

The Bield at Blackruthven.

I am not the first member of St Edwards to visit The Bield and I hope I won't be the last. Blackruthven House is a Georgian country house situated a few miles west of Perth in Scotland. It is easily accessible by car or by train from York.

The Bield is run by The Bield Christian Company Ltd, the board comprising of the owners of the house and several other directors, one of whom lives in York.

The owners have, for many years, been associated with the Acorn Healing Trust which was set up by Morris Maddocks who lived in our parish when he was Bishop of Selby, a post he left to become the Advisor to the Archbishops on Health and Healing.

Accommodation is provided in the completely redeveloped stable block, in comfortable, warm, some en-suite rooms with a kitchen for making hot drinks and toast if required.

Meals are eaten in the dining room in the area which used to be the horses' stalls, complete with original fittings.

There are several individual quiet rooms and a bright modern two-tier lounge.

There is large, well equipped art studio, a heated indoor swimming pool, a tennis court, a labyrinth, 30 acres of lawns and woods surrounded by 340 acres of farmland so plenty of places to wander – and the stars at night are amazing. There is also a smallholding with geese, goats, sheep, llamas and Kune Kune pigs (fat, grazing pigs from New Zealand). Adults with learning difficulties are part of the team who manage the smallholding and help out on the estate.

Listening, counselling and aromatherapy are available on request and Celtic worship takes place every morning and evening in the chapel, formerly a carpenter's workshop.

Quiet days, courses and guided retreats are offered or, like me, people can simply use the time and space to read, reflect, eat, sleep, study, sleep some more and pray.

I used the pool regularly for hydrotherapy exercises, walked and wandered in the woods, reflected on scripture aided by *Something for the Journey* by Margaret Cundiff, and worked on a long term research project on the writings of Laurens van der Post (google *vanderpostings* for the results!)

I also took part in a one day *Journey Into Healing Workshop*. these are available in York but I never seem to find time to attend here.

The coincidence of one being available while I was at The Bield was too good to miss.

The object of these workshops, working in small groups with a facilitator, is to be given an opportunity to explore a situation or relationship, unfinished business perhaps from many years ago, which you recognize needs attention.

It draws on gestalt methodology and involves using some physical way of addressing the presenting situation.

It may sound a bit vague and mysterious but needs to be experienced to appreciate its value.

My estimate is that it was very worthwhile and I would recommend it to others.

The Bield definitely has a wonderful atmosphere.

Bield is an old Scottish word with a range of meanings: a shelter, refuge, place of protection and rest, or 'to nurture, embolden, encourage'. This Bield meets all these definitions.

Time well spent and a place to which I intend to return.

For further details contact;

www.bieldatblackruthven.org.uk