

# Braemar Buzzard



[www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk](http://www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk)

## Happy Anniversary!



The Buzzard is ten years old this March! Take a look at **pages 8 & 9** to reflect on a few of those things that have happened in Braemar during this time. And not only is the Buzzard celebrating, other anniversaries of note... the school believes it's coming up

for 150 years; the Castle *knows* it's been in community operation for 10 years **page 10**; and Crathie Opportunity Holidays celebrates 15 years **page 6**.

But returning to our ten year theme - what do you think the village look like in another ten years (will the Buzzard STILL be going? You can help secure its future by getting involved... our AGM is coming up **page 2**). Invercauld Estate has a look forward **page 11**; some of the local primary school children add their views **page 15**; and a peek at the latest Community Action Plan shows what a lot is happening in the village now and will be in the years to come! In this issue - the Community Garden Project is currently recruiting members **page 12** as is the new Samba Group **page 14**, Braemar TV is looking for new stars **page 2** and there are four vacancies on Braemar's Community Council **page 3**.

### The New Managing Director of Glenshee Ski Centre

is David Farquharson or Farky as he is more commonly known. He was born and bred in Blairgowrie but for the past 21 years has made Braemar his home. He has been involved with Glenshee for many years and his father, who sadly died when Farky was only 6 years old, was one of the original builders of the Glenshee ski lifts in 1963. Farky has been working in the oil industry for many years and is now looking forward to working permanently in Braemar.



*The discovery of a school log book dating from 1889-1914, and the possibility that Braemar school may be 150 years old, has inspired a new school project to mark the occasion. Maybe you have some information (especially in relation to when the school was built)? Photos? Stories? - then the school would love to hear from you. Read more on page 15*



**Welcome to Braemar!** - pictured above, three new part-time employees working in the village - two for the castle and one for St Margaret's. From left to right Matt Halliday, Castle Fundraiser and Project manager, Georgina Errington, Castle Manager and Jane Smith, St Margaret's Trust Arts Administrator. A 'hot' desk is being prepared for them in the Parish Church.

**Special 10th Anniversary Issue**

# Editorial

## Braemar News Group

[www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk](http://www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk)

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**By post:** Coldrach Lodge, Chapel Brae AB35 5YT **By phone:** 013397 41030

**For advertising:** contact Maggie MacKay ☎013397 41245. Adverts cost £15 per eighth of a page.

*Past and current editions of the Buzzard together with the 'live' events calendar (updated between issues) can be viewed online (in FULL colour!) on our website: [www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk](http://www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk) Copies are delivered free of charge within the locality of Braemar. Extra copies can be obtained from the garage, the art gallery, the 'Speciality Shop' and the newsagent/pharmacy. The Buzzard is funded by advertising and donations - donation tins are at all these outlets for any very welcome contribution towards costs.*

## Braemar News Group AGM Moorfield House Hotel Friday April 21st @ at 6.0 pm All welcome



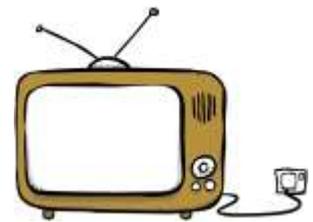
The News Group is responsible for producing the Buzzard Newsletter (distributed to all local households free of charge) together with the occasional publication 'Community Matters' (detailing clubs and services within the village). This March is the group's ten year anniversary - we would like it to remain a vibrant and valued organisation and to do so, seek your support - be this just coming along to the AGM (and even better - giving us some feedback on the publications!) or by taking a more active role in news collection (new ideas and new faces are most welcome) or by simply giving us your money via the donation tins or by taking out an advert. Unbelievably the advertising rate hasn't changed in ten years (a real bargain) and it's a very effective way of reaching a local audience but provides us with a vital source of revenue.

## Community Update:

**Water quality** - following complaints, three representatives from Scottish Water attended a recent community council meeting to listen to details of the problems and to report on sampling of the local water quality which they have recently undertaken. Several residents described their own experience of unpleasant taste in tap water in their homes - and business owners reported similar complaints from guests and customers - an issue which undermines the promoted image of Braemar as a 'stunning natural environment' and a healthy place to live in and visit.

Scottish Water are required by law to chemically treat all water for human consumption to statutory levels - and all of the samples which they have been taken recently within the village have fallen within the stipulated safe levels - disturbingly however it was reported that tropical fish will die within a short time of exposure to it! Additional sampling is now to be offered to any properties who wish it - and this can be arranged by contacting Katy Fennema at Callater Lodge.

**Braemar TV** Short of something to watch on the box? then why not turn on Braemar TV! It's a new voluntary venture by local filmmakers Dale Johnson and Colin



Wight and presented by Doreen Wood. The first edition was unveiled at the end of Jan. and a whole new programme will come out on the last day of each month on the Braemar TV Facebook page. Colin said, "We just thought the village needed a platform to let people see everything that's going on here. We thought it was a great chance to introduce some new faces and hear more about people who've lived here all their life. We may even cover future events and concerts live so watch out for advance notice on Facebook."

The latest edition included a look-back with David Geddes on growing up in Braemar, a report on the new bowling facility in Castleton Hall and an update on the playpark refurbishment. According to Colin "There's lots going on in the village. If anyone wants to contribute ideas for future programmes, compile their own report or send us stills or videos they're very welcome. It's Braemar's TV station, not ours!"

Braemar TV can be contacted by speaking to Colin or Dale, by ☎ 07850 758427 or through the Facebook page or by emailing [braemartv@gmail.com](mailto:braemartv@gmail.com)

**The Braemar Care Initiative (BCI)**

pushes forward, working towards providing care for the community from within the community. The BCI Steering Group have now visited and made contact with a number of organisations providing care and services in new and innovative ways, including:

- Highland Home Care/Foyers
- The Foyer, Aberdeen
- Cornerstone
- VSA
- Perthshire Care and Wellbeing Cooperative

These visits have been informative, thought provoking and inspiring and will form the basis of discussion around the structure of the Braemar Care Initiative. A workshop will be held in May with our key stakeholders to identify the most functional and appropriate organisational structure for the BCI.

**Cairngorm National Park Authority (CNPA)**

**Courses** there are lots planned and more in the pipeline including... 'Alpine Lichens', Thursday 23 March at Grantown on Spey; 'Lambing', Monday 20 March, in Strathspey; 'All About Fungi', Thursday 7 September (with a very familiar face Liz Holden!) at Boat of Garten. Courses are aimed at people living or working in the National Park. More information at [www.cairngorms.co.uk](http://www.cairngorms.co.uk)

**Braemar and Crathie Church** is currently agreeing its 5 Year Plan, in line with the village's Community Action Plan. There is much going on in the Church community as the range of services, events and meetings is expanded. Funding has been secured to repair the roof and tower, which like the Fife will bring short term disruption, but long term benefits. The plan is to carry out the work later this year. A room is currently being set up in the Church as a Community Office, partly for recently appointed Braemar Castle and St Margaret's project coordinators. But the room will be available as a meeting space for all groups in the village. Contact Simon Blackett for details of what is available and how to book.

Easter is a busy week in the Church's calendar so look out for details of services including our special outdoor 'sunrise' service, at 8am (not actual dawn!) 'Messy Easter' will be held in the village hall from 10-12 noon on Sat 15 April. **Simon Blackett**

**Community Resilience** is an initiative supported by Aberdeenshire Council and the Scottish Government. The idea is that communities develop a local plan so that they can help themselves during an emergency in a way that complements, but in no way replaces,

the response of the emergency responders. Braemar Community Council (BCC) have set up a small group to look at Resilience Planning here. We have had our fair share of incidents and, like other Aberdeenshire villages, we can probably do more to prepare ourselves for the next one! Police guidance is to prepare a simple, generic response plan that we can adapt easily. BCC will be looking to build a register of local volunteers to help with communications / transport / some manual tasks and potentially, run a refuge centre - should it ever be needed...

**Hydro Update** In the 3 month period October to December, in what was a relatively dry autumn, the Hydro generated 73,820 kWh of electricity with a value in the region of £18,500. Rainfall measured in Braemar was 73% of the 'expected' level and generation was 76% of the projection in the long term forecast. Interpretation boards are now in place at the turbine house and primary intake and the compensatory tree planting has begun. Looking ahead our Feed in Tariff is guaranteed for 20 years. Over this period, and subject to rainfall, the Hydro will generate revenue to cover the running costs, repay the investors and build the community fund. Beyond that we have the option of extending the lease for a further 20 years. Over the coming months the mechanism to manage the community fund will be defined.

**Dave Sherrard**

**Call for nominations -**

**Community Council** There are four vacancies. Forms are available at the Pharmacy and need to be returned to the 'returning officer' by April 22nd. Nominees need a proposer and seconder.



**The Community Action Plan (CAP)** has been refreshed and published. It is a celebration of what has and can be achieved in a small community like Braemar. The plan lists the community projects in play and their goals over the next few years. You can read the full document online at <http://braemarscotland.co.uk/community>

**St Margaret's Church** now has a new Arts administrator, Jane Smith, who will be developing the programme for St Margaret's and doing pretty much everything else required to move the project forward! A new application for Lottery Heritage funding is being prepared and will be submitted in June. Meanwhile an exciting programme of events is taking shape for 2017 including a concert by American singer songwriter Mary Gauthier on May 26th.

## Celebrate the Buzzard's birthday with this boozy cake from Gordons Tea Room!

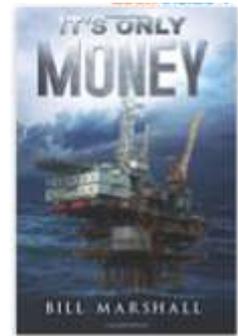


### Chocolate and Guinness sponge with Tia Maria ganache

For the sponge: 160ml Guinness; 160g Unsalted butter; 260g caster sugar; 2 medium eggs; ½ tsp vanilla extract; 90ml milk; 185g Plain flour; 50g cocoa powder; 1 ½ tsp Bicarbonate of soda; ¼ Tsp baking powder

For the ganache: 125ml double cream; 225g dark chocolate; 2 tbsp. Tia Maria

**Method:** Preheat the oven to 190c/fan 170/Gas 5. Grease and line two 20cm cake tins. Place the Guinness and butter into a saucepan and heat gently, when the butter has melted take the pan off the heat and stir in the sugar. In a jug mix together the eggs, vanilla and milk, add these to the saucepan. Sift the dry ingredients together in a large bowl, add the wet mixture and mix together using a whisk. Make sure all the ingredients are well mixed, then pour the mixture into the cake tins. Bake for 25 mins or until a skewer inserted into the middle of the cake comes out clean. While the cakes are in the oven, make the ganache. Heat the cream gently in a saucepan, but do not let it boil. Take off the heat and stir in the Tia Maria. Set aside and allow the ganache to cool a little. Once the cakes are ready, remove from the oven and allow to cool, then trim the tops off the sponges to give a flat surface. Take about 1/3 of the ganache and spread it between the two layers, then use the rest of the ganache to cover the rest of the cake. Allow the ganache to set then dust with icing sugar. Enjoy....and celebrate....!



**Available now!**  
from your local pharmacy... A new novel written by local resident Bill Marshall, Pegasus Publishing. A gripping read involving money hungry individuals and big business. Congratulations Bill on (what we believe is) your first novel. Paperback £10.99

## Councillor's Corner

At the end of last year Ballater Business Association launched the 'Royal Deeside Can Do Country' campaign with a video promoting the area as a tourist destination

[www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Tyd7CP2p0s](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3Tyd7CP2p0s) The campaign has now extended its remit and Braemar, Tarland, Lumphanan and Aboyne are joining too. In March, I am attending the Attractive & Sustainable Communities Group in Aarhus, Denmark. Flying from Aberdeen involves transiting in Copenhagen so I have asked for a meeting with the airline marketing folk to encourage them to promote us as a destination - how many Danes do we see here...? Stuart Donaldson MP and I are holding similar discussions with officials at Heathrow.

In January, Trevor Garlick, Dave Sherrard and I took Rob Simpson the new Head of Housing (*photo above*) at Aberdeenshire Council around the village and discussed various sites and options with him. Housing here is still one of my key priorities and while I am still your councillor, I will continue to pursue solutions for our needs at both council and government levels.

Finally, a word about Elmore's tragic death – she will be missed and both Simon and I send warm thoughts to her family at this terrible time. Any member of the community can request a free home fire safety visit and these request will be recorded and carried out by the local fire crews or the CAT team at a convenient time for the homeowner. If anyone would like a home fire safety visit they can make direct contact with the station, they train on a Monday night from 1900 – 2130 so just pop in and ask for a visit; alternatively there is a Freephone Number ☎0800 0731999 or text 'FIRE' to 80800 from a mobile phone and request a Home fire safety visit. Visits can also be booked using the online booking service which is available at [www.firescotland.gov.uk](http://www.firescotland.gov.uk)

### Geva Blackett

☎ 013397 41541 ☎(mobile) 0787 647 5269  
Email [cllr.g.blackett@aberdeenshire.gov.uk](mailto:cllr.g.blackett@aberdeenshire.gov.uk)

**As always, please feel to contact me if you need help or support.**



Left to right: Rob Simpson; Trevor Garlick; Geva Blackett

## St Mary's Well

by Katy Fennema

*Just after you leave the village of Inverey heading towards Linn of Dee, you will see a very special well on the left hand side of the road. This well is known as St Mary's Well, or more recently, Well of the Prins. There are many legends associated with it and I thought it might be interesting to mention some of them. The well is recessed into a bank and bears the inscription 'Tobar Mhoire'.*

Early Christian missionaries did not have an easy time here. When Saint Monire came via Glenshee, he rested on the slopes of Morrone, before descending into Braemar. After spending some time there, and feeling pretty unwelcome, he headed on to Inverey. When he arrived, he spoke to

the locals of a new religion and was spurned by all in the village, not even being offered a drink of water. He walked on, and once he had crossed the River Ey he found a spring with clear water bubbling up. Delighted, he drank thirstily until he was interrupted by a Druid priest. 'Curse the fountain that gave thee the life-continuing draught' the Priest exclaimed and with that, he grabbed some mud and threw it at the spring. A few moments later, the spring ceased to bubble, but this did not alarm Saint Monire, who prophesied that the spring would come back again, only this time twice as strong. Sure enough, the spring reappeared close by and stronger than ever and the Druid fell at his feet, overcome. St Monire blessed the well with the name of Mary, and even although recent roadworks have come perilously close to it, it flows strongly, and with a crisp tasting water to this day.

Fearchar Cam, a one-eyed man was cutting twigs about the River Dee for use in making reins, baskets and harnesses. He worked long hours to support himself, and one day, overcome with tiredness, fell into the river. His friends and family searched for his body for hours but it was in vain. Later that night, his widow, unable to sleep, walked to where he had fallen from to seek comfort. Exhausted from her walk, on her return she stopped at St Mary's Well to wash her face. There, she took her beads and prayed to the Virgin Mary to find Fearchar's body. The next morning, she returned to the spot on the Dee and discovered her husband's body laid on the ground and rolled in plaid. This spot is now called Sliabh Fhearchair or Fearchar's plain. Fearchar's body was buried in the church ground at Inverey. His widow, and son Donald remained in Inverey, and Donald later went to work for the Invercauld Estate.




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## Braemar Local History Group

Our 2017 season started off on Jan 15th with an illustrated talk by Innes Ewen, relating to Upper Deeside some 100 / 200 years ago, and was well received by a knowledgeable audience. The group AGM will be held on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> March at 7.00pm in the Village Hall, all are welcome. The AGM will be followed by a talk from Doug Bruce highlighting personal encounters and stories of the legendary Bob Scott - particularly when he was head keeper of the Derry Lodge beat. On April 16th Joyce McCombie will give a presentation on the Belgian evacuees who were located in the Village during WW2. The group will resume its popular Local Historical Walks during April and leader volunteers are always welcome to take part. Contact Doug Anderson for more information.

## Mar Lodge Estate - Winter Update

Here at Mar Lodge we've been taking stock of a successful 2016. We hosted more visitors, more events and more weddings than ever before. We have also played host to loads of really exciting wildlife, including our **first breeding hen harriers in a generation**. The stalking team has had a bumper season, with big bags of walked-up grouse and a fully booked stag season.

This isn't to say that 2016 was without its challenges. After the drama of the summer (a fire in our biomass boiler left us on backup heating for a couple of months) we are pleased to say that the biomass boiler is now back up and running. We are also pleased to say that **the footbridge over the Punchbowl in Glen Quoich has been re-opened** thanks to a generous grant from the Cairngorm Club.

Meanwhile, the ecologists have been crunching data from our 2016 field survey season. One of the main things that we do at Mar Lodge is regenerate areas of Caledonian pinewood, which is a vital refuge for species like capercaillie, red squirrel and Scottish crossbill. Last year we undertook a survey of all of our woodland to see how much regeneration we have here, and we were delighted to find an enormous 455 hectares of it! This is all regeneration established outside of fences, achieved through reducing the number of deer on parts of the estate. This brings the total amount of woodland regeneration on Mar Lodge Estate, including areas which were established on the estate in pre-NTS days, to a considerable 835 hectare - this is roughly the same size as another NTS property, the isle of Iona!



*Repaired bridge by the punchbowl*

Looking to the future, we have been asking ourselves a slightly peculiar question: how can planting trees help to conserve rare shellfish? You may have heard of the **Pearls in Peril** scheme, a nationwide project which seeks to help endangered freshwater pearl mussels. These remarkable creatures deserve our help in their own right, but one of the great things about the project is that it will benefit scores of other species such as Atlantic salmon. We're getting involved by planting water-loving broadleaf trees in Glen Geldie and Glen Dee: a whopping 45,000 of them! This will help to cool the river by shading it from the sun, and will increase the amount of nutrients and vegetation in the water. It will also help to slow down water flow during flood events. By planting the trees in Glen Geldie and Glen Dee we will be helping to create a habitat corridor that runs from Deeside to Speyside, allowing wildlife to move easily between the two areas. The project has involved erecting some deer fencing, which we generally try to avoid, but we know that the long-term benefits of the tree planting will far outweigh the short-term costs of the fencing.

Meanwhile, the ranger team have been preparing for a busy summer season of exciting events. Alongside our regular **Easter egg hunt, open day** and **black grouse dawn watches**, this spring we'll also be running bush craft events, guided mountain walks and photography holidays with award-winning, Cairngorms-based nature photographer Mark Hamblin. For more information check out [www.nts.org.uk/marlodgeestate](http://www.nts.org.uk/marlodgeestate) or visit our Facebook page or call us on ☎01339 720164.

## Crathie Opportunity Holidays

It appears that 2017 is the year of anniversaries. The Buzzard is 10 years old and we at COH celebrate our 15th Anniversary in May. To celebrate our 15 years in operation, we plan to host an event in November - details later! The major fundraisers for 2017 will include our Golf Day at Balmoral on 28th October and another of the popular Film Evenings in the V&A Halls on 5th August during Ballater Victoria Week. The Balmoral Road Races will take place in April and if anyone wishes to run on behalf of COH they should contact our Manager, Maggie Mackay, ☎013397 42100. Our book, "Essays on Life" by Thomas Mitchell, Farmer, is still available (contact Maggie). Much of what we achieve would not be possible without our dedicated staff, Maggie, Beth and Lorraine, and our band of Friends. To thank them for all their help, we plan to hold a picnic on 21st May to which all Friends will be invited. Being a Friend involves helping out at some of our events, or joining the team who host our coffee mornings for guests, or just a bit of gardening. Not onerous tasks, if you would like to consider joining us, again please phone Maggie.



## Win a 'Getting Started' Golf Membership at Braemar Golf Club

To mark the tenth anniversary of the first issue of the Buzzard, Braemar Golf Club is giving away two 12 month 'Getting Started' memberships for 2017 for two lucky Buzzard readers .

All you have to do is answer the 3 following questions and email your answers with your name, address & contact number to [Info@braemargolfclub.co.uk](mailto:Info@braemargolfclub.co.uk) entering NEW in the subject box.

1. How many shots under par is an eagle
2. What is the Yardage of the 10<sup>th</sup> Hole at Braemar Golf Club off the Red tees
3. What Year was Braemar Golf Club Founded

**The Draw will be made on Thursday 30 March 2017.**

All entrants must meet the following criteria:

**Getting Started** - This category of membership is intended for those looking to get into the game of golf. You can only hold this category of membership for a maximum of one year before upgrading to the Flexible or Full Category. Introductory members may play any time Monday to Friday (subject to tee time availability). No weekend play is available with this category of Membership. Introductory Members are not entitled to sign on guests or maintain a handicap.

Please visit the club website at [www.braemargolfclub.co.uk](http://www.braemargolfclub.co.uk) to view all categories of Membership available or call us today ☎ 01339 741618 for information

**The Fife Arms** refurbishment has gone through its first winter without any sign of slowing down. Apart from a much needed Christmas break and an afternoon merrily spent putting up Christmas decorations on the front of the building, all contractors have continued to work at pace. The building internally has been warmed up with very powerful space heaters. The scaffolding at the back has now been removed to give way to the excavation in the back courtyard. On the new foundations, we will build the modern additions to the building, which include the beautiful heather clad courtyard and the new kitchen. This will be the real hub of the new hotel. We have been working closely with RH Morton in Glasgow and Russell Sage Studio in London to plan this space and achieve a functional working environment for the staff and an exciting, sizzling atmosphere for the diners who will be able to see a section of the kitchen from their table.

Our new pre-opening website has been launched [www.thefifearms.com](http://www.thefifearms.com) and we invite as many as possible to subscribe to our newsletter. It will be used as a tool to share updates on the Fife Arms project but also to promote events happening in Braemar's lively and vibrant community. We believe in promoting the whole region in partnership with all other businesses and marketing initiatives in the area so will make sure that our platform is a window into the Upper Royal Deeside and all that it has to offer.

**Federica Bertoloni**



**New Mountain Festival is a big success** Paucity of snow has had little impact on Braemar's first Mountain Festival - the mix of the outdoor activities on offer together with talks, exhibitions, events and mountain food(!) seems to have proved irresistible with nearly all events sold out. Well done to all involved and looking forward to 2018 already! See reports/photos on [www.braemarmountainfestival.com](http://www.braemarmountainfestival.com)

# The Buzzard 2007 - 2017

Looking back over ten years of publication...



## 2007

- Braemar Community Ltd sign a 50 year lease on Braemar Castle
- Announcement that the Braemar Ambulance base is to close

## 2008

- Braemar Castle reopens
- Auchtavan restoration - marked by a community BBQ

## 2009

- Village 30 mph speed restriction extended
- Jeff Hall - appointed as new village bobby
- Scouts set off to Denmark on their first international trip
- Kindrochit Court celebrates 20 years

## 2010

- Anniversaries... SWRI 85th birthday... Bowling Club 25 years
- Castleton Dancers exceed £25k of charity fund raising
- Parish church clock undergoes refit and electrification

## 2011

- Braemar Street Party to celebrate royal wedding
- Glenshee marks 50 years of skiing



Remember the 'bad old' days when you could speed past the garage? This all changed in 2009



2009 - August issue. Off to Denmark - an adventurous international camping trip for the new scout group. Do you recognize all of these young people?!



2010 - June issue. The parish church clock gets a 'makeover', no more manual winding required!

# 2012

- Queen's Jubilee festivities
- Refurbished Co-op opens its doors
- Official opening of the new houses at Invercauld Gardens

# 2013

- Braemar Community Action Plan launched
- Scottish Redundant Churches agree to take over St Margaret's
- Garden party to celebrate the royal birth

# 2014

- Braemar Arts Festival wins Epic award
- Winterwatch comes to Mar Lodge for first time
- Start of new Community orchard
- Fife Arms changes hands and closes for refurbishment

# 2015

- Pop-up library in the TIC
- Braemar Highland Society votes to admit women
- Official re-opening of Kindrochit Castle

# 2016

- Storm Frank
- Hen Harriers breed at Mar Lodge, first record for decades
- Braemar Community Hydro official opening
- Braemar Playpark reaches fund raising target



2012 - June issue: Queens Jubilee festivities included the scouts building a beacon on top of Craig Choinnich



2016 - Feb issue: A look back at Storm Frank - a wetting that we're not likely to forget in a hurry. Above: flooded river valley...

Year	Panto
2007	Dick Turpin
2008	Snow White
2009	Peter Pan
2010	Christmas Carol
2011	Beauty and the Beast
2012	The Old Woman Who Lived in a Shoe
2013	Cinderella
2014	Dick Whittington
2015	Jack & the Beanstalk
2016	Snow White

**And...  
Ten  
years of  
Pantos**



Thank you to the Braemar Creative Arts Festival for sponsoring this colour page in recognition of the Buzzard's help in promoting their festival.

## **Braemar -The Community's Castle**

**Doreen Wood**

This year is significant for the Buzzard and the Castle as we both celebrate 10 years of operation. In 2007 the Castle stood abandoned and neglected. Ten years on, volunteers' time, energy, enthusiasm and expertise has transformed a failed Visitor Attraction into a serious success story.

When Bill Marshall persuaded Invercauld Estate to give the community the lease there was never any doubt it was going to be daunting and what's been achieved by this village is remarkable. There are few people in Braemar who haven't contributed in some way to the success either as the audience, participants or helpers. With the community in charge, it has operated solely to benefit and support the village. And when the repairs are complete, it will generate income to help fund other projects.



Along the way, there have been so many successes but also disappointments. The optimists thought the Castle would be completed within 5 years, the pessimists thought it would never work. It wasn't completed in 5 years, it will probably take at least 20, but the pessimists have most definitely been proved wrong. In our first year, 4,500 people visited the Castle. This season, the counter at the pedestrian gate counted 34,000 people although only 12,000 paid to come into the Castle! The challenge is to convert these visitors to the grounds into cash and that means improving the look of the grounds and the exterior of the Castle.

This January has marked a major new beginning for the Castle with the appointment of Georgina Errington as Castle Manager and Matthew Halliday as Fundraiser and Project manager. Georgina lives in Crathie and Matthew is from Bradford but is planning an imminent move to Scotland. Almost half a million pounds has been raised to repair the roof and the chimneys but probably at least a million more is needed. A major fundraising campaign is being launched to sort out the harling and grounds, re-route the entrance and repair the flat.

Ten years on there are so many people to thank both in the village and friends from all over the world who have both visited and donated. We will celebrate all that has been achieved with a black-tie dinner at Mar Lodge on Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> June to which everyone is very welcome and with a special anniversary Highland Fling at the Castle on Sunday 23<sup>rd</sup> July. Ten years on, not only is the Castle a success, but it now stands shoulder to shoulder with a raft of new initiatives which, are all contributing to make Braemar even better for both locals and visitors.



## Ten Years On....Invercauld Estate

Angus McNichol

The arrival of a milestone such as the *Buzzard's* 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary provides an appropriate point in time to look back and review the past. However it also offers a moment to consider what may happen in the future as the world keeps turning and a place like Braemar evolves - and what might be Invercauld Estate's part to play in this?

As is well reported elsewhere, there is a huge amount planned in and around Braemar in the way of proposed new projects, from visitor centres to an arts venue.

We hope to develop a pub at the former Strachans shop with planning consent being awarded by Aberdeenshire Council late last year. One of Braemar's greatest assets, its peerless mountain location, also creates challenges for many of these initiatives.

To do justice to an increased offering in the village, Braemar will need to be more of a destination in the future, as it was in its Victorian and Edwardian heyday. This means providing more accommodation for visitors and providing the necessary infrastructure and services to make people want to come to the village for more than just a day. We are currently constructing six 'Fog Pods' at Braemar Caravan Park but as the reputation and resulting demand in the village hopefully grows, space for visitors will need to keep pace with the provision of other forms of accommodation to meet market expectations. As coming to Braemar usually means some form of motorised transport, the Estate is also looking at what land could be used to help with providing solutions to the issue of parking within the village. To make visitors feel welcome, we need to cater for them from the moment they arrive - quite literally.

Locals require accommodation too, both those who currently live and wish to continue to live here (particularly young folk) but also those servicing the tourism market and other businesses as these develop. Provision of accommodation is a key function of the Estate and we are currently looking at suitable locations for providing accommodation that is affordable to different income brackets as part of the Local Development Plan process. With more visitors and young people staying in the village, we expect a greater need for shops and workshops and the Estate has ground available to help develop these activities and encourage enterprise on our doorstep.

As one ventures outwith the edge of the village, the infrastructure for walkers and cyclists also needs to keep up with an increasing desire for many to enjoy the outdoors and healthier pursuits. This is particularly important given Braemar's mountain setting. We could see more and improved path facilities extended out from Braemar and better information for how to make the most of these.

In short, Braemar has a potentially very bright future but there are likely to be many changes over the next ten years. Our view at Invercauld Estate is that positive changes, carefully planned and complementing the special qualities of the village's character we all cherish, should be embraced and we are looking forward to what could be an exciting next ten years in the life and evolution of Braemar.



## Gardening Talk... **Caroline Hadley-Smith**

As winter turns to spring it's a very exciting & busy time in the garden for both gardeners and wildlife. Longer days and warmer temperatures allow for an increasing range of garden tasks. It's time to get busy preparing seed beds, cutting back winter shrubs and generally tidying up around the garden.

Divide overgrown clumps of summer-flowering herbaceous perennials such as geraniums. Use two back-to-back forks to split the clumps then replant and fertilize the soil, perhaps give half of the clump away to a friend. Now is also a good time to think about planting summer flowering bulbs such as lilies and gladioli.

Scotland is one of the best places to grow potatoes and home grown always taste best (with a generous knob of butter!) The earliest to harvest (first earlies) are varieties such as Maris Bard, Swift and Bonnie Dundee. Start chitting tubers of seed potatoes to prepare for planting out. Place the tubers on a tray in a single layer with the side that has most eyes or buds facing up. Keep them in a cool, light, frost-free place and they will sprout new shoots. Beware of planting too early in Braemar or the tender new tips can be nipped by frost.

Our songbirds time their breeding season to the warmest part of the year, when there is plenty of food and lots of daylight in which to find it. As winter turns to spring, the lengthening daylight switches male songbirds into breeding mode. The first songsters of the season are residents such as robins and great tits, joined later in spring by migrants to make May and June the peak time to enjoy the dawn chorus. The first birds begin to sing about an hour before sunrise. If you listen carefully, you may notice that there is a regular sequence, with some species habitually starting before others. Among the earliest to rise are skylarks, song thrushes, robins and blackbirds, and as they do eat worms there may be some truth to the old saying 'the early bird gets the worm'.



## Braemar Community Garden **Aimi Blueman**

As spring approaches the Community Garden is gearing up for action and looking for members. This winter's weather pattern has affected Braemar in more ways than one with a lack of snow. Cold and severe weather has hit countries which should be mild, causing a lack of the fruit and vegetables we have come to expect in our supermarkets, highlighting our reliance on imported foods. The ample growing space in Braemar's Community Garden offers an opportunity to eat locally produced food in tune with the seasons - what could taste better?!

There are other benefits to the Community Garden than just produce, it will be a sociable space and give members a chance to meet with other people in the community of all ages. The Garden is a sheltered sun trap, the perfect place to chat and relax after a bit of gardening. Gardening keeps you fit! - the increased physical activity of gardening has many health benefits from reduction in conditions such as heart disease to improved mental wellbeing.

**The Community Garden is inviting members to sign up at £10 each, £15 for a couple, or £20 for a family.** Membership fees will be used for buying plants and tools and for accessing matched funding - every pound we raise now should be doubled (funding has already been secured from BCL, BCC and the Fife Arms). We hope of course that your investment will be repaid in produce! If you are able to join, check out the gardening rules, then please put your fee in an envelope, cash or cheque to Braemar Community Limited. Write **COMMUNITY GARDEN** and your **NAME** on the envelope, and drop it into Wild Thistle by the end of March. If you want to support the project but are not sure you'll have time to do any work in the garden write **SUPPORTER** on the envelope as well.

## Wanted

If you have any plants that are not dead that you don't want, Braemar Primary would love to have them. Please hand into the school or call us on 41250.

Many thanks,  
Braemar  
Primary School.





## Speciality Sweet Shop

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We also offer personalised favours and gifts to celebrate your Special Occasion.

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[www.specialitysweetshop.com](http://www.specialitysweetshop.com)

### Braemar Service Station

Spring is on its way!

Arriving soon... a lovely collection of bedding plants for your garden

\* Planters \* Plant Food \*  
\* Weedkiller \*

Call in and see what's new!



Tel: 41210



Saturday 11th March 11—1pm  
Sunday 12th March 1pm—3pm

Open Days at

Crathie Opportunity Holidays

Come along to see what we do and enjoy a coffee or tea and home-bakes

Tel: 01339742100

[info@crathieholidays.org.uk](mailto:info@crathieholidays.org.uk)

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## Deeside Knitwits      Rosy Wood

Now is a good time of year to sit by the fire and knit, so what better time to get involved with this year's Deeside Knitwits project! - we're going to make a country meadow scene for the Cluny Bridge using the 2015 flowers augmented by grass and trees plus small woodland creatures such as mice and hedgehogs, and butterflies and bees. We might also need some billy goats gruff, because there may be a few trolls around as this year the children's trail will be a troll hunt. Not those nasty internet variety... but the mythical norse and north European mountain monsters ... Bubbling in the background we've a couple of other projects... You may have seen the pots of knitting around the village for knitting strips for tree sweaters! These will be sewn around trees at Crathes Castle in June and then at Braemar Castle in July. Looking well ahead to 2018 we're also aiming to create a cascade of poppies in Braemar to mark the end of WWI. So if you're looking for something small to knit, poppies could be it! We have lots of donated yarn and the Braemar Knitter Natter group meets **Tuesdays 2-4pm in the Bothy**, all welcome.



## Drumming up support for Samba      Marilyn Baker

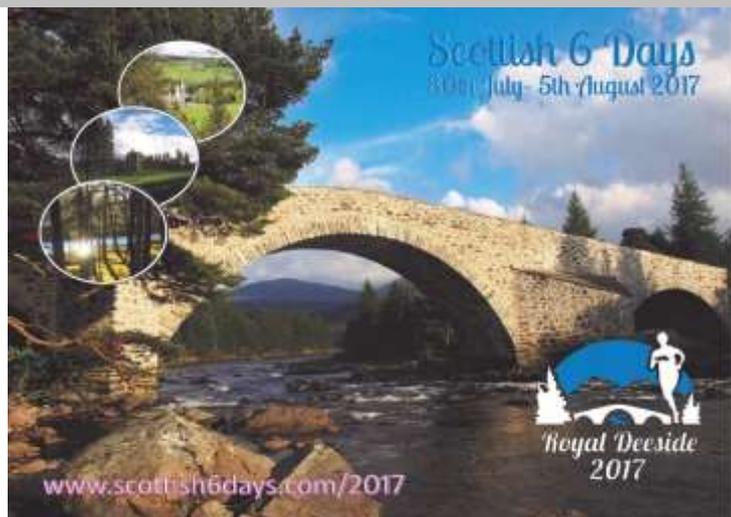
Following on from two wonderful Samba drumming sessions at the Braemar Creative Arts Festival last year and the year before, it was obvious drumming was a big 'hit' in Braemar (excuse the pun). A set of Samba drums, enough for 20 players, is being purchased using Festival funds, and instruction from members of the Samba Sisters will take place in April, May, and June, the dates still to be confirmed. The plan is to have 8 hours of tuition over one weekend each month. Perhaps, by the summer time, Braemar will have its very own Samba Band performing in the centre of the village for the tourists. It is hoped that the younger members of the community will also give Samba drumming a bash.

There is already a list of 14 interested players, but there's room for more so if you think you would like to join the group please email [braemarartsfestival@gmail.com](mailto:braemarartsfestival@gmail.com) to add your name. It is a great stress buster for all ages. We'll keep you informed of dates by email and via the Braemar Community page on Facebook.

## Scottish 6 Days Orienteering – Royal Deeside 30 July/5 August 2017 – Putting Royal Deeside on the Map!      Pat Graham

Preparations are now well under way for the Scottish Orienteering 6 Days Festival which promises to attract over 3000 entries (many from overseas) to Royal Deeside from 30 July to 5 August. Local Mar Orienteering Club will be hosting the event in conjunction with Edinburgh's Interlopers Club and Scottish Orienteering and the event centre will be the Victoria and Albert Halls in the centre of Ballater. Creag Choinnich is the venue for day 4 on 3 Aug. Days 5 and 6 are being held in stunning Glen Feardar on Invercauld Estate. While there is plenty to attract the top elite athletes, there are many other courses on offer suitable for all the family and all levels of experience including string courses available for small children to try each day.

AND a new initiative in upper Deeside and Donside 'Community Orienteering and Protection of the Environment' will provide an exciting opportunity for the local community to get involved in orienteering in the lead up to the Scottish 6 days and the 2018 Scottish Orienteering championships. The Mar Orienteering website [www.marocscotland.org.uk](http://www.marocscotland.org.uk) has further details.



**Be a part of it! Further information on the Scottish 6 Days Orienteering Festival is available at [www.scottish6days.com/2017](http://www.scottish6days.com/2017) or follow us on Facebook or Twitter @scottish6days**



## Junior buzzard

As we are celebrating the Braemar Buzzard's 10th Birthday this edition I thought it would be a good idea to interview some school children who are turning 10 this year also. So, I sat down with Esme Evans and Kyle Holland and found out a bit about them, what they like to do, what they like about Braemar and what they see themselves doing in ten years time.

Esme, who turned 10 at the end of January this year, I discovered is very active, and enjoys playing football, basketball, and tennis with her friends. She also attends local Highland Dancing classes, almost a rite of passage for any young child growing up in Braemar (although Esme is a lot more enthusiastic about it than I ever was at her age!). Esme is very fond of her one year old lab collie cross, Lula. She is a lively and friendly dog (almost too friendly, Kyle adds, saying that Lula likes to jump up at him whenever they meet. Esme says that this is a sign that Lula likes him!) When I asked Esme about what she would like to be when she grows up, she told me that she would like to be a Vet. She loves all sorts of animals and struggled to pick a favourite, as there are too many to choose from!

Kyle, who turns 10 on the 2nd of March, told me that he enjoys playing football with his friends, chopping wood, walking his many dogs, and being annoying! Kyle also enjoys going shooting with his dad at the weekends. He told me that he has shot a roebuck and a roe deer, but is yet to shoot his first stag. Kyle has decided that he would like to be a professional footballer when he is older, and would like to play as a Striker for either Manchester City or Liverpool FC - his two favourite teams.

I asked Esme and Kyle what they like most about living in Braemar and they both agreed that the scenery was a favourite attribute. For Esme, she particularly enjoys hiking with her family, while Kyle prefers the wooded areas where he can go shooting with his Dad. They are both very excited about the new play park opening too, Esme saying that it would bring more tourists with young families to the village.

I asked Esme and Kyle where they see themselves in ten years time - whether they would like to stay in Braemar or not. Esme said that she could see herself still living in the countryside as she does not like big cities too much. And Kyle said that he would possibly come back to visit friends if they still lived here.

**Erin MacAlpine**

### How Old is Braemar School?

Braemar Buzzard are not the only ones planning a birthday celebration! We are working closely with the Braemar Local History Group to research the history of Braemar School. We have evidence that suggests the school may be 150 years old. The children are busy sourcing information and searching for clues. We are planning to hold an Open Morning on **Friday 31<sup>st</sup> March 2017** where we will display our findings. We are hoping that ex pupils, of all ages, will share their stories, photographs and memorabilia. In the coming weeks children will be involved in interviewing former pupils of the school who are still living in Braemar and finding out what things have changed over the past 50 years. But they are also planning to go even further back in time and use the Scotland's People website on the Internet to research pupils who attended the school more than 100 years ago. An old fashioned classroom complete with slates, chalk, inkwells etc. has been set up at one end of room 2 to bring the project to life. At the end of the study the children are going to create a Time Capsule to be hidden in the newly refurbished Fife Arms, so future generations can learn about school life in 2017. Here are some of the pieces that have been prepared for the time capsule.

#### Our school...

...is called Braemar School and we have 3 classes with 40 children in the school. After school clubs are tennis, football, basketball and drama. After lunch we brush out teeth. I like Golden Time. We all love reading. We put a camera trap out in 3 places, 2 in the school and 1 in the woods. **Lucas**

...is small. It is fun. It is awesome. I like everyone. Lunch is my favourite time. **Joshua**

... stood for a long time. It stood before the war started. It's big, bigger that you can imagine. It was here before I was born. **Lewis**

...has a corner where we sit down to listen to stories or get books to bring to our tables. We also listen to what we have to do for our work there. Everyone in our class loves reading. **Kaitlin**

### Village Bin Collections Tuesdays

#### Wheelie Bin

March 28<sup>th</sup>  
April 11<sup>th</sup>; 25<sup>th</sup>  
May 9<sup>th</sup>; 23<sup>rd</sup>

#### Recycling

March 21<sup>st</sup>  
April 4<sup>th</sup>; 18<sup>th</sup>  
May 2<sup>nd</sup>; 16<sup>th</sup>; 30<sup>th</sup>



### Dee Don Ceilidh Collective

Organises weekends of music workshops, music sessions and ceilidh dance. The first 2017 event is:

25-26 March  
At Victoria & Albert Halls  
Ballater

Booking & info  
[www.deedonceilidhcollective.org.uk/](http://www.deedonceilidhcollective.org.uk/)

### Get Bowling...

A new facility for the village



Indoor carpet bowls in Castleton Hall  
Monday afternoons  
1.30pm; £2/session  
Come and give it a go, bowls and tuition can be provided.

Plus... outdoor bowling starts at the end of April. For more info on all of the bowling  
☎ John Kinsella 41309 or  
☎ Doug A 07585122730

## What's on in and around your village?

Date	Event
Mar 19 Sun	BHLG - village hall, 7pm AGM followed by a talk on Bob Scott by Doug Bruce.
Mar 31 Fri	School open morning - celebrating 150 yrs
Mar 20 Mon	CNPA - course on Lambing, Strathspey <a href="http://www.cairngorms.co.uk">www.cairngorms.co.uk</a>
Apr 1 Sat	Braemar Castle and Balmoral Castle both reopen for the new season
Apr 15 Sat	Messy Easter, Village Hall, 10-12 organised by Braemar and Crathie Church
Apr 16 Sun	BLHG Village Hall 7.30 pm. WWII Belgian refugees - talk by Joyce McCombie
Apr 16 Sun	Easter Day sunrise service 0800
Apr 16 Sun	Braemar Castle - Shake Hands with the Past. Meet the Castle characters who will give you a tour! 12am - 4 pm
Apr 16 Sun	Egg Hunt at Mar Lodge 10 00 - 1600. £3 per trail sheet. Lodge also open - £3 entry fee to lodge but NTS members and U16s free. Information ☎013397 20164
Apr 21 Fri	Braemar News Group AGM 6.00pm, Moorfield Hotel - all welcome
Apr 22 Sat - and other dates	Black Grouse Dawn Watch 0500 - 0800 Mar Lodge Ranger service. £26/adult. Booking essential ☎ 013397 20164
May 28 Sun	Mary Gauthier in concert at St Margaret's
June 21 Wed	Creag Choinnich Hillrace
July 8 Sat	Braemar Junior Highland Games 1130 - 1700 Games Park. Followed by family ceilidh in the village hall. Further information on facebook or <a href="http://www.braemarjuniorgames.com">www.braemarjuniorgames.com</a>
July 23 Sun	Braemar Castle Highland Fling
2 <sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of each month	Third Age Lunch Club. For information contact Kathleen Kinsella ☎41309

**Please send news/articles for the Buzzard to:**

[info@braemarbuzzard.org.uk](mailto:info@braemarbuzzard.org.uk)

**Deadline for the next edition: Mon May 22<sup>nd</sup> 2017**

Website: [www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk](http://www.braemarbuzzard.org.uk)

Adverts cost £15 per eighth of a page.

Contact Maggie MacKay ☎41245