

The Deeside Tattler

June and July 2024



St. Kentigern's, Ballater.

St. Kentigern's, Ballater, St. Thomas's, Aboyne
with St. Ninian's, Braemar



Rector: Rev'd Canon Vittoria Hancock
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Lay Reader: Hugh Dawson, Tel. No 013398 87054

Note: DAY OFF. Vittoria is taking Friday as her normal day off,
and it would be helpful if we would respect that.

Midweek Communions

Tuesdays, 11.30am, 11th June, 9th July, St Thomas', Aboyne

Thursdays, 11.30am, 27th June, 25th July, St Kentigern's, Ballater

Dates for the diary

31st May, Songs of Praise recording, Crathie Kirk (invited congregation only)

3rd June, 5 year planning meeting, St Thomas'

13th - 15th June, General Synod, Edinburgh

17th June Cathedral Chapter meeting, Aberdeen

22nd June, 10-12, St Kentigern's Coffee morning, Ravenswood, Ballater

23rd June, Hot Chocolate Walk

30th June, 11.15am, Baptism of Madison McMenemy, St Thomas'

6pm Simple Choral Evensong, St Thomas's

2nd July, 7.30pm, St Thomas' Vestry Meeting

4th July, 7.30pm, St Kentigern's Vestry Meeting

6th July, 6.30pm, Ceilidh in aid of Aboyne After School Club, Victory Hall, Aboyne

20th July, 2-4pm, St Kentigern's Church Fair, Victoria Hall, Ballater

From the Editor: Well, summer seems to have arrived at last! The last of the spring flowers are still standing by manfully, but mostly we await the full glory of the summer, with all its bright coloured flowers, and the luscious green of the trees. Somehow it is easier to look on life with hope, when all around is so alive.

We have some interesting articles in our magazine again this time. There are some looking back at ancient memories, which are the sort of thing we build our lives on. And there are accounts of more recent events, including activities in our churches, which are always good to hear about. Both churches are meantime considering 5-year plans, to help us to move forward - but it does seem that there has been a lot of growth over the previous 5 years - long may it continue.

We have articles from new contributors this time for which many thanks, they are very welcome. It is always good to have different people contributing a variety of articles, each in their own style, which makes for an interesting magazine. And don't forget that it will appear in the St Thomas's website, with the photos looking much better in their original colours. Our thanks to all. **Ed**

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From the Rector,

Rev'd Canon Vittoria Hancock



Dear Friends,

Another month, another paperwork day. It is amazing how fast time flies. Since the last edition of the magazine, we've celebrated Easter, Ascension Day and Pentecost. I've been on holiday to the Isle of Mull – of which more shortly – and my garden has burst into sudden life following a warm spell. For the last few weeks I have promised myself ten minutes in the garden each day, if at all possible. I'm not sure you can see where I've been working, but I can tell. Bits of the garden are looking a little bit neater. It is astonishing how much difference just a little bit each day can make – for good and bad. A short stroll helps mental health. A little bit of chocolate each day – perhaps not so good for my figure. I'm still working my way through the birthday and Easter chocolate, but am approaching the last bar now. I did take some away on holiday with me, but we ate surprisingly healthily.

Mull was lovely. A friend and I rented a cottage on the Ross of Mull. It had views out to sea from the living room, easy access to the shore and walks on the moorland, and a sun room in which we could roast ourselves. This being April and Scotland, the weather was variable. The sun was streaming down – and the wind was blowing a hoolie. I returned with suntanned face and hands, but everything else as pale as it was when I went. My friend and I spent hours walking on beaches, wandering across Iona, exploring the history of that part of Mull. One of the highlights for me was the wildlife tour we had booked. We saw the usual – sea eagles, golden eagles, buzzards, sandpipers, great northern divers, red-throated divers, eider ducks, pipits, warblers, seals and so on. We saw an otter from a distance, asleep on a rock. All boxes ticked. We were happy. Then we pulled into a small bay, sat for a moment, and there, close to the shore, were a pair of otters, mother and pup, ducking and diving. So close we didn't need binoculars.

As we watched, windows rolled down, they came into the shore, mother wrestling a fish, and pup piping to her. The pup was a teenager, perfectly capable of catching his own food, and she did not want to share. He reminded me of a rather petulant teenager. Off he was sent with a flea a in his ear while she munched away before joining him back in the water. And of course he managed to catch his own fish.

In the letter to the Hebrews, the writer is getting frustrated by the members of the early church. He says 'although by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the elementary truths of God's word all over again. You need milk, not solid food'. (Hebrews 5:12-14). This is one of the recurring themes in the Bible. It's time to grow up in your faith and start teaching others about it. Rather like the otter cub, it is time for us to grow up and start thinking for ourselves. It can be easy, day by day, Sunday by Sunday, to rely on what others say about God and faith and how to live as a Christian. But at some point we have to start doing it ourselves. We have to start searching for what God might be saying to us, we have to start living as mature Christians, as models for others. That is a daunting prospect. And it is all too easy to rely on someone else to do the thinking, the hard work for you.

In the church year, we are now in Ordinary Time. This is meant to be a time of growth and encouragement, of fresh shoots and harvests. Can I invite you, over this summer time, to spend time engaging with your faith, growing in your faith, living in your faith, rooted and built up in Christ, 'strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness' (Colossians 2:6-7).

With every blessing,
Vittoria

30th June: There will be no Matins at St Thomas's on 30th June as there is a Baptism and family-friendly service. Instead, there will be a simple Choral Evensong at 6.00pm, to which all who love the traditional services are specially invited. A small choir will lead the singing, and hopefully everyone will take part. All are welcome.

Midweek Communions

Tuesdays, 11.30am, 11th June, 9th July, St Thomas', Aboyne
Thursdays, 11.30am, 27th June, 25th July, St Kentigern's, Ballater

Soup Lunches

These follow on from our midweek communion services, although you are very welcome to come to one without the other.
St Thomas', Aboyne, 12-1pm, 11th June, 9th July
St Kentigern's, Ballater, 12-1pm, 27th June, 25th July

Hot Chocolate Walks

The hot chocolate walks are resuming – these are gentle strolls in the local area to explore a point of interest, with a stop for hot chocolate or a beverage of your choice in your flask. There are rarely big hills, bogs, or rivers to negotiate. If it is lashing down with rain, snowing a blizzard or blowing a hoolie, we stay at home. No endurance test is needed.

The forthcoming walks are on the 23rd June and the 21st July. Any suggestions for other walks, please let Vittoria know. Taking part in these walks is at your own risk. Please come suitably dressed with appropriate footwear.

New posts at St Kentigern's

Maggie Jaffray and her son Duncan erecting posts at the entrance of the church, to save the historic wall from being knocked and damaged.

And the finished posts in position



Easter Vigil and bonfire

Members of the congregations of St Thomas's and Aboyne-Dinnet met together on Easter Saturday, to perform the ancient ceremony of the Easter Vigil - the high symbolic bringing of light back into the church to begin the celebrations of Easter.



We gathered in the grounds of St Thomas's where the bonfire was lit, while prayers and readings were said.



The Pascal Candle was lit from the fire of the bonfire, and used to light smaller candles held by each of us. We processed into the church carrying these, stopping on the way as Vittoria, who led the procession, called out 'the Light of Christ'

The church was lit by the candles, as a Gospel reading and prayers, including the Nunc Dimittis, were said. The service ended with the first Alleluias of Easter.



The evening ended of course with tea/coffee and hot dogs with onions, and chat. It was good to see the members of the two congregations spending time together on such a meaningful occasion.



Easter-egg Hunting for the children!

And after the Easter morning celebrations, the children were let loose in the grounds of St Kentigern's and St Thomas's to hunt for Easter Eggs!



Choral Evensong at St Thomas's

In April we were treated to a beautiful Choral Evensong at St Thomas's sung by the Augmented Choir and conducted by Lucy Bailey, with organists Sheila Maxwell and guest organist Gordon Cooper from Cults. Gordon, an experienced organist and piano teacher, was invited to play the quite complicated organ part for the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis, giving us a magnificent performance to blend in with the choir.

Choral Evensong is one of the most loved services in the church providing both beautiful music (ancient and modern), reflection, and wonderful well known liturgy. It has been described as 'one of the glories of the Anglican tradition.' Although an ancient service, being established around 1549 and remained little changed since, it is still so relevant to us today. Its popularity can be seen in the fact that BBC radio 3's Choral Evensong is the longest continuously running outside broadcast in history (since 1926) loved both by Christians and those of no faith. It was clear to us all in St Thomas on this evening why it is such a popular service.

The responses were to the setting of Thomas Tallis (16th Century) and the canticles for our service were composed by Howard Goodall (maybe most famously known for his setting of Psalm 23 used as theme music for 'The Vicar of Dibley') and commissioned by Marlborough College in 1994. For many of us this would have been the first time of hearing this wonderful setting but I am sure not the last. (I for one have now purchased a recording!)

The service blessed us with music from a variety of composers and dates. Apart from the beautiful Marlborough Canticles the choir sang the psalm to a setting by Charles Villiers Stanford (1852-1924), followed later by the Ascensiontide anthem 'Above all praise and all majesty' by Felix Mendelssohn, and the great anthem 'Hail, gladdening Light' - a 3rd century Greek text translated by John Keble (1792-1866) and with music by John Stainer. What incredible timeless words this text has-

Hail Gladdening Light,
of his pure Glory poured,
who is the immortal Father, Heavenly, blessed,
Holiest of holies. Jesus Christ our Lord.

We are so grateful for all the hard work of our choir, conductor, organists, Rector and readers for this very special service. Thanks must also be given for the delicious refreshments which followed the service.

A date for your diaries - Evening of Praise in St Thomas with the Augmented Choir, on 11th August.

Carol Birss

More on trip to Vienna, January 2024

Day 3 saw us take a tram to the Belvedere Palace, a stunning Baroque ensemble built



Belvedere Palace

views of the city, and is now the home of the Österreichische Galerie, which houses a marvellous collection of paintings by Gustav Klimt, Egon Schiele and their contemporaries.

in two stages for Prince Eugene of Savoy by the greatest architect of the day, Lucas von Hildebrandt.

The Palace has commanding



Marble Hall

We then returned to the Kunsthistorisches Museum where we had an excellent lunch before continuing our tour of the collection concentrating on the non-Italian schools, and were able to see very fine works by Rubens, Van Dyck and Rembrandt. In the evening we returned to the Volksoper theatre where we were very well entertained by an excellent and traditional performance of Pierre Lacotte's ballet Coppelia, afterwards having a nightcap at a delightful café opposite our hotel.



Imperial State Library

Our last full day began with a coach trip to the Liechtenstein Palace Museum, where in the entrance we saw the magnificent Liechtenstein Coach which rather puts the Arrol-Johnston in the shade! The Liechtenstein princes have always owned vast tracts of land and properties in Austria, and at the outbreak of WW2 the family secretly removed their famous paintings collection to Vaduz in the Swiss/Austrian Alps. Although still belonging to the family, these have been returned to Vienna for exhibition and our Group had a private tour of the palace and its collections which was simply mindblowing.



Liechtenstein Coach

We then returned to the Hofburg to visit the Imperial State Library, packed with all sorts of historical books beautifully preserved, it is almost unbelievable that both library and contents have survived.

After lunch we were taken to the Schönbrunn Palace, the summer residence of the Hapsburgs.

It hadn't been burnt or pillaged by riotous mobs when the Hapsburg Empire collapsed, but just left as it was, and is now very well maintained and fully furnished with a good deal of the original contents.

The day ended with a group dinner in a restaurant close to our hotel



Klimt's Beethoven Frieze

On our last morning we walked from our hotel to the Secession Building, erected in 1898 by Joseph Olbrich, which contains Klimt's famous frieze celebrating Beethoven.

It was a short, intensive tour of this beautiful city which we immensely enjoyed, even though it was quite exhausting, and well worth the 2 hour flight from Heathrow. We found the people very friendly, most spoke English, and there was a fabulous co-op store just across the square from our hotel where we could get anything we needed! We arrived back in Aberdeen 10 minutes early and with all our luggage, and are now looking forward to our next trip, to northern Italy in early June.

Marcus Humphrey March 2024

The St Kentigern's Summer Fair

The St Kentigern's Summer Fair will take place in the Ballater Victoria Hall on Saturday **20th July** from 1.30 pm – 4pm

There will be various stalls: cake and candy, plants, a raffle, and refreshments will be served.

This year's Queen's Gift is a Highgrove wine lovers' gift set, in a beautiful presentation box.

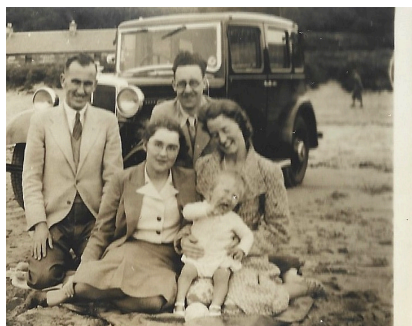
Tickets priced at £1 are available from the Brakeley Gift Room, from Sabine, or at the event. The raffle will be drawn at the Fair.



Think Back on How we used to Travel

When we look back at how we used to get around throughout our younger days, one thing stands out clear. Mum and Dad did not participate whatsoever! I can't remember my parents ever coming to any of my sporting or recreational activities as a youngster.

Of course, they didn't have a car. Dad had an old Austin 7 prior to the war so I've seen pictures of myself as a toddler on the banks of Loch Lomond before he was "Called Up for Military Service"...but then it was gone.

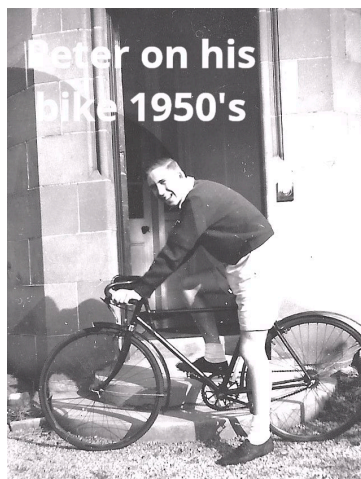


Loch Lomond
1938
aged 1 1/2

My generation grew up on bikes, buses, trams and trains. I've been told I was very privileged, as an elderly lady teacher at Glasgow Academy picked me up each morning on her route through Bearsden from Drymen; I don't know how I got home...it was a 6 mile bus ride.. or how she got the petrol.

But then, of course, bus services were generally on time, reliable and affordable. In fact when I moved to Edinburgh at the age of 12 their enlightened Council provided schoolchildren with a 1d transfer ticket for any distance on Edinburgh trams and buses. A bus would take me from George Watsons at Colinton, down to Princes Street and then a tram through Portobello to Musselburgh. The same applied to rugby practice, away matches and every other activity. I believe something has changed since those days.

Cycling was the summer way of getting around, whether it be evening runs along the coast to North Berwick, or weekend adventures over to Fife or to Perthshire Glens utilising the Scottish Youth Hostels Association. (Sometimes I got further afield by hitch-hiking in other people's cars) but we never had a car in the family till 1959, and by then Dad's licence had expired and I beat him to a new test just prior to getting married. Jean's Dad gave me £50 to buy our first car!



School Holidays were something different. The whole family used the trains. We travelled overnight to York, arriving 5am and waiting for the first bus to Pickering and a holiday cottage on the Yorkshire moors; Sometimes across country to Morecambe to stay where we had been based in Heysham in the early days of the war. Many visits, on my own in the care of the Guard, to stay with Granny in Leeds. On one special occasion by a named express to London to swap homes to visit the Festival of Britain; Once there we explored London by Tube and foot.

When Jean and I got married we took trains from Newcastle to Sorrento (via London, Paris and Rome) for a £22 return fare... of course one could only take £50 out of the country then to pay for everything else, and we ran out of money in Paris on the way home. No credit cards in those days... the only blessing was the return ticket!

When you stop to think.....travelling has certainly changed!

Peter Sowrey

St Thomas's Quiet Corner

The quiet corner is developing nicely, but still with lots of potential. It is surprisingly quiet for a place right in the corner by the main road, but it is sunken down a bit with



a solid wall, and it feels private. We will never know how much it is used, but I am told that a group of Mums go there regularly when they have dropped off their children at school, and no doubt there are others.

The bed round by the wall has had a lovely crop of spring flowers, now nearly over, but one or two are still holding the fort with bright colours. And it is a place of memories, there is a seat in

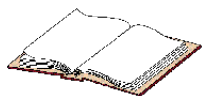


memory of Michael O'Connor, whose wife Rhona was a longstanding member of our congregation. And the cherry tree planted by Alan Dennis for Sue is flourishing better than ever - a lasting memory of a great character, and faithful member of our church choir.

The beauties of nature are not confined to the quiet corner, there are beautiful trees, plants and flowers to be enjoyed in all the extensive grounds around the church. This photo shows the other cherry tree, planted by Gill Scott in memory of Sue Dennis and Pauline Wood, both stalwarts of St Thomas who died too young of cancer. It is good to have this remembrance in spring each year when they come into blossom. And in the background is a rowan tree with a wonderful display of blossom.

Sheila Maxwell





Readings for June and July, 2024

2nd June Trinity 1	Deuteronomy 5:12-15 2 Corinthians 4:5-12 Mark 2:23-3:6	Sabine Muir	Rider Family
9th June Trinity 2	Genesis 3:8-15 2 Corinthians 4:13-5:1 Mark 3:20-35	Hilary Mutch	Helen Webb
16th June Trinity 3	Ezekiel 17:22-24 2 Corinthians 5:6-10, 14-17 Mark 4:26-34	Margaret Jaffray	Anne Harper
23rd June Trinity 4	Job 38:1-11 2 Corinthians 6:1-13 Mark 4:35-41	Stanley Ewen	Jill Binns
30th June Trinity 5 St Thomas	Habakkuk 2:1-4 Hebrews 10:35 – 11:1 John 20:24-29	Marcus Humphrey	Meg White
7th July Trinity 6	Ezekiel 2:1-5 2 Corinthians 12:2-10 Mark 6:1-13	Hilary Mutch	The Burgesses
14th July Trinity 7	Amos 7:7-15 Ephesians 1:3-14 Mark 6:14-29	Susan Smith	Carol Simmons
21st July Trinity 8	Jeremiah 23:1-6 Ephesians 2:11-22 Mark 6: 30-34, 53-56	Sabrina Humphrey	Isabel Wilson
28th July Trinity 9	2 Kings 4:42-44 Ephesians 3:14-21 John 6:1-21	Anne Richardson	Sue Burgess

June 30th, 11.15am - St Thomas's is celebrating a Baptism, instead of Matins.
Also a simple Sung Evensong will take place at **6pm**, with singing for everyone.

CHURCH SERVICES AT BALLATER AND ABOYNE

	<u>St. Kentigern's, 9.30am</u>	<u>St. Thomas's, 11.15am</u>
1st Sunday	Morning Worship	Morning Worship
2nd Sunday	Holy Communion 1982	Holy Communion 1982
3rd Sunday	Holy Communion 1970	Holy Communion 1970
4th Sunday	Holy Communion 1982	Family Communion
5th Sunday	Morning Prayer	Morning Prayer (Matins)

Sunday Club

St. Kentigern's, Ballater

Children are welcome to attend any Sunday Service, and families are invited to use the materials in the Hall if so required.

The **St Kentigern's Sunday Club** normally meets on the **third Sunday of every month at 9.30am** in the Church Hall. The children are brought back into Church to join their families during the Offertory Hymn.

These Services will be advertised when they have been resumed.

Anne R

Young Church at St. Thomas's

Children are welcome at all the services at St Thomas's.

The children's corner contains books, colouring materials and toys for small children, so do make use of them.

Morning Worship at St. Thomas's

(on the first Sunday of the month)

This is normally a non-Communion Service, not specifically for children, but they are of course especially welcome.

The next services are:

2nd June – Keeping the Sabbath

7th July – Sent out by Christ

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Singing to the Lord with grateful praise;
make music to our God on the harp.

He covers the sky with clouds;
he supplies the earth with rain
and makes grass grow on the hills.
He provides food for the cattle
and for the young ravens when they call.

He sends his command to the earth;
his word runs swiftly.

He spreads the snow like wool
and scatters the frost like ashes.

He hurls down his hail like pebbles.

Who can withstand his icy blast?

He sends his word and melts them;
he stirs up his breezes, and the waters flow.

Praise the Lord.

(from Psalm 147)

From the Bible for the young and not so young

The conversion of Saul of Tarsus, later known as St Paul



St Paul is one of the most well-known of the Apostles, a leader and preacher in the early church, but known to us mostly for the many Letters that form so much of our New Testament. But like so many of the people we read about in the Bible, his background was not simple, and involved quite a change of heart. So what happened? (See Acts ch 9)

Paul was originally known as Saul, belonging to Tarsus, and a staunch believer of the Jewish religion. He was a young man at the time of enormous conflict following the crucifixion of Jesus and the extraordinary rise of the Christian faith. Thousands of people were being baptised by the followers of Jesus and forming the early Christian Church. But this was seen as a threat by the orthodox Jews to their whole way of life and thinking, and they were fighting hard against it. There is the story told of Stephen, one of the Christian leaders, who was brought before the Council, accused of blasphemy. Stephen gave a spirited account of the Jewish history that led to the coming of Jesus, and what he stood for. But in the end, everyone set on Stephen, took him away and stoned him to death. And Saul was there, people were leaving their garments at his feet, we are told.

This must have had an enormous effect on the young Saul, it would have been a terrifying scene, and one of great danger to the Jewish way of life as they saw it. So Saul was in the thick of it, persecuting Christians, dragging them to prison, beating them and so on. He became well known and feared because of all this.

One day, he went to the High Priests asking for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any Christians there, he could bring them bound to Jerusalem to be dealt with. He travelled to Damascus, 'breathing threats and murder' against the Christians. And then the miracle happened. Suddenly a light from heaven flashed about him, he fell to the ground and heard a voice saying 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me?' And this was the voice of Jesus himself. There was no explanation, he was simply told to go into the city, and he would be told what to do. But he had little choice - when Saul opened his eyes he could see nothing, he was blind, and had to be led into the city by his companions. And he was blind for three days, and didn't eat or drink all that time.

The rescue was difficult, because Saul was very much feared for all the evil he had done, and it was hard for anyone to believe he was changing. The Lord appeared in a vision to one of the Damascus disciples, Ananias, who agreed, much against his will, to go to Saul, and lay hands on him. So Ananias went to him as instructed, and said he had come so that Saul could regain his sight - and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And at that, the scales fell from Saul's eyes, and he was baptised, took food and was strengthened. He still had to overcome a lot of suspicion from his fellow Christians, but that was the start of a remarkable career of Christian dedication, by this man who became known as Paul - or St Paul the Apostle, man of Letters.

Living near the Dee

It's dark, thunderously
powerful,
Forcing us into
submission
Try to swim against it,
forget it, it's resistant.
Continuously moving,
pouring over rock,
smoothing edges,
Swirls in places, still take you over,
You'd never be stranded.
Swim against it, is energy depletion,
The force of its nature never leaving.



You know its cold, but still
want to touch it,
as if some water magic
heals us from a distance,
smoothly flowing.

Late evening the sun
bounces off clouds
reflecting into the Dee,
turning this river golden,
swirling liquid movement,
mesmerising the moment here,
Into the forever.

Helen Webb

More about - MY DAD

I think I have mentioned it before, when during the war we did not have a car and Dad would hire/borrow one on Easter Sunday to bring his family over to St. Thomas's. We just loved it.



However in 1951 he succeeded in purchasing the little Austin 8 van from his boss, had windows put in and a back seat and set off with the five of us to London for our summer holidays. We left home at 5 am, had breakfast in a hotel in Dunblane and arrived at my Uncle's house near Alexandra Palace in London at 1.30 am in the morning. Wow, that was some drive stopping only for picnics on the way, 530 miles.



It was the Festival of Great Britain that year so we enjoyed visiting some of the stalls and side shows, not forgetting London Zoo. On the way home we decided to camp, as we had an old tent with us. But it was so cold we crept back into the van and the only one who slept was our little sister who had all the blankets on her! My Dad had to stop for a sleep on the Devils Elbow road because it was so hot, while we amused ourselves in a little burn.

Three years later we went back to London in the same little van, but this time we stayed in Doncaster on the way down and Edinburgh on the way back, Sheila and myself in employment then and I was learning to drive so could share the driving with my Dad.

Apart from cars, my Dad was always interested in getting a Concert Party going so when I came home to be Mr. Wallace's secretary, he and Mr. Erskine, the factor managed to persuade a good number of folk together and formed the Strathdon Sparklers. That was great fun and we performed all over the place helping to raise funds for different projects.



In 1959 I got married and naturally moved away, but some years later when Dad retired, he and Mum moved to Glenkindie beside our shop and he loved helping out when we had the little caravan site, would mow the grass for us and keep things tidy.



In 1981 sadly he was taken from us aged seventy seven and we gave him a lovely thanksgiving service in St. Thomas's on Easter Saturday, 18th April conducted by the Rev. Alexander Campbell-Adamson, with all our family and friends, Easter being so important to him. Very appropriate, with his parents grave outside the church door.

I have just learnt recently that my Dad was taught to drive by someone from Tarland, a Mr. McConnachie, his daughter told our daughter Pam the other day. Seemingly he very quickly learnt the

ropes before he started with the Wallace family. Mr. McConnachie had run the Boultenstone Hotel at the same time.



I have a big board with photos of some of the cars my Dad looked after over the years, but his favourite was a Rolls Royce Silver Cloud, the photos have faded, but not my memory of a super Dad, so kind hearted, a proper gent.

Eileen A. Davies

Hot Chocolate Walk

Lovely walk today after church. We saw the bog cotton out as we walked over the board walk at Parkins Moss. Stopped for a breather and watched the children running and cycling ahead. Then went on for the little ones to have a play in the stream and a bit of rock climbing on the way to the vat. Saw the yellow wagtails catching insects and heard my first cuckoo on the walk back to the car!



One very happy muddy dog, Mig, also joined us.

Lara Elson

BASS NOTES

Being Grumpy

Am I becoming a grumpy old man?



I asked myself that question because grumpy old men - and women too - rant against modern life. Moan that standards everywhere are falling. Use the phrase 'In my day...' Tut at the proliferation of tattoos, studs and decorative metal in strange body places. Detest modern music. Feel Prime Ministers should wear a tie in public. Won't have any truck with this 'pronoun' nonsense. Don't understand QR codes. Hate the assumption that everyone has a smart phone. Feel our culture is being taken over by 'others'. Generally exude discontentment. Those sorts of

things.

I asked myself that question because I was tempted to compose a *Bass Notes* about horrible linguistic tics and other slack habits of modern speech and writing – things like the inability of people to start a sentence without using the word 'so'; the overuse of the word 'multiple', when other words are freely available and would add variety and accuracy; the misuse of 'disinterested' when what you mean is 'uninterested'; the undefined use of the word 'progressive' by politicians; the roaming apostrophes found everywhere; the use of the word 'fascist' without any understanding of its full real life horror; John Torode repeatedly saying 'You're going to cook for Greg and I'; the proliferation of 'utilise' instead of 'use'; the constant mash-up of 'its' and 'it's'; and a thousand and one other sins of modern usage. Those sorts of things.

I asked myself that question again... and then I had thoughts that this language stuff was all taking up an awful lot of energy; that there are wars in the Middle East, Sudan and Ukraine; that there is still poverty, injustice and suffering in the world; that spring has come at last; that here we have unimpaired speech, most of us physically and all of us politically, even if some of us *are* a bit sloppy in our use of language. Those sorts of things.

I asked myself if I was a GOM and ... decided others should answer that question.

Eric Sinclair

River

A minister was preaching on the dangers of alcohol. He concluded by thundering: "And that is why, if I had all the beer in the world, I'd take it and pour it in the river. If I had all the wine in the world, I'd take it and pour it in the river. And if I had all the whiskey in the world, I'd take that as well, and pour it in the river." Satisfied that he had made his point, he sat down.

The music leader then stood up, and with a sheepish grin announced: "Our closing hymn is on page 238: 'Shall We Gather at the River'."

Hugh Cochran



Hugh Cochran was a long-standing member of St Thomas's Church, and indeed of the Diocese, having been Chancellor of the Diocese of Aberdeen and Orkney for many years. He was a solicitor in Aberdeen, and well-known for his many welfare interests. Among other things, he was Chairman of the Castlehill Housing Association, member of the Grampian Health Board, Director of the Aberdeen Association for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and Committee member of the Aberdeen Association of Social Service, as VSA was then known.

His family home was at the lovely estate of Balfour near Aboyne, and he became Clan Chief - with always a Clan tent at the Aboyne Games, where all his friends were made welcome! He had three children, Susan, David and Joanna, by his first wife, who sadly died in 1961. He re-married in the '60's, and had two further children, Marco and Adam. Finally in the 1970's he met and married Bev, who became a forceful and popular member of St Thomas's. They had one son, Andy, whom many of us will know as he used to come to church as a child with his parents, as well as the occasional visit more recently from Edinburgh.

Hugh liked to lead a full life. Andy has stories of the family camping holidays they enjoyed, taking along all the equipment with them in his beloved Mark 1 Ford Cortina. These included their trips to Italy, usually to cities with historical significance, because of his love of history. He also loved sailing, cricket and cooking - he had a very well-used Delia Smith recipe book, although he only started using it in his 70's!

His love of history led to a remarkable series of articles which were printed in the Tattler over a period of months, and are now in the Archives section of the current St Thomas's web-site. These included six articles on the Saints of Mid-Deeside, and four articles on the Medieval Churches in Upper Deeside, all with illustrations, and are readily available to anyone interested.

Hugh had a long-standing problem with his deafness, following an ear operation when he was a child, and of course this got worse as he got older. In the end, coming to church became quite difficult for him, and he disliked being in crowds. But one-to-one, he had no problem chatting, and remained very friendly to the end, enjoying the company of family and friends, and finding the contact stimulating.

Andy has said that Hugh was at his best when he had a project - and this went on right to the end. He moved to Praesmohr Home after a bad spell, picked up, and decided this was not for him, asking his daughter Susan to help him escape 'as I am surrounded by old people'! He finally got his wish, which made him enormously happy - just for a week, before he died, but at least he made it.

Andy finished his eulogy: Hugh threw himself into life, he loved what he did, he had a good life. We can best honour his memory by leading our lives to the full.

Jennifer Walkinshaw

On the 1st of May we said goodbye to Jennifer Walkinshaw. It turned into a dreich day at the cemetery and I think that summed up how we were all feeling.

Jennifer came to St Thomas' in the eighties when Patrick Jones was the Rector. He soon discovered that she was an accomplished needle woman and persuaded her to make an altar cloth and backdrop for the small chapel.



The gold work that

she produced is amazing, a testament of her talent. At one point a leak in the church roof damaged the cloth but fortunately we were able to salvage her work and attach it to a new back cloth.

Her next project was to make kneelers for the altar rail which she designed. She supervised her workers who were volunteer members of the congregation. My father made a long frame which could be folded and set up in our homes. A group of us regularly met to stitch and enjoy each other's company. Jennifer patiently taught us to do all the stitches required and I know at times she quietly unpicked and redid sections that did not meet her exacting standards. Sadly for us her husband and brother in law decided the Kirk was more to their liking and she felt she needed to accompany them.

Towards the end of John's life Jennifer met Vittoria and found her a great support. So much so she asked her to officiate at his funeral. She was never sure what he would have thought about a female Episcopalian minister being in charge!! After this she returned to St Thomas' until it was no longer physically possible for her to attend services, but Vittoria visited her in her home and was able to give her communion at Aboyne hospital shortly before she died.



A very intelligent, talented, feisty, independent person. She will be much missed. Rest in peace my friend.

Gill Scott

Random thoughts -

What is a smile? It's when you laugh in a whisper.
Happiness is not having to set the alarm clock!
Identical parts - aren't.

Congratulations and Commiserations

Baptisms

The baptism of Madison McMenemy is due to take place at St Thomas' in June.
Please pray for her and her family at this new stage in her journey of faith.

Deaths

The funeral of Hugh Cochran took place in St Thomas' in April
The funeral of Jennifer Walkinshaw took place in St Thomas' in May
The funeral of Amanda Mutch will take place in East Lothian in May
May they rest in peace and rise in glory.

Please pray for their families and friends at this time.

Congratulations

Congratulations to Mrs Margaret Jaffray and Dr Stanley Ewen on their recent engagement.

Congratulations to Anne Harper on receiving the Maundy Money at Worcester Cathedral. This was in recognition of her work on behalf of the community and the church.



At the annual Royal Maundy Service in Worcester Cathedral on 28th March, Anne Harper was presented with the Royal Maundy gifts. These were distributed by Her Majesty the Queen on behalf of His Majesty The King. Ceremonial coins were presented to 75 men and 75 women from around the country. The word Maundy comes from the Latin word meaning 'Commandment'. It was on this Thursday, the day before he died, that Jesus gave his disciples what he described as a new commandment: 'that you should love one another as I have loved you.' The gift is presented in recognition of their acts of love and service to church and community over many years.



The tradition of presenting alms on Maundy Thursday goes back to at least the 4th Century and in this country, the first record of The Monarch doing it is in 1213. It takes place in a different cathedral each year. The number of men and women receiving the Maundy Money is equivalent to the Monarch's age. Each person received two purses, one purse is made from white leather, holding coins to the value in pence of King Charles III's age. The other purse is made from red leather, containing a £5 and 50p. These are the first Maundy coins of the King's reign. Each year The Royal Mint produces a limited number of Maundy coins for distribution by the monarch. The silver one, two, three and four pence coins are all legal tender, but are not intended for everyday use. Maundy Money is only ever used on Maundy Thursday when it is given by the monarch to the selected group of men and women. This year was the first time King Charles III featured on Maundy coins.

Vittoria Hancock

