

Galvelbeg House B & B

Newsletter

Welcome to the first of, hopefully, many regular updates from Galvelbeg House. You are receiving this newsletter because you gave us your e-mail address when booking/checking in. If you no longer want to be on our mailing list then please e-mail info@galvelbeghouse.co.uk and we will remove your details from the list.

Since we took over at the start of August we have had a real baptism of fire! Luckily for me, Stella was off work for the first couple of weeks so I had some invaluable help right at the beginning. August was a really busy month with occupancy around the 75% mark. A large proportion of that was what we in the trade call "walk-ins", literally people who just walk in off the street.

Personally I was very surprised how many people travel like that and as a B&B owner you can go from being quiet to full up in the space of an hour!! They can be as diverse as a group of golfers from the West of Scotland to five motor-bikers from Holland. No matter who they are, they are all welcome!



- *TripAdvisor*
- *Decorating*
- *Garden*
- *Birds*
- *SWT – Working for Wildlife*
- *Griff-Rhys Jones*
- *Facebook*
- *A Perthshire Breakfast*
- *Self-catering Apartment*
- *The first snow this winter!!*



Loch Ordie, near Dunkeld



Sunset from the Knock

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One thing that everybody said to us about running a B&B was how many different people you get to meet and that has certainly been true. We have met some great characters from all parts of the UK, Europe, Canada, America, Australia and New Zealand to name but a few...

Everyone has their own story to tell and their own reason for staying with us. Hopefully so far we have made everyone feel welcome and the fact that we have had some return bookings means we must be doing something right!!

This job is pretty unique in that we are constantly being praised for the work that we do. Most people take the time out of their busy days to thank us personally and to say they have enjoyed their stay. Some go a little further and put a comment in our visitor book and some make their praise more public by entering a review on TripAdvisor.



When we first took over, Galvelbeg House only had one review and was graded 11th out of 21 B&Bs in Crieff. We now have 16 reviews and have shot up to number 1 out of 21 with some wonderful comments. A lot of these comments are about Murphy, but we *take it all* as a compliment to the package we try to deliver!!

At the end of August we had an inspection from the Visit Scotland Quality Assurance assessors. They are a bit like mystery shoppers in that you don't know who they are until after their stay. They had finished breakfast and were just paying their bill when they announced who they were... After I picked myself up off the floor we then went on a complete tour of the establishment, where the assessors praised some things and gave constructive criticism on others.

Mostly our inspection went really well and we have retained our 3* rating for the 2012 season. Some of the suggested improvements have already been carried out and others are being put in place now...



We are closed for 2 weeks in November for some decorating and electrical work to be carried out.

On the electrical side of things we are having individual wall lights installed in the rooms where previously there was just one light to share. Also all the en-suites will have some form of heating in them, either by radiator or heated towel rails to make that trip to the shower cosier!! All the TV brackets have been replaced with smaller less obtrusive devices.

Stella has been studying paint charts and wallpaper books for some time now and the guest dining room is being totally redecorated. Hopefully it will make this space lighter and airier, which should make your breakfast even more of a delight...

The bedrooms are also being redecorated, again just to brighten and freshen them up. Some things we don't want as bright as others and the street light outside Room 1 has caused some guests a few problems... We have now hung some blackout curtains in that room. Although these don't look too elegant, they certainly keep all the light out... It was feedback from guests about the street light which prompted the purchase of these new curtains. We always welcome constructive criticism, especially when it is something as easy to fix as that problem was!!

On the outside of the house we are having the decorators back in the spring to re-paint all the woodwork and the gutters and downpipes. Again after much deliberation we are sticking with the warm dark red colour which complements the stonework so well. We also hope to have a new sign up outside the house and also a car park sign.



New lights and paint job in Room 5



Stella hard at work in Room 1

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The garden has had a bit of a makeover in the last couple of months. The large Rhododendron bushes have gone and some other large shrubs have had a bit of a trim. The bottom right hand corner has had 36m² of turf laid, so there will be plenty of room for garden parties and barbeques next summer, weather permitting.

All the hedges have had their autumn haircut; they are constantly full of little sparrows nipping out for some of the seed, peanuts and fatballs we put out for them. Some of the bird feeding stations are right outside the dining room, so as you sit there tucking into your breakfast you can watch the birds tucking into theirs!!

Another addition on the bird front is a nestbox with a camera installed. We were really lucky at our last house and had resident Blue Tits straight away; hopefully this will happen here as well. Our own mini-springwatch!!! Watch this space....

As part of our commitment to wildlife, in October we became a "Working for Wildlife" supporter with the Scottish Wildlife Trust. This financial contribution allows the SWT to continue their great work and hopefully some of their members will come and stay with us.

Here in Crieff we are well known for our famous visitors and recently we have been visited by 125 contestants in this year's Miss World competition. Unfortunately we were fully booked so they had to stay at Crieff Hydro...

Also during the Drover's Tryst walking festival in October, Crieff had a visit from Griff-Rhys Jones. He was filming a TV series about the old Drove routes, driving some Highland cattle from Skye down to Crieff, ending up in King Street and James Square. The programme is due to go out in January, so keep an eye out for that.

Remember, if you want to keep up-to-date with all the goings on at Galvelbeg House then make sure you become a "friend" on our Facebook page. You can share some of your experiences and photos of your time in Crieff...



The turf ready to be laid...!!!



Scottish Wildlife Trust – "Working for Wildlife"

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As part of a Perth & Kinross Council initiative we are hoping to start supplying "A Perthshire Breakfast"... This isn't a set menu that you have to follow, rather some encouragement to use more local produce. Here in Perthshire we have some great local producers of fruits, meat and cereals and the idea is that at least 50% of your breakfast is sourced locally or is home-made. To help us achieve that I went on a cookery course at "Let's Cook Scotland" where I learnt some new recipes and passed on hints and tips with like-minded individuals. Hopefully this will all come to fruition later this year and we will get our "Perthshire Breakfast" logo...



On the self-catering side of things we have recently purchased a top of the range sofa bed for the lounge in the apartment. This means that you can now book this great little apartment for 4 people, for a superb break in Crieff.

If you are wondering what to do over the Christmas/New Year holidays then we will be open and we have already got some bookings during this time. We have already had our first snow, up on the hills, on Mon 17th October so we might have a White Christmas?

Well, after three and a half months we are still enjoying ourselves although we will be glad to get this decorating finished and get back to cooking up a few breakfasts again!!

Please let us know if you would like to see or hear about anything in the next newsletter and we will try to include it. We hope to see you all back soon.

Our warmest wishes for a joyful festive season,

Nigel & Stella Franklin.....

.....and Murphy.



A "Perthshire Breakfast" – baking skills...



The new sofa-bed in the Self-catering apartment

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