



Foreword *by Lord Seafield*

There has been so much written and said about climate change and global warming that it is tempting to bury your head in the sand and hope that it will all go away. The pervasive subject is coming at us from every direction, with governments, conservationists and the media urging us to do something about it. But do we really know how we are causing it, how it will affect us, or what we can do to make changes?

Whether you are a “climate sceptic” or not, there is overwhelming scientific evidence that climate change is happening and will be catastrophic for our civilisation if we don't make major changes on a global scale. Regardless of the causes it is simple good sense to utilise finite resources in a sustainable manner and to look at the impacts our actions have on the planet. It is not just a problem for other countries and far flung places, it also, according to SNH “presents a huge challenge to Scotland's nature”. And it's not all about people who run airlines or burn fossil fuels; all aspects of our lifestyles can have an impact and agriculture, we are told, can be a major contributor to the greenhouse gasses that cause climate change. Those who work on the land are, like everyone else, contributing to the problem but primary industries are often the first to be affected by the damage that storm events or drought bring.

As land managers, farmers and foresters, we at Seafield & Strathspey Estates are aware of the extreme weather conditions that are already having an impact on crops, wildlife and infrastructure. We must adapt our plans for the future to cope with the physical challenges and financial costs of reducing emissions, plus deal with the impact of damage to our day-to-day business and the environment. WWF Scotland reported that last year's hot dry summer led to a drop in the production of cereals and oilseed in Scotland. Winter barley was down 24% and yields of wheat fell by 16%. Animal feed and water supplies were also affected by the lack of rain. This could clearly have impact on our food security if it continues.

NEWS REVIEW

THE WINDS OF (CLIMATE) CHANGE

Adapting to and combatting climate change is not going to be easy for farmers. We are told to, among other suggestions, increase production of fruit and veg, grow eucalyptus, only use renewable energy, integrate trees and crops with livestock, produce sustainable livestock, increase tree cover to create biodiversity, and generally lower our carbon footprint. That last metaphor is almost a cliché now, and still misunderstood in its complexity.

Our forests play a vital role in reducing carbon and tackling climate change. By absorbing CO₂, forests store harmful greenhouse gasses and benefit us all. My family have been managing and creating woodland since the early 1800s, a time when the nation, as a whole, was reducing woodland cover. Today woodland cover on the Estates is almost 30% which compares against a national average of 13%, a Scottish average of 19% and a European Union average of 37%. As the second largest importer of timber products after China the creation and use of home grown timber in the UK has significant potential to assist in reducing our carbon usage and even more so if used in construction where it can lock up carbon for long periods and replace less carbon efficient building materials such as concrete and steel.

Our woodland is also home to rare and important species of wildlife and plants, and we manage them to balance the need for timber with the requirements of biodiversity. Our commitment is shown by adherence to the UK Woodland Assurance Standard, an independently audited scheme which we have been part of since 2000 and which monitors the sustainability of our operations.

Our farm also has changed practices, from the straightforward matter of investing in new and more fuel efficient machinery to the more complex matter of soil analysis and satellite navigation within fields to ensure that any fertilisers or sprays are only used where necessary and at the minimum amounts required. The weather also plays a crucial part



of our planning for harvest and the ability to react to weather conditions with the right machinery can limit the need for additional fuel use to dry cereals. We are still looking at alternative cropping methods and emerging technology to further reduce impacts and it is likely that these changes will take place over the next few years as we adapt our practices.

The Scottish Government does, to an extent, fund activity to reduce emissions from farming but perhaps more could be done to lead the way, assist in the task and recognise those who are doing their bit. We must also be careful that policy changes are thought through and based on sound science, not a populist view that results in more bureaucracy and unintended consequences.

But there is so much more to be achieved, and we must all be committed to doing what we can. Stewardship of the land is central to our operations both for my family and for the nation. It is important that we make the decisions now that allow us to hand on the land in a condition that our descendants will thank us for.

If you have any comment on the content of this news review, or wish to contact Seafield or Strathspey Estates on any relevant issue please telephone or write to our offices:

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OSPREYS



The osprey is a large bird-of-prey with a wingspan of up to 180cm (31.5 inches). These magnificent fish-eating birds, sometimes known as 'fish hawks', can live for up to 20 years and they mate for life. The species was declared extinct in the UK in 1916 but started to come back sporadically in 1954, and Seafield and Strathspey Estate has been very proud of its nesting ospreys since they returned to the area in the 1970s.

In recent years the Estate has worked with Carrbridge Primary School to rebuild a nest site that has been in use for 40 years and which was in danger of collapse. The pupils then returned to see the chicks being ringed and assessed. They were also given some background information regarding their habitat and habits by ornithologist Roy Dennis and the Estate's Frank Law and Ewan

Archer. Earlier this year a new trio of chicks was born and two of them have been satellite tagged and named 'Carr' and 'Deshar', with Carrbridge Primary School and Deshar Primary School now following their own young osprey on its incredible migration journey. The birds are known to travel up to 5,000 miles chasing the sun to Africa, and the up-to-the-minute satellite data provides an interesting and exciting project for the pupils. The Estate has been showing the satellite pictures of the birds' progress on its Facebook page. Sadly Carr never made it to Africa and is presumed to have been killed by a fox, but Deshar is, by all accounts, thriving and well in the Casamance River Delta

The total population of ospreys in the UK is less than 1500, making them quite rare.

CRANNOCH TIDY UP

The tree felling at Crannoch Hill Wood certainly divided opinion, almost 50:50 from those who recognised its necessity to those who thought it should have been left alone.

One thing that everyone seemed to be in favour of was the clearing of the Crannoch Hill Loch. Over the years this had become choked by bullrushes, weeds and sludge. With a bit of planning, the bulk of the pond was cleaned to give clear water again but a section was deliberately left at the northern end to maintain a marshy habitat for certain species, including frogs, toads and other amphibians.

The work was carried out by Currie Contractors with the expertise of Gordon Durno on the digger who made the whole process look easy and produced a very tidy job.



CAPERCAILLIE

The 28th Braid Scout Troop from Edinburgh travel to Sluggan Bridge every year to camp on the banks of the River Dulnain, on ground made available to them by the Estate.

As a thank you, the troop like to volunteer their services to help out with conservation work on the estate. Last year it was rhododendron control and this year it was capercaillie conservation. This time they helped to mark deer fences to prevent collisions by the capercaillie. Thanks to them for all their hard work.



CASTLE HILL AND COASTAL PATH



In the last issue we commented on the opening of the Castle Hill project which, thanks to the hard work of the volunteers and support from local businesses, has become a popular destination for walkers. The Estate and the volunteer group have developed a close working partnership and it's a real team effort that has brought Castle Hill back to life, creating a community asset that is enjoyed by locals and visitors alike, accessible to all ages and abilities.

And the volunteer group didn't stop there... next on the list was a 1.5 km stretch of the Moray Coast Trail. The path, which hugs the Cullen coastline, had almost disappeared into the sea in places. The path has now been widened and the surface built up, new benches have been situated at viewpoints along the trail where users can stop for a rest and take in the spectacular views.

What next – extending the path route, working with the NHS to develop walks on the trail for people with dementia, storyboards and an App telling the history of Cullen. Cullen Past and Present volunteers have big ambitions for their town and community and we look forward to continuing to work with them.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Estate's in-hand farming businesses, Old Cullen Farms and Reidhaven Farms grow on average a combined total of 2,500 Acres of malting barley as their main crop each year.
- The Estate's barley is all sold on contract through the Banff and Moray Grain Group to Pernod Ricard for distilling into their Glenlivet single malt whisky.

RARE PLANTS

Ancient Caledonian pinewoods are home to some of Scotland's most beautiful wildflowers, including orchids, Twinflower and a small, rare and very delicate native flower - the One Flowered Wintergreen.

The Estate has been working with the charity 'Plant Life' to protect these vulnerable plants and help them to expand their range. The work is about helping the plants to survive and educating and enthusing visitors about the species. Native pinewood plants can be shaded out if the trees are too dense and they need areas of open woodland to survive within plantations.

It is said that Twinflower is not very good at seeding but that it used to be spread by cattle when they grazed in the woodland as they picked up parts of the plant in their hooves and deposited it elsewhere in the woods. Without cattle in the woods and with a reduced population of plants we are assisting with a project that we hope will see plants from the Estate translocated to other areas and new genetic material from other locations brought into the Estate to help the plants set more fertile seed, thereby securing the future of some of Scotland's rarest plantlife.



WILD AND MAJESTIC:

ROMANTIC VISIONS OF SCOTLAND

The Reidhaven Trust is pleased to have been able to help the National Museum of Scotland in Edinburgh to bring two iconic paintings together for an exciting major exhibition on Scottish history.

'Wild and Majestic: Romantic Visions of Scotland' spotlights defining images of Scotland as represented around the world, including bagpipes, tartan, landscapes and history. The exhibition featured iconic objects and paintings representing the essence of Scotland through the ages. Thanks to the Estate, Richard Waitt's 'The

Champion' and 'The Piper' were together again for display in this fascinating showcase of Scottish memorabilia.

The Piper was gifted to the national museum in the late 1960s and The Champion has been lent to the museum for this exhibition.

This follows on from the successful exhibition in Grantown Museum in 2017 when the paintings were displayed together for the first time in over 50 years.

The Piper and Champion to the Laird of Grant

This pair of portraits depicts two important members of the household of the Chief of Clan Grant. They are impressively dressed in Highland clothing tailored in a uniform tartan and carry the bagpipe and weapons that represent their ceremonial positions in clan society. The portraits were designed to impress visitors to Castle Grant with a sense of the Laird of Grant's traditional authority as a Highland chieftain. These are not romantic portraits based on an imagined past. The Scottish artist Richard Waitt carefully documented the appearance of these real people. They were painted in 1714, at a time when clan society was being eroded by economic and political pressures and record a way of life that was already passing into history.

(Left) Champion to the Laird of Grant, Alastair Grant Mor
Oil on canvas
By Richard Waitt, 1714

The Champion was the strongest fighter in the Laird's retinue. Alastair Grant Mor (Big Alastair Grant) is portrayed brandishing a curved sword known as a tarsaidh and holding his targe, ready to fight for his chief and clan. He was more usually employed in the Laird's timber business.

On loan from the Reidhaven Trust

(Right) Piper to the Laird of Grant, William Cumming
Oil on canvas
By Richard Waitt, 1714

William Cumming belonged to a family of trained musicians who served the Lairds of Grant through many generations. Cumming flies the heraldic banner of the Grant family from the drapes of his bagpipe. Castle Grant is in the background.

FOREST SCHOOLS

Forest Schools (FS) is the concept of an outdoor learning environment where children and adults can access nature, lead their own learning and take risks in a controlled setting; these concepts are all aimed at building confidence and self-esteem.

A typical forest school session may involve the building and lighting of a fire, the construction of a shelter, safe use of tools and the cooking and eating of food. Activities are to be child-led and build increasing confidence.

The aim of Fordyce Primary Forest School is to provide a stimulating and natural environment with a holistic approach to teaching and learning where pupils, parents and staff feel empowered to lead their own and others' development.

Lesley Mair - Head Teacher of Fordyce School said:

"Working together with Seafield Estates has allowed Fordyce Primary pupils to develop their skills for learning, life and work. Using maps and digital tools to identify, locate and record the badger setts in the Fordycehill Plantation enhanced their learning in the real-life setting, developing our prospective young workforce of the future.

"There was great excitement in the classroom when the pupils viewed the digital footage on the Smartboard from the motion sensor night vision camera videos which recorded badgers entering and leaving their setts. Will Anderson has kindly collated the tracking on the GPS tool we used over the 8 weeks onto a set of maps for the pupils to reflect on their learning journey. This was a great example of partnership working with our local community which inspired our pupils."



ESTATE DEVELOPMENTS

NHS Dalfaber

The Reidhaven Estate completed a sale of 3.8 Ha at the Aviemore Technology Park to NHS Highland on 19 February 2019.

Work began on the new 24-bed Badenoch and Strathspey Community in June 2019 with a completion date in 2021. In addition to in-patient care, the site will accommodate an out-patient clinic, an Ambulance Service base, the Aviemore Medical Practice and integrated Health and Social Care teams.

VISTA

The VISTA Project (Visual Impact of Scottish Transmission Assets) was developed through the environmental arm of the energy regulator Ofgem and created a fund to mitigate against the impact of transmission infrastructure forming part of the National Grid in Natural Parks and National Scenic Areas.

Scottish and Southern Energy, the network operator in the north of Scotland made a successful bid to the VISTA project and have funding to remove approximately 9km of pylon line and 35 pylons on Reidhaven Estate between Kinveachy, Boat of Garten and Nethy Bridge in Strathspey. The work will be in two stages with phase one seeing a completely new cable being buried underground. Once this is complete, the second phase will see the removal of the old pylons.

The cable line crosses 8 Estate farms and both the Estate and the tenants are fully engaged in assisting SSEN to deliver a new vista in Strathspey. The initial groundworks commenced in summer 2019.

North Dalfaber

The Reidhaven Estate concluded a marathon 13-year planning process in 2019 with the approval of reserved matters by the Cairngorms National Park Authority finally confirming planning consent on land at Dalfaber, Aviemore.

The 11 Ha site has consent for 75 residential units, 19 of which will be affordable.

The development was sympathetically designed to deliver low density housing while preserving the existing birch woodland and high value habitats alongside the River Spey. On completion of planning, the site was sold in February to local developers with a proven track record in delivering local housing.

A9 Dualling

Making the dangerous A9 safer by dualling the road is a much needed and high priority project, and the Estate is very willing to assist and facilitate this improvement which will undoubtedly save lives.

The new road will cut through the Estate and cause disruption to farming and other day to day activities, but safety is paramount and the Estate has been working with Transport Scotland and its contractors to assist in drawing up a scheme which meets the needs of the public and protects estate businesses.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The Estate's barley harvest in itself will produce 3,000,000 litres of The Glenlivet single malt whisky; that's 4,285,714 bottles or almost twice the volume of the Royal Commonwealth Swimming Pool in Edinburgh.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The malt barley is taken from the combines to the farm grain stores for drying and temporary storage. It is then almost immediately transported to the maltings in Buckie. In peak harvest on average 20 bulk lorry loads are loaded and moved off the farm per day; the record in the 2019 year was 30 loads in one day.



SPOTLIGHT ON LIONEL MAIN

GHILLIE

Q: What is your role/job?

A: I started working with Seafield Estates in April 1987 as the Ghillie on Castle Grant Beat 2. During my time here, I have been fortunate to have two long term colleagues: Simon Crozier on Beat 3 and Roddy Hastings on Beat 1, a formidable team. This summer saw Roddy move to pastures new and we were sad to see him go.

Q: What length of river do you cover?

A: Beat 2 is two miles long and sits in between Beats 1 and 3. The beat has 10 fishing pools: the top pool High Church sits just above Cromdale Bridge and the lowest pool, Polchraine feeds into Beat 3.

Q: How many guests are welcomed in a week?

A: Each fishing Beat welcomes around 6 guests a week and we have many returning anglers, so there are lots of familiar faces each year.

Q: Favourite fly?

A: My favourite fly (and personally my most successful) is the Thunder and Lightning. A useful fly to fish in all conditions. I also think it is important to have confidence in the fly you are using.

Q: Biggest fish netted?

A: The biggest salmon I have netted whilst at Castle Grant was caught by Sandy Leventon, the former editor of Trout and Salmon magazine. It was a magnificent spring fish caught in the Manse pool and weighed just over 30lbs.

Q: Biggest disappointment?

A: Quite a few years ago I had a guest who had been playing a fish for just under an

hour and when I caught a glimpse of it as it surfaced, I thought how am I going to fit that fish in this net. It was a real beauty, straight from the sea. But disaster struck just as the fish rolled on it's side the cast broke and the fish lived to see another day. That fish must have been in the region of mid-30lbs and to this day, I cant believe how close we got. But sometimes nature has the upper hand.

Q: Most fish landed in a single day?

A: The bar was set high in my first year here by the Radford party who in September 1987 caught 17 fish.

Q: Most fish landed in a week?

A: The JWP Taylor party caught 42 fish in September 1989 in a single week. The Taylor party is still fishing with me.

Q: Hobbies?

A: Fishing, shooting & stalking, travel and photography. I find myself shooting more with my camera these days, mainly wildlife photography. With the abundance of wildlife on the estate, the opportunities are endless.

Q: Favourite part of my job?

A: I have the best view in the world from my office window and I consider myself lucky to see the fishing beat throughout the seasons. Whilst the guests are here to enjoy the fishing, the size of the estate offers such a fantastic opportunity to see an abundance of wildlife: migratory birds, otters, pine martens, roe deer (with the occasional red deer) and hares to name a few. For me, being able to take guests to see the wildlife and scenery is such an important part of my job.



AWARDS FOR OUR TENANTS

Well done to all our tenants who have won awards recently, including Stuart Riddoch of Tochineal Farm, who won prizes at the Thainstone Spring Show for Malting Barley and Best Overall Barley; Neil Gordon of Easter & Wester Gallovie, who won the environmental stewardship award; Gordon and Edward Chalmers of Thriepland – prizes for fat cattle; and Charles and Philip Gray of Arnbath, who were winners of the Royal Northern Agricultural Society's Good Farming Practice Award for building a new refrigerated potato store to reduce energy when storing potatoes.

This environmentally aware pair, who want to pay tribute to the hard work of their staff, also run a waste recycling business and produce compost to improve soil and reduce artificial fertiliser bills.

Well done everyone.

DID YOU KNOW?

- The farm runs two Claas combines that between them can cut a swathe of 21 metres of crop in each pass. Over harvest, they will cut on average 200 acres/day and can clear an area equivalent to the Murrayfield pitch in less than 5 minutes.

STAFF CHANGES



Peter Chalmers and staff

We say goodbye to: Peter Chalmers, Property Manager, who retired early in July after 19 years with the Estate.

Peter plans to spend more time following his many sporting interests which have included cricket and rugby and even going as far as Brazil in 2016 for the Olympics. Good luck, Peter.

And goodbye to ghillie Roddy Hastings, who was with the Estate for 25 years. Roddy has gone back to Stranraer to work part time and enjoy his spare time.

All the best, Roddy.

Also celebrating 25 years with the Estate, but not leaving us, is ghillie Simon Crozier. Congratulations on your long service, Simon

And we welcome Susan Shand who has taken over from Peter Chalmers as Property Manager. Susan has come from Haddo Estate where she was assistant factor to Lord Aberdeen for 17 years. Originally from County Durham, Susan is married to a local lad with family connections to the Estate. Susan's main duties include agricultural tenancy management, health and safety and telecom mast leases. Her hobbies including marathon running and fell races. Welcome to the team, Susan.



Simon, Roddy and Lionel

ACCOLADES FOR CNPA HEADQUARTERS

The Cairngorms National Park Authority Headquarters in Grantown-on-Spey was not only runner-up in the Royal Incorporation of Architects in Scotland's 'best use of timber' award 2019, but is also winner of the AJ Architecture 2019 Awards in the Workspace (up to 10,000 sqm) category.

Located in the centre of town the site, owned by the Reidhaven Estate who paid for the external building work, already housed the CNPA in a traditional stone building, but the need for more space has resulted in a strikingly different modern two story extension being added to the 19th century property.

The structure, which is made from timber and wrapped in timber cladding using sustainable local Scotlarch, is designed to offset carbon emissions and be environmentally sensitive. The new L-shaped wing houses a mix of formal and informal meeting spaces and breakout areas.

Will Anderson, chief executive of Seafield Estates said:

"We are delighted that the RIAS has recognised the quality of this development as we are very impressed with what architects Moxon have achieved with their sympathetic designs, and with local construction firm A.W. Laing who carried out an excellent and well managed project with great attention to detail.

"The juxtaposition of old stone building with new timber structure is particularly aesthetic, and the eco friendly aspects of the design, combined with its energy-efficient elements and CO2 saving, make this a building to be proud of. While any build had to be on sound business principles, as responsible landlords, the environmental footprint was a priority for us, and with the family's long involvement in forestry a timber construction seemed the logical answer. We were also keen to ensure that the local community benefitted from retaining CNPA as a business in Grantown."



MILNES FÊTE AND EMERGENCY SERVICES DAY



An educational day was enjoyed by all who attended this event in June.

Held in Fochabers School grounds, the Estate joined the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service, Police Scotland and Forestry and Land Scotland, who described various emergency situations and how they are handled.

The Estate talked about land managers' and gamekeepers' assistance in wildfire and showed the type of resources the estate uses in moorland management and how this can help in partnership with the Fire and Rescue Service at rural fire incidents.

The youngsters were very interested in the details but were far more interested in a chance to sit in an Argo!

DID YOU KNOW?

- All the straw from the Estate's barley harvest is baled and used by neighbouring livestock farmers for feed and bedding. This equates to approximately 10,000 round bales per year. If stacked end on end they would be 9 times higher than the summit of Ben Nevis.



THE TEMPLE

The Estate's logo (at the top of this newsletter) incorporates an elegant image of a temple. But this is not just a design, it is based on a real building here on the Cullen Estate.

The "Temple of Pomona", built by William Robertson in 1822, possibly after a design by James Playfair, 1788, is an open rotunda that is built above, and supported by, a partially exposed circular basement room. The rotunda is supported by 8 Ionic columns, above which is a leaded dome with corniced plaster ceiling and decorative centre rose. The bowed 3-bay front to the base room is flanked by curved screen walls.

The room used to have a ceiling and the rotunda a floor on which sat a plinth with a statue, probably actually representing Fame. This was lost sometime between 1939 and 1945. It is hoped to improve the safety of the monument by installing a new floor on the Rotunda in a way that preserves the original building and over the next few years to carry out maintenance on the dome, so watch this space.

