

# Gardens



# Pitmuies



## the Gardens

### The House

Pitmuies has known three periods of buildings – the first of a house recorded in the late 1500s leading to references of the Ogilvy/Guthrie marriage, Guthrie Castle lies adjacent northwards. Remains of that house, with its worn stone spiral staircase faces south over the garden. The grander west facing front is believed to date from the 1680's and was “modernised” to the 18th century standards some hundred years later when the two pavilions were added, one a music room and one a library. Also the ionic pillared porch and alterations to the windows as was deemed necessary. Date stones of 1770 and 1775 were incorporated. In 1968 an octagonal conservatory was added linking the house and garden and since then extensive restoration work has been undertaken on both the house and its adjacent buildings and will continue as funds permit.

### The Landscape

A Pictish stone cross slab bears witness to an earlier period of habitation and the name “Muies”, is reputed to be that of a Viking raider who was killed here. The great trees, from the magnificent Spanish Chestnuts on the lawn, the old beeches and hornbeams give a story of more peaceful times and the creation of a designed landscape that makes a fine setting for an interesting group of listed buildings. The Ha-ha wall that separates park from lawn in front of the house was built in recent years from stone acquired after the demolition of Guthrie Station.

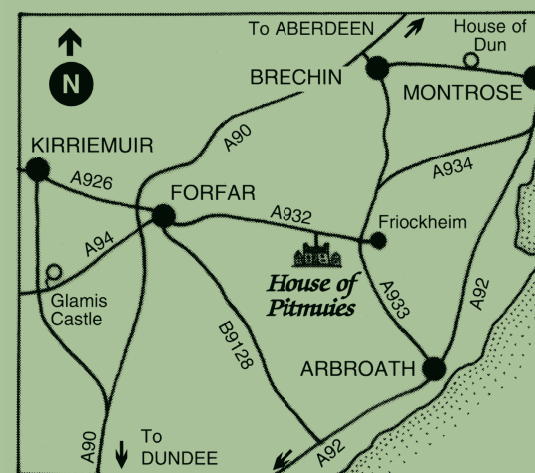
### The Ogilvies and Pitmuies

The house had known several different owners over the centuries before it was bought by Major and Mrs. Douglas Ogilvie in 1945 and so the name returned to the property. It was later inherited by their son Farquhar, who, with his wife Marguerite, made further alterations. Marguerite Ogilvie whose childhood home was Castlewellan in County Down, now the national Arboretum in Northern Ireland did much to develop the gardens. Their son, Ruairidh, moved into Pitmuies with his family in 2013. His wife, Jeanette, continues to develop and enhance the gardens. Pitmuies has had links with Scotland's Gardens Scheme for more than 80 years.

### Looking to the Future

We are delighted that so many people come to share the garden with us. Indeed, the income which we receive from visitors makes a vital contribution towards the maintenance and continuing development of the garden and its surroundings by the family.

Thank you for coming. Please come again, and let others know where they can find us.



The gardens are open daily from 1st April to 30th September, 10.00 am to 5.00 pm. Organised groups are asked to book in advance.

Please contact:

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## A Guide to



## 1 The Kitchen Garden

Most visitors begin their tour of Pitmuies in the first walled garden which continues to provide fruit and vegetables for the house. Here some very old apple and pear trees have been joined by two quinces. A formal “potager” with flowers, herbs and vegetables are mixed together with a wooden trellis on which honeysuckle, climbing roses and shrubs are trained. Borders round the edge of the garden are devoted to different themes, tender shrubs, shade loving plants and now magnolias which flourish and flower magnificently in this sheltered area. Below, in Spring, are carpets of small bulbs and a large collection of hellebores. The green house is remarkable for its rampant pink passion flower, while the main path leads on past “cottage garden” borders to the white iron gates and the larger flower garden which lies ahead.

## 2 The Summer Borders

An archway of clipped silver pear (*Pyrus salicifolia* 'Pendula') frames the central walk of herbaceous borders and sundial and the flower colours here are soft and pale, pinks and white and grey foliage, all flanked by a dark red hedge of cherry plum (*Prunus cerasifera* 'Pissardii'). A “ravine of flowers”, it is as its best in June and July.

## 3 The Rose Garden

To the right, below the house, a series of three rose terraces are linked by stone steps to the central fountain with its water lilies, bulrushes and goldfish. The paved surround is planted with alpines, campanula and white musk mallow (*Malva moschata* 'Alba'), while the long delphinium borders lie alongside stretching the length of the terraces. Many of the varieties have been grown in the garden since the 1920's. They are edged by dark iris.

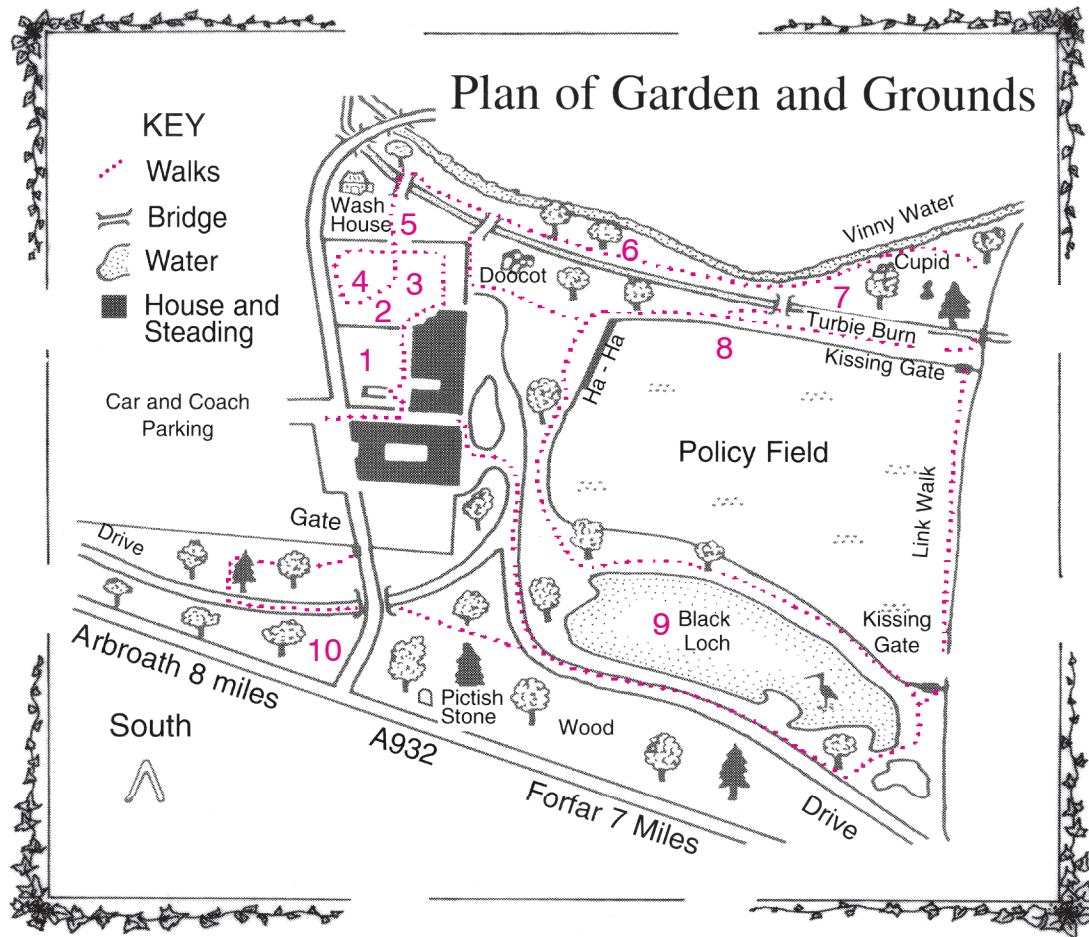
On the far side, a green trellis with climbing roses divides the rose garden from the blue and yellow herbaceous borders and the massive yew hedge that protects the whole garden from the prevailing south-west wind.

## 4 The Cherry Tree Walk

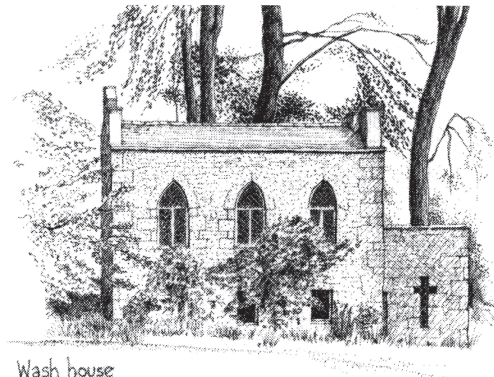
At the foot of the Rose Garden, a line of eight shiny-barked cherry trees (*Prunus serrula tibetica*) leads towards the old grass tennis court and is backed by a white trellised walk where clematis mingles with climbing roses and Himalayan poppies flourish among exotic ferns, hostas and iris. The huge lilies (*Cardiocrinum cordata*) were grown from seed collected in Japan in 1992. The former tennis court now boasts paved corners, as a habitat for scented dianthus and violas, and a central roundel sprouts stately spikes of “Bear's Breck's” (*Acanthus mollis*), planted around a modern slate sculpture by the celebrated Joe Smith and his daughter Jenny. The whole area is backed by low walls, shrubs and small trees. Beyond lies a shrub border.

# Welcome to Pitmuies Gardens

This leaflet describes the principal features of the garden and suggests a route which you may wish to follow. We hope you will enjoy your visit.



Fountain Statue



Wash house

## 5 The Alpine Meadow

Through the gate at the foot of the garden is a small meadow, formerly a drying and bleaching green for the chapel-like “gothick” wash-house, built over 200 years ago. Autumn mowing ensures a fine spring display of snowdrops and purple and white crocus which have naturalised. By midsummer it is a wildflower meadow, edged on one side with shrub roses. This is a good area for butterflies. A path leads across the meadow towards the river and a white painted wooden bridge.



The Doo'cot

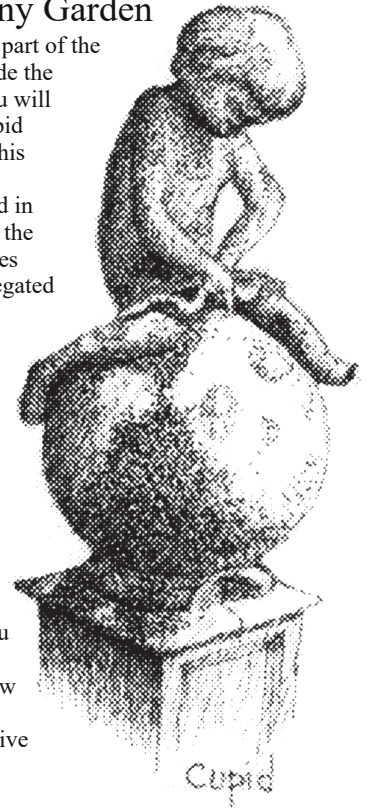
## 6 Mesopotamia

This rather grand name refers to the narrow strip of land between the man-made channel of the Turbie Burn and the course of the Vinny Water beyond. Stately beech and lime trees shade the riverside walk which is overlooked by an unusual turreted doo'cot.

On this building, a very worn and carved stone bore the Ogilvy and Guthrie arms, and the date 1643. One of the turrets served as a feed-store for pigeons which once occupied the hundreds of nest boxes which line the inside of the building.

## 7 The Vinny Garden

In this secluded part of the gardens alongside the Vinny Water you will find a small Cupid struggling with his bow and arrow. Probably planted in Victorian times, the area now includes some huge variegated hollies and a monkey puzzle and a fine North American tulip tree. Pride of place, though, must surely go to the paperbark maple, (*Acer griseum*) which greets you as you enter the garden a tree now believed to be extinct in its native Manchuria.



## 8 The Hornbeam Walk

A bridge takes you back across the Turbie Burn, and a path which climbs up the bank, to a walk leading back towards the house, part of which is planted with native hornbeam trees. In the spring this whole area is a mass of daffodils and narcissus. To your left is a ha-ha or sunken wall which gives uninterrupted views from the house across the adjacent Policy Field. Fine copper beaches and a pair of venerable Spanish chestnut trees stand on the lawn in front of the house.

## 9 The Black Loch

The drive beyond the house lures you down to the Black Loch, where a broad grass walk leads round among the trees, rhododendrons and azaleas. Between the loch and the Policy Field are planted a variety of exotic rowans and maples noted for their autumn colours, many of them raised from wild seed collected in Oregon and Japan. This is part of the garden where, on a quiet day, you may see rooks, red squirrels, swans, ducks or even a stately heron standing at the loch-side.

## 10 The Woodland Garden

This area of the grounds lies to the far side of the Bridge carrying the road over the east drive. It is an acid, marshy hollow once dominated by impenetrable *Rhododendron ponticum* that has been gradually cleared and planted with moisture loving plants and trees. Sheltered and shady, though a “frost pocket” it has some fine large conifers. Developed since the 1980's it now seems to be flourishing and has carpets of snowdrops in early spring. There is a path up to the white gate, road and carpark. Beware of passing traffic on the road.