40 fascinating ‘facts’ about Upper Deeside

1. Prince Albert purchased Balmoral estate for Queen Victoria in 1853.
2. Deeside Water now bottles the water from the Pannanich S~~s~~pring~~,~~ which was the spa water that resulted in Ballater growing as a resort in the early 1800s.
3. Col. Francis Farquharson developed the town of Ballater in order to service visitors to his waters at Pannanich. Col. Francis had lost his lands in the area since he supported the Jacobites in their rebellion against the king. He was saved from execution by the local minister and then turned his entrepreneurial talent loose regaining position and land.
4. Patrick Geddes the 19th C~~c~~entury environmentalist, and credited Father of Town Planning, was born in Ballater.
5. Byron spent some of his childhood days in the Deeside area and wrote lovingly of Lochnagar’s *steep frowning glories.*
6. Dalmochie was a logging camp built in WWII by Newfoundland lumberjacks. British forestry workers had joined up and so the British government appealed to Canada for workers to work for the timber needed for the war effort.
7. Robert Burns' song 'O'er the Water to Charlie' refers to John Ross, the Jacobite boatman who ferried travellers across the Dee at Aboyne before the building of a bridge in 1828.
8. Aboyne was originally called Charleston of Aboyne in honour of Charles Gordon, first Earl of Aboyne, who obtained the charter and who in 1671 rebuilt part of Aboyne Castle.
9. Joseph Farquharson is best known for his paintings of winter landscapes, usually snowy scenes featuring sheep and with poetic sounding titles. This earned the sobriquet *frozen mutton*. He inherited the title Laird of Finzean. ~~He continued to paint.~~
10. The Aboyne Dress, worn by girl dancers for 'The Lilt', is named for the Aboyne Highland Games in Scotland where it is forbidden for the women to wear the kilt.
11. Loch Kinnord has a crannog site on it. Crannogs were an early dwelling sited on man made islands with causeways that could be removed when under threat.
12. Knock ~~c~~Castle was a Gordon stronghold. The Gordons and Forbes~~’~~ were mortal enemies. When one of the Gordon sons decided to secretly marry a Forbes girl her father had him killed. He then, fearing repercussions, killed his 7 brothers. On hearing the news of his sons deaths Alexander Gordon fell to his death down the stairs of the ~~c~~Castle.
13. In 1829 there was a serious flood at Ballater~~,~~ which became known as the *muckle spate.* The folk tune *The Lum Hat Wantin' the Croon* commemorates the event.
14. The Royal family attends Braemar Gathering, which takes place each year in September.
15. The late Queen Mother fished on the Dee on the stretch~~,~~ which runs between Pollhollich Bridge and Ballater.
16. Craigendarroch means *hill or rock of oaks.*
17. Prince Charles wrote a childrens’ story called the *Old Man of Lochnagar.*
18. In the 14th ~~c~~Century second wars of independence Andrew Moray won a decisive victory at Culblean on the 30th November, St Andrews day.
19. Upper Deeside Access Trust (UDAT) have been working to improve pathways in the area to ease access for all and to enhance the visitor experience by bringing history and culture themes into the walkways.
20. William Cunliffe Brooks, a Manchester banker, brought in his own team of English architects to enhance and develop Glentanar estate. When his daughter married the Marquis of Huntly he also purchased Aboyne ~~c~~Castle and his influence on Aboyne town’s architecture is noticeable.
21. Deeside railway stopped at Ballater since Queen Victoria did not wish to have the train travel through Balmoral estate.
22. Tullich reel was a fiddle tune and dance, which was invented as the congregation, waited one cold Sunday morning for the minister to arrive and allow them into the church.
23. Craigendarroch House, now the hotel, was built for Keilor of Dundee the successful jam manufacturer. He imported sandstone for the building of the house despite being next door to a granite quarry since he wished stone to be marmalade in colour!
24. Queen Victoria was advised about Deeside as a location since her doctor’s son was staying at Abergeldie C~~c~~astle for health recuperation. She is also said to have been influenced by the paintings of James Giles from this area.

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25. Thomas Telford's bridge over the Dee at Ballater was wiped out in the *muckle spate* of 1829.
26. Abergeldie Castle is haunted by French Kate who was executed in Aberdeen after being found guilty as a witch. She incurred the wrath of her mistress Gordon by telling her of her husband's infidelity.
27. George Truefitt, architect to William Cunliffe Brooks, was responsible for the farm buildings of Aboyne castle. The byre became known as the Coo Cathedral since it has a Basilican interior forming nave and aisles! The building is now used for concerts on occasion.
28. The Royal family worship at Crathie Kirk when they are in residence at Balmoral.
29. Ballochbuie Forest is one of Balmoral estate's most ecologically important areas. Roughly 1,000 hectare (2,500 acre) it was bought in 1878 by Queen Victoria to save it from a timber merchant. Ballochbuie now contains one of the largest remnants of native Caledonian Pine forest left in the country.
30. Braemar was called Kindrochit at one time. The remains of Kindrochit castle are still visible.
31. Robert Louis Stevenson worked on the book *Treasure Island* whilst staying in Braemar.
32. Royal Lochnagar received its royal warrant in 1848 when Prince Albert first visited the distillery.
33. The station at Ballater was painted black and gold when the Russian royal family visited.
34. Invercauld House, home to the Farquharson clan, has 168 rooms!
35. Brunel designed the girder bridge at Balmoral at Prince Albert's request.
36. Balmoral tartan is restricted to use by the Royal family and the estate.
37. The Cairngorm National Park was formed in September 2003 and encompasses much of the Upper Deeside area.
38. Aboyne gliding club still hold the UK height record for soaring at an altitude above Mount Everest!
39. One of the Deeside trademarks is the marvellous white suspension bridges, which cross the rover at various points. Images of these were popularised by the royal photographer George Washington Wilson.
40. If you are a member of Crathie parish you can play golf on the Balmoral 9 hole course.