



Auchenblae Messenger

Founded in 1999 by Donald B. Rennie

CHRISTMAS EDITION



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DECEMBER 2012

SPECIAL POINTS OF INTEREST:

- **Pantomime**
- **Santa Visit**
- **Advent diary**

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From The Editor

Here we are with another year almost over. Where does the time go? As usual there is a lot happening around the village. At least it keeps us out of mischief! Once again we are indebted to Kevin (Aww shucks!, K.) for putting the whole thing together and for printing it and also to Anne Anderson and her team for the distribution. We couldn't do it without our contributors, to whom many thanks. Also to Ann Rennie for her work on the Memo.

The next edition will be in March so contributions to me by February 15th to barbara_auch20002000@yahoo.co.uk. If there is enough information there will be a Memo for January and February. Information to Ann Rennie please at Mernis Howe, Inverurie Street. I enjoy my work with The Messenger and also the positive feedback we get from here and globally now that we are on-line. My very best wishes to you all for a Happy Christmas and a prosperous 2013.

Barbara



The Messenger Memo

The next Messenger memo will contain information about forthcoming events in January & February and any short reports of events that took place earlier. Please contact Ann Rennie at Mernis Howe, Inverurie St. (tel. 01561 320622) before 15th December

Messenger and Memo Distribution

It is thanks to Ann Anderson and her team that the Messenger and the Memo are delivered to your door. We certainly owe them our gratitude. At times some members of the team may not be able to deliver for various reasons. Ann would be grateful if a few of you would volunteer to act as relief members. The rounds are short and should not take more than about 30 minutes a month. If you feel that you can help please phone **Ann on 320524**.

Auchenblae Guides

*".....nostalgic
smell"*

We have had a lot of extra activities this year , a special County Camp-fire for the Queens Diamond Jubilee , our Olympic Themed Camp at Cairndee , this was made even better as we had new modern lightweight tents . This was made possible from an award from the community fund from the wind farm company. Yes, I do agree that it did not seem like proper Guide camp without the dear old green canvas ridge tents , the nostalgic smell of bygone camps when you unpack them , the bashed fingers hammering in wooden pegs, running round the field at 3am in py-jamas and welly boots adjusting poles that girls insist are about to fall in and kill them all. This is one Guiding Traditional we may not keep up, but good fun was had by all and we were so lucky to get nice weather. One of the camp activities was a trip to Montrose swimming pool . the girls were very lucky to be able to use all the diving boards just a couple of weeks before the pool closed and how sad the new pool will not be having boards.

Monday 12th November was school holiday so we took the train to Edinburgh . We booked to see the Giant Pandas , the photo shows the girls excitedly waiting at the Panda house for our booking time, bit disappointing that all we saw was the rear end of a sleeping Sweetie, the female. However, the rest of the zoo was good , we then went back into town and hit the shops on Princes Street. We used the day to get the girls used to following bus and train timetables but more complex that getting the school bus every day, this was to help our 4 older Guides who are in Inverness this weekend on their Baden Powell Challenge , this award is the highest they can achieve as a Guide.

I will ask then to write about it for the next Messenger.

Evelyn Richardson



Auchenblae Parks Committee

The golf course has survived this rather soggy summer amazingly well with only a slight drop in visitor numbers. Favourable comments on the condition of the course have been received and membership numbers remain high. Let us hope this continues because without this essential income we would not be able to maintain the other areas of recreation within and around the village.

The Den as always has been much enjoyed this year, not only by village residents, but by the many families who come from further afield to spend some time here. They are always very envious of this wonderful facility on our doorstep and it is therefore sad and disappointing that the actions of a handful of local youths have caused our grounds men considerable additional work. We hasten to add that the culprits are in the minority and that the Den remains a place where all sections of the community are most welcome.

Although the Den is a place of natural beauty it still takes time and money to keep it in the condition we all enjoy and appreciate. The parks committee continually strive to maintain and improve amenities and to this end we appreciate any feed-back, whether positive or otherwise! We also request that any damaged, broken or faulty items of equipment are reported to a member of staff or committee.

While on the subject of staff we must thank Alice Robertson for the many years of faithful service she has given to the village in her role as den pavilion attendant. Her commitment has been exemplary and we are aware we will have difficulty in filling her shoes. There will be a vacancy for next year's summer season.

It leaves us now to wish all readers a happy and contented festive period.

Auchenblae Calendar

A calendar for 2013, depicting twelve different scenes from the district, is on sale at Metelski's shop, the church, or by contacting Jenny Thomson (01561 320245).

Priced at £6.00 the proceeds will go towards urgent church hall roof repairs.



Antiques Roadshow

I'd like to thank all the people who enabled this event to be staged. Although the crowd was slightly disappointing we had a fun filled afternoon with most people going home with bargain buys of one sort or another. It's quite amazing how a £1 here and a 50p there mount up with the takings, all in all, coming to £1,996. 91p. Strange how there's always a mysterious 1p in the final tally!!

This magnificent outcome didn't happen without the help of many people who came to my aid in the last week or so. Donations for the stalls came in thick and fast and without seriously good organisation it could well have become a logistical nightmare!

A spacious Silent Auction table displaying our wares was set out in the middle of the hall, with a lengthy 'triple table set up' at the side stacked with a huge variety of items coming under the banner of White Elephant.

The kitchen staff did wonderful work keeping the soup hot; the trays filled with baking and the tea and coffee pots at the ready. Thanks to Alison, Heather, Adelaide and to young Anne Philips who smiled throughout. Iris, Ann G. and June ably took charge of the food serving arrangements, both in a corner of the hall and in the Mutual hall upstairs. The system worked well and Evelyn and her Guides: Lyndsay; Allanah; Heather and Gracie helped out wherever help was needed, so thank you girls.

Ann R. and Alex made a good clearance of the piles of books we were given. Most of those sold will likely find their way back into our stock for future events. Thanks to Anne and Sheree, who acted as efficient cashiers at the end of a busy, but rewarding afternoon.

Other helpers were Alison M. who welcomed people at the door and relieved them of some cash; those who donated vouchers and goods for the stalls; Kate Matthews and her Mum who gave us invaluable advice on setting prices on some of the rather more obscure items and finally to those who came along on the day and helped make this effort so worthwhile.

Lastly, we mustn't forget Barry Liddle and his friend Gerry who were kept busy throughout the afternoon giving their opinion on the items people had brought to be valued. Note, I say 'their opinion' as I believe they seriously undervalued my treasures!! They're back in pride of place on the mantelpiece whatever.

Jenny Thomson

AUCHENBLAE DRAMA GROUP

"FANGTASTIC"

**"A MONSTER
OF A SHOW!"**

**"you'd be bats to
miss it!"**

**Fri. & Sat.
7.30**

Friday 7th Dec.2012

Saturday 8th Dec. 2012

Sunday 9th Dec.2012

**Sun.
Matinee
2.30**

Auchenblae Village Hall

Tickets: Adults £8

Concession £4

**Tickets from
Judith Houghton**

01561 320222

FRANKENSTEIN THE PANTO

“...we are well named”

Auchenblae Friendship Group



We continue to meet in the Church hall every Wednesday morning from 10.00am to 11.45am, apart from during school holidays. Our numbers are steady. We are always open to new members to come for a cuppie, a fine piece and good craic. December 12th we will be entertaining ourselves with a mixture of readings, poems and songs to celebrate Christmas. Last winter we were reasonably lucky with the weather and only had to miss one meeting. Let's hope we're lucky again this year.

A very Happy Christmas to all our readers from all at the friendship Group. (We are well named.)

Auchenblae Community Association

Annual General Meeting

Following the Annual General Meeting in October the new members and office bearers of the Community Association are: Chairman: Trevor Hodgson. Vice Chairman: Jacqueline Humphrey. Secretary: Alice Morgan. Treasurer: Sue Hodgson. Committee: Jenny Thomson (Fabric Convener), Allan Mills, Gina Easter, Tracey Harrison Lewis, Gillian Siddons, Lindsay Fraser, Kate Matthews, Ewan MacLean.



Christmas

Once again a Christmas tree will be erected at the Square and we will arrange for Santa to visit on **23rd December** to hand out treats for the children.

Thanks

The Committee wish to thank everyone who contributed in any way to the success of the various events of 2012, your continued support is very much appreciated. Also many thanks to all those who attended to the village flower tubs over the season. **We wish you all a Happy, Healthy and enjoyable 2013.**



Diary Note:

Curry Night – March (date to be confirmed)

Auchenblae Pre-School Group

Scottish Registered Charity SC021752

Over the last few weeks we have been kept very busy with our 2 and 3 year olds at the pre school. During the last term the children enjoyed discovering all about Autumn, we're so lucky where we're based that we're able to make use of the Den and surrounding area to explore what happens during this magical season. The children photographed various bugs hiding in and around the Den and then, back in the playroom, we made salt dough hedgehogs for the playroom and to take home. During this term we also looked at Halloween and Bonfire Night, again using their imaginations, the children made some wonderful bats and firework pictures. Currently, we are working towards the most magical time of the year, for a child - Christmas! We will be exploring why we celebrate Christmas (it's not all about toys, X-Boxes and iPods) and giving the children the experiences of making Christmas decorations to adorn the pre-school walls. The children have recently started to rehearse some Christmas songs for our Christmas Show, including Away in a Manger, Pop a Little Mince Pie onto My Plate amongst others. Over the coming weeks the playroom will be decorated with our tree and decorations, please feel free to come and admire the children's work.

In January we hope to hold an Open Evening to all parents to come and play for an hour or two, this will give parents the opportunity to explore various elements of the Curriculum for Excellence through play (identical to what the children do on a day-to-day basis)!

Please support Auchenblae Pre School Group as much as you are able to. Without the sterling work and commitment put in behind the scenes there would be no pre-school provision for children under 3 years in the village and it's such a fantastic resource in the village. We currently have spaces for 2, 3 and 4 year olds and our Parent and Toddler Group runs on a Friday morning in the Church Hall. For further details please contact Lorna Eastaugh on 01561 320903 or apsg@me.com or check out our Facebook page.

We'd like to take this opportunity to wish all the parents and children of Auchenblae Pre School a wonderful Christmas; and we'd like to thank the people of Auchenblae, and the surrounding area, for their support over this year.

We wish everyone a Happy Christmas and a Prosperous New Year!

Transition Mearns (TraM)



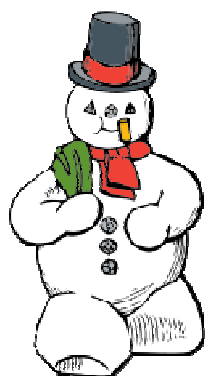
TraM is a passionate group of individuals concerned about the impacts of our actions and aims to rebuild resilience of the Mearns community with exciting local projects to make a positive difference to our world and quality of life. It allows us to take matters into our own hands and have fun in the process. Take a look at our website to find out about the community allotment scheme in Fettercairn, how to incorporate permaculture principles into your everyday life, start Freegling, and more: www.tram.btck.co.uk.

We have a new community bike workshop at the Mill of Benholm, near Johnshaven, called 'Benholm Bikes' - brought to you by TraM in partnership with the Mill of Benholm Trust and Mearns Area Partnership. We've run our first few workshops and will take a little break for the winter months while we try to sort out a heating and lighting system. Anyone knowledgeable on hydroelectricity or technical/practical matters is invited to e-mail mearnscycle@yahoo.co.uk to get involved. Keep an eye on the website for workshop dates in the New Year.

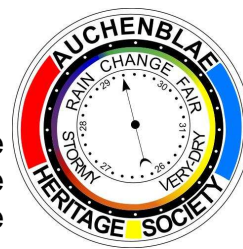
Another fantastic new project we're starting is skill sharing! So if you would like to learn a new skill focused on adapting our lifestyles to more sustainable practices, or you have something to offer please let us know too.

Join our Facebook group 'Transition Mearns (TraM)' or e-mail transition-mearns@gmail.com to join our mailing list. And please come along to the next TraM meeting (held on the second Tuesday of every month) on Tuesday 11 December at 7.30pm, venue TBC.

Thanks for reading,
Zoë Sawane



Auchenblae Heritage Society



At the first meeting of the Heritage Society on Monday 3 September, the milk didn't run out this time, but extra chairs were almost called for, as the full church hall was shown a DVD, edited by the late Donald Rennie, of the transformation of the former Distillery and Flax Mill dam area of The Den to what it is today. Jenny Thomson introduced the 1998 video, which included a section on the BBC's "Hit Squad" coming to the village with their proposed garden ideas, concentrating mainly on the burn and one of the sluice areas of the original dam.

What was really evident was the fantastic community spirit, where almost every able-bodied person, young and old, contributed to this demanding project. Many local skills and equipment were also freely employed, in sometimes, absolutely dreadful conditions, but the end result is now there for all to see - and improvements still continue to this day. A fine example of what can be achieved when everyone pulls together towards a common goal.

The showing of this, now 14 years old initiative, reminds us of just how inventive, far seeing and energetic the residents of Auchenblae were, and surely still are?

The next Heritage Society meeting is on **Monday 4 December**, 7.30 in the church hall and will be given by **David Doig** on, "The Fettercairn Distillery Unicorn 1823 - 2012" Fascinating stuff, and let's hope there is plenty milk and chairs to go round for these increasingly popular talks.

Video footage taken in 1998 by Jenny Thomson, and edited by the late Donald Rennie, has recently been transferred to DVD and is now available for sale.

The film covers the initial discussions on how best to transform the derelict site of the old distillery dam in the Den; the subsequent months of hard work which involved so many people; right through to the final stages, resulting in the pleasant woodland area we have today. Also included is a five minute televised feature by the BBC as part of their Beechgrove Garden Hit Squad production.. **Copies costing £5.00 are available by contacting Bob Jamieson on 01561 320383.** All proceeds will go towards the church hall roof fund.

If you don't talk to your kids about drugs, who will?

Parents are the strongest single influence in a child's life.

A fun and interactive community based course developed by the national charity Care for the Family. How to Drug Proof your Kids equips parents with the information and skills they need to encourage their children to form a responsible attitude towards drugs, including cigarettes and alcohol, steering them away from their harmful use.

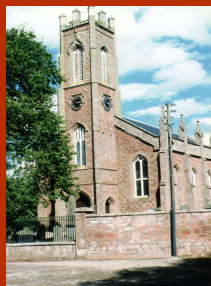


**Stonehaven Community Centre—Tuesday 15th January – Tuesday 26th February (6weeks)
9.30am – 11.30am.**

The course is fully funded and free of charge.

Places will be allocated on a first come first served basis.

To register your interest please contact **Trish MacEachern on 01561 321263**



West Mearns Parish Church

ADVENT & CHRISTMAS DIARY 2012

Sunday Worship: 9.30am at Fettercairn every Sunday

11am at Glenbervie on the 1st Sunday of the month

11am at Auchenblae all other Sundays in the month

All welcome. Sunday School for the children at all three churches.

REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Sunday, 11th November: 9.30am at Fettercairn; 11am at Auchenblae

Saturday, 17th November

Auchenblae Guild Coffee Morning and Fashion Show at 10am at Auchenblae Village Hall

Guild Week: 18th – 25th November

Sunday 25th November: 9.30am at Fettercairn: Dedication of the Guild;

11am at Auchenblae: Sunday Worship involving members of the Guild

2.30pm Fettercairn Guild Service at Queen Elizabeth Court

Carols, Candles & Christmas Pies

Friday, 30th November at 7.30pm in Auchenblae Church

ADVENT SUNDAY

Sunday, 2nd December: Services: **9.30am** at Fettercairn; **11am** at Glenbervie.

Come and celebrate this special time of preparation for Christmas so we may better know 'the reason for the season' (and be less stressed!).

Saturday, 8th December: Sunday School Party

2 – 4.30pm at Auchenblae Church Hall

2nd Sunday in Advent: 'White Gift Sunday': 9th December

Services: **9.30am** at Fettercairn; **11am** at Auchenblae.

Gifts wrapped in white paper for children & adults in need welcome.

6.30pm at Glenbervie: a short, gentle “ **Hard to be Merry this Christmas**” service recognising that for many there is special sadness at this time of year.

3rd Sunday in Advent: 16th December

Services: **9.30am** at Fettercairn; **11am** at Auchenblae.

2.30pm: Carol Service at Queen Elizabeth Court, Fettercairn

6.30pm: Carol Service in Drumlithie Village Hall

4th Sunday in Advent: 23rd December

Services: **9.30am** at Fettercairn; **11am** at Auchenblae.

Christmas Family Service with Nativity Play

CHRISTMAS EVE: Monday, 24th December

6.30pm: Auchenblae **Children's Carol Service**

11.15pm (for 11.30pm): Fettercairn **Christmas Eve Service**

CHRISTMAS DAY: Tuesday, 25th December

11am: **United Christmas Day Service** at Glenbervie Church

CHRISTMAS 1: Sunday 30th December 2012

Services: **9.30am** at Fettercairn; **11am** at Auchenblae.

There will be a short celebration of Holy Communion at each service.

Auchenblae Guild

Once again we have had some very interesting meetings which serve to strengthen our feelings of fellowship. We have recently held another successful coffee morning and fashion show by Encore of Fettercairn. Many thanks to Carrie and to all the ladies who modelled the lovely clothes for us, and to all who baked and helped on the morning. The Guild Service and the November meeting are also past. We look forward to what has become our annual celebration of Christmas, Carols, Candles and Christmas Pies. This year we are holding it a week early so that we don't clash with the Pantomime. (thanks—ADG) It will be on Friday 30th November in the Church at 7.30pm. There will be refreshments afterwards. As usual the Church will be decorated with candles, a magical sight..

Our December meeting will take the form of a Christmas Lunch at the Crown in Laurencekirk on the 19th. Travel arrangements will be announced later.

We look forward to welcoming new members in the future.

Dates for your diary

Guild—Carols, Candles, Christmas Pies	Church Hall	30th November
Frankenstein The Panto	Village Hall	7,8,9th December
Friendship Group—Xmas Celebration	Church Hall	12th December

"Fantastic Turnout for Auchenblae Nearly New Sale"

On Saturday 3 November 2012, Isabelle Riddoch, Gillian Milne and a group of friends ran the latest of their Nearly New Sales at Auchenblae Village Hall. As always, there was a fantastic turnout of buyers on the day. As a result, the sale made an incredible £1,500, by selling almost £5000 worth of goods in two hours!! This was the highest amount raised in one sale, since the sales began 5 years ago. On this occasion, the charities to benefit were; the Junior Diabetes Research Foundation (Scotland) and the National Autistic Society (Scotland). These charities were chosen after Isabelle and Gillian were approached by two local parents whose children suffer from these conditions. Small contributions were also made to the local school and play-group.



Gillian and Isabelle would like to thank all buyers and sellers for their continued support of this event. The next sale will be held in March 2013, details of which will be advertised locally.

Should you wish any information in the meantime about being a seller, buyer, helper or are aware of a good cause, deserving of support, please contact Gillian or Isabelle at the numbers below:

Gillian Milne - 01561-320685—Isabelle Riddoch - 01561-320759

Messenger Distribution Team—Anne Anderson, Sheena Auld, Sue Barrie, Anne Caird, Sheree Caird, Therese Hendry, Janette Hoedl, Ann Howe, Carol Nelson, Barbara Strouts.

Messenger Production Team—Barbara Strouts, Kevin Newstead, Eddie Cairns

Memo Production—Ann Rennie

The publisher for this issue was **Kevin Newstead**