



Chairman's Comment

The wonderful news of the major donation towards the purchase of Balfour Wood means that BCT can at last become owner of the Wood.

This will be a very important milestone for BCT, as one of BCT's aims since it started has been to re-instate the historic pattern of three forests that belong to the parish and are managed to promote the local common good. The two reasons behind this aim have been to improve the management of each of the forests from a local point of view and to provide BCT with a long term potential income.

BCT needs to have some income of its own to support the conservation of the other important local sites that BCT looks after on behalf of the community. There are many costs involved for BCT in meeting its responsibilities, including significant annual insurance premiums, accountancy fees and utility bills. There can also be sudden contingencies, as with the burst pipe in the Old School roof this January that has cost BCT several thousand pounds despite all its insurance cover.

The nature of the timber in Balfour Wood complements that in Slewdrum Forest and there is the potential for regular harvesting from the woodlands in future, to give BCT a modest annual income towards its operating costs and other expenditure that can not be met from grants.

There is a still a funding gap to close to buy Balfour without borrowing, but Trustees had no hesitation in seizing the 59th minute opportunity to buy the Wood. I look forward to the purchase being completed soon.

Donald Silcock
Chairman

April 2010



BCT Trustees (left to right): Andrew Walker, Brian Page, Robert Dinnie (Patron), Jean McLeod, Donald Silcock, Dorothy Dinnie.



The BCT office ceiling at Finzean Old School ready for repairs after a burst pipe in the roof in January brought down parts of the ceiling.

"The Muckle Spate"

'The Muckle Spate of Twenty Nine' is the fast flowing, humorous poem that describes the disastrous floods of 1829 along the river Feugh. The Spate resulted from a great rainstorm on the 3rd and 4th August and was recorded by local poet David Grant in this famous Doric poem. In 2009, BCT re-published the poem to mark the 180th anniversary of the Muckle Spate and make copies available locally again thirty years after it was last published. Copies can be obtained from the BCT office at £2 each.

AGM 2009



Hector Riddell, local resident and Scotland's Champion of Champions Both Ballad Singer, performing after the formal business at BCT's 2009 AGM

Associate Membership

Anyone who lives outside Birse parish can support BCT by becoming an Associate Member. The subscription is £20 within the UK and £25 overseas. Membership runs for 12 months from the date of joining. Members receive BCT's newsletters, other mailings, special discounts on BCT's publications and other benefits. Please support BCT and send your subscription to BCT's office.

Donations

BCT greatly appreciates donations to support its projects. Please send donations to BCT's Office. BCT can provide a Gift Aid Declaration form for donors who are UK taxpayers. Signing the form will increase the value of the donation to the Trust. Please consider leaving the Trust a legacy in your Will.

Acknowledgements

BCT is very grateful to all who have supported the Trust's work with donations and other assistance during the last twelve months, including the following for grants: Aberdeenshire Council, Cairngorms National Park Authority, Forestry Commission Scotland and Scottish Natural Heritage.

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