

Scottish Episcopal Church
Diocese of Glasgow and Galloway
St Ninian's, Castle Douglas

(Scottish Charity No: SC011079)



*The Old Bridge on the Water of Minnoch
near Newton Stewart*

St Ninian's Review

Issue No 52

Summer 2015

FROM THE REGISTERS

Baptisms

12 April 2015	Lacy Jean McLachlan Darla Eve Blair
21 June 2015	Arash Kai Christopher Chilavi Cameron Miller

Confirmations

5 April 2015	Michael Little Euan MacQuarrie Samuel Stevens
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Weddings

30 May 2015	Nathanael Worsley and Danielle Onossey
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Funerals

21 February 2015	James Beddows
2 April 2015	Agnes Josephine Fink



Sam, Euan and Michael following their Confirmation

Dear Friends,

We believe that God never sleeps, but the Church undoubtedly dozes a bit in the summer months: clubs, organisations and committees are in temporary abeyance; many people are away on holiday; friends and relatives who come to visit take up our time; the garden, the beach or the golf course are seductive alternatives to attending Church. The clergy and other congregational leaders use this quiet time to begin to plan things like study groups, sermon series, special events and (Oh, no! Not yet!) Carol Services.

I realised I was behind with my prep, driving into Kirkcudbright the other day, when I spotted Arden House's enormous banner advertising its Christmas dinners and parties. The early part of the year has been so remarkably busy that forward planning has had to give way to "sufficient unto the day....." We are currently operating as a group of four Charges, served by nine clergy (eight of whom are supposed to be retired!) three lay readers, and four worship leaders. Just planning the Sunday services and rostering the clergy has become a series of major exercises that risk obscuring the wider view.

While we continue to hope and pray that a new Rector will emerge soon for St. Mary's and Greyfriars, we nevertheless need to develop a shared vision for the charges that will encourage us to grow in Christ. During this quieter summer time, we all need to reflect on how we can work more creatively, both among ourselves and with our brothers and sisters in Christ of the other denominations (who find themselves in exactly the same situation as ourselves) so that the Church in the Stewartry can have not just a viable but a vibrant future. The Mission Action Plans, on which our congregations have been working separately, and which have helped us to a better self-understanding, will also help us to spot opportunities to work together.

So, do enjoy the Church's little summer sleep—it's going to be a busy autumn.

Yours in Christ's service,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "David Bayne". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal line extending from the bottom of the name.

PLUS ÇA CHANGE ... *by Sheila MacKenzie*

I thought of this old French axiom, “the more things change, the more they remain the same” as I sat down to write this article.



When I returned from a visit to Israel in March, Stephanie asked me if I would write about my experiences for the newsletter, but I told her that I had so many memories jostling for place in my mind that I would need time to sort them out. My visit was not exclusively concerned with the Christian sites. We swept through very early settlements like Dan at the source of the River Jordan, where we could visualise Elijah taunting the priests of Baal, to Roman cities developed on ancient foundations like Beth Shean. There we stood in the marvellously preserved theatre and three of our party read the last lines of Sophocles’ “Antigone.” In Jerusalem we walked along stretches of the Via Dolorosa, though it is by no means certain that this was the road Christ trod on the way to Golgotha, and saw other sites associated with His Passion. To my surprise, it was not these places that I found most moving in Jerusalem - perhaps my expectations had been too high - but the Wailing Wall, so familiar to us from our television screens. The atmosphere around it was like that of a Bank Holiday Monday but, when I placed both my hands on it for a few moments, I felt the power of the prayers which had been uttered at the spot nearest to the ancient Holy of Holies where Jewish people can stand today.

On our fourth day, we left the crowds of Jerusalem to drive south through the desert and along the Dead Sea to the palace/fortress complex of Masada, developed by Herod the Great. It is a wonderful site - 1300 feet of sheer rock face rising abruptly from ground level. All the tourist amenities are there at the base and so do not detract from the site itself. Early visitors had a two-hour climb up the Snake Path to the top but the modern tourist is more fortunate - going up by cable car.



Masada

In 66 AD the Jewish people had rebelled against Roman rule and, when the revolt had been crushed in Jerusalem, a thousand members of the Zealot sect fled to Masada. It was the last Jewish stronghold to resist the Romans and, in 70 AD, a force of ten thousand men was sent to lay siege to it. There was no

escape for the Zealots with their fortress surrounded by a ring of eight forts but, equally, there was no victory for the Romans since the cliff faces of Masada prevented the tactics of a conventional siege. In the end, the Romans built a huge ramp - you can still see it today - up which they rolled their siege engine and battered down the defensive wall. The Zealots realised that they could resist no longer.

Their leader, Eleazar son of Simon, was determined that there would be no surrender; it would have been followed by crucifixion for the men, abuse for the women and slavery for the children. He urged his followers to choose instead mass suicide:

“Let us do each other an ungrudging unkindness, preserving our freedom as a glorious winding sheet.

But first let all our possessions and the whole fortress go up in flames ... One thing only let us spare - our store of food; it will bear witness when we are dead to the fact that we perished, not through want but, as we resolved at the beginning, we chose death rather than slavery.”

When the Romans finally entered the fortress “seeing no enemy but dreadful solitude on every side, fire within and silence, they were at a loss to guess what had happened;” but when they came upon the rows of dead bodies “they admired the nobility of their resolve and the way in which so many had shown an utter contempt of death.”

As we listened to these words written by the Jewish historian, Josephus, my mind went back to the previous afternoon when we had had an optional visit to the Yad Vashem Museum, the memorial to the Holocaust. We were given a maximum of an hour there, not I think because an hour would be sufficient to study the whole presentation, but because it was probably as much as we could stand emotionally. I lasted 50 minutes. I had reached an account of the uprising in the Warsaw ghetto and realised I had insufficient time to complete the circuit - and anyway I wanted to visit the book shop. My final memory was of a photograph of a charismatic young man at the head of a group of resistance fighters. He might have been a twentieth century Eleazar.



MOTHERS' UNION REPORT - JULY 2015

Our Mothers' Union programme concluded on 16th June with a Service of Enrolment in church, at which Thelma Gemmell was enrolled as a member. Elizabeth Woodburn and Jenny Spence also officially stepped down as leaders. They presented our current joint leaders, Alison Bayne and Ann Gault, with a special cross to use with our opening worship at our meetings.



Afterwards we gathered at the Rectory to enjoy the usual warm welcome and generous hospitality extended by Alison and David. Sadly the weather did not live up to its usual sunny warmth!



L to R: Merle Grant, Emily Mairs, Marjorie Wright, Maggie Eddyshaw and Sue Beddows



L to R: Maurice Till, Margot Greenwood, Gill Sinclair, Janet Gillespie and Liz Barrett



L to R standing: Liz Barrett, Judi Duck, Merle Grant and Janet Gillespie with Rosemary Elliot seated, singing "Happy Birthday" to Betty Thomson (seated R)



L to R: Matthew Wright, Michael and Jenny Spence, Judi Duck and Jenny Wright

Plus ça change ... What difference had been made by the passing of nearly two thousand years? Recruits to the modern Israeli army still vow at the swearing-in ceremony, "Masada shall not fall again."



Lake Galilee

Our last afternoon was spent on the shore of Lake Galilee. We moved from Capernaum to the traditional sites of the Sermon on the Mount, the feeding of the five thousand and of the post-resurrection appearance of Jesus. The atmosphere was calm with water rippling onto the pebble beach and the hills on the far side touched by mist. I thought then of the words of the hymn, "Dear Lord and Father of mankind:"

O Sabbath rest by Galilee!
O calm of hills above,

And now as I write I remember how that hymn ends:

Breathe through the heats of our desire
Thy coolness and thy balm;
Let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
Speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still small voice of calm!
O still small voice of calm.

What was true for Elijah in 800 BC is still true for us today. Plus ça change, plus c'est la même chose.

BEING THANKFUL

A Rector said to a precocious six-year-old boy, "So your mother says your prayers for you each night? That's very commendable. What does she say?"

The little boy replied, "Thank God he's in bed!"



*L to R: Elizabeth Woodburn, Alison Bayne,
Emily Mairs and Marjorie Wright*

At the end of the afternoon, Alison and Elizabeth were each presented with a plant. At this point, Merle Grant told us, sadly, that she and her husband were leaving to live near their family in Norfolk.

The new programme for 2015-16 will be available soon, and the first meeting will be on 15th September. This will be a Service of Dedication at 12 noon followed by lunch and an Open Meeting in the Hall. We would be delighted to welcome you to sample us if you have not been before.

Kirsty Allison
Secretary

Canon David Main writes that each year at St Ninian's-tide a lecture is held at Whithorn. Details of this year's lecture are as follows:

22nd WHITHORN LECTURE 2015

at Whithorn Primary School
on Saturday 19th September 2015 at 6.00pm

Professor Richard Fawcett

OBE, PhD, FRSE, FSA, FSA Scot

will speak on

THE FIVE GREAT CHURCHES OF GALLOWAY REVISITED

Professor Richard Fawcett spent many years in Historic Scotland, latterly as Chief Inspector of Ancient Monuments, becoming Scotland's chief authority on ecclesiastical architecture. He is the author of many books on medieval churches in Scotland. He is currently Professor at St Andrew's University where he is working on a project on the parish churches of eastern Scotland.

For our Whithorn Lecture he has picked up on a theme from the great 19th century work by David MacGibbon and Thomas Ross, *The Ecclesiastical Architecture of Scotland*, to revisit what these authors defined as 'The five great churches of Galloway'.

Please speak to David Main for further details (504669)

Raiding the Rector's Library 2 : Prayer

Our subject here is not the prayers offered in public in the course of services; that's an acquired and particular skill. Rather, I want to focus on personal prayer—a matter so individual, so sensitive, that my general advice would be: don't read about it; don't even think about it; just *do it*.

That approach is evident in the paucity of "how to pray" books on my shelves. I just don't find them helpful. A few, though, survive.

- **Angela Unwin's "Heaven in Ordinary"** shows how it is possible to make conscious space for God amidst the frantic pace of modern life.
- I still remember from decades ago the revelation that was **"Prayers of Life," by Michel Quoist**—a series of observations, reflections and prayers that redeem the unlikeliest of subjects: a tractor, a five-pound note, or even a pornographic magazine. It was also my introduction to the idea of extended prayer and meditation on a single theme—in this case, **The Stations of the Cross**.
- **Esther de Waal's "The Celtic Way of Prayer"** offers a view of how exploration of what we believe to be the characteristically-Celtic understanding of God-in-Creation can enrich and deepen our spiritual life.

Clergy are obliged to say morning and evening prayer, and many lay people find such a structured prayer-life helpful.

- The **Scottish Episcopal Church's "Daily Prayer"** or the **Franciscan "Celebrating Common Prayer"** or, indeed, **The Scottish Prayer Book**, offer prayers and readings for every day of the year.
- A down-side of such comprehensive prayer cycles is that, in order to cover every day of the year and every eventuality, they are also extraordinarily complex. Some, therefore, prefer to use **"Daily Prayer Short Form,"** (the clue is in the title!) or perhaps the **Daily Examen** from **St Ignatius Loyola's "Spiritual Exercises."**
- Another approach might be to **Pray the Psalms**. If Ps119 is divided into its parts, the cycle takes about six months—and all human life is there.

Reading the prayers of others can inspire prayer in us. The range of collections is well-nigh unlimited; let me suggest just one: **Collins' Best Loved Prayers and Words of Wisdom, ed. Martin Manser**.

And finally, if you want to know how *not* to pray, read **John Betjeman's "In Westminster Abbey"** which, though written during World War 2, holds up a surprisingly-contemporary—and witty—mirror to our human failings, in just seven stanzas.

David Bayne

CHRISTIANS AND CLIMATE CHANGE

Patrick Little writes: The publication of the Pope's encyclical, *Laudato Si'*, concerning the urgent need for Christians to take Climate Change seriously, prompted me to look back at an article I wrote for the parish magazine of St Barnabas Church in Reading seven or eight years ago. Here is a slightly amended version...



When Christian Aid launched its 'Cut the Carbon' campaign there were complaints from some of its supporters. Christian Aid's job is to help the world's poor, they said, not to tackle 'environmental' issues! The response from Christian Aid was swift and decisive: if we don't prevent Climate Change we can't help the poor in the developing world in the long term. The statistics speak for themselves. 180 million people in sub-Saharan Africa could die of the effects of Climate Change by the end of this century; millions more face death and devastation through floods, famine and drought caused by humans damaging the planet. The knock-on effects can also be serious: internal conflict, war between states, mass migration. If we truly love our neighbour, doing nothing is not an option.

There is another side to the Climate Change debate, and it is one that is going on in churches across the country. It looks behind the practical issues of death and disease highlighted by Christian Aid, to the theological problem that the threat of Climate Change poses to all believers. How does God want us to respond to this (hopefully still avoidable) environmental catastrophe?

To begin to answer this, we must look at the role of humans and the environment. The traditional, conservative line, is that Almighty God created the world, and sits enthroned in heaven. Our role is as his stewards. According to Genesis, we are made in the image of God and he gave us 'dominion' over all living things, with instructions to 'fill the earth and subdue it'. We've certainly done that! Indeed, we have taken our delegated god-like power to extremes, turning stewardship into exploitation. It is hardly surprising that modern

theologians have attacked this ‘stewardship’ model as self-serving, not least because it implies that we are separate from creation, above the natural world - and that God is too.

The new theological model that has taken over is rooted in the Trinity. God is not like an Almighty despot ruling the world from afar, but a loving mixture of Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The three-person God creates the world, forms the world and exists in the world. As a result he is inextricably linked with his own creation, and to worship him properly we must reverence his works. This is summed up in the idea of the ‘immanence’ of God – he is present throughout the world, in close relationship with his creation. The entwined nature of God and the natural world can be found throughout the Bible. For example, when God established his covenant with Noah after the flood (Genesis 9, vv.9-10), he stated that the agreement was ‘with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature that is with you’. God’s concern is not just with present-day humans but also with future generations and with nature. To act selfishly towards the environment is to break this covenant with God. A New Testament example can be found at the beginning of St John’s Gospel, which makes it clear that Jesus - the ‘Word’ - is also immanent in creation, as ‘All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being’. To disrespect the environment is thus to disrespect Jesus, just as to exploit the planet is to exploit its creator.

There is another aspect to this, of course. As humans, made in God’s image, we share his close relationship with creation. If we ruin the planet we ruin ourselves and we ruin God too. This is what Christian Aid believes. Christian thinkers believe it too. The famous theologian Jürgen Moltmann says that when we do things that we know will destroy the planet, ‘it is not just “our human environment” that is suffering; it is the creation which is destined to be “God’s environment”’. The immanent God is part and parcel of his own creation. To deny the intrinsic value of nature is to deny the value of God. Thus, Moltmann continues, ‘the nihilistic destruction of nature is practised atheism’.

These are very strong words. They come as a challenge to every Christian in the rich west, as they consider how their actions are causing Climate Change. Christian Aid says that we must act if we love our neighbour. Theologians say that we must act if we love God. When the two are put together, caring for the environment is no longer an optional extra – it goes to the heart of our Christian belief. The question we should be asking ourselves is this: if I know that my actions are harming the planet, and I carry on regardless, can I continue to call myself a Christian?

JOY MARGERISON

Stephanie asked me to write something about myself as a newcomer to St Ninian's - who am I, where have I come from, why am I here? I hope the following résumé will suffice to answer these questions.

It was at the turn of the year that I moved to Castle Douglas from Beverley in the East Riding of Yorkshire to be nearer some of the family following the sudden death of Nigel, my husband - just two years ago now. Why we were in that part of the world will be made clear, I think, as I tell you something of my story.



I am a Lancastrian by birth and upbringing and remain connected in a way to the Red Rose county, simply because it is where my early life was shaped and grounded. One of five children, our family life was ordered, disciplined and rooted in the Methodist tradition. The Chapel Hall alongside the Chapel itself, was our day school, Sunday School, and the place where all other activities took place - youth club, operatic society - well, everything!! A typical northern work ethic and non-conformist values were part of life: "You must not think more highly of yourself than you ought to think" and of course: "You must just get on with it" (whatever "it" might be at the time) while Sunday was definitely Sunday.

College/University eventually allowed all five of us to move away. For me it was teacher training college and it was during that time I met Nigel a newly-qualified pharmacist, who was also a committed Christian and a Methodist. We married and moved further north to Cumbria for Nigel's business, living for many years in the Carlisle area, although we did live in Gretna for a while and our daughter was born in Dumfries. Family life was central. Otherwise, my life was in music until (to use a Methodist term) I had "a call to preach". From becoming a Lay Preacher a further "call" followed - to offer for the ordained ministry. By this time, our three children were all fledged and as a pharmacist, Nigel could get work anywhere. It was in 1991 I was sent to Durham University for study and became a part of Cranmer Hall in St John's College, of which the Wesley Study Centre was a small part. The college lies in the shadow of the great Cathedral and my time there was ecumenically based. I was ordained at the Methodist Conference in Leeds in 1994.

The Ministry took us to Bishop Auckland, Halifax and the East Riding of Yorkshire, including Beverley, which was my last "station" and where

we retired for a while. Nigel's sudden death changed everything, of course, and so I came back to be nearer to Andrew (a teacher living in Gelston) and Neil (a GP in Carlisle) while Lindsay, our daughter, (a horticulturist) lives in Cambridgeshire. They are all married and grandchildren abound! With no Methodism here, I feel I have found a spiritual home and a Church family to belong to at St Ninian's, for which I give thanks and for which I am truly grateful.

FUND-RAISING FOR JULY TRIP TO KENYA



As mentioned in his article in the last St Ninian's Review, Sam Stevens has been offering car-washes to help fund his trip to Kenya with the Scouts and, in recent weeks he has been kept very busy - and anticipated keeping up the good work on his return (Tel: 01556 503589 to book, or speak to him when he is in church). There have been many satisfied customers, amazed at the thoroughness and care he has taken to do a good job - see below!



Douglas Allison writes:

"Lovely shiny car, thanks to Sam, the man with the sponge!"

LIFE AS A HOSPITAL CHAPLAIN

Revd Yvonne Glass - one of our visiting clergy who takes services at St Mary's, Greyfriars and Christ Church as well as at St Ninian's - spent eleven years as a hospital chaplain in Nottingham before moving to Gatehouse of Fleet some four years ago. This article gives a flavour of her previous work.

I have often been asked what my work as a hospital chaplain entailed. One stereotype suggests that the chaplain is one step ahead of the undertaker - but there is much more to chaplaincy than that.

A chaplain is a resource for both staff and patients which meant, at the Nottingham City Hospital, that we were there to try and meet the needs of around 5,000 staff, 2,000 in-patients and many day care patients, as the chaplain is there for people of all faiths and of none. I found that a great deal of my time was taken up with being a 'listening ear', something that many of us need in times of crises. A chaplain's response is very much led by the staff/patient need rather than any previously fixed agenda.

In times of need and crises, spiritual needs become heightened. The sort of questions I often found myself hearing were things like, **"Why is this happening to me?" "Where is God in all this?" "Is this my fault?" "Is God punishing me for some past misdemeanour?"** and **"What will happen when I die?"**

Some questions just need to be asked - it isn't that an answer is necessarily expected and the very last thing a suffering person wants to hear is religious platitudes.

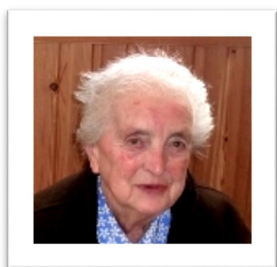
I was asked to perform an exorcism twice, which certainly caused me some consternation, and I had the very happy situation of being around for a forty year old man who had a dramatic conversion experience. (I must add that this was nothing to do with the Chaplaincy. He was in the bathroom when it happened, but he came to us after the experience, as the only help he was offered was the psychiatrist!) That man was a great joy. He came to the Chapel on the day he was leaving the hospital after a nine-month stay. There were flower arrangers in the Chapel at the time and I asked if he would like me to arrange for some privacy. He answered that he didn't need privacy, he just wanted to thank God for all that He had done for him in the hospital, and he didn't mind who heard him. He had come into hospital as a confirmed atheist and he was leaving as a Christian, and nobody was more surprised than he was. He went on to join a church when he got home and all the family were baptised.

Sadly, happy occasions such as this were not the norm and, most of the time I found myself dealing with the sadness of broken hearts and dreams, disappointment and despair. I think the saddest occasions for me were the baby deaths. A chaplain was involved in every baby death even if there was no religious/spiritual input, as we also acted as bereavement officers, helping would-be parents with what happens next. We took most of the baby funerals for the parents we were involved with as, often, we were one of the few people who had actually seen and held their baby, and it created a bond between us. I was privileged to be part of some very moving services where parents had written much of the material themselves. One particularly lovely and very moving moment was where a trained singer wrote and recorded a song for her baby girl, which was played at the funeral service. The song asked God to do for her baby all that she had wanted to do and to please make sure she knew that she was loved.

One of the things I enjoyed most about hospital chaplaincy was the lack of any pretence or need to impress that I found in people. When the chips are down or the end is near, there is often a need to speak openly and honestly about how we really feel and some of those conversations will stay with me forever. I learned never to assume anything, no matter who I was speaking to, and always to take every request with the seriousness it deserved. I suspect I will look back on the eleven years I spent at the hospital as being some of the best of my life.

MY FAVOURITE HYMNS

Thelma Gemmell has written about two of her favourite hymns ...



Thelma writes, "The day thou gavest, Lord, is ended" was sung at the end of the school day and, as most nights were spent in an air raid shelter with bombs falling while struggling with homework, it seemed so appropriate and has remained with me to this day."

Another favourite of hers is "Praise, my soul, the King of Heaven," about which she says, "This is a particular favourite of mine, especially in today's troubled world. It is something to hold on to in these uncertain times."

(Would anyone else like to write about their favourite hymns for the next magazine/s? It could make an interesting regular feature.)

MARGARET HARRISON, PEACE CAMPAIGNER

I read this obituary in the Diocesan News, published soon after Margaret's funeral in May this year and I thought it might be of interest to people. It is slightly abbreviated from the obituary by Bill Heaney, originally published in The Scotsman. It is printed here with her daughter's permission. Ed.

Margaret Harrison left Dumbarton aged 95 to come and live with her daughter, Anne and her husband, Eric Macarthur, in Castle Douglas. She was a member of St Ninian's although never actually came to any services here.

'Margaret, who was one of Scotland's best-known campaigners against nuclear weapons and helped to found the Faslane peace camp, has died aged 96. There was a memorial and thanksgiving service for her in St Mungo's Scottish Episcopal Church, Alexandria, on Saturday, 16 May 2015.

'Margaret was arrested at least fourteen times while taking part in demonstrations against the Polaris and Trident missiles and submarines based at Dunoon and Coulport on the Firth of Clyde. She was also taken into custody by the police at the annual Easter demonstration at the Atomic Weapons Research Establishment at Aldermaston in Berkshire, Greenham Common and the United States air base at Molesworth in Cambridgeshire. Her involvement in the peace movement arose naturally from her strong Christian convictions. She always said in her straightforward, uncomplicated way that Jesus told us to love one another so killing people must be wrong. This was a belief from which this quiet, dignified woman who brought up a family and wrote poetry in her old age never wavered her whole life. Margaret's beliefs underpinned her desire to see an end to poverty and war in the world.

'With her husband, Bobby, she was a well-kent face at the Clyde Naval Base at Faslane and the US Polaris missile base in the Holy Loch at Dunoon. She was thrown out of the House of Commons during a protest there in 1991. She knew well what it was to be lifted by the police and spend a night in the cells during demonstrations. On one occasion in the early 1960s, she decided to not pay the fine and go to jail to highlight the cause for peace. She was furious, however, when a newspaper paid the fine in order to get a story for its front page – "especially when they printed a lot of nonsense".

'Margaret and Bobby Harrison were presented with a crystal bowl by the CND in the 1970s for their tireless work for peace, which included helping to establish the universally known peace camp at the Faslane gates of the Clyde Naval Base on the Gareloch. They were also awarded the Freedom of Dumbarton for their work for peace along with her sister, Bee, and Church of

Scotland minister Arthur McEwan for their work for Amnesty International. Margaret said one of the most wonderful experiences of her life was in 1981 when she and her husband took part in a Peace Pilgrimage from Iona to Canterbury.

‘She was born in Dumbarton, went to Knoxland Primary School and Dumbarton Academy and spent a happy childhood in the east end of the town. Her first and only job was as a tracer in Denny’s shipyard drawing office where she happily worked for ten years until her marriage to Bobby in June 1945, in St Augustine’s Scottish Episcopal Church in Dumbarton. By her own admission, Margaret was clever but lacking in confidence, which is why she didn’t go on to higher education. During her time at Denny’s her interests included acting. She was a member of Scottish People’s Theatre (SPT) when their Little Theatre at Bankend was destroyed by an enemy bomb in 1941.

‘Margaret usually arrived at her work on a Saturday morning with her rucksack, ready to go off with her friends or sisters youth hostelling around Loch Lomond and the Trossachs. It was on one of these weekends that Bobby, a Liverpool man who adopted Scotland as his home, came cycling into her life at Monachyle, near Balquhiddel.

‘Margaret was a lifelong member of the Scottish Episcopal Church, firstly St Augustine’s and then St Mungo’s, Alexandria where she moved to support a friend who had become the vicar there. She taught Sunday school for about 40 years and during the war.

‘Her family would not have called Margaret Harrison a feminist. She was a woman who was traditional in the raising of her two daughters and never would have left them to go to work. She did, of course, believe in equality for women but it wasn’t directly one of her “causes”. Her work was to do what she could as a mother and housewife to make the world a better place.

‘She always wanted to write and joined the Alexandria Writing Group, where she was made an honorary member and had a collection of the group’s poems dedicated to her. Many of her writings reflected her deep desire to see an end to poverty and war. She loved to entertain audiences with funny recitations, some of which she adapted to suit the situation, acting all the parts with different voices and accents. She continued to do this after her move to Castle Douglas, entertaining the other senior citizens at the day care group she attended twice a week.

‘Throughout her life, she welcomed lonely people into the family, providing hospitality by sharing meals and even holidays, always putting the needs of

others before her own. She had a particular compassion for people with mental health problems as she herself had gone through a period of severe depression and knew how debilitating and isolating that could be. She spent many years regularly visiting patients in Gartnavel Hospital in Glasgow.

‘Apart from a few months being wardens of the youth hostel at Kinlochard in the Trossachs, where during a drought they did the washing in Loch Ard, Margaret and Bobby spent the rest of their lives in Dumbarton, where he had a cycle shop and bicycle repair business.

‘She embraced her new life in south-west Scotland and enjoyed being part of the family but never forgot her dear friends in Dumbarton and surrounding area. Although only spending two years there, she touched the lives of the many people in Castle Douglas who got to know and love her.

‘In his own autobiography, Bobby said of Margaret that she was “the kind of person who could never deceive anyone even if she tried, and I have never met a kinder, more trusting or unsophisticated person before or since”. This sums up the feelings of her many friends and family who will miss her greatly.

‘John Ainslie, who is co-ordinator for the Scottish Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament, said: “Margaret Harrison was an inspiration for many people of all ages in the peace movement. Along with her husband Bobby, she played a key role in establishing the peace camp at Faslane. Her friendly attitude and resilience encouraged others to join her in the struggle against nuclear weapons. She will be sorely missed by those who strive for nuclear disarmament.”

ST NINIAN’S REVIEW - ADVENT 2015

If you have anything you would like to contribute to the next edition of “The Review” (such as a piece about your favourite hymn) it would be most welcome. Please give or send it to me by sometime in early November.

The deadline will be published in the weekly notices nearer the time.

Email: johnsteph@mkcott.wanadoo.co.uk or phone: 01556 502736.

Current and recent editions of the Review can also be read on the St Ninian’s website: stninianscastledouglas.org.uk/st-ninians-review/

If for any reason you are unable to get to a Service at St Ninian’s, the notices for the week are also published on the News page of the website.

ST NINIAN’S WEBSITE can be found at: stninianscastledouglas.org.uk/

IONA by Jenny Wright

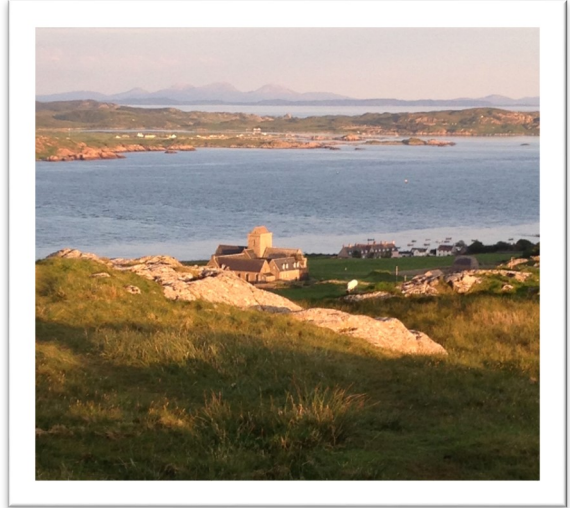


Iona is my favourite place to be. The first time I set foot on it some thirty years ago it felt special and I certainly understand the phrase 'a thin place' connected with it; somewhere to feel closer to God. Jesus went up into the hills; I go to Iona and I've been missing it recently. So when places became available at short notice in Bishop's House, and Matthew asked me what I wanted for my birthday a few days later, I responded by asking for a holiday on Iona. Much to my surprise he agreed.

Getting to Iona is a pilgrimage in itself. A long journey to Corran just short of Fort William via Rannoch Moor and Glencoe, followed by a short ferry ride to the Ardnamurchan peninsula. A long trek on a single track road to Lochaline, another ferry ride, slightly longer, to Fishnish on Mull and then another long single track road across the Isle of Mull to Fionnphort for the short ferry trip to Iona. The scenery is spectacular, the wildlife is varied en route with sightings of birds of prey, otters, deer to name but a few and we usually meet some interesting people at the various necessary stopping places. This time we met a lovely couple at the Glen Coe visitor centre who live near Matthew's old school; she uses the swimming pool there and we found a lot of shared interests over a cup of tea. We also met another lovely couple while waiting for the ferry at Lochaline and eating venison burgers freshly cooked for us at a kiosk.



Bishop's House



Sun setting over the Abbey from Dun I

Bishop's House is one of two Diocesan Retreat Centres for Argyll and the Isles and, although accommodation is relatively basic with shared bathrooms, we are very well looked after and again meet some lovely people, renewing old friendships and developing new ones. The house is a long building with a wonderful chapel between the two wings and one of the things I love is the

rhythm of daily services with a morning Eucharist before breakfast and Compline before bedtime.

Visitors are not allowed to bring cars onto the island and there are few roads: one down part of the east side where the ferry lands serving most of the village; this then goes across the island to the west side bisecting the island into north and south, ending at the Machar where there is a golf course! (Sheep and cows graze on it keeping the grass short and the greens need to be cleared of sheep droppings and cow pats before play!) Another road goes up past a couple of shops from the jetty and then veers to the north, going past the Nunnery and the Abbey en route to the North End. There's a restaurant and bar, a couple of cafés, two hotels, a youth hostel, a camp site, a Spar shop, a gift shop, various craft shops, and books can be bought at the Abbey and Iona Community shops. The bank visits once a week. As well as the Abbey and Bishop's House there is a Church of Scotland and a Catholic retreat house.

I made good use of the footpaths. We arrived on Monday afternoon and left first thing Saturday and so I only had four days to visit all the places I wanted to. Iona might be a small island, about 3 miles long and 1.5 miles wide but there is a lot to do.

On Tuesday morning I managed to get to St Columba's Bay, where he is first thought to have landed from Ireland, on the South End via the Machar on the far west side. I only intended to go as far as the Machar but I couldn't resist going further and was a few minutes late for lunch as a result. On Tuesday afternoon I went to the North Shore calling in at the craft shops, art gallery/pottery and Iona community shop en route! I must have covered six miles over the day. Matthew meanwhile was resting, reading and enjoying the scenery from the lounge window and meeting some of the other visitors.

In the evening we were treated to a concert in the village hall by a very talented young lady. She played violin, accordion, penny whistle and had a wonderful singing voice. She knew how to entertain as well. Her repertoire included folk, jazz, blues and classical: the first half of the concert was given entirely to her own compositions.

On Wednesday I treated myself to a trip to Staffa in the afternoon and was entertained by a wonderful display from the puffins. The owner of the boat has a wealth of knowledge and told us where the best place to find them would be and sure enough these very friendly birds came right up to where we were sitting and weren't intimidated at all. I spent so long watching them

that I only just had time to get to Fingal's cave and back to the boat before it was due to leave. There was an enormous swell coming right into the cave and the colours due to phosphorescence (the plankton breaking on the rocks) and the sound of the waves was quite something. I've been many times before but each time is different and this time I could understand why Mendelssohn wrote his Hebridean Overture. I paused to take one more look before leaving the cave and was pleased I did, as an enormous wave chose that moment to break close to the path and I would have got soaked had I gone out!

The good weather was not so apparent on Thursday morning - a sea fog - and so I rested with Matthew in the morning and set off after lunch to find the marble quarry. (The paths are not so well defined and it's easy to get lost!) By the time I was a few hundred yards up the road I had to divest myself of water-proofs and fleece as the sun came out and I was roasting. I was successful in my search for the quarry, a place I love, with the sound of the waves dragging the pebbles back and forward, some interesting remains of the machinery of old and views over the Sound. After exploring I sat and enjoyed a drink and a snack and just absorbed the scenery and sounds. Wonderful.

Matthew in the meantime was using the large sturdy mobile scooter supplied by the house and exploring locally. He was able to go to the Abbey Eucharist service in the evening while I rested! One of the other guests kept him company.



Port Ban

On Friday morning we went over to the Machar together and had a picnic. I went on to Port Ban, a wonderful beach, but I chickened out of going for a swim as others who tried the water were obviously finding it very cold and not making it past their knees! Matthew went back and enjoyed testing the speed of the scooter!

I kept my favourite walk for sunset that evening as I walked up Dun I, the highest point of the island, and I wasn't disappointed by the views and the colours. I could see right out to Skye and the Outer Hebrides, Coll and Tiree, and Jura and Mull in the other direction. A perfect end to a wonderful

week. Matthew and I met on Iona and walked up Dun I together eight years ago and so this walk evokes memories of a time when he was fit.

Iona is a special place with far more to do than I have mentioned, touring the Abbey for instance, doing the 'pilgrimage' and attending their services and concerts. It's a place where you can meet with others or spend time on your own; to rest, to take time out and be with God. Bishop's House with its lovely chapel and prayer balcony and the care given by the staff, the new people and the old friends that you meet, all make for a very memorable time and I can recommend it. If anyone wants to read about the history of Iona or Bishop's House, I have books I can lend.



Sunset over the Atlantic from Dun I cairn

Jenny Wright

From the Scottish Episcopal Church website, July 15, 2015

"It's a matter of shame that in a society so rich many are unable to feed themselves and their families"

In responding to the Budget last week, The Rt Rev Dr Gregor Duncan, Bishop of Glasgow & Galloway said: "At a time when many churches in my diocese, in very poor areas, not so poor areas and fairly well-off areas, are offering significant support through food banks and other agencies to people in desperate need, I find it hard, without being party political, to see how the recent budget is going to reduce the need for this kind of intervention. Indeed, it may very well make the need even more pressing.



It must surely be a matter not only of the deepest regret, but also of shame, that in a society so rich so many should be unable to feed themselves and their families without this kind of help. I am sure that politicians of all parties, including the present UK Government, must sense that this is a blot on our society and that they will wish to adopt measures to expunge it."

Scottish Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham

Friday 25th – Monday 28th September 2015



For over 40 years the annual Scottish Pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham has taken many to the small village of Walsingham in North Norfolk. The event provides a great opportunity to meet, share and worship with other Episcopalians and Anglicans in a peaceful and blessed setting.

Accommodation is in modern well appointed single rooms within the Shrine itself and the total cost, including your room, transport and meals on a half board basis, is £265. The Rev Gordon Fyfe is our accompanying priest who oversees a programme of reflection, worship and socialising.

For further information please contact:

Anne Blackwood Tel: 07989 554023 annie.b70@live.co.uk or

Alison Gifford Tel: 07990 570371 gifforda@sky.com

The Shrine's theme for pilgrims in 2015 is ***'Mary: Life-Giving Spring'***, inviting us to partake of her spiritual nourishment.

The coach leaves Glasgow at 9.30 a.m.; with pick-up points at Edinburgh and at other places en route by arrangement. It is expected that on Monday the coach will be in Glasgow by 6.00 p.m.



BEXLEY PHOENIX CHOIR

**Friday 7th August 2015 at 7.30pm
at St Ninian's Episcopal Church**

FAURÉ'S REQUIEM

and a selection of other music

***There are
more details
on the notice
board***

TICKETS £8
from Stephanie (502736) or on the night
Refreshments included

bexleyphoenixchoir.org.uk

WHO'S WHO

Rector	: The Revd Canon David Bayne	01556-503818
Hon Assistant	: The Revd Canon David Main	504669
Lay Reader	: Mr Douglas Allison	504279
Lay Worship Leader / Pastoral Assistant / Lay Representative	: Mrs Jenny Wright	502184
Hon Secretary	: Mr Patrick Little	690507
Hon Treasurer	: Mr Fred Coulthard	502965
Property Convenor	: Mr Clem Gault	502583
Freewill Offerings Convenor / Alternate Lay Rep	: Mr Ian Mather	505910
Third Lay Rep	: Mrs Ann Gault	502583
Vestry Members	: The Rector (Chair) Hon Secretary Hon Treasurer Property Convenor Lay Representative	
Elected Vestry Members	: Mrs Sue Beddows	670286
	: Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst	502736
	: Miss Sheila MacKenzie	01644-420623
	: Mr Ian MacQuarrie	01557-820530
	: Mr Ian Mather	505910
Organist	: Mr Maurice Till FRCO LTCL ARCM	620619
Sanctuary Guild	: Mrs Alison Bayne	503818
Co-ordinator for the Protection of Vulnerable Groups	: Miss Sheila MacKenzie	01644-420623
MU Branch Leaders	: {Mrs Ann Gault	502583
	: {Mrs Alison Bayne	503818
Thursday Club	: Mrs Ann Gault	502583
Men's Group Chairman	: Mr Ian Mather	505910
Administrator / Hall Bookings / Magazine & Website Editor	: Mrs Stephanie Dewhurst	502736
Magazine Distribution / Traidcraft	: Mr John Dewhurst	502736
Sunday School Leaders	: {Mrs Rosie MacQuarrie	01557-820530
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Little Fishes	: Mrs Roz Stevens	503589