Kirk News

St Andrew's Wallace Green & Lowick

November 2022

(Registered Scottish Charity No SC00867)

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Session Clerk	Miss Rita Inglis	01289 307421
Treasurer	Mr Brian Tait	01361 882897
Organist	Miss Rena Telfer	01289 302080
Choir	Miss Rena Telfer	01289 302080
Church Flowers	Miss Rita Inglis	01289 307421
Churches Together	Miss Rena Telfer	01289 302080
Gift Aid	Mr Alan Irving	01289 308741
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Kirk News	Mrs Joan Montgomery	01289 763151
Keep Fit	Mrs Susan Jordan	01289 306144
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New Horizons	Rev Dr Adam Hood	01289 332787
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Walking Group	Mrs Grace Tait	01361 882897
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Kirk Session Sub Committees

Finance
Lead: Mr Brian Tait

Fabric
Lead: Mr Chris Budzynski

Pastoral
Lead: Rev Dr Adam Hood

Mission and Nurture
Lead: Rev Dr Adam Hood

Elders

Alan Aitchison, Karen Aitchison, Linda Bankier, Dale Hall, Fiona Hall, Rita Inglis, Alan Irving, Neil Jordan, Bryon Longbone, Louise Newton, Joan Reed, Brian Tait, Grace Tait, Sarah Weatherburn.

Holy Communion

We will be celebrating Holy Communion on Sunday November 20th at 11am. All welcome. **Please note that we are no longer handing out communion cards to everyone on our roll quarterly.** The function of the card is to remind us that communion is happening and invite us to come along, and this task is now carried out by the Kirk News. We will,

however, continue to return those cards handed in at previous communions, since many of us appreciate the tradition of handing in our communion cards as we come to the sacrament. If you have not received a card with your magazine, but would like to hand in a card when you next come along to communion, please just look out one of the cards you have previously received and hand this in. If you cannot find a card at home, and would like to receive one, please let me know.
After the service there will be a **retiral offering** for the **Berwick Youth Project**, which provides supported accommodation, information, outdoor activities and youth club facilities to young people between 13 and 25.

Congregational Register

Marriage Blessing

Beth Sapi and Tony Chadney 7.10.22

Deaths

(*denotes communicant member)

Patricia Evans	16.9.22
George Osmond	24.9.22
Henry Fleming	28.9.22

Minister's Letter

Dear Friends,

Bridges are a familiar part of the Berwick landscape. Bridge Street takes us on to the Old Bridge, a quaint, narrow crossing, which offers a lovely view of the Tweed Estuary. The New Bridge is a more utilitarian structure, which, nevertheless is a vital route for cars making their way back and forth across the river. The Royal Border Bridge, 659 metres long with 28 arches, is a stunning achievement, which graces Berwick and enables rail travel from North to South. Bridges are important because they overcome a divide, making transition possible. Sometimes, for this reason, the bridge has been taken as a picture of Jesus and his work. Jesus, it is said, is the bridge between God and humankind; it is because of him that we can journey towards God. Through him we are able to traverse the gap between a life cramped by fear and anxiety to one of love and freedom.

Another picture that Christians use of Jesus is that he is the door to life. This image reflects the belief that God is not far away from us. Indeed, because the 'Word became flesh', Christians believe that the material world is taken up into the spiritual. God is present to us in those things that we touch, see, hear and smell. We praise a God who is found in the High Street as much as in church. However, it is only as we pass through the door of Christ by prayer and by living in Christ's way, that we come to recognise the closeness of God in every situation.

Shortly, we will be entering the season of Advent, which is commonly a time of preparation for the celebration of

Christmas. In some ways, it is obvious what getting ready for Christmas will involve. Buying presents, arranging meals, decorating our homes – these may be some of our preparations. However, it is not so easy to understand how to prepare spiritually for Christmas. Perhaps one thing we could do, is to remind ourselves daily, that because of Jesus we can journey towards God, he is the bridge between us and the infinite, who helps us to recognise that God is close to each of us in the everyday things of life. At the heart of every experience there lies an encounter with the concern and love of the Holy One, who invites us to open the door of our lives and hearts to Him and to allow Him to change us through his love.

Your friend,

Adam

For your calendar

Tuesday 8th November - 2pm New Horizons, Revd Jeliase Mutimbairi

Thursday 10th November - 7.15pm Dr Nathan Hood, The Spirituality of Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings'

Monday 14th November - 7pm Kirk Session

Thursday 17th Nov - 7.15pm Training session for those who lead us in church through Bible reading and praying.

Sunday 20th Nov - 11am Holy Communion

Saturday 26th Nov - 10am-2pm Christmas Fayre

Sunday 27th Nov - 11am Advent Sunday Worship

Thursday 1st Dec - 7.15pm Advent Discussion Group

Friday 2nd - 2-4pm Congregational Consultation on Church Building Project

Saturday 3rd Dec - 2-4pm Christmas Song and Cake

Thursday 8th Dec - 7.15pm Advent Discussion Group

Sunday 11th Dec - 3pm Service for those who find Christmas Difficult

Tuesday 13th Dec - 2pm New Horizons' Christmas Party

Thursday 15th Dec - 7.15pm Advent Discussion Group

Saturday 24th Dec - 11.30pm Watchnight Service (with carols from 11.15pm)

Sunday 25th Dec - 10.30am Christmas Day Service

Streaming

Since early on this year, we have been streaming our services online week by week. This means that with some basic equipment, a laptop, PC, iPad or smart phone, people who are not able to join us in person can participate in our worship from the comfort of their homes. It is simply a matter of clicking on the link that you can find on our website – sawg.org.uk If you have any questions about how to access the services do have a word with me.

It would be really helpful in developing the Church's online provision, if those who have watched the stream were willing to give me some feedback on what their impressions. We are

all on a steep learning curve with this and constructive feedback would be invaluable.

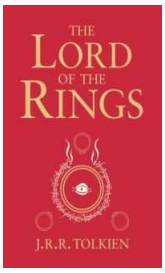
The streaming of services has been possible due to a grant from the Presbytery. Thanks, also, to Nathan and Tony for overseeing the weekly filming. We are always on the look-out for further people to assist with running this service. Please have a word with me if you can help. (AH)

New Horizons

We made a good start to our session with a viewing of the 2022 blockbuster film 'Belfast' in October. On 8th November the Revd Jeliase Mutimbairi, a minister from Zimbabwe, who has recently joined the Church of Scotland ministry, will tell us about his life and ministry. On the 13th December we will be having a Christmas Party – watch this space! All welcome. Meetings begin at 2pm.

Advent Discussion Group

At 7.15pm, on 1st, 8th and 15th December we will be meeting informally to discuss aspects of Christmas in preparation for the annual celebration. All welcome. See the minister for further details.



Tolkien Talk

On 10th November at 7.15pm, Nathan will give a talk entitled The Spirituality of Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings'. All are welcome and there will be time for questions and discussion during the evening.

Warm Spaces

As part of a Churches Together in Berwick project, we are providing a warm space on Tuesdays from 2.30-4.30pm in the Session Room up until the end of November and perhaps beyond. This is a space for those who might struggle to heat their own homes in these difficult times, where they will find a cuppa and some company. They can also charge up phones and other devices.
Whilst the 'Space' is specifically set up for the vulnerable, everyone is welcome, so why not come along and enjoy a social time on a dreich autumn afternoon!

Christmas Song and Cake

On the afternoon of Saturday 3rd December from 2-4pm we are having an informal gathering in the Session Room to sing some favourite Christmas carols and songs, as well as to learn a couple of new ones that we can use in our Sunday worship. There will be tea and eats also, for what will be a good time of socialising and singing. All welcome.

Christmas Fayre – A date for the Diary

Just to remind you all about the Christmas Fayre which this year will be on **Saturday 26th November** between 10am and 2pm. Hopefully, this year we won't have a repeat of storm Arwen to throw a spanner in the works!
It is a great chance to catch up and chat while searching for that elusive present (at bargain prices) for a friend or family member. We will have teas and coffees and some non-alcoholic mulled wine and spiced hot drinks as well as some lovely foodie treats to buy.
As usual there will be the craft stalls full of beautifully knitted/sewed/crafted items ideal for young and old alike.

Little fun stocking fillers, books and of course the bric a brac stall, where there are always bargains to be found.
Plus of course we shall be selling our very own Christmas cards – so don't buy all you need before the Fayre.
Please put the date in your diary and come along. If you would like to help on any of the stalls, then have a word with Rita.

Christmas Postal Service

We will be running our Christmas postal service again this year. This is a very important money earner for us but also a very vital service for our community. The cost of a second-class stamp has increased once again and is now 68p. This will be too expensive for some in our community to afford. We are providing a real affordable alternative.
To run this service, we do need sorters and posties, if you are able to assist in anyway, please speak to Rita. The more helpers we have the easier it is for everyone, "many hands make light work".
Flyers advertising this service will be available in the Church in due course so please collect them and pass on to any of your family or neighbours.

Rita

Christmas Presence

The Christmas Presence run by Churches together over the past few years has been much appreciated by those who have visited it. It has been well supported by churches, including St Andrew's Wallace Green.
Unfortunately, for Churches Together both of the venues we have used in the past have been let to new businesses. Whilst this is good for Marygate and Berwick, it has left us with a problem. Other possibilities have been explored, the search is ongoing, but time is passing and a suitable space is still to be found.
Warm hubs, as run by various groups and churches are great, but don't have exactly what the Christmas Presence had to offer in the way of practical and spiritual help. Quite a number of people came in to put a message on the prayer tree, to get presents wrapped, to buy hand-made cards or just to have a chat in a warm place. Coffee and a mince-pie while finding the right affordable present was a great attraction. (My great nephew appreciated his gift!)
One of the very important aspects of the Presence, however, was the little space where people could, and did, receive prayer and spiritual help from that day's 'chaplain'. There were also leaflets explaining what Christmas is really about.
Please pray that the right place for Christmas Presence will be there somewhere in the centre of Berwick.

I strongly believe that it has an important place in our town at Christmas.
Rena

Flowers

I hope you all enjoy the flowers in Church each Sunday and agree they do brighten the building up. If you wish to book flowers for a specific Sunday, for a special Birthday, occasion or in memory of a loved one then please sign up for one of the Sundays. There will be a rota up in the Session room. All you have to do is drop me a note and donation with any special requests you may have for colours or types of flowers. I shall do my best to comply.

Rita

Buildings Update

Since my last update things have moved on a pace and we now have planning permission for our proposed alterations to the church. We have decided on a set of plans which we feel best suits our needs. The Church is going to be open on the afternoon of **Friday 2nd December from 2pm** to give everyone a chance to view the plans and discuss the plans with the Building Committee. I hope as many of you as possible will take this opportunity to see what we have in mind. We will leave the display up for the Sunday but if you want an in-depth explanation of the plans then please come along.

Our aim has been to modernise the heating with a much more efficient and environmentally friendly system and to make the Church much more flexible. We want our Church to be more comfortable and more user friendly, so that it is well used in the years ahead. However, we want to ensure that we keep the best features of our wonderful building. We look forward to seeing you all and hearing your feedback.

Rita

Fabric Report

St Andrews Wallace Green Church

The 5 yearly high-level inspection carried out earlier this year highlighted a problem with a number of ridge stones. These stones were loose & dangerous due to the deterioration of the mortar beds & joints.
Scaffolding was required to allow our contractor to rake out & then fully repoint the mortar beds & joints. The opportunity was also taken to provide additional stability to the ridge stones by fitting stainless steel cramps.
This inspection also identified that further maintenance works were required sometime in the near future ie stonework on towers showing erosion to mortar beds and joints with accumulation of algae and moss on various areas. Also, sections

of stonework round louvre windows show signs of weather erosion.
A section of the roof which had been damaged by Storm Arwen had emergency works carried out to make the building wind & watertight. The permanent repairs followed with the cost of these works being covered by our building's insurance less our excess.

Manse

Storm Arwen caused a number of trees from the adjacent Berwick Cemetery to fall into the garden demolishing the boundary fence & breaking a few ridge tiles.
Although not covered by our insurance policy, Aviva did pursue the matter with Northumberland County Council who were responsible for the trees. Following protracted negotiations between both parties we were advised that the County Council could not be held liable for the damage which was deemed "an act of God "!!
However, contractors working for the County did remove large sections of the trees leaving the stumps & roots lying across the fence line. Despite involving our local County Councillor, the contractor has only recently returned to remove the stumps & roots.

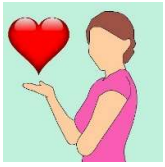
Chris Budzynski

Prayer Group

The Church Prayer Group continues to meet on Zoom at 10.00am on a Saturday morning. This group is open to

everyone and I would be pleased to add any others who are interested, to the weekly email. You are also very welcome to email matters you wish prayer for to either Adam or myself. You contact us by whatever means is easiest for you.
There is also a Prayer Chain where anyone is able to ask for prayer for more immediate situations and emergencies. Please feel free to contact us and the prayer request will be sent out to the group as soon as possible.
If your name isn't on the Prayer Chain list and you would like to be added, then please mention that to me. Prayer does change things. It is not just a blessing to the person prayed for, but also to the person who prayed for them. Prayer is an undervalued tool in most of our lives - but one which really can make a difference. We don't need money to use it, but we do need the willingness to give the time and focus on it

Rena



Keep Fit

The Keep Fit class is going really well. We meet Tuesday mornings 10.00-11.00 with nice, gentle exercises and loads of fun, followed by tea, coffee, biscuits and a good chin-wag! New members are always welcome as there is room for more.

Susan

Harvest Thanksgiving 9th October

“The Earth is the Lord’s and all that is in it….. God makes grass grow for the cattle and plants for folk to cultivate – bringing forth food from the earth: wine that gladdens the hearts of people, oil to make their faces shine and bread that sustains their hearts.” (Ps 104. 14-15)

On Sunday 9th October we gave thanks to God for the harvest. We gave thanks to those who grow and provide our food – the farmers, market gardeners and fishermen.
We thanked all those who work so hard to process and deliver our food.
The church had been beautifully decorated with home grown produce for the service.

We thought about the life cycle of a simple sunflower seed. How such a small seed grows and flourishes with simple nurturing – how something so small provides us with so much.

There was an amazing collection of food and £262 for the Berwick foodbank. This was then delivered by Neil Jordan and Gordon Learmonth to Berwick Community Trust (BCT). There has been an increased demand for the foodbank in September and October and our contribution was greatly appreciated.
(The Trust is happy to accept donations of provisions or money at any point.)

The huge collection of provisions being received at BCT. The money is used to buy fresh food and milk for food parcels. Sarah, at the Food Bank is always grateful to our Church for their ongoing donations and support.

Creation Service

Later that day there was a gathering of all creatures *great and small* in church. This service was held in partnership with Berwick Parish Church and Rev Tom Semple and Adam worked together in perfect harmony. The response to Adam's welcome was a resounding "woof" …… by his own admission, a first!

4th October is the Saint's Day when we remember St. Francis of Assisi, the patron saint of ecology and animals.
It is said that the Saint often sang and preached to birds and other animals praising God's presence in each of them.

Perhaps, the blessing of 17 dogs and a 62-year-old tortoise is not in the job description of either Adam or Tom, one would never have known. By Tom's own admission, things were perhaps a little more chaotic than usual, but, he was sure that Jesus would be quite happy with the outcome.

A time to Remember

November is a time for remembering. November 11th is the day when we stop and think about those who so bravely gave their lives for others in World Wars and many Campaigns since then.
Memories can sustain us through difficult times – they chart our own timeline and make us smile, think, laugh, cry and think about life.

For this edition of the Kirk News, we have been recalling a great collection of memories and stories from distant days …. from Hallowe'en to Christmas past and many thoughts in between.

Some of our memories, thoughts and recollections:

Remembrance

My Grandfather, Tom Stenhouse was killed in action in the First World War. He was sent home from the front line to recover from frostbite and when he recovered, he returned to

the Front Line. It was particularly sad that his wife wrote a letter informing him that they had had a baby boy, my father. It is so sad that this letter crossed with a letter telling her that my grandfather had been killed. He never knew about his son and my father never knew his father. I am sure that this must have happened to many families.
Tom served with the Royal Scots and his name is registered in the Scottish war memorial in Edinburgh Castle.

Many years later I went on a WWI Battlefield Tour with the school where I was working in Reception. We visited the beautifully kept War Cemetery where Tom Stenhouse is buried. We lay daffodils on his grave and the fact that this was a real family member resonated with the young people on the tour. When the school returned the following year daffodil bulbs were planted and much to the delight of my son, when he visited the grave of his Great-grandfather, the daffodils were flowering.

My own father was a Sergeant Major in the Black Watch. He met my mother, who was born in Calcutta to Armenian/Scottish parents. We all left India in 1948, the year after Independence.
My Mother-in-law's Wedding dress was made of parachute silk and is now held by the Berwick Museum.

These wonderful memories were written and shared with Editor by Joy Routledge.

The Horrors of War

Commonwealth War Graves

My first experience of the Horrors of War was when I made the first of many visits I made to the Commonwealth War Graves sites in Turkey. There are 41 allied military cemeteries in the area, but the ones I visited most were in the Anzac area, on the west coast of the Gallipoli peninsula. The main focus in this area is on the Australian and New Zealand forces during the Gallipoli Campaign of 1915.

The whole area is of course quiet now, with very few inhabitants and hardly any traffic. It really is a beautiful and peaceful area, so different from the circumstances in 1915. We could walk from one small cemetery to another, and over the course of several visits, we saw most of them. At the time of one particular visit, probably the first, in October 1982, I was pregnant with my son, Daniel, which made my experience all the more poignant. It was a shock to realise just how many fine young men left their farms and businesses and jobs in Australia to travel halfway around the world to fight for Great Britain. I was in awe of their loyalty and bravery.

One grave of the many stood out for me, however, and I will never forget it. This was the grave of a fifteen-year-old Australian boy, a water carrier to the front line troops. His was an unarmed and dangerous occupation; many died, but his youth marked him out. He had lied about his age to the

recruiters to get into the Army and fight for Britain.

His mother wrote some lines for his headstone: "My son left Australia as a boy but died as a man". These words had a great impact on me at the time and have remained with me ever since. I knew that his mother would never see his grave or the place where he died and I was grateful to her for letting her son give up his life in fighting for a country thousands of miles from his home.

These cemeteries always moved me. They are so well looked after by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and the Turkish staff of gardeners and masons. The graves are tended with love and care and respect. Turkish mothers say that these young men are their sons too, because they died on their land.

On 11th November, I will be remembering these young men and their families, for all of those who gave their lives so that my family could live in a peaceful country.

Jackie Anderson

Some recollections

Although I was born in Thailand, moved to Australia and survived the U-boats en-route by sea to the UK, I have no memories of such adventures – alas!
I cannot expect others to be interested in my life, although there is much to be thankful for.

My husband, a retired URC minister never intended to remember when his parents or his two siblings died. He did, however, always remember their birthdays. This seems a good idea as he would recall the lives of each one with pleasure and gratitude, avoiding sadness and stress of remembering their funerals.

With the Lord's help we can forgive and put behind us sad memories. Even failures can be turned around, for good.
To God be the glory.

Sheila Ritchie

A story of family bibles

We have moved a lot – it's an Army kind of thing. We have lived in some amazing places, made friends all over the country but, we were happy to come back to my hometown and settle down.
I can remember the day we moved into our house, it was just before Christmas 2020 and we were determined to unpack as quickly as possible, so our house would be our home. We are well practised at this and our skills as a double act work seamlessly. That is, until I am distracted and that certainly happened that day. I was unpacking our books – we have quite a few, including an interesting collection of family Bibles.
The tiniest of these, carefully covered in brown paper, was given to Fusilier William Stoddart 4274199 (my dad) in November 1939. The inscription, written by Simeon E Cole (Padre) reads, "The best book to read is the Bible".

My father was captured in June the following year at St. Valery– it was a month after his 21st birthday.
There is a bookmark in St John 15, it is a piece of card torn from something, with pencil writing on it. It says, “Chapter 15 5-16.”
Verse 13: “Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends”.
Sadly, I never had the chance to discuss this level of bravery with my dad, but I felt humbled and moved that such a young man was fortified by “the best book to read.”

On the back inside cover, in microscopic writing are all the days he spent in captivity, starting on 12 June 1940. He eventually came home in April 1945. He lived a long and very happy life.

JGM

Reflections

I became a choirboy in the late 1940s. In our rural parish in Oxfordshire there were a number of annual events that had a powerful effect on my young mind. Not least among these events was Remembrance Sunday. The choir would process out into the churchyard and stand by the War Memorial. The British legion would attend; flags would be lowered, the Last Post would be sounded, and, of course, two minutes’ silence would be observed.

Back in church we would sing, ‘O valiant hearts, who to your glory came’ – a hymn that still evokes an emotional response in me, even though much of it now seems to me to be

nonsense. Back in the 1940s, of course, the war was still a recent memory and many of those who gathered at the War memorial had actually fought in the war, including my own father and could literally remember those who had died.

As the years went by, I became increasingly uneasy about Remembrance Sunday and increasingly unsure about what was really going on as people gathered together on that day. In 1969 a great test came for me as I was ordained and found myself obliged to conduct Remembrance Sunday services, which I did for the next 38 years. I became ever more unsure about what was going on because I observed two things. The first thing was that while it was true that some people who didn't normally come to church would come on Remembrance Sunday, there were other people who *did* normally come to church who did *not* come on Remembrance Sunday.

The second thing that I observed was that if, as I often did, venture to say something in the sermon that might seem to be casting doubt on the real purpose of the day, far from causing offence, people would agree with me, or at least enter into a discussion about what I has said. On one occasion, I said something that I thought was bound to upset somebody but observed a retired colonel vigorously nodding his head in agreement!

The nub of the matter is this. While we carry on remembering people whom we cannot possibly remember, the world is afflicted by endless conflicts, disputes and wars about which we often appear to be indifferent. A better way of remembering those who have died in war would be to work harder at being peacemakers and to encourage governments of the world to do likewise.

Clive Price

November 11th

My earliest recollection of remembrance was witnessing my elder brother and sisters' parade to Church in Dollar, a town in Clackmannanshire, on Remembrance Sunday - they were part of the Boys Brigade and Girls Guildry - I vividly recall them 'marching' in best uniform behind their respective leaders who were proudly walking up front. There were multiple organisations represented in the procession and I recall Church being especially busy that day and our minister, Rev Andrew Hughes, receiving many colourful flags and carefully positioning them around the Church - I also recall how difficult it was as a child to keep quiet for the two minute silence later in the service.

Many years later I was a scout leader in Bahrain - I recall our Beavers, Cubs and Scouts attending a multi-faith act of remembrance in the Awali Church - our numbers were fewer than in Dollar, However, the service followed a similar format - what was notable was that we had children from many different faiths attending that service including several Bahraini children who were Muslim. It was indeed a great privilege as an expatriate in Bahrain to be able to continue worship in the several Churches around the island - so different from the experiences of expatriates in neighbouring countries who were unable to worship openly. I so much value the opportunity and experiences of my own four children growing up in the cross cultural, multi-faith environment of Bahrain - perhaps that partly explains why three out of the four of them continue to live and work overseas.

Today, as a volunteer with the British Red Cross, I am reminded of the wonderful work they do in supporting vulnerable people through conflict - they work extensively throughout the world on multiple projects - some work in war zones and others in support of crisis as a result of the growing number of natural disasters - they work tirelessly in supporting and ensuring the human dignity of people, which forms a core value of the Red Cross - many men and women risk their lives daily in pursuit of this value. Many other voluntary agencies, too numerous to mention, work alongside them in humanitarian work. I have felt immensely proud wearing my Red Cross workwear while attending Remember Sunday services at different times of my volunteer career.

As we approach Remembrance Day, I am also reminded of the continuing efforts of our Armed Forces who day in, day out, work diligently and often anonymously in pursuit of our personal safety - also I reflect on other agencies such as the police, fire services, RNLI, and our health services again to name but a few of the agencies who protect us in our daily lives. I am humbled by their relentless efforts and courage.

Finally I reflect on my own family - some of whom have played their parts in many of the roles described above - some laid their lives down in WW1/WW2 and others have naturally passed on. You are now in your final resting place, more beautiful than any of us can ever imagine - you richly deserve this - rest well and Thank You!

Bill Chalmers

Thoughts on Hallowe'en

I grew up in a tall, thin Victorian terrace house in Botanic Crescent in Glasgow. The house had been purchased by my maternal grandmother (Nana) sometime in the 1920s and had been passed on to my mother in the late 1940s – by there hangs another tale that is for another time.

The house was in a crescent with the Pleasure Garden in front. What an idyllic place in which to grow! I had loads of chums; there must have been around 15 of us between the ages of 3 and 9 who just roamed around in the Pleasure Garden and the Botanic Gardens.

Hallowe'en was good sport! We had lots of neighbours on which to prey. My major memory of Hallowe'en was of a party organised by Mum and Dad. The invitation was on condition that all of the adults must play the game of exhausting my brother (Robert), me and all the other young invitees so we would go to bed early ….. Parents!

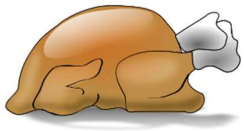
The games included:

- toast spread with treacle suspended on string from the clothes pulley for us to bite bits.
- dooking for apples using our TEETH! None of this luxury use of forks?
- pin the tail on the monster (Dad was good at drawing)

- dressing up in what was close to hand -Mum's dress was a favourite. [One time, Robert (brother) was dressed in his green pixie outfit. This had been made (by Great Auntie Lizzie) for his performance at a children's show some 3 months ago. Mum (and Auntie Bobbie) couldn't remember much of that performance except that, whenever the cast sat down, Robert stood up, and, whenever the cast sat up, Robert stood down! To the day Mum died, she would go into hoots of laughter about that.]

Isn't it great to have such good memories? We all have them. We all store these thoughts and feelings in our hearts which keep us on tract, even when life gets a wee bit too much.

Allison Longbone



Christmas Day

I am sure we are not the only family that has albums full of photos of the family gathered round the Christmas table every year. It's always fun seeing us, as we grew from toddler under the table on a potty (one of the brothers) to teenagers trying not to look too bored, to young and now much older adults with children and grandchildren in tow.

One of the photos of our family which always brings a smile, is while we were in Singapore and there, we all are, in thin summer frocks or tee shirts and shorts (complete with

Christmas cracker hats of course) and are we eating a light salad or rice meal? Of course not! We are gathered round a table groaning under the weight of a huge turkey, complete with all the usual trimmings - goodness knows where my mother got it from! I can only assume the RAF flew in special supplies to keep their families happy. And of course, there was no ice cream for dessert - it was traditional Christmas pudding with brandy sauce! All in 90C heat! The Brits abroad!

Rita

Memories of Christmas

My earliest memory of Christmas was when I was five years old and I got a doll's pram. I can't remember whether I had wanted one or not, but I did know when I was older that my Mum and Dad knew something I didn't. There were going to be two prams in our house!

One of my favourite parts of Christmas later on was standing in Selkirk Square, with lots of others, singing carols around the Christmas tree with the local brass band. There was, and is, something special about carols in the open air. Perhaps it reminds me of the shepherds in the fields hearing the angelic choir in the night.

Christmas Day was the one time in the year that my Mum's extended family got together. We went out for Christmas dinner to a hotel in Lauder. It is nice to have photos of all the cousins together at a time when photographs were few and far between.

Memories from those occasions include defrosting the car windows with lukewarm water and driving back to Selkirk.

The backseat car door was still frozen on getting home and my Dad had to climb over the front seat both getting in and out. Fortunately, he was fit!
My favourite Christmas day memory, however, is coming home from a family get together and my Mum going to put a box of shortbread away in the cupboard under the stairs. She came back with a half-eaten jar of her best homemade raspberry jam. It had the dried pips arrayed down the outside of the jar. The mouse or mice had sucked off the juice and left the seeds! Something had indeed had a good Christmas! This explains why all the jars of jam, chutney and curd I make are tightly sealed with metal lids!

Rena

Remember

I remember coming to Wallace Green Church on a Sunday morning and, after two hymns, leaving to cross over to the Sunday School held upstairs in Wallace Green Church Hall. Three adults led us: Helen, Sheena (Burgon) and Mr White. We needed three adults because the number of children was so large and we were split into three age classes. We returned to the Church just before 12 noon, to join our parents for the final bit of the service.

I remember the Church Hall being used for badminton, dances, etc. Berwick Opera would perform and, on these occasions, it was full for 1-2 weeks.

I remember the Church being heated by cast iron pipes powered from a boiler and coal house in the unseen parts of the building – oh how efficient (not) it was!

I remember Sunday School Advent plays with several dozen children involved and a plethora of lovingly home-made costumes which were really quite spectacular.

I remember Mothering Sunday when each child would give his/her mother a small posy of daffodils.

I remember the Church putting in the present heating system and how much warmer it made the building.

I remember the removal of the 'sheep pen' at the front and the extension to the altar dais. What controversy that caused and how much better it now looks!

I remember christenings when the Church part was more important than the after party.

I remember the controversy when St Andrew's and Wallace Green united and now, we are one and better together.

I remember Communions when 400+ would attend and more in the evening.

Oh for the good old days!
But, I also remember the Church being 'proper' to the point of being cold.

I remember the youth voting with their feet when they could because the Church had not moved on.

I remember we had all these things. They were the legacy of the past. They were the baggage of the past.

The Church of St Andrew's Wallace Green and Lowick is now in our stewardship. It is in difficult times.

Will we step up to the mark? Will we ensure by our fulsome support and encouragement that the next generation will have somewhere to worship? Or, will that generation say:
'Oh, I remember when that used to be a church!

Bryon Longbone

'Remember, remember the fifth of November,
Gunpowder, treason and plot'

Well, that's one way of remembering the date of Bonfire Night! The sight of a poppy in a lapel helps us the remember the eleventh hour of the eleventh day of the eleventh month – Remembrance Day. A day to remember not only our own loved ones, but the many others who gave their life for freedom. The photographs on the mantlepiece of smiling faces helps us to remember the happiness of a particular moment in time. The crayoned scribbles stuck to the pantry door reminds me of growing grandchildren. Summer postcards remind us of our friends - and some places we have never been to. Who can forget acts of love and kindness in times of sorrow? Sights, sounds and smells are all used to trigger memories. But the most poignant symbol is an empty wooden cross. Remember, remember that God loves us, Jesus died for us.

Diana Higham

Spotlight on a local Charity

The Royal British Legion (RBL)

The **Royal British Legion** (**RBL**), formerly the **British Legion**, is a British charity providing financial, social and emotional support to members and veterans of the British Armed Forces, their families and dependants, as well as all others in need.
The Royal British Legion has been supporting Service men and women, ex-serving personnel and their families since 1921. The British Legion was formed on 15 May 1921, bringing together four national organisations of ex-Servicemen that had established themselves after the First World War:

- The National Association of Discharged Sailors and Soldiers
- The British National Federation of Discharged and Demobilized Sailors and Soldiers
- The Comrades of The Great War
- The Officers' Association

The amalgamation of these diverse bodies can be attributed largely to two men: Field Marshal Earl Haig and Tom Lister of The Federation of Discharged and Demobilized Sailors and Soldiers. Lord Haig served as the President of The Royal British Legion until his death.

The Berwick upon Tweed Branch amalgamated into the North Northumberland Branch. The Branch covers an area of approximately 30 miles x 30 miles and has about 100 members.

Tim Cryer was interviewed as part of this focus on the RBL. Tim served in the Royal Navy for 32 years and was the last Branch Chairman. After handing over as Chairman, he took on the role of Poppy Appeal Organiser. He covers an area from Berwick to Cornhill and from the Border to Purdie Lodge in the South, although he did stress that area borders were flexible. He stated that his aim was to give everyone in the area the chance to buy and wear a Poppy. He had been in to some Middle and Senior Schools and that Poppy Packs had been put into the Junior Schools. Whilst the 'tin rattling' is carried out by the cadet organisations he organises around 40 Poppy Wreaths each year including the Wreaths that are laid at the War Memorial on Remembrance Sunday. The Tins and Poppy Appeal raised £14,000 last year.

The Charity gives direct benefit to those who need it, including the recently announced help with fuel bills. Their Central Office grants funds for applications from charities such as SSAFA to assist ex-service men, woman and families in need.

Tim was clear that a number of ex-Service people are genuinely pleased and comforted when people wear poppies because it shows they care!

Keith Montgomery

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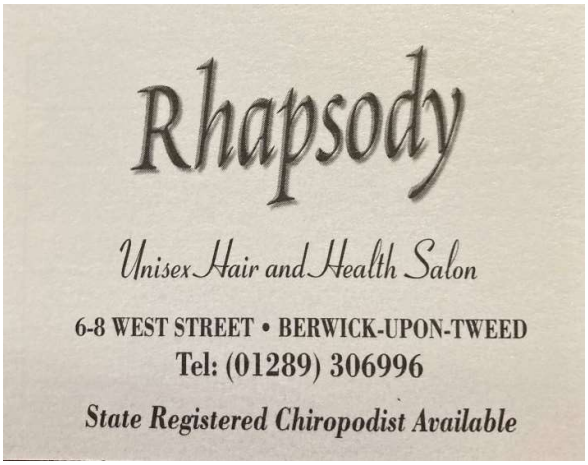
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Notes from the Editor

Many thanks for all of the contributions to the Kirk News, with special thanks for the wonderful memories, thoughts and recollections shared with us in this edition.

Thanks to Di Higham for the front-page photo of Bob Higham Taken by Debra Jerdon.

If there are any ideas or suggestions for future magazines, please contact me. I would love to interview members of the congregation – please do not be shy!

Meanwhile, take time to enjoy this special time of year.

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