

The Auchenblae Messenger

Volume 10 Issue 4

Dec 2008

Founded in 1999 by Donald B. Rennie



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From the Editors

We are two people who worked in the Post Office and found ourselves redundant!

Looking about for something else to take up our new found spare time we were asked if we fancied a shot at editing the Messenger! This is a steep learning curve for us so if it's not up to Donald and Craig's standard we do apologise. We would however love some feedback; if we've left anything out please let us know. Equally, if there are things you don't want to see in the Messenger again, let us know.

We hope to have captured the spirit of the magazine started by Donald Rennie, a good friend to all the village and sadly missed.

This is a Christmas edition and we thank everyone who has taken the time and trouble to send in their articles. We're sure that contributors are going to dread our phone calls and emails in the future!

At this time of the year we are all busy trying to get ready for Christmas, but still want to take part in and support village activities, we hope that this Messenger lets everyone know what's going on and when.

Susie and Annie

A very
Merry Christmas
and a
Happy and Healthy
New Year
to everyone



EKWENDENI MISSION HOSPITAL, MALAWI

A sincere thank you to Drumtochty Social Group for the table space to sell bric-a-brac and other donated items to raise money for the above hospital. Sale total was £325.00. As you may know, Ross has been in Malawi since July working in the maternity, gynaecology and baby units at Ekwendeni. Day to day supplies are urgently needed and any monies raised or donated will be spent wisely. I have also received many generous donations and have been able to purchase and deliver (via family and friends) urgently requested supplies.

Thank you for your continuing interest and support.

Dates for your Diary

- Dec 1st Heritage Society
- Dec 4th WRI Open Night
- Dec 5th Carols, Candles and Christmas Pies
- Dec 5th Quiz Night
- Dec 7th Senior Citizen's Fund AGM
- Dec 7th Carol Service, Fordoun Hall
- Dec 12th Pantomime
- Dec 13th Pantomime
- Dec 14th Pantomime
- Dec 16th Primary School Christmas Service
- Dec 24th Children's Carol Service
- Dec 27th Paper Shop Closes



Sir Robert Smith's Message



In the run up to Christmas people in Auchenblae will be getting used to the recent changes in Post Office services available to them. For many years now I have been emphasising the importance of post offices to rural communities. It is very much regrettable that we have lost the full-time Sub Post Offices following the two public consultations. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Mrs Singer for the service she has provided Auchenblae over the past thirteen years.

Following the Post Office's decision to cut the service to a part-time outreach the Metelski's have agreed to host the service in their shop on Kintore Street. I wish them well in this task.

On a more positive note, the Government's decision to retain the Post Office Card Account is a victory for the many loyal Post Office users who campaigned so strongly to retain this service. I would like to thank everyone who supported the Post Office in this campaign. I would be keen to hear from users of any difficulties they have with the card account as the Government do have a track record of pressing people against their will into moving to bank accounts.

If you have any issues I can be of assistance with please do not hesitate to contact me at 6 Dee Street, Banchory AB31 5ST, by phone on 01330 820330 or by email at robert.smith.mp@parliament.uk.

May I take this opportunity to wish all readers a Merry Christmas and all the best for 2009.



Auchenblae Nursery



First of all we would like to welcome Pam Davey to our nursery as our new teacher. The children enjoyed showing Mrs Davey their village when we all went for a walk round Auchenblae.

We have had visits from Rev Hepburn the minister, Muriel Minty the lollipop lady from Laurencekirk and Susan McWilliam the dental nurse.

Rev Hepburn is also helping us prepare for our small Nativity performance and to end off the term we are having a Christmas Party. We wish you all a Merry Christmas.

Mearns and Coastal Healthy Living Network

A lunch club is planned for Auchenblae starting sometime early in the new year. It will meet on Wednesdays in the Church Hall. If you're interested in coming along or would like to volunteer please contact The Mearns and Coastal Healthy Living Network on **01561 378130**.



Mearns Community Council



Grit Bins

Grit bins have been delivered and positioned in the village where Aberdeenshire Council feel they will be most useful. A grit bin was requested for Burnett Street, however it is not Council policy to position grit bins on level streets.

Recycling

The proposed location for the recycling point will be in the area of the doctor's surgery. Recycling officers are still gathering the relevant information concerning ownership of this site, to ensure that it can be a permanent position for the recycling bins. Hopefully this can be resolved early in the New Year. Dr Pirie and D Bruce, the developer has been most co-operative in ensuring that a suitable site is found - many thanks to them.

Auchenblae once again has three representatives on the Community Council, please don't hesitate to get in touch if you have any issues concerning the village and surrounding area. Your representatives are Susie Brown, Shirley Castles and Gillian Siddons.

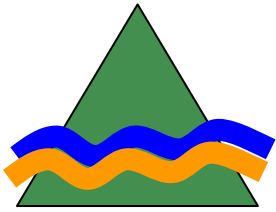
With all good wishes for a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from all at Mearns Community Council.

Inverbervie Post Office

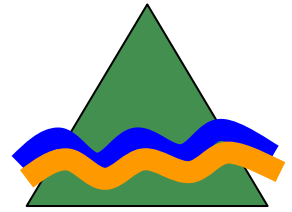
(serving Auchenblae)

Hugh wishes everyone
best wishes for the festive season.

Thank you for your support.



Auchenblae Parks Committee



The year started with our Annual Work Day in the Den. Those who joined the committee, worked very hard laying new bark in the adventure playground; tidying up the paths; removing branches and scrub; rolling the tennis courts; tidying the roses in the old dam; burning brushwood and cutting up logs.

The Den looked fantastic for those who came to celebrate the 'Opening Day' on the 26th of April.

The Tennis Club has a membership of 74, predominately juniors who are being trained by Wendy Byres, a registered LTA coach. We're grateful to Gina, Carol and Margo who organize these weekly sessions and give of their time and effort to keep this club running.

The Den continues to improve under the careful eye of Roy and Bill. When tree surgery or fabrication work is required, Bernie Mel-som willingly comes to our assistance. Thank you Bernie.

The committee has just planted bulbs donated by Geo. Gammie of Cairnton - we can confirm that there are many, many bulbs in a bag!! Look out for them in the dam area in the spring.

The football pitch is now being cut on a regular basis by Ann Galbraith, and we hope to get it marked and new nets in place for next season. We also hope to make further paths for dog walkers through the surrounding area. The hundreds of spindly saplings planted by George Dey twenty years ago have grown into a thriving woodland and wild life habitat.

The golf course is a tremendous asset to the village, with the revenue subsidizing all other recreation areas. We have a membership of 465 and a healthy waiting list of 83. Included are 46 junior members, who were offered instruction by Ken Marvelley, a golf course member and professional coach. The youngsters who went to Ken's classes learnt so much and we are grateful to him for giving his services free of charge.

This year we built the long anticipated machinery store to house our valuable equipment. We are grateful to Kenny the green keeper for keeping the course looking so good and to Susan and Jackie for making our members and visitors welcome.

Auchenblae Parks Committee, under the Chairmanship of John Nicoll, wishes you all a Happy Christmas and Peaceful New Year. We look forward to welcoming you back to enjoy these wonderful facilities throughout 2009.

Jenny Thomson, Treasurer & Corr. Secretary



Auchenblae Guides

Once again the guides will be offering a Christmas card delivery service in the village. The collection box will be in Metelski's from **10th December**. Deliveries will be on Sunday 14th, Wednesday 17th and Sunday 21st.

A donation of **10p** per card is requested, this raises some funds for the Guides and also helps the girls carry out part of the Community Service section of the Guiding Programme.

Dog Owners

Several people have asked for a mention in the Messenger that dog fouling seems to be becoming more of a problem in the village and surrounding areas recently.

Please pick up after your dog and remember that grass verges outside the village must also be kept clean. Pedestrians need to move on to verges to avoid traffic.

The dog warden has advised that you can deposit your poop bags in any litter bin, as long as it is properly sealed.



Drumtochty Social Group

We wish to sincerely thank everyone who helped, attended and contributed to the Car Boot Sale which raised £325.00 for the Malawi Hospital Fund and an additional £307.00 for events including the OAP Christmas Party.

OAP Christmas Party on Sunday 07th December, Village Hall 2.00pm - 5.00pm. All invitations are now out, please RSVP to Brenda Forbes Tel. 320131. OAPs requiring transport please call Brenda Forbes - Tel. 320131.

Santa in the Square - Christmas Eve at 5.30pm - all village children welcome, bring your Santa letters - Drumtochty Social Group - Shirley Castles Tel. 320934.

13th December – 34 heads including committee, friends and organisers of Drumtochty Social Group will gather for their ticketed Christmas Evening Meal at the Ramsay Arms Hotel. Bus travel included. We would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and we look forward to seeing you at up and coming events in 2009

Planning Application for seven Town Houses on former site of Auchenblae Motors - the 28 letters of objection have forced a hearing at the Aberdeenshire Council, Kincardineshire and Mearns Committee Meeting on 18th November 08. A case was presented at the meeting by David Forbes on behalf of village residents opposed to the application who are concerned that the proposed scheme is over developed and out of character with this historic area of the village thus putting the village application for Conservation Area Status at risk. **Councillors voted not to approve the application at the meeting but to move to a site visit date to be advised.**

AUCHENBLAE SURGERY

Along with Dr Keith Pirie we now have Dr Claire Lindsay and Dr Joanna Connolly also consulting at the Surgery. Some morning appointments are now available to book in advance although there is still the option of open surgery. There will also be regular clinics running before 08.00 for those who find it difficult to attend during our normal working hours and afternoon appointments remain bookable in advance as before.

If anyone, who fulfils the medical criteria, has still to have their flu jab please contact the Surgery on 01561 320202 to arrange a suitable appointment with the Practice Nurse.

The Surgery will be closed on Thursday 25th and Friday 26th December and Thursday 1st and Friday 2nd January. Please make sure you have given ample time to re-order your prescriptions at this busy time. The Surgery will re-open at 08.00 on the Mondays following the festive break. Dr Pirie & his staff would like to wish all patients a Merry Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.



Kincardine and Mearns Area Partnership have recently appointed a development worker. She takes up her position on December 1st, and one of her first tasks will be to meet up with the Auchenblae Planning for Real steering group to that all issues raised during the consultation are addressed where practical. Things are happening, all be it very slowly! Aberdeenshire Council are agreed that when planning gain monies are allocated, that "cognisance should be taken of PFR" This is clearly a boost for all the consultations being carried out across Kincardine and Mearns.



Following on from Planning for Real

Are you concerned about the environment? Would you like to do something positive about it?

The Transition movement is about local communities developing their own solutions to the challenges of climate change and peak oil. We're looking at the idea of setting up a Transition area in Auchenblae and some of the surrounding communities.

If you want to know more or want to get involved please contact Ed or Jess Garrett, 01561 320340.

Auchenblae Senior Citizen's Fund

Again we have had another great year! We've held regular coffee mornings that are always popular, mostly due to Wendy's delicious sausage rolls!! The coffee mornings are a great excuse for friends to get together for a blether

The first weekend in September found us at Edzell vintage rally at Arnhall farm . Again we were well supported with bric-a-brac, bottles, and home baking for the stall and raised enough money to get the Christmas hampers for this year.

We'll be holding our A.G.M on the 7th Dec in the meeting room at 6.30pm. We'll also be delivering the hampers from about 2.30pm that same day. Albeit a little early we'd like to wish you all a very merry Christmas and happy new year and many thanks to our special helpers without whom we'd not be able to do what we do...all at Metelski's, all at Lindsay's the butchers, all at the post office , Vicky Reid, Connie Smart (whose energy out does us all) and our families for their constant support.

Wendy, Jean and Tracey



Auchenblae WRI
Thursday 4th December
Open Night
featuring entertainment by the
"Kilwhang Ringers"



7.30pm - Auchenblae Hall - All Welcome

Auchenblae WRI would welcome new members, they meet on the first Thursday of every month in the Hall at 7.30pm.

All good wishes to everyone for the festive season.

Stovie Dance

Willie and Joan and family would like to thank all those who supported the annual Stovie Dance either by attendance or donation.

As always, a great time had by all - the total amount given to the ANCHOR unit this year was a fantastic

£1,489.51

Many Thanks to You All

Auchenblae Guild

cordially invite you to come along and enjoy

"Carols, Candles and Christmas Pies"

Friday 5th December

7.00pm



Auchenblae Church

Message to All Parents, Past & Present, and Members of the Auchenblae Community



from Mr. Adamson, Head Teacher, Auchenblae School & Nursery

The day I planned towards several years ago is nearly upon me !

I retire at Christmas after almost 27 years
as Head Teacher here in Auchenblae.

The reason I write this is to say **a big thank you** to all of you in the village who have been so supportive of me throughout my many years here in helping ensure that the hundreds of children I have had the privilege to teach and get to know have flourished in many different ways.

I have so many wonderful memories of my time here to cherish and feel particularly honoured that so many past pupils, spread throughout the wider community and further afield {many now parents themselves}, still seek to engage with me and share their memories of the great times they had at Auchenblae School together with their belief that they took so much with them to ensure their success and happiness in later life.

Likewise, the warm relationships and friendships I've enjoyed with almost all the parents over the years, many of whom still recall with affection the times we shared while members of their family were at the school, have been tremendous and much has been achieved by everyone working together.

A succession of very good reports over the years together with the excellent reputation that Auchenblae School has earned and maintained in the local and wider community gives me confidence that the school will continue to be central in providing wide opportunity to all youngsters as they grow and develop their many skills - of this I'm particularly certain as, whomsoever the new Head Teacher may be, he or she will inherit a superb staff, wonderful children and a school very well equipped for the future!

A very big thank you to everyone for making my time at Auchenblae such a happy and memorable period of my life!



Auchenblae Post Office

Wednesday 12th November saw the end of a full time post office in Auchenblae. It is quite fitting that the last customer to be served was Elizabeth, who has been sub-postmistress for some 13 years.

The post office was not always on this site, in the 1920's it was run by Alec and Mina Gove in premises where Jade House now sits. 1930's it was in Edward's shop, where Metelski's is now. It then moved to West Brae, opposite The Hollies, where it was run by Len Harvey who also had a drapery/hardware shop.

Next it went to a site where the public toilets are now, run by the McLennan's who formerly had the Drumtochty Arms Hotel. The last postmaster on this site was Dan Farquhar. This premises was demolished in the 1960's to build what is now McKenzie Avenue.

In April 1966 the post office moved to its final location. It was run by Angus and Ruby Coull until 1994, since when, apart from about 6 months it has been run by Elizabeth.

The village is fortunate in that an alternative service is being provided by Inverbervie post office.

We wish Elizabeth a long and happy retirement.

20 Questions to “Jack the Postie”

Were you named after anyone?	<i>Grandad</i>
What is your favourite colour?	<i>Green</i>
What is your favourite meat dish?	<i>Mince</i>
Do you still have your tonsils?	<i>Yes</i>
Would you bungee jump?	<i>No</i>
What is your favourite cereal?	<i>Cornflakes</i>
What is your favourite ice cream flavour?	<i>Vanilla</i>
Do you untie your laces before you take your shoes off?	<i>Yes (sometimes)</i>
What is the first thing you notice about people?	<i>Smile</i>
What is your least favourite thing about yourself?	<i>Teeth</i>
What was the last thing you ate?	<i>Lasagne</i>
What was the last film you watched?	<i>“Taken”</i>
Where was your favourite holiday?	<i>Cyprus</i>
What radio station do you listen to?	<i>Northsound</i>
What colour are your eyes?	<i>Blue</i>
What did you watch on TV last night?	<i>Coronation Street</i>
Where were you born?	<i>Powis, Montrose</i>
Do you have a special talent?	<i>Golf</i>
Rolling Stones or Beatles?	<i>Beatles</i>
Last person you talked to on the phone?	<i>Karen Jones</i>

West Mearns Parish Church

Special Events and Sundays

- **7th December** - “White Gift Sunday” Services at Fettercairn (9.30am) and Glenbervie (11am) Gifts wrapped in white paper for children and adults in need welcome.
6.30pm - Family Carol Service in Fordoun Village Hall
- **14th December** - Services at Fettercairn (9.30am) and Auchenblae (11am)
- **16th December** - Auchenblae Primary School Christmas Service - 9.30am in Auchenblae Church.
- **21st December** - Christmas Family Service with Nativity Play. Services at Fettercairn (9.30pm) and Auchenblae (11am)
- **Christmas Eve** - 6.30pm Auchenblae Children’s Carol Service.
11.15pm Watchnight Service at Fettercairn Church
- **Christmas Day** - 11am - United Christmas Service at Glenbervie Church
- **28th December** - Christmas Worship with short celebration of Holy Communion. Services at Fettercairn (9.30am) and Auchenblae (11am)
- **Sunday 4th January** - New Year Worship at Fettercairn (9.30) and Glenbervie (11am)



Auchenblae Community Association

Christmas Quiz Night – Friday 5th December. Doors open 8pm. Quizmaster Kevin Newstead.

Christmas Hamper: A Luxury Christmas Hamper Comprising items of Christmas Fayre donated by members of the Community Association will be for sale in Metelski's Shop from early December.

Community Association Committee: Chairman: Alan Richardson. Vice Chairman: Allan Mills. Treasurer: Sue Hodgson. Secretary: Alice Morgan. Fabric Convener: Jenny Thomson Committee: Sallyanne Morrison, Gina Easter, Simon Leigh, Tracey Harrison Lewis, Trevor Hodgson, Liz Gammie, Graham Milne, Carol Nelson, Sandra McDonald, Chris Robinson, Gillian Siddons, Clare Ptasek, Lindsay Cochrane. Please contact any of the above committee on any village matter you wish raised, they will be happy to help.

Auchenblae Community Association wish to thank all who have contributed in any way to a most successful year. Burns Night in January, always a sell out, started a hectic programme of events. Gala Week followed, with its emphasis on three days of events for the children, and particularly notable for the record crowd on Gala Saturday in the Den. The weather was exceptional, but without the excellent support of the village, the proceeds of well over £3,000 would not have been possible. Thank you all for your contributions and offers of help. The queues at the Drumtochty Games tea tent tell their own story! The Art Show in September has, since its inception in 2001, grown in size to become an established and recognised part of the artist's calendar in the Mearns. The proceeds from these well attended events ensured adequate funding for the much needed renewal of the external and internal painting of the Village Hall resulting in a beautiful venue for village events, weddings and parties. The village shops and staff, golf course staff, although thanked personally, deserve recognition for the part they play in promoting events and selling tickets. Thank you all.

We wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year.



Grampian Fire and Rescue Service



'We all want to be warm in winter, especially at home, but we must avoid tragedy', that's the message from Grampian Fire and Rescue Service this winter. Dusting off an ancient electric fire from the attic or pulling out an old electric blanket may not be good enough if you want to be safe and warm. Each year in the U.K. over 1000 fires are caused by electric blankets and some of these result in death and injury.

When you buy an electric blanket, make sure it carries the British Electrotechnical Approvals Board (BEAB) or the British Standard BSEN 60967. Keep electric blankets dry and flat and have them serviced every two to three years by the manufacturer. If neglected, electric blankets will become a serious risk. Always follow manufacturer's instructions.

Always make sure you switch off the under-blanket before you get into bed and unplug it. Some over-blankets may be safely left on – check the instructions.

Have your blanket inspected at least every three years by the makers or more often if they recommend it. Some local councils also provide this service free or at a nominal cost.

Many people think that having a fire is something that won't happen to them. Unfortunately, firefighters know differently, we see people who suffer because of house fires.

We want people to take just a little more care to prevent typical winter fires involving heaters.

- Electric heaters must be fitted with the right fuse, which should be stated in the manufacturer's guide. The guard must prevent children or clothes coming into contact with the heating source. Cables should not be frayed or damaged, and don't lay them under rugs or carpets where they can be walked on and damaged. Don't trail the leads across the floor where someone may trip over them and pull over the fire at the same time. If you find any damage, or aren't sure about the fuse or wiring, get a qualified electrician to advise you.
- If you have central heating, ensure the boiler is regularly serviced.
- Chimneys used for open fires need regular sweeping to prevent a build-up of soot which can easily catch light and may spread inside the roof.
- Portable gas heaters should be well maintained and checked over by a qualified gas engineer periodically.
- If a leak of gas is detected all naked lights and cigarettes should be extinguished, the cylinder should be turned off at the main valve and removed to the outside. The heater should then be serviced and repaired.
- Cylinders should be changed in the open air if possible
- Spare cylinders should be stored outside, protected from frost and direct sunlight.
- All portable heaters should always be secured in position to prevent them accidentally being knocked over when in use.
- Always use a fireguard and never leave a heater unattended, especially when there are children about. A child's skin is very sensitive to heat. Children should not be left in a room with an unguarded fire.

Many people think that the noise of a fire and the smell of smoke will alert them, but it doesn't always work out that way. In fact, if a fire starts while you are asleep, the effects of the smoke could mean that you would never know a thing about it.

Everyone should have working smoke alarms which are tested weekly.

Auchenblae Friendship Group

The group continues to meet every Wednesday and has a full programme of activities.

New members most welcome

Thanks to all who have helped out with transport in recent weeks.
(Jean, we really miss you!)

For further details please contact
Sheena Auld on 320424



*Auchenblae Heritage Society
Next meeting*

*Monday December 1st 2008
7.30pm
Church Hall
Auchenblae Shops of Long Ago
By Gillian Siddons
All Welcome*

From Grampian Police

As we get closer to the Festive period and the nights are getting darker and longer, Grampian Police would like to take this opportunity to remind readers to look at measures of ensuring that their homes and properties are secure and not left vulnerable.

Most DIY and Hardware stores stock timers which can be used in conjunction with lights and radios within the home to give the impression that the house is occupied.

Ensure that sheds and outbuildings are locked and secured to avoid thefts of any valuable equipment.

Report any suspicious people, or vehicles, to Grampian Police on 0845 600 5 700, and please keep a friendly look out for your neighbours, particularly the elderly.

With the temperatures dropping, give yourself plenty of time for your journey and during adverse weather, do not travel unless you really have to. If in doubt, call 0900 3401199 for road conditions.

Finally, on behalf of the Officers and Support Staff of Grampian Police, we would like to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Tom Lawson
Sergeant G8443
Stonehaven



GRAMPIAN
P.O.L.I.C.E

Keeping our communities safe

West Mearns Parish Church
Fundraising Committee

A very successful Auction held on
Saturday 15th November
raised **£2,300**
for the fabric fund



Mearns Community Transport Scheme

Mearns Community Transport Scheme has a minibus available for hire to local groups and clubs. A minibus licence from Aberdeenshire Council is required by all drivers. MCT can arrange to carry out assessments for any interested person.

The scheme offers a shopping trip on a Monday from Fordoun and Auchenblae at 10.20 and 10.30 respectively. Seats must be booked in advance, no later than Sunday night. Please ensure you leave full contact details and your full address.

Mearns CTS 01561 377000



Metelski's Stores

Angela, Ludi, Frances and Zoë
wish all their customers
Happy Christmas
and a prosperous New Year

Thank you for your custom in 2008.

Shop closed 25th and 26th December

Please watch for notices about when we
will start selling newspapers.



William Lindsay

Butcher

Dave and Andy would like to wish all their
customers a Merry Christmas and
Happy New Year

Thank you all very much for your custom
over the past year

Orders now being taken for the festive period.



Auchenblae Post Office

*Elizabeth would like to thank
her customers for their support
over the last 13 years and to
wish them all a very*

*Merry Christmas
and a
Happy New Year*

*Shop open mornings only until
27th December*

The **Next Messenger** will be published at the end of
February 2009, please hand copy to Susie Brown by
15 February 2009. House next to Metelski's Store.

The **Next Memo** will be published in February 2009
please hand information to Ann Rennie by 15 January
2009. Mearns Howe, 320622

Email themessenger@mearns.org
Congratulations to **Susie and Annie** on producing
their first Messenger, Eddie the Printer.



Santa and the Vikings

Explore your Norse side with this years ADG Christmas production "Santa and the Vikings".

They came in their longboats from the icy lands of the north and are now rowing their way to Auchenblae for your entertainment.

Enter into the Viking world of ravaging, pillaging, looting and funniest of all, our hilarious attempts at the Norwegian accent!

Join in the fur clad frolics in the fjords, delight in the devious debacles of the dark ages and witness the hi-jinks of the hapless helmet headed heroes!

Among the characters you will meet the traditional pantomime goodies, baddies and uglies. Meet Prince Svien and Stuka, Eric Big Axe, Thor Smallsword and Smut the Smug. Of course there are also the downright ugly ones, Helga Forkbeard and Dame Dustpan!

So grab your oars, don your skins, fur and helmets and join in the fun at Auchenblae Village Hall.