

A G E n d a

Grampian 50+ Network News for

Aberdeen City, Aberdeenshire & Moray



Issue 80
Spring 2020




NETWORK NEWS

FROM THE COMMITTEE AND EDITORS

We hope you are all coping in these difficult times and that walking club members are keeping in touch with each other so that no-one feels isolated, even although we are confined to our homes. Looking forward to the time when we can all walk together again.

Due to advice from the Government concerning the current Coronavirus situation, changes have had to be made to our planned activities.

- **The Spring Fling** will be postponed until the October holiday if all is well by that time. It will still take place in Fraserburgh. Any groups who have sent in forms will have them returned and money refunded.
- **Spring walks** will become Autumn Walks. Applications will be returned and money refunded.
- **The Rendezvous** it is unlikely that this will go ahead in Banchory. There will be more information later.
- **Holiday:** As the position becomes clearer, participating members will be contacted. We are sorry to have to make these changes, but, as you will understand, the circumstances are outwith our control.



NETWORK COMMITTEE
The Network needs you!

**How would you like to bring some joy to a large number of people?
Easy! Volunteer to join the Committee of Grampian 50+ Network.**

So many of us have derived huge enjoyment from Network events: learning new skills, exercising together, socialising – **having fun!**

If you feel that you can make a contribution of your time and energy, please contact Marjory D’Arcy (m.c.darcy@talk21.com)

Your decision will be appreciated by several hundred people! How worthwhile is that!

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Chairperson's Report 2019

2019 was another busy year for the Network. We have nearly 60 groups in membership, with a total of 1362 members. The focus of most of our groups is enjoying the out of doors, leading an active lifestyle and being with other like minded folk.

Network events throughout the year included:

Training:

4 First Aid Training Courses held in Aberdeen, Culter and Ellon attended by 46 members

Introduction to Map Reading held at Glentinar attended by 8 members

2 Safety in the Outdoors held at Aden Park and Fochabers attended by 19 members

Spring Fling was held at Bridge of Don Academy, Aberdeen in April – attended by 260 members with helpers from the two Bridge of Don Groups

Spring Walks were held during April in the Alford Area and attended by 56 members. Leaders were members of Alford Ramblers and Millbank 50+ groups

Ramblers' Rendezvous were held in July at Mackie Academy Stonehaven attended by 352. Helpers were from the 2 Stonehaven Groups

Autumn Walks were held in October in the Ballater area, led by members of the Ballater and Aboyne Groups and attended by 78 members

AGenda Newsletters – our new editors Chris and Joan produced three newsletters – in April, July & December with all our Network News along with Group Reports and other useful information.

Changes in the Network Committee

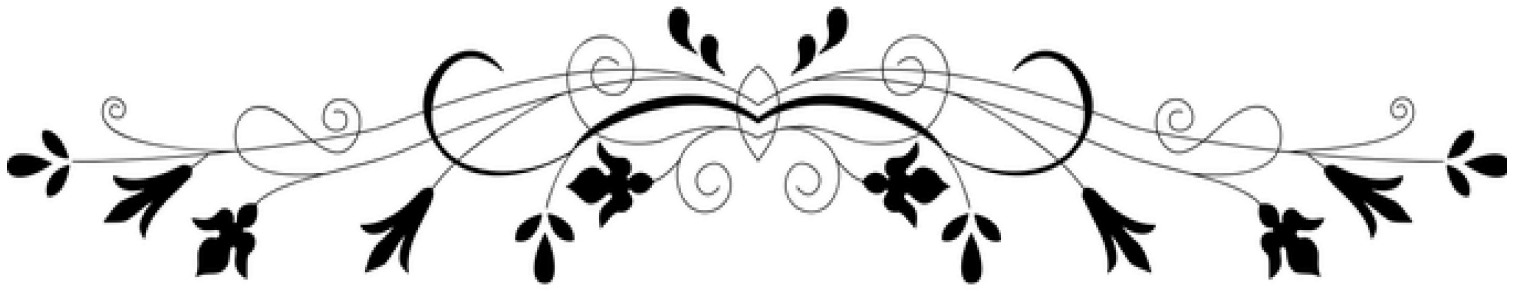
Sadly, Brian Torrance, our Walks Coordinator, died in July after a short illness. He made a big contribution to the work of the committee and Network and is sadly missed.

Muriel Knox has resigned from the committee to pursue other commitments but hopes to return to the committee soon.

THANK YOU

Lastly, the **Network** could not exist without the tireless commitment of so many people – the Network Committee members who give lots of time to plan and run the programme and find funding; the AGenda editors; the groups and individuals who help with the events. With your encouragement and support, we can all continue to enjoy an active and healthy retirement, learn new walks and activities, make new friends and have fun as part of Grampian 50+ Network. Thank you all. Good Luck with your group, now and in the future.

Marjory D'Arcy, Chairperson



A letter from Jean, previous AGenda Editor

Dear Network Walkers

As some of you will know, that after 18 months and two estate agents I moved from Aberdeen back down into Englandshire in October 2019. It's been a classic case of not appreciating what you've got until it's gone. You might ask, "Why did you do it then?" Common sense told me that, as I have passed my allotted three score and ten, I should be looking for a more sensible place to live than my lovely converted steading, with views of Ben-nachie and beyond, but over four miles from the nearest shop and bus stop in Newmachar.

After 30 years in Aberdeen I miss Grampian's beautiful countryside with its huge open views and the terrific company to share those walks. There are walking groups in this area and they do a sensible length for me - 6 miles. BUT, you Network folk do things differently! Six miles with a break for coffee and lunch in the middle is a lovely walk, but it's entirely different to 6 miles non-stop! There are Health Walks here too but so far I am happy to walk alongside the River Trent (now that the floods have retreated to reveal the foot paths), cross over a pretty footbridge into town, stop for a coffee (and cake) and walk back home - a 3.6 miles round trip, or catch the bus which stops at the end of the road!

After two recces in the Midlands area, which was the approximate area that we could afford, my son and I virtually stuck a pin in the map, so here we are in a rented house in Burton on Trent where the natives are very friendly and the town has everything that we need - the riverside Library even has a cafe! We are still house hunting and have got our eye on a house in a pretty little village nearby which fulfils all the criteria of bus, train, post office, general store, etc.

For the first time in at least 20 years I enjoyed Christmas with my daughter and her family in Buckinghamshire; am having a day trip to London to see her collect an Award and have visited nearby Birmingham, Derby, Nottingham, Lichfield and Tamworth. I also have plans to meet up for lunch with two long standing friends whom I met at work 43 years ago! Thanks to Facetime I can talk to my good friend Rosemary in Dyce and we are planning a holiday together in Jersey in August - she will fly from Aberdeen and I will go from Birmingham.

Please continue to support and appreciate your unrivalled Grampian 50+ Network with everything that it does for you. Without the loyal voluntary Committee Members the Network wouldn't exist - which takes me back to my first paragraph of not appreciating what you've got until it's gone. When a call for volunteers next goes out, please don't sit on your hands, or even - ask any Member of the Committee if there's anything you can do to help!

Best wishes

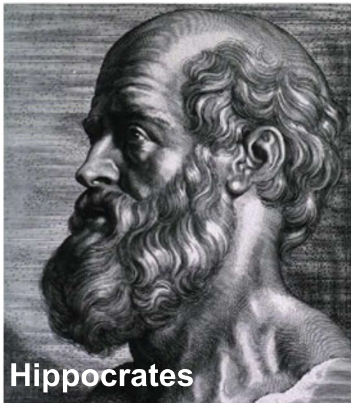
Jean Pritchard - jean.pritchard1@gmail.com



KEEPING ACTIVE WITH ARTHRITIS

TOPTIPS FROM KATHRYN R MARTIN, PhD MPH FHEA

Lecturer (Epidemiology,) Academic Primary Care Group, University of Aberdeen



Hippocrates

It was Hippocrates (circa 400 BC) who said “Eating alone will not keep a man well: he must also exercise...”. This still rings true in our modern world, where a mountain of scientific evidence indicates physical activity IS medicine! UK Physical Activity Guidelines suggest that all adults limit their time sitting down and we should aim to get 150 minutes per week of moderate activity, even in 10-minute bouts. If you are over age 65, then additional activities to strengthen muscles, as well as improve balance and coordination should also be undertaken throughout the week.

But what if you have arthritis or a musculoskeletal condition that causes you pain and stiffness? What if you are generally fatigued and can't find the motivation to be active? Remember, **any activity is better than none at all!** Start from where you are and begin slowly, trying to increase the amount of time and intensity of activity as you progress – just don't do too much too soon. Proper warm-up and cool-down exercises are essential to prevent injury, even if you are just going out for a walk as this helps protect the joints and muscles.

If you are struggling to take part in an activity you love, consider that many activities can be adapted for people with arthritis. Walking sticks or Nordic walking poles can take pressure off your feet, knee and hip joints, and many stretching or strengthening exercises can be undertaken in a seated position. Also, why not try something new? There are many fitness classes and activities suitable for adults with arthritis across Grampian and you never know who you might meet!



Finally, if you have arthritis, be mindful of your pain as it shouldn't be worse two hours after you exercise than when you began. That's your cue to modify the type and intensity of activity undertaken! It is important to avoid a boom and bust scenario, so balance activity with rest too. Stay active with your arthritis to maintain a happy, healthy and independent lifestyle!



Need a new map?

Go to www.dash4it.co.uk - a great company which offers much lower prices and deliver by first class post, often the next day.

Found a new walk?

Please email me any new walks you'd like to share with others, giving a description and if possible a map, then one of the walks sub committee will arrange to walk it with you or your group and then we can share it in the AGenda.

Judy Middleton middletonjdy@gmail.com

Are you over 50 and looking for a new adventure?

- Fancy trying Canoeing, Coasteering, Gorge Walking, Mountain Biking, Climbing, etc?
- Then check out Adventure Aberdeen's new 50+ Programme
- Find them on Facebook at Adventure Aberdeen
- Email them at adventureaberdeen@sportaberdeen.co.uk
- Website: www.aberdeencity.gov.uk/sportaberdeen
- Adventure Aberdeen, Fairley Road, Kingswells, Aberdeen, AB15 8PZ - 01224 270990

Visit this venue using the number 14 First Bus.



December 2019

1 st	No 111	D Hogg	£25
2 nd	No 136	M Gunn	£20
3 rd	No 55	C Fleming	£15

January 2020

1 st	No 8	C McConnachie	£25
2 nd	No 135	R Gunn	£20
3 rd	No 132	G Pirie	£15

February 2020

1 st	No 57	F Bristol	£25
2 nd	No 109	U Burnett	£20
3 rd	No 41	J Pritchard	£15

March 2020

1 st	No 144	S Erridge	£25
2 nd	No 109	U Burnett	£20
3 rd	No 4	M Forbes	£15





Into October and we were fortunate with the weather while enjoying two fine walks. On 9th we walked along the railway line from Lonmay to Strichen, with great views of the countryside and of Mormond Hill. Picnics were consumed in a lovely setting overlooking Strichen Lake.

Walking on the railway line again on 23rd October, we went from the outskirts of Fraserburgh to the Lonmay area. The awaiting bus took us to Heath Hill for a soup and sandwich lunch followed by tea/coffee and cakes. A very good autumn outing.

Once again we were fortunate with the weather when we walked in Lenabo Woods on 6th November. This is a great setting for a walk - also lots of interesting information relating to Lenabo being a wartime Airship Base.

Our last walk of the year was from Rathen to Inverallochy. Another good walk.

December and party time! A three course Christmas lunch was greatly enjoyed in The Ban-Car Hotel, followed by an afternoon of dancing and games. Music was provided by Andy Coutts. A fine start to the Festive Season!

Into a New Year and the first walk was a local one within Peterhead, finishing off at The Masonic Hall for a Burns Day lunch. A hearty meal was enjoyed by all. There was a good buzz of conversation, and the weather was kind to us - a great start to our walking year.



John all set to address the haggis

Two fairly local walks in February. The first one on the 12th was from the outskirts of Longside to Faichfield Farm. The second one on 26th February commenced on the Memsie/ Fraserburgh main road. We walked on quiet tarred roads as well as through woodland and the final part was on the railway line, ending up on the outskirts of Fraserburgh.

A big thank you to all who help to organise and lead the walks.

Hazel Beaton

www.grampian50plusnetwork.com

DISCLAIMER: the views expressed in articles are not
the
responsibility of the Network

Fraserburgh 50+

January was quite busy, beginning with our local walk to get us into gear for the New Year. The following week we had a lovely festive lunch in the Davron Hotel, Rosehearty and January's activities finished with our AGM in Fraserburgh Community Centre which was very well attended.

Our walk in Inverallochy was led, very ably, by a new member. After fortifying ourselves with coffee and a scone at the Golf Club, we walked in sunshine along the sea front, stopping to admire the very poignant figures of a fisherman's wife and child looking out to sea, put up by the local community as a tribute to the fishermen from the village who had lost their lives at sea and reminding us of how dangerous an occupation the fishing can be. Continuing along by the shore we paused for a while by the small harbour, enjoying the sea breeze and the view of Fraserburgh across the bay, before moving inland and making our way through parts of the village and back to the bus.



The next walk was in the Mintlaw area, starting at the Happy Plant. We set off along the Buchan walkway, but left it to follow a succession of pathways, including a recently made, totally new one. Much of the walk was in woodland, always beautiful whatever the season, whether it's a tracery of bare branches against the sky, luxuriant green foliage or the vibrant colours of autumn.

A full bus load of members enjoyed the walk through the Keith Hall estate, starting off at Inverurie garden Centre. Again we enjoyed the woods, now carpeted with snowdrops. Our next walk is in the new Pitsligo area and we are looking forward to welcoming other groups to Fraserburgh for the Spring Fling in April.

Chris Ritchie

Focus on Grampian 50+ Network

The 50+ Network is working in partnership with the University of Aberdeen who are undertaking a piece of research to highlight the benefits of Network Walking Groups.

Members will be invited to complete questionnaires and later perhaps some interviews by telephone.

Information will be sent to Group Contacts as usual for circulation to groups.

Stonehaven 50 plus Walking Group

October saw us in Aberdeen for a Blackburn Walk. Next time, we used a Spring Fling walk route from Bridge of Don along the Don, through the Autumn trees on an interesting variety of paths. The River Dee was visited on our walk at Potarch. Staying locally for over Cheyne Hill, our walk had an interesting mix of uphill, downhill, woods, forestry and farm land - oh and the odd dyke and fence to clamber over or slither under!! Blackhall Estate by the banks of the Dee was lovely. We celebrated a fine Christmas Lunch with some old walking friends.

A New Year and a new decade! They come around surprisingly quickly. Our first walk was a local one on a cool day just to get the legs going. The weather has remained 'kind'. February, and Crathes Estate was a real treat on a bonny, bright day as was House of Dun and Montrose Basin. There we started round the sheltered Burn Gully to admire the profusion of snowdrops, then we walked the 'Birders' paths to the Montrose Basin. The mud underfoot was a wee challenge but 'The Wind'! Fine at your back but we were blasted as we walked along, shouting to be heard and teetering in the sudden gusts. It certainly, got rid of the winter cobwebs. It was grand to get back on the bus and enjoy an old fashioned 'Sweetie'.

March arrived bright and breezy with a fine walk over Tullos and Kincorth Hills. Hard to believe it's at the edge of Aberdeen's bustling housing and industrial areas! We all admired the views over the City, stunning on this glorious day as we could see all the way north to Balmedie.

Betty Luurtsema - Enquires:

stonehaven50plus@grampian50plus.com



Insch Walking Group

Some of our members thought it would be good if we could contribute to the next issue of Grampian 50+ Network News and we hope you find our contribution interesting.

The purpose of these walking groups is, in our opinion, fresh air, exercise, seeing different places that we may not otherwise have seen and, obviously, company. We make friends and often have coffee and occasional picnics. All positive things!

The Insch members come from all walks of life, pardon the pun! We all have varied interests and personalities and are a good mix of men and women. We have different levels of fitness but are able to cater for everyone. We have one member who definitely deserves a mention. This person is, I believe, turned 82 years young, is a member of three walking groups and goes line dancing once a week! How good is that for recommending people to join us - use it or lose it as they say!

There is a website www.westhighlands, which gives walk details, including the description of interesting places, the distance, the terrain and whether it is boggy or not. This is such a great website for information.

Grampian 50 plus Network also has a register of walks and it would be good if members would pass on interesting walks, including route map and description if possible.

Our group has a meeting approximately every 6 months where we all agree the next walks' programme. We discuss where we will walk and delegate who will lead the walk. This is voluntary for whoever is willing to take charge of that particular walk.

So far we have had many stunning walks and will be happy to send details to anyone interested. We would also welcome new members to come along for a walk and see if this is for you.

I enclose a picture of our members - note the happy faces! We walk every alternate Sunday and meet at the Leisure Centre in Insch at 9:30 Contact details for more information : **M – 07708461418 : T -0146 820005 :**



DYCE TFG

Our first outing of the season was to Finzean, following the footpath past the local school to the "Big Hoose". We enjoyed the autumn colours while sitting on fallen trees having lunch, before returning to the minibus via the avenue. Our next outing was to Mintlaw, parking at the Happy Plant and finishing our walk at Aden Park. Because of frost, we changed our next outing, deciding on a walk along Aberdeen beach. We walked the full length of the boardwalk, while the less able chose a shorter walk. Since it was too cold to sit outside, we took ourselves off to Duthie Park Winter Gardens to have our packed lunches in the lovely setting of the tropical house.

On our outing to Fyvie Castle, we parked at the village car park and walked along the road, entering the castle grounds by the main entrance. Keeping left round the castle, we visited the walled garden. This was a circular walk and we hastened back to the village in order to drive to Delgaty Castle for our lunch of soup and Christmas pies or a choice from the menu. Great! Mid December saw us all at Craighaar for our Christmas festivities and "Secret Santa".

New Year saw us off to Crathes Castle, parking at Milton of Crathes and taking the underpass to the estate. We followed the red route off to the right and were amazed at the new carvings. Try and visit and enjoy the wooden carvings, especially the one beside the pond. Afterwards we stopped at Raemoir Garden Centre for a welcome cuppa. Drum was our next outing – a lovely walk around the estate. Then it was the Chanonry, walking round Old Aberdeen and following the riverside path from Diamond Bridge to Seaton Park, then over the Brig o' Balgownie to Bridge of Don and back upstream to Seaton Park. We lunched in the Botanical Gardens, where some of us spotted grey squirrels. We also visited Tillydrone Campus where we were given an excellent tour of the building, which is much used by the community. Our next trip was Hazlehead circular. Parking behind the restaurant, we set off to the right, following the red path past the football pitches and golf course, where we loitered to watch a few players before following the path to Somebody Cares, where less able walkers chose to return to the minibus. The rest carried on along the main road to Johnston Gardens where we sat in shelter having our packed lunches before re-tracing our steps, via Walker Dam, to meet up with the others. Dunottar Castle was the next outing, where we did the usual walk through the trees, with a gentle climb to the castle, then returning to meet the others who were doing the beach front to Cowie and back. **Joan Mclean**

The first of our October walks was the Blue Door walk which is a lovely walk at any time of year. This walk starts at the Gannochy Bridge where the River North Esk tumbles over the rocks below and separates Kincardineshire from Angus. As you go upstream, the mood of the water changes, as does the landscape. Two weeks later on a beautiful autumn day, we walked in the grounds of Castle Fraser and beyond.

In November, we walked from Montrose to Hillside where we stopped to see the stone which marks the spot where Robbie Burns stopped to water his horse in 1787. The stone was engraved by Adam Christie, a Shetlander who spent most of his life as a patient in Sunnyside Asylum there. At Crathes, we admired several wooden sculptures in the grounds of the Castle.

December saw us at St Cyrus doing a circular route, some of which was new to us and some familiar. Two weeks later, on a dreich day, we were in Brechin doing a tour of some of its iconic buildings: the old Flicks Nightclub, now a sorry sight; the Cathedral which is 800 years old this year and the nearby Round Tower; Maisondieu Chapel, another ruin, and the old Brechin High School which is now Maisondieu Primary School, and still looking well!

In January a circular walk in Arbroath covered some new ground, while our walk in Stonehaven turned out to be somewhat slippery despite the nice day!

One of our February walks was cancelled due to the weather but the other, to Lunan Bay was a great day out.

In January, we all enjoyed a post-Christmas lunch at the Hickory Restaurant at Brechin Golf Club.

**Helen Ritchie Tel 01674 840319
Mob 07814 324725**



**Taking a breather on the
Castle Fraser walk!**

**Mearns
50+**

Our Autumn planning meeting was attended by quite a few,
Preceded by a local walk, some of which was new.
We came up with a list of old and new, some long or short
And the following poetastery is our Wanderers walks report.

On a cold October day which was overcast and grey,
We went down glorious Glen Ey where majestic mountains touch the sky.
Spotting lots of herds of deer at different points along the track,
We then saw even more as we made the long trail back.

Our Christmas meal at Porterhouse was after a walk through Keithhall Estate,
Arriving at the restaurant not a minute too late.
A delicious meal was enjoyed by all of us
Then some of us walked home although we could have caught the 'bus.

A new walk at Lumphanan which we started from the square,
Took us up the old military road where the mud made us tread with care.
Lunch on the moor with views of Benaquallie hill,
Then back to the village where our cars were parked there still!

Through Cotton wood and Fetternear then across the river Don,
A lunch stop at a perfect spot where we even had some sun.
Around quarry ponds where geese were noisy and plenty
Then back to the car park at precisely two twenty.

To Bucksburn in the sun with not a sign of rain.
Past ponds and burns and leafy lanes.
Seeing roe deer, a fox and skylarks high above,
An amazing surprise walk which we just had to love!

Ballater's seven bridges was the next walk on the list,
It surely is something that we never want to miss.
Then to Knock castle where we heard the tragic story
Of the murdered seven sons whose heads were impaled-how gory!

But that's not quite the end of the tale
As presently we heard a loud wail.
Maggie had inadvertently sat in some muck
As we heard her shout "oh yuck..just my luck!" -

Sheila Carter



Ellon Ramblers

I begin this report on a very sad note as our oldest member, Charlie Fowler, passed away three weeks before his 92nd birthday, just two months after his last ramble with us.

His funeral was on the day of our scheduled Gight/Methlick walk and so this was cancelled as a mark of respect and for those wishing to pay their last respects. Many ex members also attended a memorable farewell to a kind, quiet, helpful and respected gentleman.

His widow, Doreen, is now our oldest member and still continues to “toddle awa” with the group.

Our annual outing began on a dull, dreich drive south to the Abernyght Antiques complex with a lovely café where we enjoyed a much looked forward to coffee and tea with warmed scones, etc. After a good hunt around, we made our way to the Red House at Coupar Angus, where a delicious meal was quickly served by cheery, helpful staff. With our tummies as tight as drums, we boarded our comfy coach to make the journey home through lashing rain. Most fell asleep. Our thanks to Mary, organiser of this enjoyable trip.

Our other rambles included Gartly Woods, where a large area of edible mushrooms was found by our driver, who was an expert on this and told us the proper way to cook them. From Spey Bay to Fochabers, autumn tints brightened the dull day. Loch Kinnord/Burn o' Vat was breezy with blinks of sun and the scenery was lovely. The Stonehaven/Dunottar walk was nice and sunny, giving a magical sort of view of the castle and the rugged coast. The other three walks on the programme – Fettercairn/Fasque, Castle Fraser and Keith Hall estate were enjoyed in squally wintry showers and DUBS! However, that's what dedicated ramblers expect. We now look forward to the next phase of the programme.

Doreen M. Fowler



As usual the Wayfarers have had an enjoyable winter season with walks at Craigellachie, Auchmacoy and Logie Buchan to Ellon, and local walks along the Buchan railway line to Strichen and Longside.

The weather has been kind to us and although the programme has had to be changed a couple of times to fit various dates, buses and the weather, we average around 40 walkers each outing, and we all seem to enjoy our Wednesdays.

Beside the walks we do build in social events through the year one of which was our Christmas lunch at the Heathhill, Memsie. We have been going there for several years and the general feeling is that we will continue to have Christmas there. We also had a Burns lunch following a walk around Peterhead and were entertained with several of Robert Burns works. This was held at the Masons' where we also celebrated our Christmas Dinner and Dance.

Since the New Year we have had a walk along the coast from Whitehills to Portsoy past the old mill and the bridge over the river that used to power it, and again the weather was very kind

Another fine day was spent on a 6 mile walk from Aberdeen Cults to the Duthie Park along the Deeside railway line (we are so lucky that so many of these old lines have been made available to walkers.) We reached Duthie Park and had our picnic in the Winter Gardens along with the usual ice cream!

Wilma Driver

Wayfarers Walking Group Peterhead



Mintlaw Ramblers

It was a good season for Mintlaw Ramblers and the weather was generally kind to us. As our saying goes, “*It nívvir rains on a Wednesday*”. On 16th October our walk was from the

small village of Memsie via Wester Cardno to Fraserburgh. The walk began with a rendition of “The Orra Loon” by J.C. Milne, the poet who was born in Memsie in 1897.

On 30th October we were in New Aberdour. Our walk took us along the village and on to the new footpath built by Aberdeenshire Council down to Aberdour beach. A visit to the ancient St. Drostan’s Church was a must, as was discussion on the site of the original Aberdour village on the seashore and beyond.

November 27th saw us in Fetterangus and our walk took us around the Gaval Loop, then around the village and “Doon the Ducker and up the Pole”, an old saying in the village for walking down Duke Street and up North Place.

On 11th December, Mintlaw Ramblers had Christmas Dinner at the White Horse Hotel, Strichen, and, as our next date would have fallen on Christmas Day, this completed our programme for 2019.

Our first walk of 2020, on January 8th was, as by tradition, local to Mintlaw. We walked through Aden Country Park to Old Deer and returned via the old railway line.

On 22nd January we were in the historical village of Rathen, with a visit to the ancient church of St. Ethernan. On 5th February we had a pleasant, if muddy, walk around Stuartfield via Scroghill and Dens of Crichtie, and on 19th February, a lovely walk along the old coach road from Hallmoss to St. Fergus village and on to St. Fergus beach.

Doug Simpson



Two of our most interesting walks were the Rosehearty Circular and a walk through the Brucklay Estate.

Mintlaw Walkers

The Rosehearty Circular took place on a pleasant sunny day which always helps. It started and ended in the square in Rosehearty. The path led down to the sea along the cliff tops, passing by the old observation tower viewing the old offshore practice bombing range; this has now been converted into a house with excellent views. As we proceeded along the cliff tops we came to the ruin of a salmon fishing station. This had two ice houses, one considerably larger than the other. The slope down to the shore was steep and I imagine it was heavy work carrying the catch up to the processing areas. We then proceeded slightly inland, stopping for lunch at an old doocot before proceeding back to Rosehearty.

The Brucklay Estate was an interesting meander round what was the home of the Dingwall-Fordyce family, now divided into various plots. We approached along the old railway line, through woods, passing by the old stables, which are being converted into a house and then to the old castle, now sadly a ruin though the outlines of the terraced gardens are clearly visible, though overgrown. Then along the banks of a lake to the old laundry building, now a private house, where we stopped for lunch on the banks of the lake. Behind this was a very large walled garden, currently empty except for a line of trees down the middle. The family’s private graveyard was nearby with some very substantial monuments. Altogether it was a very interesting walk.

Other walks have been round Fraserburgh and Philorth, the Buchan Line and the standing stones at Aikey Brae, Aden Park and Pitfour Estate. Numbers are generally between twenty and thirty.

Ian Sandison



We have had a few shorter walks these past few months to cover the winter period. One such was at Auchendirran near Aberchirder, a new one for the Group, which is always well received. Others were at Keithhall, which we always start the new year with, Newmachar/Kingseat on a different route from the usual one and the old railway line at Ellon to Logierieve.

The weather has been kind to us on walk days with some very Springlike days when at Newmachar, Ellon and Pitfour estate. There, we have heard and watched larks singing high in the sky. We have been lucky too to see deer, squirrels and of course the swans and ducks. (Look out for the brightly coloured mandarin duck at Pitfour.) Too early yet unfortunately, for the ospreys but their nest awaits their return.

Fyvie Castle is another place where we saw plenty of wildlife - squirrels, swans which flew so elegantly over the lake, a flock of rather noisy geese, lots of ducks and a heron. We liked seeing the Ice House at the back of the Castle and marvelled at the depth of the "hole" and the brickwork.

Other favourites walked have been Banff to Whitehills, always good to be near the coast, Persley to Old Balgownie and on through Seaton Park, a good place for a picnic stop. We were interested to see the Hydro scheme (Aberdeen Community Energy /ACE). Information about the Donside Hydro is on their website. So, there you see the ancient remains of machinery, left to the elements, alongside this very modern energy scheme. We enjoyed kicking the dried Autumn leaves which make a lovely rustling noise. Also amongst the trees a swing has been hung and it just asks to be used - and it was!!

The Grandholm Community take a pride in their area with a graffiti wall, some we liked, others definitely not, nor could we understand what it was meant to portray. But it is rather different and more interesting than a blank concrete wall.

We viewed Glover House, rather a nice building which has been left empty for ages - seems a waste when it could perhaps be a tourist attraction.

Always good to have great views on the walks although sometimes it is difficult to decide which hills we are looking at, as at Kingseat. Such good views you have, after a bit of a climb, at Kirkhill Forest, when on a clear day you can see out to Peterhead.

The walk at Castle Fraser was done on another lovely sunny day. We are lucky to have so many National Trust properties so near.

At Christmas we all enjoyed our lunch at Morris's Hotel in Oldmeldrum.

Catherine McConnachie



Garioch 50+ Men's Walking

We continue to thrive, with 5 new gents joining us recently.

In October we carried out a Mountaineering Council of Scotland initiative:

<https://www.mountaineering.scot/conservation/campaigns/tak-it-home>

on the Deeside Way, filling at least six bags and depositing them at Dinnet Recycling. We borrowed tongs from Kemnay Academy who were very happy to lend them to us. I think some council recycling departments may also be able to supply/lend these. I have a name and contact number for a chap at Aberdeenshire Recycling. We'll repeat this exercise on another walk.

Despite occasional inclement weather, we continue to walk each Tuesday, with no cancellations so far this year. We are hoping to organise a visit to Maud Railway Museum in April (tbc) and also carry out walk and path maintenance with the Garioch Ranger.

We walk each Tuesday, departing from Davidson Park, Inverurie, at 8.30 or 9.30. Gents wishing to join us please get in touch via the secretary.

Russ Jacobs



AGE SCOTLAND

Age Scotland provides services to help older people in Scotland in various aspects of their lives.

The Helpline is a free, confidential phone service for older people, their families and their carers. The Team provides information, friendship and advice and is available Monday to Friday from **9.00 till 17.00** on **0800 12 44 222**.

Factsheets provide information on Legal & Family, Housing & Fuel, Health, Money Matters, Care and Veteran issues. These can be ordered on the Age Scotland Helpline or online at publications@agescotland.org.uk The factsheets are clearly laid out, easy to read and regularly updated.

The Policy & Communications Team champions older people's issues such as over 75's TV licence.

The Dementia Support Team offers free dementia awareness training to groups, organisations and people throughout Scotland. It is vital that people are better informed about the steps they can take to reduce the risk of developing dementia and, if diagnosed, how to live well with it.

Age Scotland has a monthly e-newsletter and there are also specific e-newsletters on **Dementia Support** and **Policy & Communication**.

Why not become an Age Scotland member?

Membership is free and open to groups, organisations and individuals who support the vision and aims of the charity. Apply online at:

<https://www.ageuk.org.uk/scotland/what-we-do/community-development/age-scotland-membership>

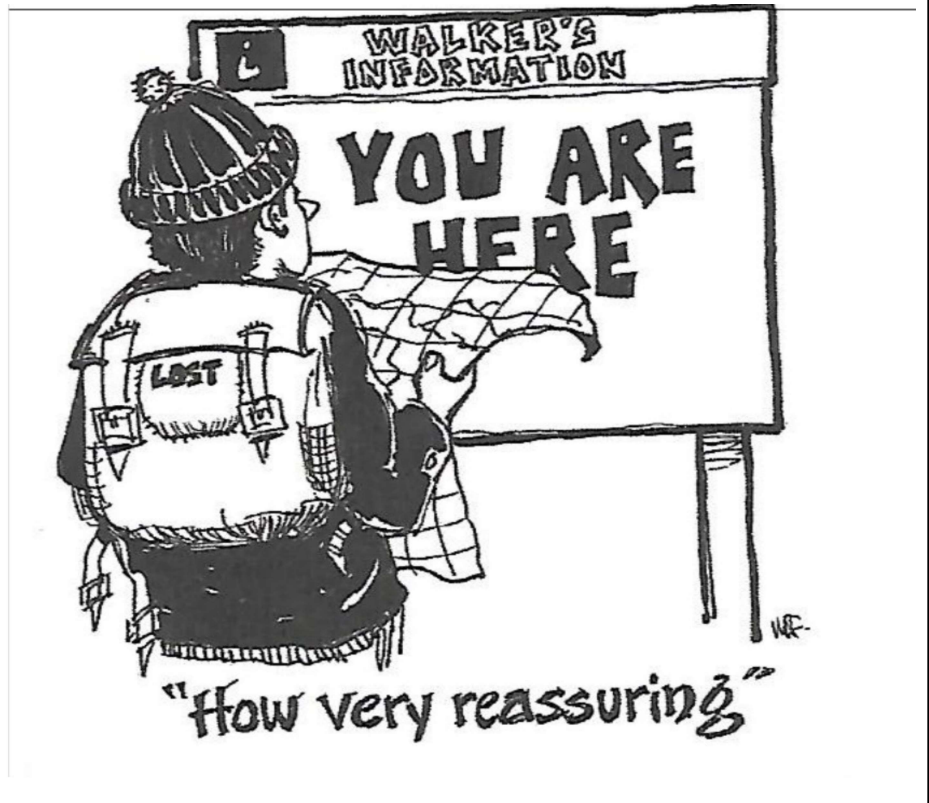
Grampian 50+ Contact Details:

Email:

grampian50plus@hotmail.com

Website:

www.grampian50plusnetwork.com



Grampian50+ Committee 2018/2019

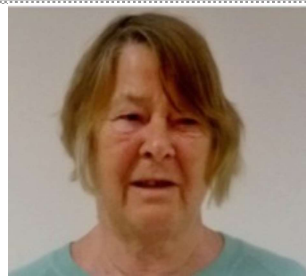


Chair

**Marjory
D'Arcy**



**Secretary/
Membership
Secretary
Sue Wright**



**Minute
Secretary
Catherine
Mason**



**Treasurer &
100 Club**

Alison Emslie



Sheila Erridge

Committee Members



Jo Jones



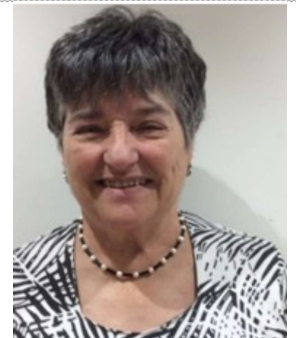
Muriel Knox



Judy Middleton



Diane Miller



Nora Radcliffe