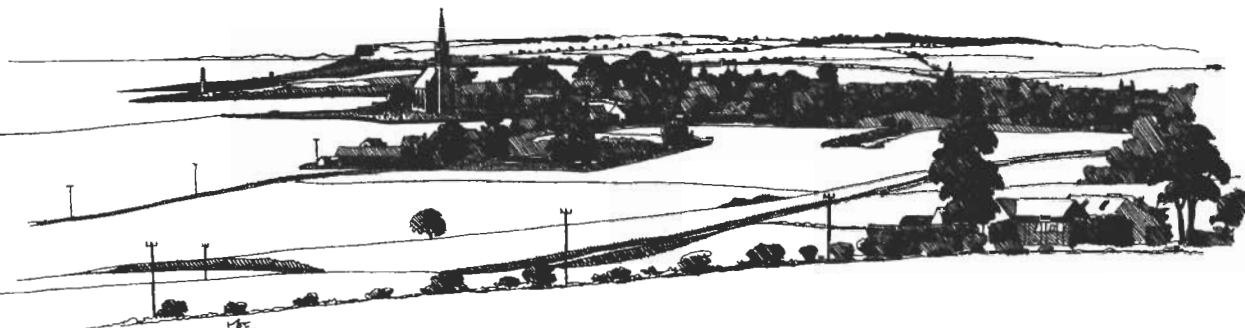


The St Cyrus Newsletter



Volume 4 Issue 5

This is a free newsletter but donations are welcome

December/January

Season's Greetings

Inside this issue:

| | |
|-------------------------|----|
| Letters to the Editor | 2 |
| Public hall diary | 3 |
| St Cyrus Nature Reserve | 4 |
| Disability Issues | 5 |
| Old Worthies | 6 |
| Street Football | 7 |
| Weather Lore | 8 |
| Senior Citizens' Assoc | 9 |
| Bowling Club | 9 |
| Shepherd's Calendar | 10 |
| Calendars | 12 |
| Photography Competition | 12 |

Also:

- Page 2 Editorial
- Page 3 Church+school
- Page 6 Computer help
- Page 7 Squirrel survey
- Page 8 Dance Group
- Page 9 Family History
- Page 10 Playgroup
- Page 11 Fund raising
- Page 12 Railway Cutting

Planning for the next generation

IN the public mind, planning, whether for one house, a new town or a wind farm, has few grey areas. It tends to be a black and white issue – individuals are either for or against the development. Because new building has such a major impact on our communities and environment, planning is a matter of legitimate public interest.

Major changes are afoot in terms of planning regulations following the publication a new Parliamentary bill. What is of vital importance is that the right for public views to be expressed is safeguarded, and that the process is robust in defending local input on planning issues which could have a considerable impact on where we live.

That is why a new approach to planning – the strategic land use plan for Aberdeen and Aberdeenshire – is an issue where local views are important. Aberdeenshire Council is soon to begin consulting on the plan and will be seeking community input. The strategic land use plan is more than simply a structure plan, it is an attempt to look at new development over a 25-year period and take account of changing economic and demographic circumstances.

It is a bold idea, but one which could influence how planning is taken forward throughout our communities. In effect it will be an attempt to think ahead in a cohesive way, not just about where housing development should be but how the infrastructure – roads, sewerage, schools, and other services – are part of the process from the beginning. It is about the big picture.

And it is important that public views on this process are captured and fed back. From the beginning active public involvement should be part of the process.

Some of the issues that have already been raised include the affordability of housing, rural development, transport, lack of community facilities and design.

It is important that the process, which should take until the summer of 2008 to complete – so it is a long-term issue – test a variety of issues that matter to local communities. If for example there is to be a new town in the North-east where should it be? How big should housing developments be, and how should land be released for development? Issues like retail parks are also to the fore, as is the debate about the green belt around cities.

The consultation exercise will throw up a great many issues, not least the sustainability of rural communities and their schools, the place of renewable energy, and the opportunities for small developers as much as volume builders.

There is a lot on the horizon in terms of planning of which local communities should be aware. And when the time comes the chance to air local views should be taken and the community voice heard.

Councillor Bill Howatson bill.howatson@aberdeenshire.gov.uk

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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| Jack McNicoll | John Gavin |
| Jean Anderson | Harry Scott |

Editorial

The Newsletter Group are delighted to welcome Allan Robertson to the writing team, he brings his perspective and knowledge on the important subject of disabilities. We are much heartened by our growing list of contributors and invite others to join us with either regular, periodic or 'one off' contributions. These could come from individuals, families or groups. For example a family could write about walks they might recommend others make and there must be many out there with valuable knowledge to share on the culinary arts.

The Newsletter Group would like to thank everyone for their support during 2006 especially those who have taken the trouble to respond to items in the newsletter.

We would also like to thank all those who deliver the newsletter and welcome people who could share the load for example by delivering to Manse Lane, Mayfield Road, Croftlands, Croft Place, Davidson Place and Mercury Terrace.

We wish everyone a Very Happy Christmas and a Healthy and Wealthy 2007
 Editor

DEADLINES

Articles and information for issue 6
 should arrive at the latest
 28th January Write to us at:

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

We publish on St Cyrus day which is Jan 31st.

Dear Editor,

Letters to the Editor

I walked from Old Station Square to the village hall this evening. It took me 189 steps via Station Road and I wondered why there wasn't direct access through the fence. Can anyone explain and would residents of Old Station Square, Scotston Place etc, welcome the access?

Yours faithfully (name and address supplied)



Thanks to the Newsletter Group for assembling the range of photographs of St Cyrus displayed in the Village hall at the Coffee morning on the 23rd September.

The collection caused a great deal of interest and comment. Those who were unable to attend on Saturday missed an opportunity to learn more about the history of the village. I hope that there will be another exhibition of photographs to give more people a chance to view them.

(name and address supplied)

We have someone researching appropriate software with a view to producing a St Cyrus Newsletter website.....(watch this space)



St Cyrus church services are at 10am every Sunday *

Christmas Eve service at 7pm in Johnshaven

Christmas day at 10am in St Cyrus.

Sunday 31st Dec last 10am service

*All St Cyrus Sunday services will be at 11:30 in 2007

The Free Church in St Cyrus

Quotation from the Bible; Proverbs Chapter 3, Verse 5; "Trust in the LORD with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding".

.....do you believe that, or do you think you are able to understand everything there is to know about the world all on your own? That's an awful burden on you, surely! Wouldn't you have to see - experience - read - etc etc everything in the world in order to be sure?

Jesus invites us to let go of that burden and trust our understanding to he who knows all things and who is - by definition - utterly dependable. Jesus says "Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest" (Matthew 11:28).

It is an open invitation.

Latest schedule of activities. Everyone is welcome to the Hall and home groups

3pm Sunday 3 December 2006 - Worship & Learn
- Speaker: Dr Jonathan Cook, Aberdeen
Sunday School available. Tea & Coffee.

3pm Sunday 17 December 2006
Mid month discussion over tea/coffee/seasonal food

3pm Sunday 7 January 2007 Lunch and house group at Muirhead cottage.

3pm Sunday 21 January 2007
Mid month discussion over tea/coffee.

3pm Sunday 4 February 2007 - Worship & Learn
- Speaker: Rev David Robertson, Dundee
Sunday School available. Tea & Coffee.

3pm Sunday 18 February 2007
Mid month discussion over tea/coffee.

You are very welcome to our activities.

Tel Donald Gillies, 850607.

Catholic Services:

Saturday 6.30pm St David's Episcopal Church:
Bervie

Sunday Mass at 9am and 11am St Mary's
Stonehaven

Mrs Gladys Laing, St Cyrus
died aged 87 Nov 23rd

Please inform the editor if you wish to include an announcement or obituary in the newsletter.

Scottish Episcopal Church

St Mary's + St Peter's Montrose

8am Sunday said Eucharist

11am Sung Eucharist

Wednesday 10:15 said Eucharist

Inverbervie: St David's

Sung Eucharist 9:30am Sunday

What's on at the Public Hall

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:

Pensioners Christmas dinner takes place on Monday December 11th from 6 to 10pm

Coastal Parish Mission children's party Fri 15th Dec

Gala Day Committee disco on Friday 29th Dec.

Tea dances start on 5th, Country dances on 8th,

Bowlers on 9th, Youth Club on 12th Jan

WRI 78th birthday Monday 15th Jan.

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

Yvonne Buck 850160

St Cyrus School

The school is holding a Christmas show in church at 9:45am on Monday 18th December and a repeat of the event in the evening at 6.45pm

On Tuesday 19th December The St.Cyrus School will be open for members of the community to look in and appreciate the Christmas decorations.

There will be tea & coffee. Older people are particularly welcome to drop in for half an hour between 1:45—2:15

~ St Cyrus Nature Reserve ~

The summer months were busy down on the nature reserve. We had a rare visitor to the reserve this summer, a young female Red-backed shrike. Not usually seen this far north the Red-backed shrike is also known as the 'butcher-bird' because it stores any surplus food, impaling insects and lizards on thorns or barbed wire to be eaten later.



The Red-backed shrike that stopped off at St Cyrus
(Photo courtesy of Harry Scott)

There have also been some good sightings of whales & dolphins during the cliff top watches run as part of National Whale & Dolphin Watch Week. On Sunday 13th August two Bottlenose dolphins were seen feeding very close in and 15 to 20 were seen later on playing, leaping right out of the water and slapping their tails. Sunday 20th had better weather and again two Bottlenose dolphins were seen feeding, this time off Montrose, but the highlight of the watches was a sighting of a distant Minke whale.



Bottle nosed
dolphin

Garden
Tiger moth



We also had lots of events down at the Reserve looking at the plants, birds and minibeasts that make the dunes, grassland and cliffs their home. The highlight of our minibeast hunt was a beautiful Garden tiger moth. This brightly coloured moth is very distinctive with cream and brown forewings and bright orange hindwings with black spots.

The Family Fun Day in July was very well attended and with British Divers Marine Life Rescue, Aberdeenshire Council Ranger and a storyteller along with the Scottish Natural Heritage games and activities everyone found something to entertain them. There will be many happy birds and bats as lots of visitors, young and old, were keen to hammer away and make their own bird and bat boxes to take home.

Following the success of our Beachwatch beachclean we are running another to tackle some of the debris brought ashore during the recent storms. If you would like to help keep St Cyrus Beach beautiful meet Alison outside the Visitor Centre at 10:00 on Saturday 9th December. Gloves and litterpickers will be provided and we should finish by 1300 (all under 18s must be accompanied by an adult).



In the last month lots of work has been going on with the cliff path. Contractors scaled the cliff at the end of October removing 10s of tons of loose rock. With work to repair the path planned for December we hope to open the path again early in the New Year.

One last thing,
our Visitor Centre is now on winter
opening times;
Monday to Friday 1000 - 1700.

Article by: Alison Couch,
Site Management and Interpretation Officer,
St Cyrus National
Nature Reserve'

Introducing Allan Robertson who has
offered to write for us in future newsletters on: **Disability Issues**

My name is Allan Robertson and I am medically retired due to *CEREBELLAR ATAXIA* which is a degenerative illness. I was a trained nurse and have lived in St. Cyrus most of my life. I now work as a volunteer in the Citizens Advice Bureau in Montrose. Enough about me and more about disabilities. In St. Cyrus there are quite a few disabled people some of whom, like me, have an electric scooter or wheelchair to get about on. However not all the village allows for the easiest use of vehicles designed only for driving on pavements and we are put in unsafe situations when people park their cars partly on the pavement forcing those such as myself and people with children in buggies and prams into the road which, although relatively quiet, can be quite lethal. We cannot rely on road users seeing a seated figure coming from around vehicles parked in this way. Also, because there is not much clearance under a scooter, we cannot easily negotiate kerbs and must use the sloped kerbs which are not always present where we would like them to be when crossing to the next pavement. This little reminder will I'm sure be enough to alert St Cyrus road users to the importance of those disabled access kerbs.

I would also point out that bus companies in this area are not electric scooter or wheelchair friendly as they were not designed to allow wheeled access.

Now some thoughts for those disabled people who do not regard themselves as such and do not claim all benefits & allowances that are due to them. These people may not feel they qualify for benefits but I can only urge them to make enquiries. They can do this simply by contacting their nearest Citizens Advice Bureau either in person, or by getting a friend to call in on their behalf, alternatively they can go on line through a computer to the web address listed below and find the advice and information they seek:

<http://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/winn6/index/publications/advisernet.htm>

Disabled people can access the web for information by entering the address listed below.

http://www.direct.gov.uk/DisabledPeople/DisabledPeopleArticles/fs/en?CONTENT_ID=10023362&chk=85yA9r

People who are disabled in any way can also take advantage of the fact that buying items that are necessary for them due to their disability are zero rated for VAT and by contacting their local community nurse or health service they can have their needs assessed and houses equipped.

THE BLUE BADGE SCHEME.

http://www.direct.gov.uk/DisabledPeople/MotoringAndTransport/fs/en?cids=google_PPC&cre=DPAC_franchise this website will give you information on all aspects of the blue badge scheme.

It is astonishing to find that a lot of people who can claim motability do not do so for whatever reason, some people do not have a car and think that this will stop them but not so.

Also a lot of people do not realise that if they have a blue badge it can mean that they are not subject to road tax and the Motability car scheme should be looked into. Blue badges are issued to disabled people personally and apply to any car they are travelling in.

<http://www.motability.co.uk/> this site explains all you need to know about ***MOTABILITY***

For further information I can be contacted by e-mail redrobbo@fsmail.net or by mobile phone on 07980 397 477.

In Scotland everyone over 60 is entitled to free, local and long-distance bus travel. From 1 April 2006 older and disabled people can use buses at any time of the day, including the morning rush hour. This scheme is run by Transport Scotland and you will need to apply for an Entitlement Card to travel for free.

[Free bus travel in Scotland - how to apply \(opens new window\)](#)

Also if you are travelling in Aberdeen City you can apply to

http://www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/ACCI/web/site/PublicTransport/CI/put_Scot_Free_Bus_Travel.asp

Also if you are disabled you are advised to apply for a RADAR toilet key, this gives you access to disabled toilets throughout the country, this can be gotten by writing or telephoning **RADAR (The Royal Association for Disability and Rehabilitation)**
25 Mortimer Street, London, W1N 8AB

Tel: 071-637 5400 or access the web site

<http://www.youreableshop.co.uk/modules/shop/products.asp?catid=39&rangeid=168&gclid=CLno3IvE14gCFQk8UgodKlIZ-w> The Radar key scheme offers independent access to disabled people to around 4,000 locked public toilets around the country.

The Radar Key Scheme enables these toilets to be locked, to prevent vandalism and misuse. With one Radar Key - you won't be caught short! The economy Radar Key looks like a normal key. The Premium easyturn Radar key, may be more suitable for people who find them difficult to turn.

Look out for bulk savers on Radar Keys.

These keys come at a very reasonable cost and once you have one you need never be caught out again.

Allan Robertson

THE OLD WORTHIES OF ST. CYRUS

Since Neil and I first decided that we were leaving St. Cyrus, for pastures new, the memories of our first years here and the wonderful people who made us love the place and decided us to make our home here, have flooded back.

The most important of these is our memories of 'Sna Brew' whose real name was Jock Adam. He was the skipper of the salmon coble at the South end of the beach and the story of how he came by his nickname was often told us by the local fishermen. It was not always the same story, but the one that I liked best was the one where he had arrived in the bothy, having battled through a near blizzard with the snow sticking to his bald head like a thick mop of white hair—hence 'snowy brow' and from there to 'Sna Brew'. There was another version which concerned the snow melting and being rushed down the river (brown at the time) and out to sea and the sight of Jock battling the snow was compared to this.

We'll probably never know now-as Jock, like most of the other 'old worthies' have gone to that big fishing boat in the sky.

The great thing about Jock was his wit and genuineness. He had a story and a naughty remark for every occasion. Yet he seldom talked about the troubles of his own life: Taking part in the Russian convoys during the war; losing his young wife in childbirth and bringing up his two sons John and Jimmie (Nipp) on his own. He is still sorely missed and referred to in conversation as if it was only yesterday he left us.

There were so many wonderful characters—and coming from Glasgow, 'characters' were not new to us.

Andy Cargill—battling the North Sea in all weathers, but still able to make everybody smile when he appeared in the hotel for his usual 'GG'(Glen Grant) He too had a nickname—Conger, but he never would explain its origin.

Jock Mac Lean—who had a racing tip every time you met him and —even better—planted our garden every year when we lived in Cliff Place.

The Gunner, Will and Lisa Birse, Sandy Taylor, Maggie Nielson and Jack —and many more —enough to fill a book.

I have no doubt that many of the older St. Cyreans (and even some of the younger ones), have tales to tell about the 'Old Worthies' who gave the village it's unique character. I wonder if we have others waiting in the wings to take their places?

Jean Anderson

Recently in my work there has been a significant wireless revolution giving rise to increasing requests for wireless networks to be installed. Most people see this as an opportunity to go on the internet without the shackle of wires everywhere. For those that own notebook computers formerly referred to as laptops this is of great advantage.



Many people however are not aware of the security implications of this but also its positive potential for home network capabilities.

With a wireless adsl router you get the internet but you also get the added problem of people in close vicinity seeing your network and if unsecured logging in and using your connection for their purposes. I have come across situations where a neighbour has been using their neighbour's internet connection inadvertently for a year and only discovering their error by accident.

Most of the time this is found to be an innocent mistake but the problem with leaving your network exposed is threefold. One you lose some of your connection speed if somebody outside your home is downloading files to their computer on your connection. Second they could be up to nefarious internet searches and file sharing with your IP address, i.e. the finger of suspicion is being pointed squarely at you and your computer if there is any come back from their activities. The reason for this is that any time you connect to the internet through a router or directly from your computer connection your identifying Internet Protocol (IP) address is logged so that everywhere your computer goes on the internet it is logged on a remote server. This includes where you went, how long for and on which dates. Third if you are sharing files across a local network then the outside hacker can very easily browse your files and at worst take control of your computer.

So what do you do? All you need to do is encrypt your network access and change the login **Username** and **password** to your adsl router. If you need instructions on how to do this for your own particular router e-mail me at andrew@andrewspcadvice.co.uk the make and model and I will be happy to reply. Some routers like BT Home hub have encryption already preset as standard most however do not. I will talk more about home networking in the next issue of computer corner.

Andrew Christie

Youth News

THE BLA BLA BLA

Take a look over the Garvock hill and see what the secondary age young people in Auchenblae are up to at: www.blablalba.org.uk

They printed 100 copies of this their first edition for the children at Auchenblae Primary and plan further editions for 2007 (we would love to help St Cyrus young people who think they can match this effort).

Street Football

Mearns Community Development Group and Grampian Police organised a street-football event in St Cyrus on Saturday 25th of November. More than thirty five children from throughout the area gathered at St Cyrus to take part. Similar events have taken place this year in Laurencekirk, Portlethen and Stonehaven. The street-football project aims to motivate and encourage team building. Teams taking part are mixed gender and mixed age. Apart from points gained by scoring a goal points are also gained for sportsmanship. Aberdeenshire Council Youth Workers also offered face painting for the youngsters, which was widely enjoyed by both young and old!



The Street football pitch was hired from the Cafe Project in Arbroath whose Staff and Volunteers are to be thanked for their support & encouragement

during the afternoon. Thanks also to Mearns Community Development Group for funding the hire.

Karen McWilliam
Community Learning Worker:

~ St Cyrus Youth Club ~

Sessions

Junior Session Primary 5 to 76.30pm-8.15pm

Senior Session Secondary 1 to 38.30pm-10pm

Every Friday during school terms:

For further information contact Morag Dalgarno 850656

Christmas Disco 8th December

Lots of activities being planned for January:

STOP PRESS: The Scottish Squirrel Survey would like to thank all those readers who sent in their records of squirrel sightings in the area in response to the request in the last newsletter. We now have 20 new squirrel records for the St Cyrus-Montrose-Brechin area, all of them red except for one grey squirrel seen in Brechin in July of this year. Please keep your eyes open for grey squirrels and report them to the Survey as soon as possible. And please keep the red squirrel records coming in. Thank you. Mel Tonkin, Scottish Squirrel Survey Co-ordinator: mtonkin@swt.org.uk

St Cyrus W.R.I. - 7.30 p.m. in the village hall. New members and visitors are always welcome. W.R.I. 78th. Birthday party is to be held on Monday 15th. January 2007. 'Food, Fun and entertainment' Former members very welcome. If you would like to come along please phone Mrs. Thomson on 850161

| | |
|---------------|--------------------------------|
| 5th February. | 'Around the World' John Gavin. |
| 5th March. | 'Grampian Growers' Mark Clark |
| 2nd April. | 'Tales of Cairo' Francis Moir |
| 3rd May | A.G.M. |

~ The Tea Dance Group ~

This group meets on Fridays in the village hall from 2pm - 4pm. We dance all year round except for a short break at Christmas time. The group was started eleven years ago by Nan Mills. Nan retired last December having given sterling service to the dancers. She taught us all over a hundred dances and we miss her expertise. The group wished to continue dancing so Joan Davidson took over from her.

What is Tea dancing? The name suggests a group of old folks waltzing sedately round the floor. In fact this is far from the truth. We do a mixture of old time, Ceilidh, sequence, line dances etc. You have to think a bit as each dance has a pattern. There are many Tea Dance Groups all over the country and it is becoming increasingly popular. People come to our group not only from the village but also from Johnshaven, Gourdon, Inverbervie, Laurencekirk and Montrose. This kind of dancing is enjoyed by all ages, music is therapeutic, and we guarantee you good music and an afternoon's dancing that will lift your spirits.

We have an annual afternoon dance with the Kirriemuir Tea Dance club here in St Cyrus and pay a return visit to Kirriemuir which is much enjoyed. We also have a special afternoon before Christmas and can find other reasons to have a party! Tea Dancing is social. The St Cyrus group is friendly and very good at mixing.

New members of all ages are welcome—you don't need a partner. After all—where else would you have an afternoon's dancing, good music, a cup of tea, good company and fun.... for £1? Contact Joan Davidson 850367

Weather

The Lore Red Sky

While sitting in the village hall one Saturday coffee morning having a cup of tea, as you do, I was asked by a lady what was the meaning of the saying "RED SKY IN MORNING//WARNING AND AT NIGHT DELIGHT"

The weather forecast that each of us makes each time we say red skies is in most cases the most accurate weather lore forecast going. The basic reason for this is the rising sun shining on the underside of incoming lowering clouds tells the observer that a weather front is coming toward them and with it poor weather conditions. Things like rain or snow, depending on the time of year, wind, fog, and in short bad weather. The other side of the coin is at night or in fact evening as the sun set its rays again shining on the underside of the clouds but now the clouds are rising and moving away which indicates that the weather front has passed and the weather will improve. Now comes the big question, where did this statement come from?? That is a question I can't answer. I can tell you that it is to be found in the Old Testament and again in the New, it reads: "When it is evening, ye say it will be fair weather; for the sky is red. And in the morning, it will be foul weather today; for the sky is red and lowering". (Matthew 16:2-3)

This is not the complete story of RED SKIES just the beginning. If I were to try and tell you the whole story I would need the news letter for the next three months and that would be just weather.

Questions please for MAC

to stcyrusnewsletter@beeb.net

Finding Your Family History (continued) Now you have gathered all the information you have in the house and had the old folks reminiscing about auld lang syne you should have enough to get started.

Did you think about writing to relatives too far away for a short visit?

Scotland did not introduce statutory civil registration until 1855 eighteen years after England. When they did I like to think that they made a better job! There is more information than on those from south of the border. - Despite my good Scots name my husband was born in England so I know just how frustrating they can be.

What is so different about a Scottish certificates?

Birth certificate gives date and place of parent's marriage. Mother's maiden name also time of birth for all babies not just for multiple births. Marriage certificates give place of ceremony - often bride's home. Groom's occupation (note changes over the years), Names of parents for both bride and groom, Death certificates name parents of deceased. Women retain their maiden name. So if Gt. Granny married more than once she will have a certificate in her own name and one for each husband.

At the left-hand side of certificates there is a narrow column that is usually blank but this may have a note drawing your attention to documents elsewhere, I have come across only two entries in all the years I've been searching. One for a divorce and one for a sudden death inquiry as result of a fatal accident.

Make sure that you take note of all names on the certificates - witnesses, informants etc. They may turn out to be family members.

You now have enough information to draw up a basic tree. So what next? I would suggest a visit to New Register House Edinburgh. Tell you all about that next time also how to get hold of English certificates.

If you are local though visits to Montrose and/or Bervie libraries would be more convenient and cheaper.

Anyone keen to get started contact me at 850305 or pheemie@btopenworld.com

~The St Cyrus Senior Citizens' Association ~

The St. Cyrus Senior Citizens' Association meets every second Monday evening in the month from October to April 7:30pm to 9:30pm.

Musical entertainment is provided

plus tea or coffee and cakes.

There is a summer outing in May and an autumn outing in September. During July and August four coffee mornings are held to provide

funds for the Christmas Party and outings. New members and visitors are always welcome. For further information contact Jack McNicoll 01674 850545

~ St Cyrus Bowling Club ~

Following the renewal of the old synthetic bowling surface last autumn, (the cost of which was achieved with many donations from within our community) a very good season has taken place this year. Our first chance to use the new surface came on New Year's Day 2006, a pairs competition (whisky at one end and a dram at the other).



Alex Marshall, one of Scotland's leading bowlers and a world champion, officially opened the new green on the 23rd May 2006, and offered a few tips on techniques yet to be achieved by most members.

Getting used to the run of the new surface caused some concern to many members but old skills soon came to the fore. We have also erected a wooden wind break on three sides of the green which as well as giving us protection from the elements, also improves the appearance of the area.

We can report that apart from the local graffiti artist having been at work on the pavilion, vandalism to the area was at an all time low.

That well known figure SANDY DAVIDSON, won the Club Championship after a very good final against JACK McNICOLL.

The new season will start in April 2007 and we will welcome all new comers including anyone wishing to learn the game. COME ALL, YOUNG OR OLD.

Any queries, contact;

President - Jack McNicoll 01634850545

Secretary - Tug Wilson

01634850824.

The Shepherd's Calendar – part 1

The shepherd's year begins in late summer when lambs are weaned and their mothers are put onto bare grazing. The reason for treating ewes in this way is that they are very susceptible to mastitis at weaning & we try to prevent it by stopping them from producing milk as quickly as possible. Over the next few weeks we check their udders regularly and keep an eye out for telltale signs, like apparent lameness in a back leg.

Once they are "dried off", my ewes graze the old railway line which provides a complete change from the lush grass they've been used to all summer. They seem to enjoy the opportunity to sample unusual plants and recover from sacrificing so much of themselves for rearing their growing families.

In September we trim feet, check teeth, udders (again) and body condition, keeping only those we consider are fit enough for another year in the breeding flock. These are put onto an "increasing plane of nutrition", in practice good grazing and a bite of barley to eat, so that they get back to peak condition for tugging. At this time many folk buy in new young stock but for many years I've maintained a "closed" flock, replacing numbers only with my own home bred ewe lambs. Introducing strange animals risks bringing in strange diseases. Any bought in sheep should be quarantined, treated for parasites and vaccinated before joining the main flock but even after that a contagious eye infection, for example, can suddenly appear.

We put our tup (ram) in with the ewes in late October. Hill shepherds would wait until November in the hope of good weather come lambing. The ram's brisket is daubed with an oil-based raddle which in turn marks his harem as they are mounted. The colour is changed after about a fortnight because the ewe has a 16-day cycle. Too many marked with the second colour indicates a fertility problem and quick action can be taken but if all seems well it is normal practice to remove the ram after two cycles.

Gestation in the ewe takes 147 days and once her lambs are implanted (15 days) she should be brought back to a maintenance diet to maximise the development of the placenta during mid pregnancy. Concentrate feeding begins again 6-8 weeks before lambing because the lambs grow rapidly from then on and the mother should be given every opportunity to keep herself healthy for when they are born.

Stockmanship in winter involves looking for problems such as lameness, loss of condition and abortions – which can be one offs or signs of an epidemic. This is why The Shepherds Watched their Flocks. It wasn't just because they didn't have a TV.

Happy Christmas!

mary singleton



A Leicester by Thomas Bewick 1788

Postman Pat's Chat:

My wife and I went along to the Halloween Disco in the village hall in support of the Gala Committee and what an entertaining evening we had.

The majority of the people there that night dressed up for the occasion although I did not but I promise to do so next year.

Count Dracula was there and Elvis made one of his famous appearances, there was a nun and a gorilla, Dennis the Menace and some characters from The Wizard of Oz and the Flintstones who we all declared the winners.

After a good number of discs there was some Karaoke and what an abundance of talent there is in the village! It was like being at the finals night for The X-Factor. From Rock to Pop, Country to classical, the singers all performed really well. My favourite was the young lad who sang a 'Meat Loaf' number. Sharon Osbourne and company should look in the next time they hold a 'Stars In Your Eyes' contest in the hall to see such great entertainers.

Shorts to Thermals in 3 weeks. That's the length of time it has taken me from summer to winter wear. How quick the weather has changed since the clocks went back. I can't wait till they go forward again. Until then, keep warm this winter and wrap up well like your Postie.

Durward

PLAYGROUP

A big thankyou to everyone from Ian, Kirsteen and Heather who filled 106 shoeboxes for the Blytheswood appeal, 48 of these were filled with hand-knitted children's clothes by Mrs B Thompson and Mrs C. Murray—special thanks to you both!

Thankyou from everyone who supported our recent soup and sweet event and The Christmas Shopping evening. 85 brave souls came along on a very wet and cold evening and were rewarded with some inspiration for Christmas gifts—hopefully the mulled wine warmed you up! St Cyrus Playgroup wish Everyone a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy, Successful 2007

Fund Raising

MEARNS COASTAL CHURCH RESTORATION APPEAL

Just over a year ago the Kirk Session decided to launch an appeal for funds to carry out repairs and alterations to the remaining church buildings, and I agreed to co-ordinate the appeal. My idea was that individuals or groups of individuals would undertake to organise specific events, rather than appointing a fund raising committee to run everything. This arrangement has worked far better than I had dared to hope and many individuals and local organisations have organised fund raisers, both large and small raising so far over £11,000.

The year started with a very enjoyable Burns Supper and will end with a St. Andrews Ceilidh both organised by John Sparrow. Jean Cook overcame many difficulties to stage a very enjoyable concert with the Gordon School of dancing and a successful Silent Auction. This month John Glennie and David Alexander held a very successful Auction. These have been some of the major events held throughout the year and on behalf of the organisers I would like to thank all those who helped at the events and made donations to make them both enjoyable and productive. In addition the Kirk had stalls at the St. Cyrus Gala and Johnshaven Fish Festival. Sadly I have to report that no balloons were returned from the Balloon race, but there is still time to guess the Birthday of the Tiger which Mrs Armatage brought to the Fish Festival.

Several local organisations have also organised fund raisers. The Johnshaven Brownies held a Sponsored Walk and the St.Cyrus Youth Club ran a "Bag 2 School" collection from which they made donations to the restoration Fund. St Cyrus Toddlers held a very successful Teddy Bear Walk. In addition the Carol Singers, Caravan Club, Friendship Club, Fordoun Curlers and the Beach Fun Day have all contributed. An earlier contribution from the Rafter towards the repair of the clock is being held for that purpose.

As well as the above events individuals have organised fund raisers. Mina Pirie made up two very successful quizzes, Isobel Paterson has sold many butterflies and bridge score cards. Many individuals have made very generous donations often buying slates; to date almost 1000 slates have been purchased of which 90 have been signed (please don't make a mad rush to sign the rest—I haven't got them!)

I have deliberately refrained from mentioning the totals produced by individual events or individual donations since all donations large or small are gratefully received and I do not want to create a league table. Remember the story of Jesus and the 'Widow's mite'.

I don't know when work will start but the wheels are beginning to turn and once the whole package is in place and we know how far the money will go, work will begin. Meanwhile many thanks to all contributors; please keep it up.

John Gavin

St Cyrus Public Hall New Windows fund

The St.Cyrus Public Hall was built in 1912 and it is one of the busiest halls in the Mearns area. Our hall accommodates for a wide variety of local community activities and services from Playgroup, Mothers and Toddlers, Youth Club, Keep Fit sessions, a range of Pensioners and dancers clubs and Doctor's Surgeries. The income from these activities covers annual insurance, the day-to-day maintenance and running costs. However, the remainder doesn't amount to enough when major works are required. At present the Public Hall Committee finds itself with the task of replacing the large decaying original wooden windows that are becoming quite dangerous in both the large and small halls. In addition, some of the windows also need new mullions and lintels.

In 2001/2002 the hall was extended after a lottery grant with the addition of full access for the disabled and an extra room for community use. The windows were not part of the programme and are now in a sad state of repair. They are single glazed and not energy efficient - we loose a lot of heat in winter.

So far our fundraising has raised £2488.73, but we still have a long way to go as the quotes received are around £20 000. For financial help the application for the Big Lottery grant has been submitted, so fingers crossed for success! The fundraising was a whole community effort - many local people, clubs and businesses have made generous donations and are helping with raising funds: coffee mornings, Whist drives, Boot Sales, etc. The Committee would like to thank the OAPs, Bowlers, Friendship clubs, WRI for generous donations; Youth Club for running the "Bag 2 School" collection; MacPhies of Glenbervie for supplying most delicious cakes for Coffee Mornings; and individuals who contributed their time and effort organizing and running events. However, we are still far from the sum required. We would appreciate any financial support or new fundraising ideas which the local community can offer to help us with this task. Our village hall acts as a hub for all of the varied activities within our Parish and it is our legacy to maintain it for generations to come.

Lina Forsyth-Grant

Treasurer Public Hall Committee

Please tell those of your family and friends who have moved away from St Cyrus that they can read this newsletter in colour at www.mearns.org

Business Directory

Accountant: Ted Ripoll D&T Services, Little Newton, Old Rayne, Inch, AB52 6SE 01464851268

Architectural Technician, Norman. McIntosh, Architectural Services Ltd 01674 850187

Computer problems? Ring Andrew 01674850326 /07793107612

Plumber: Aymer McFarlane:01674850000 / 07956489660

Brechin Books: (try us 1st)Whinfield, Edzell DD9 7TN Tel 01356 648378 www.brechinbooks.org.uk

St Cyrus Community Council Meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month @ 7:00pm in The Public Hall

If you are interested in the community you live in do please come along to meetings or if you have a subject you would like discussed please contact either Andrew Hamilton (Chairman) on ah@andyhamilton.com or 850284 or Norman McIntosh (Secretary) on norman.mcintosh1@virgin.net or 850371. Elections for membership of the CC take place in January/February of each year.

.....<COMMENT>.....

THE RAILWAY CUTTING

The CC would like everyone in the community to have a say on the development of the railway cutting:

Are you happy with the state of the railway line at the moment? Do you want it to continue being the tip for garden rubbish and whatever else, whilst nature takes over growing her own trees, shrubs and brambles?

Our young people would like a skatepark such as they have at Laurencekirk, are we against them congregating in a particular area to enjoy such sports?

Do we want a small wood with bluebells or perhaps a wildlife and butterfly garden with seats?

There are many questions and many more opinions but we need reasonable suggestions for a compromise solution which will satisfy everyone **including** those living close by the railway cutting.

Would you like a public meeting to discuss this?

Over to you..... phone Bob Flann on 850264 or Mike Burleigh on 850988

2007 Calendars: There are still some St Cyrus 2007 history calendars available at £1 each at The Old Bakery Coffee Shop. These are being sold to raise money for new windows in The Public hall. Why not send copies as Christmas presents to family and friends who have moved away from St Cyrus? They can be rolled up and posted for 84p second class/£1 first class UK.

St. Cyrus Calendar for 2008

While speaking to the Editor, Mike, it was suggested by him that a calendar for the year 2008 with images from the residents of the village would be a useful community effort by which means we could raise some money for the Public Hall windows and church funds whilst also encouraging the photographer in all of us. I agreed that this would be a good idea and now find myself in the position of trying to organise same!!!

You will note that this is for **2008** as it is a bit late for next year. However, this would be a good time to start.

What we would like is for photographs to be submitted as soon as possible for each month of the year and that these should reflect some aspect of St. Cyrus.

If you feel you have anything suitable, please, in the first instance, send a print or digital image to me and ensure that your name & address are attached together with any information you care to add. If you would like your print/s returned please enclosed a suitably sized stamped addressed envelope.

As preparation of the calendar would have to be completed by June/July next year to enable us to have the calendar professionally printed in colour and on sale at the appropriate time you might want to get cracking on some winter photos during the next couple of months and if you have any summer or autumn pictures already please send them in.

Prints should be sent to me at 38 Invergarry Park, St. Cyrus DD10 0BU or digital images can be emailed to me at tomdalziel@avoch44.fsnet.co.uk

The final selection of photographs for the calendar will be made by a panel and the Editor's decision will be final.

P.S. If you are looking for some inspiration you might want to check out my website at <http://avoch.250free.com> and click on the St. Cyrus link.

Tom Dalziel