Kirk News

St Andrew's Wallace Green & Lowick

February 2023

(Registered Scottish Charity No SC00867)

Minister	Rev Dr Adam Hood	01289 332787
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
Investments	Mrs Sarah Weatherburn	01289 298579
Kirk News	Mrs Joan Montgomery	01289 763151
Keep Fit	Mrs Susan Jordan	01289 306144
Life & Work	Mrs Anne McQueen	07526 223274
New Horizons	Rev Dr Adam Hood	01289 332787
Pastoral Care	Mrs Betty Mathieson	01289 308686
Presbytery	Miss Rita Inglis	01289 307421
Property	Mr Chris Budzynski	01289 305303
Safeguarding	Mr Dale Hall	01289 308944
Walking Group	Mrs Grace Tait	01361 882897
Website	Mrs Allison Longbone	01289 302249
Work Party	Ms Evelyn Mavin	01289 306086

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, Betty Mathieson, Joan Reed, Brian Tait, Grace Tait, Sarah Weatherburn.

Holy Communion

We will be celebrating Holy Communion on Sunday March 12th 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 **Christian Aid Turkey/Syria Earthquake Appeal**.

Congregational Register

Deaths

(*denotes communicant member)
James Duff, 4.11.22
Margery Lindsay, 7.1.23*
Mabel Davidson, 12.1.23*

New Communicant Member

Fiona de Havilland

Minister's Letter

The Christian year comprises a number of high peaks, Christmas, Epiphany, Easter, Pentecost, but none is more important than Easter. It is the Everest of the Christian life! Indeed, so important is Easter, that there is a long period, what we call Lent, that precedes the festival, offering a time when we can prepare ourselves to enter into the richness of Easter. There are many ways in which we can follow a Lenten programme. Coming along to the Lent Lunches, organised by the Churches Together in Berwick, offers one possibility. Some people like to read a Christian book during Lent. Others observe a time of abstinence, perhaps giving up an activity or a favourite food in order to make time for prayer and meditation.

Whatever form our Lenten discipline takes, the purpose will be to help us enter into the story of the first Easter more deeply. It's a tale of elation, intrigue, plots, betrayal, sorrow, weakness, fortitude, suffering, compassion, desolation, confusion and final victory. The meaning of the story cannot be summarised in a few words, but can only be understood by those who, in their imagination, walk alongside Jesus in his week of passion. The sublime joy of the resurrection is only truly known to those who have shared with Christ in his passage through Holy Week, and in the desolation of the cross that gave way to the joy of Easter Day.

Your Friend, Adam

Thanks

Our appreciation to Louise Newton, who has been our long-term cleaner at the church. Thanks for all you have done Louise! Recently, due to our significant structural financial deficit, the Kirk Session regretfully came to the conclusion that we could no longer afford to pay a cleaner. We are grateful for Louise's understanding in this difficult circumstance. (AH)

Pastoral Group

Recently, we had a meeting with those who are interested in visiting housebound members of the congregation, and others who would appreciate regular contact from the church. This was a very encouraging occasion with ten people in attendance and there is to be a further meeting to discuss the project on 16th March at 7.15pm. Do come along if are interested. Please have a word with me if you want further information. (AH)

Membership

Adam would welcome enquiries from anyone who would like to join the membership roll of the congregation. Membership formalises a commitment to the congregation and our mission and allows for involvement in congregational decisions and leadership of the church. Though, of course, all are welcome to participate in any and all of our activities regardless of whether they are formally members or not.

For your calendar

Thursday 9th March - 12-1.20pm, Lent Lunch, Catholic Church

Sunday 12th March - 11am, Holy Communion

Tuesday 14th March - 2pm, New Horizons: Revd Clive Price

Thursday 16th March - 12-1.20pm, Lent Lunch, SAWG

Thursday 16th - 7.15pm, Pastoral Group Meeting

Saturday 18th - 10.30am-12.30, Spring Clean in Church

Tuesday 21st - 1.30pm, Easter Film: 'Jesus Christ Superstar'

Thursday 23rd - 12-1.20pm, Lent Lunch, Baptist Church

Saturday 25th - 2-4pm, Song and Cake - Sing-a-Long, SAWG

Tuesday 28th - 1.30pm, Easter Film

Thursday 30th - 12-1.20pm, Lent Lunch, Salvation Army

Wednesday 5th April - 7pm, Dr Nathan Hood, 'J R R Tolkien and the Hope of Easter' Talk, SAWG

Thursday 6th April - 7.15pm, Maundy Thursday worship

Friday 7th April - 10.45am, Good Friday March of Witness from the church, followed by act of worship at old Advertiser building, 11am

Friday 7th April - Good Friday Worship, 7pm, SAWG

Sunday 9th April - Easter Worship on Spittal Beach, 7.30am, followed by breakfast at St John's, Spittal.

Sunday 9th April - Easter morning worship, 11am

Tuesday 11th April - New Horizons: Music by Eclectica

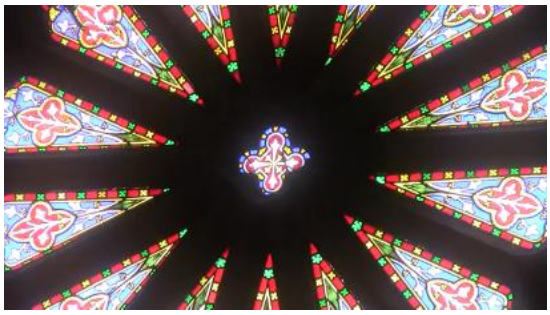
Monday 24th April - 6.30pm, Kirk Session

Streaming

Last month marked a year since we first started streaming services online. Initially, they were a follow on from Adam's use of videos during the lockdowns. Since then, every week either Tony or I have set up and run the livestream, sending out the Sunday service online live and as a recording. I know that many of you have found it helpful and it has been a real pleasure to serve the church in this way.

One of the things I've enjoyed about streaming is getting to see the beauty of the church building. The video cameras we use can zoom in and out, allowing for closeups of the windows and architecture around us on a Sunday morning. The video can show us in more detail the bright colours and magnificent designs that we wouldn't necessarily

notice. The circular window behind the pulpit has at its centre rings of yellow, red, and green, united in a cross. As Adam has been preaching on the book of Exodus the last few weeks, it has been fun showing the stunning depiction of Moses found on the back window above the gallery. The intricate craftsmanship is amazing: Moses stands with the tablets of stone which have inscribed upon them the Ten Commandments – in Hebrew!



The Sunday livestreams are a great way to take be a part of our congregation when you can't make it on a Sunday. Both livestreamed and recorded, they can be watched at any time during or after the service. Every week Adam provides the link in an email, and if you click on the link you will be taken to the stream webpage. You can also access the stream through the homepage of our website (www.sawg.org.uk) If you would like any help in accessing the stream, please contact Adam by either giving him a ring or by email and we can arrange a way for you to watch the livestream. Thank you for your continued support – it is very much appreciated. (Nathan)

New Horizons

Our 2023 meetings have been very successful. A varied and excellent 'Scottish Afternoon' was enjoyed in January with the participation of several of the congregation and February saw a pictorial presentation by Linda Bankier on the developments within Berwick from 1952-2022. Numbers have been good, with Linda's talk drawing around 90 people – it was lovely to welcome friends old and new to the church. Our programme continues on March 14th with a talk by Revd Canon Clive Price on his experiences during his ministry and the visit of the Eclectica Music Group on the 11th April. Gatherings begin at 2pm. ALL WELCOME.

Easter Films & Events

We plan to show **two Easter films** in the church on Tues 21st and 28th March both beginning at 1.30pm. On the 21st we will show the rock musical 'Jesus Christ Superstar'. The title of the second film has not been confirmed as yet, but will be advertised well before the event.

On Sat 25th March@2-4pm there is a chance to sing favourite Easter songs and learn one or two new ones. These **Song and Cake afternoons** always prove to be very enjoyable – why not come along and join in the fun.

On Wed 5th April@7pm in the church (Holy Week) **Nathan** will be following up his successful talk in November 2022, by offering a presentation on 'J J Tolkien and the Hope of Easter'.

On **Maundy Thursday**, 6th April@7.15pm there will be worship including Holy Communion. And on **Good Friday** there is worship@7pm.

Easter Day begins with the Churches Together early morning service on Spittal Beach@7.30am, followed by breakfast at St John's Anglican church, Spittal. Our Easter worship then continues at 11am in SAWG.

Tea and Chat

What began life as a Warm Space to help those who struggle to keep warm in the winter, has evolved over the last few months into a Tea and Chat Tuesday, 2-4pm. This has been a space for friends, old and new to gather and share some chat and laughter over a cuppa and a bit of cake. This has been much appreciated by those who have come along and my thanks to all who have overseen the gatherings. We're not sure, as yet, whether we will be continuing with this into the spring, but information will be shared as soon as possible.

Spring Clean

We are going to have a spring clean of part of the church on Saturday 18th March, 10.30am - 12.30. This is chance for all who are able to get involved in keeping our lovely building spic and span. Please come along to help if you can. (AH)

Church Cleaning

As you will have heard from Adam, we have unfortunately had to lose our Church cleaner. As a result, we now have a voluntary rota in place. If you feel you could spare an hour once every few months, then please feel free to lend a hand and put your name down on the rota. I can explain exactly what is needed and where the equipment is. The aim is to do the basics of the toilets and kitchen every week and other areas when there is time. We shall then top up the main cleaning now and again with a mass spring clean. So please consider if you can assist – the more people that sign up the less everyone must do.

Thank you.
Rita

Presbytery

On the 1st of January, Duns Presbytery ceased to exist and we became part of the new Lothian and Borders Presbytery. This includes what was Duns, Melrose & Peebles, Jedburgh and Lothian Presbyteries. On the 21st of January we all met up together in Dalkeith for our first meeting. It was a lovely day, very positive and forward looking and a great chance to start to get to know each other. Our meetings will be a mixture of in person and online meetings so that we aren't always travelling. It is important that we periodically come together so we can get to know each other.

We have still to implement our Duns area plan where we will be sharing Ministers. There remain parts where we haven't managed to get full agreement required as yet. I am sure we will get there shortly. This is particularly important as Ayton and District no longer has a Minister with Norman Whyte's retirement last year. David Taverner of Coldstream and District will also be retiring at Easter this year. It will be become more difficult for those Districts to operate without a Minister in place.

In preparation for these prospective changes (when we will have a Minister only one day a week) you will note that the readers in church are starting to do a bit more. These changes will continue in the months ahead.

All in all, it is going to be an exciting time going forward.

Rita

Church Building

It was lovely to see so many of you come to the consultation meeting in December when we showed the proposed plans for alterations to the building. I hope you all had your queries and concerns answered. If anyone missed the meeting, but would like to know more, then do speak to me. I will do my best to answer any questions. I am delighted that so many of you were very positive.

The architects are currently getting quotes and prices for the works. We will use this information to look for builders to complete the works and to seek grant funding.

I will continue to keep you informed as we progress our plans.

Rita

Flowers

It is that lovely time of year when we have the cheery bright yellow of the daffodils and the beautiful, coloured tulips brightening up the Church. Unfortunately, they do cost money to buy. Please, if you feel you can contribute to the flower fund, we would be very grateful. If you would like to remember someone special on a specific date just let me know and we can organise this for you.
Rita

Christmas Fundraising

Thank you all for your support in the run up to Christmas. Our **Christmas Fayre** was extremely well attended and we raised £2091. This is a magnificent total which is just short of our best ever total in 2019. There was a brilliant buzz in the Church with a lot of visitors and first timers. Everyone seemed to have a really good time and picked up some amazing bargains for Christmas presents. A big thank you to all who helped setting up, making drinks, manning stalls, baking and clearing up afterwards – we couldn't do it without you all. Our card postal service raised £490 which was also great. A big thank you is due to all the sorters and posties who braved icy weather, the very strange numbering system

round some of the town's estates and even addresses that don't exist at all!!

A big thank you to all for their hard work and for all of you who used the service. It is a much-appreciated alternative to Royal Mail especially during the strikes.

Rita

Christmas Presence

It is lovely to be able to report that the Christmas Presence was once again able to go ahead, although with two main differences. This time our venue was on the ground floor of the Guild Hall, which gave us the central location we were looking for. We were very grateful for the provision of this space which gave us the facilities we needed. The other big difference was that we were open through January too, although starting later and finishing earlier in the day. This provided a warm space, and there were several regulars, including a dog. (I'm not aware that bones were provided though!) As in the past we had a number of holiday makers who particularly appreciated being in a building which was so much part of the town's history.

As always, we were very grateful for all the donations of money, coffee, biscuits, cleaning materials. We also had presents suitable for any time of the year, as well as all those specifically for Christmas. We had less space to display things. This meant that there was lots of re-arranging of items so that everything had a chance to be seen. There were handmade Christmas cards, and the present wrapping

table saw some very busy days. Anyone at a loose end could put a piece or two into the on-going jigsaw - which did get finished.

Once again, we were able to provide designated chaplains who were able to get alongside people and simply chat or listen to any worries that they had. One of the highlights of being involved, even when walking round with a disinfectant spray, was the opportunity to chat to those who came in. Once again, disinfectant featured highly as we tried very hard to keep the building safe and clean. Unfortunately, my enthusiasm for this occupation was left at the door when I went home!

We do thank God for His provision of the building, and the finance to heat it. We thank those who gave such a lot of time and energy to head the project up. We also thank all those who helped out in so many ways. Finally, thanks for all those who donated to make the Christmas Presence and The Presence the blessings that they undoubtedly were.

Rena

News from your Treasurer

Hello everyone, I hope you all have come through the worst of the winter unscathed. Spring is definitely on its way with the snowdrops in bloom and the daffodils poking their heads through the turf. Spring is a time of hope and a time to look forward to what hopefully will be a positive future.
2022 has gone and is well and truly behind us and if you are like me, you will not be sad to see the back of it. The Church finances in 2022 were a mixed bag of results. There were encouraging and positive signs towards income. However, high levels of expenditure on the upkeep of our buildings and a poor performing stock market hit us badly. I will give further details at the annual meeting in March. Together we go ahead in 2023 and regretfully we are faced with more considerable expenditure on our buildings which will have to be funded from reserves built up in the past. These reserves are quickly decreasing and won’t last forever.

What I would appreciate you all to do during 2023 is to consider and review your level of giving to the Church. It is important we keep increasing our total income. Circumstances for no two people are the same and it is very much each to their own.
A very easy method of giving is to donate directly through the banking system. This ensures a regular donation from you working its way to the Church. This can work alongside the offering envelopes or if you choose, replace the envelopes completely. Modern online banking allows you to be in full control of the transaction. Amounts can change month to month are dictated by your own circumstances. Payments can be stopped and restarted by you whenever you wish.
If anyone would like to ahead with this, please contact Rita or I for further details and we will be glad to help.
Thank you for your continued support.

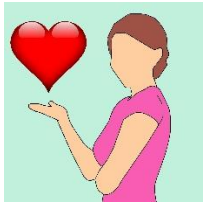
Brian Tait

St Andrews Wallace Green Walking Group

In 2022 the Walking Group had its first full year since the dreaded lockdown. All the old faces retuned heartily, and we found one new permanent member and had guest appearances from a couple of gentlemen on occasions. Regular attenders can be maximum of 10 but numbers average at about 8.
The winter walks are done locally and based on staying on footpaths for sound underfoot conditions. In the summer more licence is given to where we walk but a safe route is always planned.

The summer walks included visits to the Hirsel, Duns, Norham, Cheswick and Paxton House. One of the highlights of the summer was a walk around East Ord loaning ending up for tea and cake in the garden of one of the walkers, where a lot of the night was spent chatting.
In the winter months the group meets on a Thursday afternoon at 2pm in the Church. The walk is roughly one hour long, maybe a little longer if the weather is kind. Tea, coffee and cakes is always had at the end of the walk back in the Church.
In the summer season which will start on the first Thursday in April the group will meet at 6pm in the Church and enjoy the fellowship. Walks can be a little longer depending on the weather. The summer season lasts until the last Thursday of September and to bring the curtain down the group go for a fish and chip tea or meal of their choice.
The group is always looking for new recruits. Attendance is at everyone's discretion and can be as often and as regular as you like. If any more information is required, or anyone has any questions please get in contact with me or Brian.

Grace Tait



Keep Fit

The Keep Fit Class meet Tuesday mornings 10.00 – 11.00 with nice gentle exercise followed by tea, coffee biscuits and putting the world to rights.

New members welcome to join the fun and fellowship.

Susan

Our focus for this part of the first Kirk News of 2023 is about welcoming the new year and all that lies ahead of us. Perhaps, it is time to slow down and reflect on the beauty of nature and the simple things in life that surround us without really being noticed.
Springtime is around the corner. Already the mornings are lighter, the afternoons longer and plants are nudging their way through the soil. The site of beautiful snowdrops and crocuses is a sure sign that Winter is on its way out.
At times, it can be difficult to get away from the responsibilities of our day, but however much or little time we have, there will always be a way to get back to nature even if only for a short while. Being outside is a natural antidote for the hurly-burly of everyday life.

Come to the woods, for here is rest. There is no repose like that of the green deep woods.

John Muir

Well, that's what the lady said and that's what the lady wants but which New Year?

I could talk about the riotous entertainment and drunken revelry I enjoyed on Hogmanay or that I was in bed and sound asleep by 10:30 that evening. One of these is, of course, correct and the other a figment of my imagination. You may decide which.

I could give you a lengthy discourse on the non-Gregorian calendar New Year still celebrated, I believe, by the Orthodox Church. Perhaps not!

I could mention the financial year-end that has just been concluded in our business. This is something which does focus our minds considerably in the latter part of every January.

I could mention that, a week or so ago, my wife and I were away to visit a trade show and that marked the start of another year and another season of such buying trips and events.

I could speculate that perhaps our lady editor wants a discourse on the Christian New Year. We have now passed from Epiphany and are moving forward towards Lent, Holy Week and Easter. Surely a cycle of such events for another year.

I could mention the Chinese Lunar New Year and the Year of the Rabbit, Rat, Tiger (or whatever it is) that has since been and gone. I haven't seen any dragon dances going on anywhere in Berwick so my contribution to such things is very limited. All I know is that the local Chinese restaurant has been closed for a period of time.

I could mention Up Helly Aa and the festivities in the Shetlands but, bluntly, I had to look up how to spell it so my knowledge of such an event is, clearly, not that of an expert!

So, what am I supposed to talk, write, or think about? I don't know.

Help!

Confused_of_Berwick.com

Hogmanay

Our family tradition is this. At the first stroke of midnight, you take a handbell to the backdoor, open it and ring out the Old Year. You then run to the front door, open it and ring in the New Year. You must do this before the clock has finished striking twelve! We then recite together –

May the best you've ever seen be the worst you'll ever see.
May the moose ne'er leave yer ginal wi' a tear drap in its ee.
May ye keep just hale and herty til ye're auld enough tae dee.
May ye aye be just as happy as I wish ye now tae be.

Diana Higham

January

January is a dark month and most of us prefer light to darkness.

A new born baby turns its head to the light. On a bright day, we can look around us and marvel at God's creation.

But light also shows up in the places that need cleaning. Years ago, it was the tradition that women scrubbed their doorsteps and cleaned their windows before the new year came in.
Darkness has long been associated with evil. Much crime is committed at night. People who want to hide will use 'the cover of darkness'. We talk of 'dark deeds' and being 'kept in the dark'. But, we can give praise and thanks to God who doesn't want us to 'stay in the dark'.
Some of the Christmas gifts came with instruction – before using, after using, storage, safety and handy hints.

Everything NEW has come with a list of do's and don'ts.
What about the NEW year? Surely, it's also a wonderful gift that should be taken care of!
Candles aren't just for Christmas either……light one this new year and think of it as a parable.

Burning itself out it gives light to others. Christ gave himself for others and he calls us to give ourselves. Light a candle this new year and see it as a symbol – of love and hope, of light and warmth.
Jesus said: "I have come as light into the world that whoever believes in me may not remain in darkness."

What a wonderful message for a world in turmoil and darkness.
Don't stay in the dark…… light a candle.

Diana Higham

Reflections

We are living in an increasingly complex world with so many issues taking up our thoughts. There's the current economic situation fuelling so many uncertainties, political unrest at home and in many countries abroad, a host of recent natural disasters and multiple human made disasters too, to mention a few. These thoughts can often sap our energy - they can become all encompassing - however we have our spirit and our faith - in my experience, these very simple things comprise the antidote to cope with busy times.

Yesterday, I was in Berwick and in between chores I took a break and parked at the sea front at Spittal. It was a beautiful morning, just above freezing, however as I walked along in the full morning sun, it did not feel cold - quite the opposite. My heart was lifted when I saw the cafe chairs back out on the esplanade - a sure sign of Spring approaching! The tide was a fair way out and there were many folks walking along the beach as the rippling surf broke behind them. Kids were playing and dogs were having the time of the life bounding in and out of the sea. As I walked further along the promenade, folks greeted me with a smile or a 'Good Morning' - not one person walked by and failed to acknowledge me. At the far end of the promenade a small group of 'regulars' congregated on and around a bench, most likely putting the world to right, or trying to. They were animated and clearly enjoying the lovely morning around them.

I found a quiet spot, reflected on the wonderful picture in front of me and committed it to my memory bank for the undoubted busy week ahead of me. I also spoke with God to say thanks for this wondrous picture and had some quiet prayer time.

On the way back to the car, I took a few photos of spots I'd spent on the sea front with my grandchildren during last summer and pinged them off to family in far flung places - the wonders of technology - not long afterwards a reply said 'these pictures warmed our hearts and we can't wait to be back in the summer' - something very much to look forward to.

And finally, I came across a dog watering ‘station’, where some kind soul puts fresh water out for thirsty dogs passing by to enjoy. Such a simple act of kindness. Which leads me to consider what simple act of kindness can I show today? It’s the little things we can do for others, that make such a difference when coping in complex times.

Bill Chalmers

The Lighthouse

Dear Lord,
Help us to remember the symbols of the lighthouse as it provides guidance for safe passage to sailors – hope, security, strength and uprightness.
In John 8:12 Jesus said, “ I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness but will have the light of life.”
May our love for YOU shine through the darkness and help us to stand strong, faithful and hopeful as the waves rage round the world

in 2023 – war drought, famine, flood, fire and daily fears for the future dealing with climate change, strikes and our personally worries. We give our thanks for our church family and its support and trust that the Church will keep the light burning brightly in this time of change.
Amen

Maureen Kirkaldy

Signs of Spring

These beautiful images have been captured by Rena.

Easter in Seville

My family and I have been visiting Spain regularly for over twenty years, since my parents moved to a small village, called Casarabonela, inland from the Costa Del Sol in Andalucía. Over the years, we've been privileged to happen upon several small ferias (festivals), and other celebrations. Most were secular but it was the Easter events that fascinated me the most. We've seen events in Casarabonela, Malaga, and a small glimpse of Semana Santa (Holy Week), in Seville.

It's difficult to overstate how much I love Seville. While Casarabonela feels like a home from home, and Malaga is a working class yet elegant place for worthwhile day trips, Seville feels like another world. The city is the most beautiful I've ever been to. The architecture harks back to days when money was no object to the merchants and nobles who received the goods that flowed in from South America every day. The barrios (neighbourhoods) are quirky and workaday. The parks teem with parrots and pony rides, and there is at least one bar on every street. The bars are the not the drinkers' dens that they might be in other countries but places where people pop in for a coffee in the morning or a fino (dry sherry) after work, and where families take their children, late at night, to listen to a flamenco singer lamenting his lover who ran away to Columbia.

Celebrations

Back in 2019, in preparation for my 50th birthday and our Silver Wedding Anniversary, in 2020, we booked a trip to Seville. 2020 happened and the hotel we had booked kindly offered to carry the booking over to the following year. It was 2022 before we were able to, finally, make the journey. By that time, we had decided to go by train, so, ten days before Easter, we hopped on the train in Berwick, and after a night in Paris, and two nights in Barcelona, we arrived in the Andalucian capital.

Semana Santa is a time of almost constant activity in a city that, even in normal times, seems rarely to sleep. We saw so many processions during Semana Santa that we lost count. There were some that we knew we wanted to see but often we just had to accept that we were stuck in a crowd and that we would be seeing what we saw, or not.

A Sevillian Semana Santa Procession

Each church within a certain radius of the cathedral (Catedral de Santa María de la Sede), processes its two ‘pasos’ to the cathedral and back to the home church. A paso is a platform carrying scenes of either Christ’s Passion or Mary’s grief. Covered in gold (for Christ) and silver (for Mary), the pasos carry carved, lifelike, and life-size, wooden figures. The pasos with Mary feature only her or her and her Son. The pasos with figures of Christ are arranged in scenes from His Passion with as many as thirteen figures.

The scenes and wooden sculptures on the pasos are affecting in their realism. Long recognised as works of art in the Sevillian tradition, the figures are carved from wood and painted. Some are hundreds of years old. Some of the figures of Mary have additions like crystal tears to accentuate the realism and to illustrate her grief, and she is always dressed in the most beautiful, embroidered robes.

As the pasos leave their home church, they might be accompanied by music, a choir, or simply silence. The huge crowds gathered to see them emerge will applaud as they see them slide, seemingly effortlessly, through the doorway. Santa María de la Esperanza Macarena is one of the most popular images in the city and thousands gather at midnight on Holy Thursday to see her emerge (people begin gathering before 10pm). As she appears in the doorway of the

Basilica de la Macarena, surrounded by a cloud of incense, people shout “guapa!” or “beautiful”, cheer, and weep. From a balcony opposite the Basilica, a woman sings a saeta (an improvised song) praising the Virgin and commiserating with her in her grief.

Each paso is accompanied by as many as 3000 people. One procession we watched from beginning to end, took an hour and a half to pass. The people taking part are organised by brotherhoods (many women are members now) and are dressed according to their ‘rank’. Some are the famous nazarenos, who wear the pointed hood (capirote), altar boys, organisers, and penitents carrying large wooden crosses, who wear the capirote but without the pointed hat. Each brotherhood dresses its members in certain ways and in distinct colours. The age range of the participants is impressive, from two-year-olds, upwards.

As the processions pass, if you look interested enough, some of the nazarenos will hand you a tiny photograph of the figure on their paso or a small sweet.
The pasos, are two metres (seven feet) high and can weigh as much as 2,000 kg (4,400 lbs). About forty men called costaleros carry each paso, hidden behind a velvet curtain. They practice year-round for this incredible task. Each paso is carried by several teams which take turns so that the men can rest. It’s common to round a corner during processions and come across a team taking a break, sitting on the ground, smoking, and glugging bottles of water. We saw a number go into restaurants to use the toilet and were given free drinks and food; considering the effort and strength that goes into their task, not to mention the life-long injuries some suffer, they deserve it!

The crowds gathered can be as interesting as the processions themselves. Many people in Seville dress in their best clothing for Easter week but especially for Holy Thursday and early on Good Friday (Madrugada). Devout women wear black dresses, a mantilla (a

lace veil) over a large hair comb called a peineta, and low heeled, black, court shoes. Younger people dress in suits and ‘going out’ dresses. It’s quite moving to see the young people openly demonstrating their faith with reverential silence as processions move by, even if they were horsing around a few moments beforehand.

As the pasos move through the narrow streets of the city, they must negotiate balconies, streetlights, tight corners, and other obstacles. The costaleros, below the pasos, perform these backbreaking and complicated manoeuvres with aplomb, guided by an overseer (capataz). The crowds clap and cheer their appreciation of the effort and the pasos continue through the streets, moving as if under their own power.

The photos I took really don’t do Semana Santa justice. Without the smell of the incense and candles, the haunting music in the narrow streets or the heavy silence of a devout mass of people, it’s not possible to convey the atmosphere that envelopes the city during Semana Santa.

Heading Home

After our week in Seville, we took another train, north to Madrid, to catch a plane back home. In Madrid, we saw no signs of Easter but we did visit the Liria Palace (Palacio de Liria), the **Madrid residence of**

the Dukes of Alba and of Berwick (yes, Berwick-upon-Tweed) but I'll keep that story for another time.

Terri Bearhope

Spotlight on a local Charity

B.A.R.K. short for Berwick Animal Rescue Kennels is a registered charity and is active and growing in our local area. BARK provides temporary refuge for unwanted and stray domestic animals. Wherever possible, the aim is to re-home the animals. The guests come from both north and south of the border, in general within about 60 miles of the kennels.

When I visited Jan Ross, who manages the kennels, she told me that the current residents include cats, dogs, rabbits, gerbils, parakeets, a parrot and a snake – a most eclectic mix of animals great and small, noisy and quiet!

BARK has had a presence in Berwick for many years starting when Mrs Youngman ran kennels from Ancroft. It was clear that a bigger space was going to be needed and in 2000 land was leased on The Ramparts Business Park to build kennels. Since then, through the generosity of so many people BARK has cared for hundreds of animals giving them the second chance that they need to live a long and happy life.

Jan and her team at the kennels are amazing. Her knowledge, wisdom and understanding of the needs of the animals under her care (and their humans) is outstanding. She knows exactly what to say and how to deal with very many sad and difficult situations. Having to give up a much-loved pet, for whatever reason can be a difficult decision. They also help and support all animals who are to be fostered or adopted making sure the fit is perfect. A family from Shetland fell in love with one lucky dog, they made six visits to BARK before adopting and the outcome was extremely happy for the two legged and four legged members of that newly extended family.

Sadly, the current economic climate means that some families are no longer able to care for their pets. The rush of people to take on a dog in Lockdown has become the reality of caring for a pet once people are back at work.

As it says on the notice board in the entrance of the kennels: "Rescue dogs aren't broken; they've simply experienced more life than other dogs. If they were human, we would call them wise. They would be the ones to tell stories to write, the ones dealt a bad hand who had responded with courage. Don't pity a rescue dog. Adopt one. And be proud to have their greatness by your side."

You don't need to rush to the kennels for a dog, but when you are Spring cleaning or tidying up your wardrobe….. pop some items into a bag and hand them into the BARK shop on Marygate. A random act of kindness that will make a huge difference.

An afternoon with Ian Hannah

Q and A with Ian

Ian Hannah had a lifetime on the buses. Other than a period of time doing National Service, Ian's working life was spent working for the Eastern Scottish Bus Company.

What brought you to Berwick-upon-Tweed?

We moved here in 1974 when I was promoted to Depot Inspector. This meant a move from a much bigger depot near Edinburgh where I had been a bus driver.
My new job was in management and my late wife, Irene, was very happy in Spittal. It was a great place to settle with our family of three boys.

Tell me about your life before Berwick.

I was born in Roslyn, just outside Edinburgh. Like most young men at that time I had a period of time doing National Service.
I trained in Oxford and served in Egypt, Suez and Hong Kong. I was part of the Royal Army Medical Corps, Field Ambulance working as a Discharge Clerk.

What happened next?

I was working shifts as a bus driver and it was through my job that I met my wife, Irene. It was actually my future mother-in-law who set it all up by asking me to their house for tea. The rest is history! We were married in 1958 and celebrated our Golden Wedding in 2018.

Tell me about your life on the buses.

I could actually drive a bus before I could drive a car!
It was a great life, full of companionship and like-minded people. We were always on standby to help in Rail emergencies. It was not unusual for me to knock on a bus driver's door through the night if a bus was needed at short notice. I even had to drive a bus to Berwick Infirmary once when a passenger became unwell (but, that's another story!)

What happened when you eventually retired from your working life?

I retired in 1997 and continued to keep busy. I did a lot of the cooking at home as my wife's health wasn't great. I delivered Meals on Wheels for 15 years and I joined the Probus Club – often talking to them about my hobbies and interests.
We took the opportunity to travel and spent many a happy holiday in Spain and by the time this is published, Ian will have recently returned from a week in his favourite hotel in Benidorm.
I looked after my wife, Irene, who sadly died 5 years ago.

It was at that time that I started to attend St. Andrew's Wallace Green on a regular basis. I was made to feel incredibly welcome by the Minister and Church members and that meant a great deal to me. I really enjoyed the welcome and it has become a very important part of my life.

How do you keep busy?

I enjoy keeping in touch by email and FaceTime with family and friends. I still like to travel, I go to Probus and I attend Church.

I can tell you that Ian still bakes a very good piece of shortbread! My thanks to Ian for taking the time to speak to me and I hope he will forgive any inaccuracies in his story.

JGM

World Day of Prayer

The annual World Day of Prayer Service takes place in St. Cuthbert's RC Church, Ravensdowne on **3rd March at 2pm.**

All Welcome

The Service this year has been prepared by Christian women in Taiwan.

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Notes from the Editor

Many thanks for all of the contributions to the Kirk News, with special thanks for the thoughts about this New Year and all of the things we need to be thankful for.

Thanks to Rena Telfer for her beautiful photographs.

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!

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