

(A registered Scottish Charity SC024227)

### Notes from your Chairman.

It has been a busy Summer and the weather has blessed all our visits. As we approach Autumn we will be reverting to our usual schedule of talks and indoor events. We have a lot to look forward to. In September we will have a fundraising concert in collaboration with the talented young musicians of Meldrum Academy. Make sure you book your tickets for that. On 9<sup>th</sup> October we are out and about again – not a garden visit this time, but a visit to somewhere where they are more concerned about what is going on under the surface of your garden – the James Hutton institute in Aberdeen. There is more information later in the newsletter. Thanks to all of you we are once again able to donate £3000 to our local NTS properties. This is great news and the Members' Centre couldn't do this without your ongoing support. Thank you!

*Patricia Shaw*

### Visit to Delgatie Castle



It was a perfect Summer's day when we visited Delgatie and the Castle was looking almost impossibly romantic. Even those of us who had visited before fell in love with it all over again. Joan Johnson, who heads up the Delgatie Castle Trust and who personally oversees most of the activities at the Castle, met us to give us an introduction to the history of the Castle before we started our self-guided tour. Joan has been at the Castle for over 40 years and her recollections of the Captain really brought the story of the Castle alive. Captain Hay bought the castle on a whim to save it from being destroyed by its then owner the Countess of Erroll, who had plans to remove the roof to avoid

having to pay taxes on the property. He and his wife lovingly restored the Castle over many years. Shortly before he died Captain Hay set up the Delgatie Castle Trust and it was to Joan that he entrusted the ongoing care of his beloved family home. We ended our visit with a delicious lunch provided by the Castle tearoom, which is a popular destination for those who appreciate fine home cooking.

[Delgatie Castle Turriff Aberdeenshire](#)

### Visit to Arbuthnott House and the Grassic Gibbon Centre



We had another beautiful day for our visit to Arbuthnott House. We were met by Chris and Emily Arbuthnott, whose home this is. The Arbuthnott family have lived here for 37 generations, almost 900 years. Although the lands of Arbuthnott or Aberbothenoth, were occupied and documented well before the 13th century, Hugh de Swinton is credited as the true current family ancestor. He came north from Berwickshire, married, settled, and changed his name to "Arbuthnott" in 1190. Most of the House as seen today dates from major rebuilding work carried out during the 1700s but parts of the house are much earlier dating back to an original tower house built in the 16th century. As well as getting a

guided tour of the House we were able to stroll around the beautiful gardens. The present formal garden is on a very steep slope and was designed, laid out and brought into life between 1685 and 1690. About 100 years later a further and more extensive landscape plan was devised. The cultivated gardens extend to some 5 acres and we

were amazed to learn that they are maintained by only one full time gardener. Not only does he keep the grass and borders in tip top condition, but he also tends a productive kitchen garden supplying fruit and vegetables to the house. Amazing! We followed our visit to Arbutnott House with lunch at the Grassic Gibbon Centre, after which we were able to peruse the exhibition celebrating the life and work of author Lewis Grassic Gibbon (James Leslie Mitchell) best known for the classic Scottish novel "Sunset Song". It was fascinating to learn more about this prolific author and wonder how much more he could have produced had he not died tragically young at the age of 34 in 1935.

[Home - Grassic Gibbon](#)



## What's Coming Up?

### Fundraising Concert featuring the students of Meldrum Academy 7 pm 26<sup>th</sup> September at Daviot Village Hall



The young musicians attending Meldrum Academy can boast a rock band, a ceilidh band, a guitar group, solo piano and clarinet players, pipers and highland dancers. They will be bringing their many and varied talents to Daviot Village Hall on 26<sup>th</sup> September to help us raise funds for the National Trust for Scotland. This is certain to be a popular event. Tickets will be available through Eventbrite, but

Members can also buy tickets using the ticket application form at the end of the Newsletter.

### Visit to the James Hutton Institute, Aberdeen – Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 10:30am

The Institute takes its name from James Hutton (1726-1797), Scottish geologist, agriculturalist, chemical manufacturer, naturalist and physician. Often referred to as the "Father of Modern Geology", James Hutton played a key role in establishing geology as a modern science. The Institute was formed in 2011 from a merger of the Macaulay Land Use Research Institute (MLURI) and the Scottish Crop Research Institute (SCRI). It works to improve the resilience of crops, land, natural resources and communities in the face of changes and climate and habitats. Their unique research is tested in labs and at scale on their farms. Chief Executive Prof. Colin Campbell will tell us more about the history and the current work at the Institute. There is no charge for what is certain to be a fascinating visit. but numbers will be limited so you will need to book using the booking form at the end of the newsletter.

## Where does the Money Go?

As mentioned in the Chairman's notes, we are able to donate another £3000 to Haddo House, Fyvie Castle and Pitmedden Garden this year. We donated £3000 in 2024, so how did the properties use the money? The staff at Haddo House invested in some high-quality Christmas decorations to help create the feel of a Victorian Christmas. The decorations will be used year after year, so look out for them if you visit any Christmas events at Haddo this year. Have noticed some lovely new terracotta planters around the house and courtyard at Pitmedden? They are there courtesy of the Members' Centre. Feedback from visitors to Fyvie had suggested that more places to sit and take time to enjoy the location would be appreciated, so they used our donation to provide some seating and picnic tables near the American Garden. Check them out.



## Current Opening Hours for our Local Properties

**Haddo House** - Fri-Mon. Access to house by tours only at 11:00, 13:00 and 15:00

**Courtyard Café** –Thur-Mon, 10:00–16:00

**Shop** –Fri – Mon 10:30-16:00

**Fyvie Castle** – Castle, Shop and Tearoom until 26<sup>th</sup> October – Wed – Sun, 10:30 – 16:00

Grounds and Garden – Open (weather permitting) 1 Jan–31 Dec, daily, 09.00–dusk.

**Pitmedden Garden** – Garden, Museum Shop and Tearoom until 28<sup>th</sup> September – Thur – Mon 10:30 – 16:00.

Grounds open dawn – dusk. Please note Pitmedden Garden car park is open daily between 9.30am–4.30pm. The car park is locked/secured overnight.

## What's on at our Properties?

<b>Haddo House</b>	First Saturday July, August, September at 10am	Haddo Garden Yoga
	Sat 20 <sup>th</sup> September at 7pm	"Emma" the movie
	Sat 18 <sup>th</sup> October at 10:30am	Fungal Foray
<b>Fyvie Castle</b>	Fri 17 <sup>th</sup> October 10:30am and 1pm	Squirrel Safari
<b>Pitmedden</b>	Last Sunday June, July, August, September 10am	Pitmedden Gardening Club
	Sunday 28 <sup>th</sup> September	Apple Sunday
	Sunday 26 <sup>th</sup> October at 4:30pm	Family Halloween Trail



Don't forget Pitmedden Apple Sunday on 28<sup>th</sup> September. Your perfect autumn day out, with music, food, games, and lots of delicious apples.



This year's David & June Gordon Memorial Lecture on Saturday 13<sup>th</sup> September at 2:30 is Byron: Half a Scot by birth and bred a whole one. Peter Hunter looks at Lord Byron's Aberdeenshire roots and his connections with the Gordons of Haddo, before taking his audience on a journey to his early and heroic death in Greece aged 36. The talk is partly illustrated using rarely seen images of items from Harrow School: sabres and seals, carvings and cartoons, forgeries and freedom fighters.

[Byron: Half a Scot by birth and bred a whole one - Haddo Arts](#)

The next concert is on Saturday 11<sup>th</sup> October at 7:30pm when Scottish Opera will present Opera Highlights

[Scottish Opera - Opera Highlights - Haddo Arts](#)

## What's on elsewhere in the area?

<b>Crathes Castle</b>	Tues 15 <sup>th</sup> and Wed 16 <sup>th</sup> June at 10:30am, 12pm, 1:30pm, 3:30pm	Horse Drawn Carriage Tour of Crathes Estate
	Sat 19 <sup>th</sup> July at 10am	Crathes Castle – Tree Collector
	Fri 15 <sup>th</sup> – Sun 17 <sup>th</sup> August	Family Fun Weekend
<b>Castle Fraser</b>	4 <sup>th</sup> or last Saturday of the month Apr-Sep at 10:30am	Castle Fraser Gardening Club
	Wed 22 <sup>nd</sup> and Thurs 23 <sup>rd</sup> October throughout the day	Family Halloween Trail
<b>Drum Castle</b>	Tues 14 <sup>th</sup> October at 10am and 11:30am	Jay for a Day
	23 <sup>rd</sup> , 24 <sup>th</sup> , 25 <sup>th</sup> , 26 <sup>th</sup> October throughout the day	Family Halloween Trail

More details and tickets for all these events are available from each property's webpage (under the "Events" heading) on the NTS Website. Please check the website in case opening times or event details change.

**NE Aberdeenshire NTS Members' Centre**  
**Fundraising Concert with performances by the students of Meldrum Academy**  
**Friday 26<sup>th</sup> September at Daviot Village Hall, Wellbrae, Daviot, Inverurie AB51 0HZ**  
**Tickets £12 (£6 for children 12 and under) includes interval tea/coffee.**

From: .....

Tel. ....

email address .....

I would like ..... tickets (£12 each)

I would like ..... tickets (£6 each)

I enclose £..... In payment, or I am paying by bank transfer.....

(Cheques should be made payable to: North East Aberdeenshire Members' Centre the National Trust for Scotland).

Bank transfers to: S/C 80 06 71, A/C 00687168, NE Aberdeenshire Mem Cent, Ref: "Concert"

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If you are paying by cheque, please return to: Dr Patricia Shaw, 2 Aulton of Fochel Steadings, Oldmeldrum, AB51 0AT (Tel 01651 851411) enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for return of the tickets by **Wednesday 24<sup>th</sup> September**.

If you are paying by bank transfer, please complete this form and email it back to: [patriciashaw404@gmail.com](mailto:patriciashaw404@gmail.com) and we will email you your tickets (a photograph of the completed form will do)

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I am happy to take my car and another.....passengers

I would like assistance with the travel to Daviot Hall (Please delete as required)

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**NE Aberdeenshire NTS Members' Centre**  
**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> October at 10:30 am at The James Hutton Institute, Craigiebuckler**  
**Aberdeen AB15 8QH**

From: .....

Tel. ....

email address .....

I would like ..... tickets

Please complete this form and email it back to: [patriciashaw404@gmail.com](mailto:patriciashaw404@gmail.com) and we will email you your tickets (a photograph of the completed form will do)

Or alternatively send a completed form to Dr Patricia Shaw, 2 Aulton of Fochel Steadings, Oldmeldrum, AB51 0AT (Tel 01651 851411) enclosing a stamped addressed envelope for return of the tickets by **Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> October**.

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I am happy to take my car and another.....passengers

I would like assistance with the travel to the James Hutton Institute (Please delete as required)