to meet others.

### **Diary for 2018:**

#### **Grand Auction – Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> May – Venue to be confirmed**

We are seeking donations to be auctioned on the night. We are hoping for anything; vouchers, fishing, golfing, Clay pigeon shooting, Paintball etc. Services; gardening, babysitting, ironing, cooking, DIY etc. Actual items to auction would be appreciated too. We are positive that our community has within it many talented people who can help donate in various ways. You may have a company who can donate something. No donation is too small. Tickets will be on sale soon which will include food.

#### **Family Fun Day – Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> August – Fun Day Field**

Yes, you may have noticed that we are hosting the Fun Day on a Saturday for the first time this year, due to popular demand! We will still be in the field between Church and School. The Fun Day grows every year and we will again look for local groups to have their own stands. The Fun Day is a huge project for such a small group so any help is very much appreciated. Last year's lovely weather, the grand view from the top of the hill and the laughter heard from miles away made the event a great success and as the evening approached, nobody wanted to go home!

#### **Bonfire Night – Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> November – Top o' the hill (Sunnyside Farm Field)**

Wrap up warm, bring a torch, and a penny or two for hot food and drinks and look forward to a very popular night of the year. The amount of people who attend this event increases hugely every year and the sound of excited children (and adults) is great to hear. The bonfire creates a lovely atmosphere, the fireworks are always bring a gasp or two and the refreshment stalls are busy the whole night.

### **Village Christmas Tree Lighting – Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> December – Keithmuir Gardens**

One lucky child gets the opportunity to press the plunger, flooding the tree in lights. Santa's Grotto has children queuing up with their letters in hand and hoping to get a selfie with the big man. Hot food and drinks are appreciated by all and the air is filled with music played by talented locals.

### **Hogmanay Family Ceilidh – 31<sup>st</sup> December – Drumoak and Durris Bowling Club (TBC)**

Bring all the family for an evening filled with music and dancing. Fun and games for the younger ones keep them occupied while the adults have a few drinks and a lot of laughs. We ask you to bring your own refreshments. Tickets normally on sale from September.

Every event takes a lot of planning and preparation and we rely on volunteers to carry out a variety of tasks from lifting equipment, putting up fences, erecting gazebos, painting, purchasing foods, manning stalls etc. These events wouldn't take place without help, so if you are available for any or all of the above, or have a specific talent, please get in contact with us; email address??

<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=drumoak%20%26%20durris%20community%20group%20-%20%20ddcg>

Some images from last year







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**Editor's message.** Finally, it looks like Spring has sprung and the countryside will get busy again. I have noticed in recent months that there is an increase of litter and dog mess being left in our beautiful countryside walks. Every day I walk down towards the Glebe and I am always picking up litter and discarded fast food cartons, this is not only unsightly but is a danger to dogs and other animals. A dog on the lead can remember where they have sniffed food and run back to it when let off the lead, I know I have experienced it from almost ½ a mile further on, and dogs have no road sense! If a BBQ is being used in the Glebe please ensure all rubbish is either taken home or is placed completely in the bins provided, not at the side as it is ripped up and spread around by animals.

If you own a dog the responsibility is for you to clean up behind it especially on pavements and the walks. The vast majority of owners are diligent and do clean up afterwards but it is the minority that is causing the issues of dirty paths.

The countryside is for everyone to enjoy, so please do what you can to keep it clean and safe.

KMS

Next newsletter will be Summer edition, any articles, photos please send to me by Friday 29<sup>th</sup> June

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## **Fresh Water Training Course for the residents of Crathes, Drumoak & Durris**

Last year North East Scotland Outdoor Learning Group (NESOLG) received funding from Mid Hill Wind Farm (administered by CDDCC) to deliver outdoor learning courses to benefit the residents of Crathes, Drumoak & Durris.

### **About the course**

North East Scotland Outdoor Learning Group (NESOLG) has developed a new certificated Level 1 module (2 credits) in partnership with One Awards. Its aim is to increase participant's knowledge and understanding of a fresh water environment through hands-on learning, specialist input, field visits and submission of a workbook.

At the end of this course the participant will gain new knowledge and understanding in:

- Identifying a watercourse origin and its physical changes.
- Identifying and understanding the ecology of flora & fauna in and next to a watercourse
- Identifying and understanding the impacts of non-native flora & fauna
- Understand the benefits of human influence in managing a watercourse

The course is designed to familiarise participants with the basic knowledge and skills required for teaching young people and adults the management & ecology of freshwater and their associated habitats. However, it has also been designed for participants who wish to gain new knowledge and skills for their own personal interest and enjoyment.

### **Who will deliver the course?**

It will be delivered by NESOLG tutors Thys Simpson, Leys Estate Countryside Ranger, Jill Birch, Freelance Forest School Leader & Julia Mackay, Freelance Forest School leader and professional partners such as River Dee Trust.

### **Where will it take place?**

On site locations within Crathes, Drumoak & Durris catchment.

### **Course Dates**

Sat May 12<sup>th</sup> & Sun May 13<sup>th</sup>, 2018

### **Cost**

**FREE** to residents of Crathes, Drumoak & Durris but spaces are limited to 10 participants.

For further information and/or an application form please contact Julia Mackay 01330 811576 or [Julia.m4cay@gmail.com](mailto:Julia.m4cay@gmail.com)

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## Bowling club news

A brief update from the Club for Newsletter as our usual 'Editor' is temporarily 'out of action' as this goes to Press.

We are drawing to the close of our Indoor Season and looking forward to Opening of our Green on Saturday 14 April @ 2.00pm.

Hope the British weather is kind to us on the day and for the summer months! If ANY NEW MEMBERS WOULD LIKE TO JOIN US, we have the bowls, you bring yourself along with flat-soled shoes and give it a try. You can't knock it until you have tried it!

We meet on Tuesday and Friday evenings at 7.00pm **but for the first 3 weeks in April, due to the shorter day, we meet at 6.30pm.** We also meet on Wednesday and Saturday afternoons at 2.00pm.

We have just completed our Open Indoor Triples with fewer Teams competing this year but enough to make it an enjoyable competition. The 'Beast from the East' did not affect the first weekend of entries but played a part during the week and even the quarter finals in teams having to withdraw.

Our next fund-raiser will be our Annual Coffee Morning on Saturday 05 May between 10.00am and 12 noon when we generally have a generous support from the local community who all enjoy a 'fine piece and blether'!

Our Club Pavilion is also available for hire. Please contact for details, Lena Sim, telephone 01330 811374.

Looking forward to seeing you all then or on the Green.



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**BEFORE & AFTER**

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## DURRIS WI

### February

In our February meeting our members along with guests from Strachan and Maryculter were entertained by a wonderful talk with slides, by Andrew Cordier about his many trips to St Kilda as a volunteer with the National Trust for Scotland. Volunteers help maintain buildings across the islands. The renovation of the old buildings and the birdlife were the subjects of Andrew's slides. It was greatly enjoyed by all.

A lovely tea was supplied by Winnie Reid, Carol Melvin, Tricia Law and Meggie Leslie

### March

In March we were delighted to welcome Jane Stears who gave a patchwork demonstration. The members were all given the opportunity to make a coaster. Jane was a very patient teacher with the members taking up the challenge and all managed to leave the meeting with a completed item.

Our annual bulb competition was judged by Mrs Bisset.

3 white hyacinths: 1st Tricia Law, 2nd Sandra Blackhall, 3rd Aileen Melvin.

5 Parrot Tulips: 1st Tricia Law, 2nd Carol Melvin

Pot of Double Daffodils: 1st Winnie Reid, 2nd Tricia Law, 3rd Sandra Blackhall

Something old from something new: 1st Winnie Reid, 2nd Hazel Marshall, 3rd Linda Robb

Single homegrown bloom: 1st Tricia Law, 2nd Winnie Reid, 3rd Sarah Holtom

Thank you to Doreen McIntosh, Joan Cordier and Hazel Marshall for our refreshments and home baking.

### Additional Events

Three Durris ladies were successful in the Short Mat Bowling Competition at Strachan and move onto the Final which is in Durris. Good luck to Myra Strachan, Meggie Leslie and Betty Abernethy in the final.

An extra meeting was arranged in March with the Young Famers Club for a bowling competition. The bowling teams were made up of a mix of WI and Young Farmers and all had a thoroughly enjoyable evening. Thank you to all the ladies who supplied a delicious tea.

The next meeting in April is an evening visit to the Tin Coo - Devenick Dairy Farm shop & Café near Ardoe.

Anyone interested in joining the Durris group, please contact any known members, M Simpson (07753806366) or check out our Facebook page.



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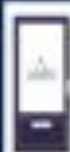
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**Catherine** CWT Administrator: 01224 862008  
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### Drumoak School – Time flies – Third year in our new building.

Can you believe it! We have started our third year in the new building - it opened in February 2016, and we are embedding our new routines and events. We have one hundred and ten children in the primary classes and twenty-nine in the nursery. There are five classrooms for the classes and our sixth classroom is used as our support base. The nursery is about to complete their second full year. Time flies!

The building remains a great facility and we are glad that the After-School Club which operates on a Monday to Thursday is a success. It has taken a lot of effort to launch the club, but we hope that its foundations will be built upon in the future.

The Sports Hall is another great asset. This year we have added Indoor Curling to our school curriculum. The School Council purchased the equipment and our pupils have loved using them. This will now become a permanent fixture in the school calendar. This term the children are using the new gymnastics equipment: wall bars, horses and trampets are all used by our P.E. Specialist. In the summertime we will be out and about on the Astroturf following a cricket curriculum. All this was not possible in our previous location. Our cluster school neighbours – Crathes and Durris are also getting the benefit of the hall, having a period of time **sharing our facilities** during the autumn and winter months. We have clubs using the hall before and after the school day. Parents organise the popular Junior Jog group on a Friday morning (8.15am). We also have an after-school badminton club which is oversubscribed **at the moment**. The school football group uses the Astroturf on a Thursday evening and Saturday morning. This month we hope to host two indoor sporting tournaments for all the primary schools in the Banchory cluster – Indoor Curling and Badminton.

The Adult Badminton Club on a Wednesday night from 7 – 9pm is great fun and new members are always welcomed. I encourage others to find ways to use the school hall but one of our barriers at the moment is the lack of a Caretaker. We have advertised locally and there have been a few applicants. For our community facility to be used successfully we need to find a Caretaker who can help in the evenings. **Do you know anyone who might be interested? If so, please contact the school office.**

Our major cluster events are held in the Hall such as our “Scottish Ceilidh” and “Enterprise is the Business” event. These were previously held in the Church hall but now we have a bit more space we can do so much more. This school session we have started Film Nights. Last term we showed Boss Baby and that was a good success and this term we invite the community to watch Paddington Bear 2. We hope that these film nights will be a great success as we have comfortable seating, clear sound and a great projector for the DVD.



Look for our next movie night in the future.

Lastly, we invite you to our French Café Morning which will be held on Wednesday 28 March from 10am to 12 noon. Don't miss out on a range of French food and singing, and of course our annual raffle. All our pupils will be "showing and telling" throughout the morning.

All this wouldn't be possible without our splendid new building.

**Paul Wilson**

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### [Peterculter Medical Practice](#)

The 'flu vaccine campaign at the practice enjoyed another successful year with good uptake, the Saturday morning clinics again proving as popular (and busy!) as ever. It was a tough winter, with a flu-like viral illness taking hold across the country, and we certainly saw many cases of this in our area.

Our partner colleague Dr. Stuart McMain has left the practice after 11 years with us here – we thank him for his hard work with the practice and wish him all the best for the future. His expertise in orthopaedic & musculoskeletal medicine was especially appreciated, and he did much to develop undergraduate medical teaching at the practice. The partners are working on recruitment now and we shall update you when possible with further news.

Mrs. Norma Dickson left the practice nursing team in January after almost 3 years with us, many of you will have encountered her cheerful approach and steady hand in the treatment room! We are very pleased to welcome our new practice nurse Mrs. Laura Mitchell who is now in post.

We have a new arrangement in place relating to any home visits requested during the afternoon (after 1pm), this new service has been set up by the group of practices serving the western side of the Aberdeen city area (West Cluster), which includes our own practice. An advanced nurse practitioner (based at GMED) may be mobilised to undertake urgent home visits, following initial assessment by the practice GP via



telephone to make sure this is an appropriate course of action. This has been in operation now for the last few months and is proving well accepted by patients with the nurse practitioner providing written records of the visit back to the patient's own GP. We are very happy with this innovation, and it helps the practice manage the afternoon workload better, especially during busy times.

This is an ideal opportunity for me to remind you of our practice website [www.petercultermmedicalpractice.co.uk](http://www.petercultermmedicalpractice.co.uk). There are many of you now using online appointment booking and ordering of repeat prescriptions - if you are interested in this please see details of this online or ask at reception.

Best wishes

Dr. Douglas Harris

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## DRUMOAK & DURRIS NEWSLETTER

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

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### Useful Information

Drumoak-Durris Church - [drumoa-durrischurch.org](http://drumoa-durrischurch.org)  
 Drafts: Drumoak & Durris Community Council  
[craighilldrumoa-durris.org](http://craighilldrumoa-durris.org)  
 Drumoak & Durris Community Group - [drumoa-durris.org](http://drumoa-durris.org)  
 Aberdeenshire Council - [aberdeenshire.gov.uk](http://aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

### Useful Telephone Numbers

Drumoak-Durris Church of Scotland  
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 Session Clerk: 01224 811050  
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 Emergency: 999  
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