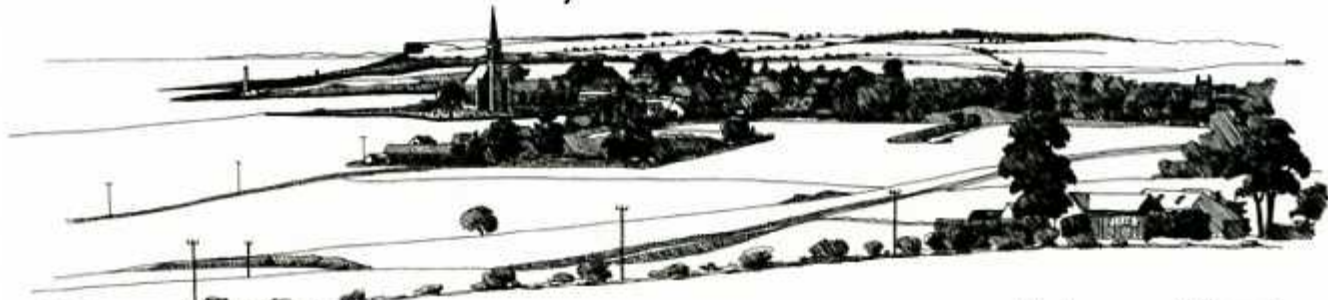


The St Cyrus Newsletter



Volume 4 Issue 6

This is a free newsletter but donations are welcome

February/March

Focus on volunteering **Volunteer and help your community** **Volunteer in 2007** Volunteering opportunities

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Who volunteers?

The first volunteer I encountered was Miss Gladys Forsyth Grant, aka Brown Owl. Half a century ago various timid village girls stood around her piano at Burnside and sang hymns about Jesus calling us o'er the Tumult, having first practiced our knots to perfection. Who else remembers that?

Things have changed a bit since our day. Guiding still exists, evolved for modern needs, but sadly not in St Cyrus. Likewise we haven't had a Scout group for a few years - although I could name two former Scouters over 90 still living in the village. It would be great if this newsletter formed the catalyst to bring forward a new band of willing folk to step into their hardworking shoes.

Volunteering may once have been the occupation of wonderful old ladies with little else to help them pass the time (and I'm told the F-G Easter pageants were legendary!) but now anyone can offer their help for as much time as they wish to a myriad of different organisations. You can have the freedom of becoming involved in one off projects or take on more regular commitments and because 2007 is supposed to be the year of the volunteer and New Year resolutions are still being made, we have got together with as many groups as we can to tell you what is going on locally. You can help clean up the beach once or twice a year or make a weekly visit to someone lonely, the choice is yours, and the satisfaction gained from seeing how happy your company can make a vulnerable person or how beautiful the beach is when it's tidy makes the whole effort worthwhile.

Retired folk can meet new friends and gain a new interest in life through volunteering, many who are still working can find a couple of hours here and there to do their bit and for the young or unemployed volunteering provides an opportunity to gain relevant experience that will look great on a CV. It might even help make up their minds what career direction to take.

OK, so there may be someone reading this who says "but I'm not one of Nature's carers and I'm not fit enough to pick litter and slash bracken. There's nothing I can do to help." Oh yes there is! It may surprise you to know that all the organisations who have responded to our appeal for information are eager to recruit committee members as well as "shop floor" workers.

If you can take notes and type, you can be a Secretary, if you can add up you can be a Treasurer and you may even have the necessary skills to be an effective Chairman, but you don't have to be an office bearer. Anyone interested in the running of these worthy causes can join a committee knowing they are helping to keep a valuable ship afloat.

Nowadays we have bodies such as CVS offering training in effective committee skills so there is no need to approach the job with fear and ignorance. It can be just as rewarding to be part of the team running a thriving voluntary organisation as it is to see the smile light up your client's face each week.

Don't sit there and say volunteering is for other people. Pick up the phone and enquire about something you think you might be able to do. You can always change your mind once you know more about it but if you don't call in the first place you'll never know.

Once upon a time I promised to do my best to do my duty to God and the Queen and to help other people every day especially those at home (I can't confirm I was much use at that) and I've made other promises since. What I can promise you now is that voluntary work is far more rewarding than you can imagine - so please try it.

A former Kelpie

Editorial Policy Statement

The St Cyrus Newsletter is a free community newspaper produced and distributed every two months by volunteers to households and businesses in St Cyrus and district. The aim of those involved is to produce an informative, accurate and entertaining journal for those who live, work and visit in this area. We are supporting an integrated and inclusive community with information, entertainment and discussion. Letters and articles published in the newspaper do not necessarily reflect the views of the Production Committee and they reserve the right to shorten, edit or not publish any item. Contributions will be attributed to the author. Vested interests will be declared where applicable. Articles should be between 200 and 300 words and the content should be original work relevant to St Cyrus and the environs. The St Cyrus Newsletter Group obtains written parental permission before including any photographs of children in the newsletter. When photographs of children are included they will not identify and name individuals. The principal reason for this policy is because the newsletter is made available on the Internet as a downloadable PDF file. This policy is standard practice in all schools in Scotland. Photographic resources donated to and collected on behalf of The Newsletter Group remain the property of the group to illustrate the newsletter and may also be used to support village charitable fund raising. Entries for the Business directory are charged at £5 per issue for the single line entry of name, service and tel contact number.

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Contributors to this edition

Durward	Bill Howatson	Wilma Jobson
George Hastie	Andy Turner	Pete Wolsey
Mary Singleton	Heather Jenkins	
Liz Leslie	Evelyn Richardson	
Donald Gillies	Mike Burleigh	
Ed Garrett	Alison Couch	
Allan Lemon	Andrew Christie	
Rebecca Chambers	Yvonne Buck	
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Rosie MacAllan	Andrew Hamilton	
John Adams	Lina Forsyth-Grant	

Editorial Happy New Year to all our readers who we thought might take inspiration for their new year resolutions from an edition focused on the importance of voluntary groups in our society. The extent to which we can be considered a caring society might be judged from the number of voluntary groups, the extent to which they are supported and the quality of the service they offer.

Being relatively new to St Cyrus and wishing to find an overview of the appropriate voluntary sector offices I looked to www.kdvoice.org.uk who are the CVS (Council for Voluntary Services) and the umbrella organisation representing the interests of the voluntary sector for our area.

We invited local organisations to provide details of their services and how these can be supported with a few hours of your volunteered time. Remember also those village committees which need your support, The Youth Club, Community Council, Public hall, Gala, Flower show and Newsletter Committees.

Thanks to Mary Singleton without whose interest, support, direction and advice this edition of the newsletter would not have been possible. Editor

DEADLINES

Articles and information for the next issue should arrive at the latest 27th March

Write to us at: Email: stcyrusnewsletter@beeb.net
 13 Scotston Place, St Cyrus DD10 0BZ

Dear Editor,

Letters to the Editor

Christmas Lights A big THANK YOU to all of you who donated towards the Christmas Lights including local businesses. Also the team of volunteers for giving their time for maintenance and erection and taking down the lights in unfavourable weather.



I would also like to explain why we have only nine Christmas illuminations on the main road. The council stated at the beginning that only six lamp standards were capable of taking the Christmas lights.

We have since managed to make that up to nine! As we have to pay £70.00 plus VAT to the Council for fitting connections to each lamp standard this adds to the overall cost.

As the Christmas features are reasonably expensive and generally require some maintenance we are always glad to receive donations towards them.

We hope to keep adding to them for the enjoyment of everyone. D H Skinner (one of the elves!)

The St Cyrus Newsletter Group acknowledges the support of Aberdeenshire Council in the production of this issue.



St Cyrus Church Services are at 11:30am every Sunday

The day of prayer this year for all the churches will take place at Johnshaven Church on Friday 2nd March at 2:30pm and will include Kinneff & Laurence-kirk folk for you to chat to over a cup of tea afterwards.

In small communities like ours it is important to support the local facilities such as the shop, post office, hotel, cafes and petrol station. They all need you. The church is no different. This year, we have services at 10am in Johnshaven and 11:30am St Cyrus.

I hope that you will all make a point of coming to worship as a community this year. Psalm 146 tells us not to put our trust in princes but to trust in God. Robert Burns echoed that in his poem 'A man's a man for a' that'. Many people strut for a while on the world's stage and then come to nothing. A breath takes them away. In a changing world it is better to trust in God and do the right thing. Each of us has a part to play in our neighbourhood and our street. Look to see what you can do to volunteer and lend a hand in our village. If you know of people ill who would like a visit give me a ring 850 880 and provide their address or hospital ward details. **Hospitals no longer inform ministers of new admissions unless specifically asked to do so by the patient.** George Hastie 850 880

Scottish Episcopal Church

St Mary's + St Peter's Montrose

8am Sunday said Eucharist

11am Sung Eucharist

Wednesday 10:15 said Eucharist

Evensong during Lent at 6:30pm starting

Sunday 25th February

Inverbervie: St David's

Sung Eucharist 9:30am Sunday

FREE CHURCH: Meeting in the Public Hall
Outlines of meetings for Feb/March. All our meetings are suitable for all ages and a Creche can be arranged on request.

Worship & Learn Preacher - David Robertson
 3pm Sunday 4th February St Cyrus Public Hall
 Communion Service. Refreshments afterwards.

Mid month Bible Study - Donald Gillies
 3pm Sunday 18th February St Cyrus Public Hall.
 Refreshments first.

Worship & Learn Preacher - David Robertson
 3pm Sunday 4th March St Cyrus Public Hall
 Refreshments afterwards.

Mid month Bible Study - Donald Gillies
 3pm Sunday 18th March St Cyrus Public Hall.
 Refreshments first.

Christianity Explored - Donald Gillies
 Ten week video based course and discussion group.
 Available to run where requested, why not organise a group of friends? Contact: Donald Gillies, 850607

Funerals held at St Cyrus

Kathleen Anderson. Died 22nd January aged 80

Obituary: William McDonald: Bill Macdonald (Biscuits) Born Dundee Dec 1927. Although their father was a Master Grocer Bill and his brother went on to become Master Butchers in their own right. His steak pies were well known locally, nationally & even internationally. Bill became the proprietor of the Bush Hotel St.Cyrus in 1969 and built up a healthy trade (The weekly dinner dances were very popular) as people enjoyed his often quirky sense of humour, regulars will remember his pony Tanya drinking buckets of stout in the bar! Bill went on to run the Ferryden at Montrose retiring in 2000 and spending his time either tending his garden or looking for Car Boot Sale bargains. Bill died on Jan 3rd at home with his family and is survived by his wife Christine who lives in Invergarry Park and daughters Pamela, Marianne, Patricia and Caroline.

What's on at the Public Hall

OAPs every 2nd Monday from 7pm

Bowls Tuesdays and Thursdays.

Country Dancers Mondays 7pm-9pm.

Tea Dancers Fridays 1.45pm-4.15pm.

Playgroup Mon-Thurs. 9am-11.30am.

Toddlers Fridays 10am-12noon.

Keep Fit Wednesdays 8pm-9pm.

Whist Club Wednesdays 6.30pm-9pm.

Friendship Club Wednesdays 9am-1pm.

Youth Club Fridays:

Juniors P5 P6 P7 6.30pm-8.15pm.

Seniors S1 S2 S3 8.30pm-10pm.

Free Church 1st and 3rd Sunday in month 2pm-5pm.

WRI 1st Monday in month 7pm-10pm.

Community Council 2nd Tuesday in month 7.30-9pm

Also:

The St Cyrus Gala Committee is holding a Pampered Chef kitchen show in the small hall on Friday 16th Feb

The St Cyrus Gala Committee is also holding a St Patrick's Disco on Saturday 17th March.

Important:

The large hall will be out of commission on Thursday 15th & Friday 16th of February because the floor is being sanded and re-coated and I am very grateful for the co-operation of the Bowlers, Playgroup, Tea Dancers and Toddlers in agreeing to cancel their regular meetings so that the maintenance of the floor can be completed.

Make your bookings well in advance to have them announced here. Yvonne Buck 850160

~Committee Members Needed~

The Public Hall is run by a committee of user group representatives and other volunteers. If you are interested in joining these public spirited people who care for our community facility please come along to the AGM on March 6th or contact John Sparrow on 850 739 for further details.

Catholic Services:

Saturday 6.30pm St David's Episcopal Church: Bervie
 Sunday Mass at 9am and 11am St Mary's Stonehaven

~ St Cyrus Nature Reserve ~



The Old Lifeboat Station
Nether Warburton
St Cyrus
Montrose DD10 0AQ



Scotland's
National Nature
Reserves

Scottish Natural Heritage (SNH) staff perform regular litter picks across St Cyrus National Nature Reserve but every September we enlist the invaluable help of volunteers to really scour the beach of litter. This September beach clean is part of a nationwide annual beach clean organised by the Marine Conservation Society (MCS). Volunteers around Britain pick litter and record exactly what's been collected. This information is sent to the MCS who can establish an overall picture of the cleanliness of our beaches and use this information to lobby government or prosecute the main polluters.

In 2006 we followed up the September beach clean with another very successful litter pick on a fine day in December. With the help of 17 volunteers we collected over 40 bags of litter from the northern section of the beach. Litter can travel for many miles before spoiling our beaches, most of it is transported by wave and tide action, although some is wind blown or dropped by careless visitors. With so many people willing to volunteer their time to keep St Cyrus beach litter-free we are organising a spring beach clean on 5th May as part of the National Outdoor Access Festival.

Volunteers are important on the reserve, as without them we would not be able to undertake some of the large-scale habitat management that is needed to maintain and improve the site. The main volunteer project last year was bracken bashing at the foot of the cliffs where the bracken is encroaching on the wildflower rich grasslands. Bracken shades out the spring displays of wildflowers that St Cyrus is famous for. Removing the bracken allows dormant seeds the space and light to grow and produce not only a beautiful carpet of flowers for visitors to enjoy but also attracts more butterflies and insects to feed on their sweet nectar.

We had two groups of volunteers helping with the bracken bashing in August. SNH colleagues from our main Area office in Aberdeen, and from Forvie National Nature Reserve spent a day using brushcutters and other machinery on the flatter areas. We were also lucky to have band of willing helpers from the Johnshaven based Safe Habitats Alliance for Rural Kincardineshire (SHARK) group who tackled some of the more difficult to reach areas with hand tools. The eight SHARK volunteers really made an impact on areas that can't be accessed with machinery. It is hoped that all the effort will be worth it with an even more spectacular show of flowers come the spring. We plan to organise another couple of bracken bashing events this summer to continue the good work.



SHARK bracken bashers

If you are interested in joining SHARK please contact Rebecca Chambers on 01561 362120 or at shark@johnshaven.com

Conservation volunteering contacts:

BTCV : <http://www2.btcv.org.uk>

NTS : <http://www.nts.org.uk/web/site/home/home.asp?>

SWT : <http://www.swt.org.uk>

JMT : <http://www.jmt.org>

CJS : <http://www.countryside-jobs.com>

If you are interested in working in conservation one of the best ways to gain experience is through volunteering at a local site. Some organisations offer residential opportunities but often regular volunteering, for example a day a week or similar, can fit in around other commitments and shows commitment to the work. You can also take part in John Muir Trust Award designed to encourage people to take a closer look at nature or find other volunteering opportunities and job vacancies through Countryside Jobs Service (CJS) who produce a weekly newsletter full of job vacancies and info on training courses. We are working on the events programme for next summer and want to include a few new events to add to the popular ones from last year so look out for more information coming soon! We would also like to encourage more local groups of all ages and interests to make use of the nature reserve and organise either a visit to group meetings or a trip to the reserve with either Andy or Alison. Just give us a call for more information on 01674 830 736 or pop into the Reserve Office.

Mearns Healthy Living Network:

As most people know, the population of Scotland is getting older. This is particularly so in Aberdeenshire which is due to see the second highest rise in the proportion of older people in the country in the next 10 years.

This changing population brings with it new challenges as well as new opportunities. The Mearns Healthy Living Network was established in 2002 to meet some of these challenges. It provides a range of services and activities for older people in the Mearns area, including St Cyrus. These services and activities include help with shopping and transport, a handyperson scheme for small DIY jobs around the house and garden, lunch clubs, exercise groups, computer and art groups and other social activities. In all, 120 people use the project's services and activities each week. These services and activities are provided through the hard work and commitment of 50 volunteers.

The Healthy Living Network is a voluntary organisation funded mainly by the Big Lottery Fund with two part-time staff based in the Community Centre in Laurencekirk. Though our initial grant is due to end this year we are confident of getting more funding to continue with our work in the Mearns and to start work in the coastal communities north of St Cyrus, from Johnshaven up to Catterline.

The Healthy Living Network is increasingly busy in the St Cyrus area. Until recently a exercise class has run in the Village Hall. Computer and art groups have also run in the past. Several people also use the shopping service regularly.

If you think you might want to use one of the Healthy Living Network services or come to one of its groups, or if you simply want to know more, please do get in touch with Ed or Nikki at the Mearns Community Centre. We're also interested in any ideas you might have for other things we could be doing in the area.

We also really need more volunteers in the St Cyrus area, particularly volunteers able to help with driving, shopping and handyperson jobs. The commitment can be as small or as big as you like and training is provided. There is also the opportunity to become involved in the management of the project. We are setting up a new management committee and as yet we don't have anyone from St Cyrus involved. If you want to know more about these volunteering opportunities with the Healthy Living Network, again please contact Ed or Nikki.

Ed Garrett, Project coordinator,
Mearns Healthy Living work,
Mearns Community Centre,
148 High Street, Laurencekirk AB30 1BL
Tel: 01561 378130 mhln@care4free.net



~ St Cyrus Friendship Club ~

The Friendship Club..... continues to be open to all comers every Wednesday in the village hall at 10am You don't have to be a member, just drop in and have a coffee. We are very grateful to all those who help in running the club, but we can always use more. If you can help us with either transport or in the hall please contact me, John Gavin 850288 or Barbara Dunbar.

Volunteers work in a rota which comes round about once in four weeks. The more volunteers we have the less often your turn will come round and there is no reason why you shouldn't volunteer as a 'pair'!

We are usually finished and cleared up by 1:00pm. If you can spare one Wednesday morning in four, please let us know. As I have said, we are

open to all, so once you have collected your passengers or done the serving, there is no reason why you shouldn't move to the other side of the counter, have a coffee, do your exercises, have a game of scrabble or dominoes & lunch. If you're an intellectual, Mrs Davidson will test you with a quiz!

John Gavin



Home-Start Kincardine
A unique volunteering opportunity to support
children and families

Home-start Kincardine is a voluntary organisation based in Stonehaven, committed to promoting the positive side of family life, by offering practical help and support to families with children under five years of age.

Many parents feel overwhelmed or exhausted by the stresses and difficulties of everyday life. All too often they have no close family or people around them who can give them encouragement, support or breathing space when they need it.

Our volunteers, who are all parents or grandparents, understand the pressures and demands that come with the job. They undergo a 30 hour preparation course, really designed to give them a picture of some of the issues that may be facing families at this moment in time.

They visit their Home-Start families once a week for 2-3 hours and although every family's needs will be different, the support may include:

- taking the children to the park
- helping parents keep appointments
- spending time listening and encouraging a parent
- playing with the children whilst Mum has a break

All expenses are paid and regular on-going training sessions are offered to all volunteers.

Do you think you would like to be a volunteer for Home-Start?

If your answer is yes, then call Carol or Heather on 01569 767773 to find out more information.

We usually run two courses a year, at different locations.

There is one starting in Portlethen on February 6th. We would love to hear from you.

BEFRIENDING MAKES A DIFFERENCE



Kincardine & Deeside Befriending is a well established local charity which matches lonely, isolated, older people with a volunteer on a one to one basis. We are currently looking for people to join us as befrienders throughout Kincardineshire and the Mearns –could you make a real difference to someone's life in the St Cyrus area?

As Spring approaches, along with some warmer and longer days, we may begin to think about trips out to enjoy the countryside with perhaps a stop for a cup of tea. For some older people, however, this is not a possibility as they are unable to get out and about without help and may not have family or friends locally who can support them.

This is where a volunteer befriender can help – someone who can spend an hour or two each week or fortnight visiting an older person, perhaps accompanying them on a walk, taking them out for a drive or simply visiting at home for a chat and a cup of tea. Befriending is very flexible and can be fitted in around full or part time work. Our befrienders are both men and women and of all ages. Most find they get as much pleasure as they give in their role.

The scheme provides support, training and expenses for its volunteers. Befriending can make a real difference to someone's life – providing companionship, practical help and a listening ear. If you feel that you have a little time to spare and could help out in your community please contact: Catherine King 01569 765714

42-46 Barclay St, Stonehaven, AB39 2FX

e-mail befriending@hotmail.com

