

## Chairman's Comment

In BCT's first ten years, the Trust managed to safeguard the important local sites shown on page 3, carry out a wide range of other projects on behalf of the community and remain viable along the way. This was only possible because of the help and support of many people and the Trust is very grateful to all of them.

BCT was also pleased to receive the Minister's congratulations quoted on page 1. However, this was really a compliment to the whole community in Birse. BCT's achievements reflect the high levels of community involvement by the people living in Birse parish. BCT is just a part of the wider pattern of local community activity and achievements involving the parish's three Community Associations, two Community Councils and many other local groups.

An impressive example of the strength of the community life in Birse was the remarkable 75% response rate and near 100% support for BCT's community ballot on its proposed purchase of Balfour Wood. The recent rejection of BCT's funding bid for Balfour by the final Lottery Committee has been a huge disappointment. However, BCT will continue to try and buy the Wood. The article on page 4 reflects the economic importance and deep historical roots of acquiring Balfour as part of safeguarding all the sites that BCT looks after on behalf of our community.

BCT first ten years included some tremendous high points and major setbacks, as illustrated by the photos I have chosen here. BCT will be very grateful for continuing help and support in meeting the challenges of the years ahead.

Donald Silcock  
Chairman

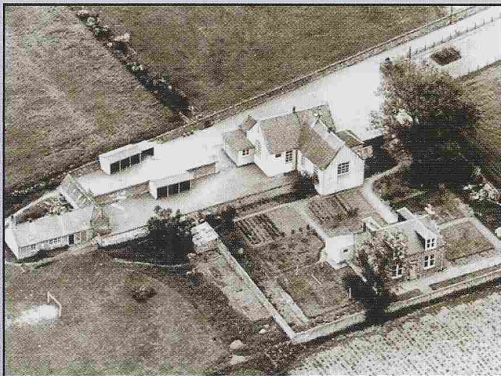
April 2009



*The Dedication of the Birse Millennium Stone at Corsedardar on 1st January 2000*



*The major wildfire in the Forest of Birse Commonly Pinewoods on 10th April 2003*



*Finzean School in the 1950s*



*Waterside of Birse in 1897*

## Archive Photos

BCT has many interesting local photographs in the Parish Archive at Finzean Old School and is always grateful for additions to the collection. These can be the original photos or simply the chance for BCT to make a copy of one.

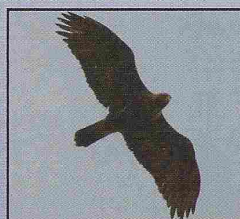
The Archive is in the former soup kitchen and toilet block at Finzean Old School. These buildings are on the left in the aerial view of the School shown here, which was taken before the current Primary School was built in the 1960s.

The photo of Waterside is a recent addition to the collection. However, donated pictures do not have to be old. BCT also safeguards contemporary photos of local interest. The two examples of birds of prey here were both taken recently by local residents.

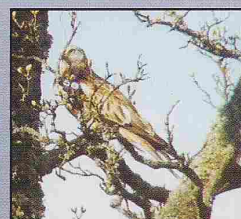
The hills and native pine forests of Birse are the hunting grounds of Golden Eagles. The photo here shows one of them passing fairly low overhead in the Forest of Birse.

The Red Kite was photographed next to the public road in Finzean. Red Kites used to be native to the parish, but have been extinct locally since the 19th century.

This bird's conspicuous wing tag showed that it was released near Aberdeen in 2008 as part of the wider programme to re-establish Red Kites in Scotland.



*Where Eagles Fly*



*The Return of the Kite*