

INVERKIP CHURCH NEWSLETTER SUMMER 2022





Please continue to collect your used stamps to support The National Evangelical Synod of Syria and Lebanon (NESSL) and their pastors.

In response to the financial collapse in the country, the pastors in Syria and Lebanon initiated in 2021 a scheme where they gave half of their salary to establish a relief programme as an expression of support to the neediest families around their congregations. NESSL is a partner church of the Church of Scotland. The financial situation in the Synod has affected their ability to pay pastors salaries. Despite this, pastors are reaching out to the needy in their congregations in a sacrificial way.

Please pass on your used stamps to Joyce Brown, leave them at Church Door, or in the Church Hall.

INTERIM MODERATOR



Those who say ‘the sky’s the limit’ are, frankly, just lacking in imagination! This is my last note to you as your interim moderator and in the short time I’ve been involved with Inverkip I have been so mightily impressed at all that goes on – and more importantly – how much is done by everyone I’ve met.

We have our worries and our woes, of course. The world is still a troubled place, with the war in Ukraine dragging on and so many concerned about the state of the country, and the church is in a precarious place as we await the Presbytery Plan which will outline which congregations will be allowed to call a minister, which will need to unite, which will close and which buildings will be retained.

Surely, however, when Jesus said he came to give us ‘life in all its fullness’ he meant that we were to genuinely work hard at enjoying it, even in the midst of our woes. My last Kirk Session meeting could have been a night of sad farewells, as I took my leave of that small but wonderfully energetic and resourceful elders. Instead, it was a night of laughter and hope – and a small party! (may I say, I have never seen a meringue that big in my life! And may I say a huge ‘thank you’ for the kind gifts.)

Now, I can be sad because I’m hanging up my dog collar as a parish minister and will no longer be your interim moderator, or I can thank God for all that goes on in Inverkip – and all that WILL go on there. And so, I thank God, and I thank you for your fellowship over this past year or so. Thank you indeed!

Aim for the stars – and you might just reach the rooftops!

Excessive Blessings!

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white rectangular background. The signature appears to be 'Alan' written in a cursive, slightly stylized font.

PASTORAL ASSISTANT

Lynsey Graham

Summer is here and it is with cautious optimism that we are wearing face masks less and being able to see each other properly and sing out and worship God the way He intended us to! Praise God for that!

During Holy Week many of us succumbed to the dreaded Covid-19. To prevent spreading the virus to my daughter I decided to quarantine in my bedroom for the first week. My 'week' of quarantine actually turned into 40 calendar days off sick from my NHS job when I took some nasty post-viral symptoms from around day 8!

It was during that time I discovered the word 'Quarantine' literally means 'Forty Days' and was the number of days ships used to isolate in harbours before passengers could go ashore, during the time of the plague.

This was interesting as I was writing a sermon on The Ascension which takes place 40 days after the Resurrection and I was looking into the significance of the number 40 throughout the Bible.

The typical pregnancy in humans lasts 40 weeks and is the exact number of 'winks' suggested for the perfect nap in Dr William Kitchiner's 1821 guide 'The Art of Invigorating and Prolonging Life'.



Lots of Biblical characters go through their own 40 year or 40 day periods of isolation, testing, trials, relying fully on God and, finally, fulfilling God's will.

I am hopeful that my own set back will produce similar fruits in time, I'm a great believer in lived experience and when we go through difficult times we can relate to those God calls us to help. The word Compassion literally means 'to suffer with' and we have all been through things in life that make us better equipped to comfort and support those in need.

So as the seasons change, the academic year ends, courses and exams are over, we say thank you and farewell to our lovely Interim Moderator Rev Alan, we look ahead and wonder what the future holds for us here at Inverkip Parish Church with the assurance that we will help and support one another whatever happens.

“ Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble, with the comfort we ourselves receive from God “

2 Corinthians 1: 3-4

Lynsey

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SESSION CLERK

Ewen Cameron

Rory and I have had a lovely few days in The Faroes. We have been amazed at the number of Churches that are in use and found out that in a population of 50000, 40000 attend Church (Lutherans) and 5000 (Plymouth Brethren). Our host had brought us some fresh salmon to cook as all shops are closed on the Sabbath. We have spotted many different birds and Rory saw puffins for the first time. I was amazed that there are so many tunnels linking the small islands. One we visited was



11km long and we were underground for 10 minutes driving at 60km an hour and it has a roundabout in it. What fantastic engineering skills for such a small nation.

We missed the Kip Fest but have seen the photos and are very pleased it went so well.

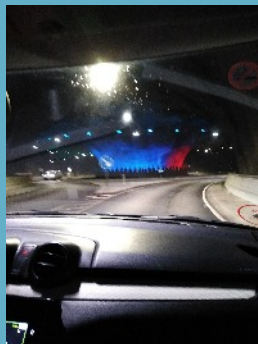
It has been a quick year for us with Alan Sorensen being our Interim moderator and we wish him all the best in his retirement.

I must thank all of the worship team for their amazing support in leading worship throughout the year. It has been great to have them.

We hope you all have a fantastic summer and look forward to seeing you at Church.

Kind regards

Ewen



Underground tunnel



Back in February I got an email from Jean asking if we wanted to join up with the Inverkip Hub to make an application for a grant for a community event. Of course with my treasurer hat on I immediately said yes! Free money! But in all

seriousness Inverclyde Council had created the Meloria Community Fund as an opportunity for communities to socialise and reconnect during the summer and I knew how badly we all wanted/needed that after the pandemic.

The application was completed, it went to a public vote and then after a nervous wait we were informed in April that our application was successful! Hooray!

But ... it was only 2 months away. The joint committee began meeting every week to plan the various activities over the 3 venues. Making sure there was something for every age group! It all got a bit frantic towards the end dealing with licences, trying to get a hold of cones and putting up endless streams of bunting but we got there in the end and before we knew it the big weekend arrived!

First up was the bowling club quiz. Our hosts kept the drinks flowing and provided half time sausage rolls. We also had crisps and sandwiches.



Gordon was the quizmaster for the evening and didn't make it too easy for us. Well done to the winning team. I think they were called the Disciples of Agnes but I'm not sure why!



Saturday dawned and unfortunately it became clear that the weather was not going to play ball; it varied between dull and downpour for most of the weekend but that didn't dampen our spirits. Not even for the volunteers at front entrance who still had a friendly welcome for everyone. There was plenty going on at the Hub - football, Zumba, guitars, art, cinema, bouncy castle, face painting and gardening.

People catching up over coffee and home baking which managed to raise almost £700 for Ukraine appeal. Plenty to eat from Scouts at bbq and Cubs at tuck shop and volunteers dishing out popcorn at cinema. Well done to all the young people who helped out. You were a credit to your organisations/parents. In between all that some of us nipped over to the bowling club to give it a try.



Helpers were on hand to help us get started.



Then it was time to set up the church hall for the ceilidh. What a fantastic night full of fun and dancing! The band were great and thanks to Jimmy, Chris and Becky for keeping us entertained during the interval. We hope to see more of you all in the folk night later in the year! Thanks to everyone who helped us to set up/clear up and serve half time sausage rolls/coffees.



Then it was Sunday. The Singing Kettle was a sellout for the younger kids. There was also an outdoor market. Everyone enjoyed browsing the various stalls of local food, drinks, crafts, beauty products, etc. In the afternoon there was another opportunity to try bowls at bowling club and another cinema for younger kids; Encanto proved to be a popular choice.



At the church hall we were setting up for our tea dance. We had another great band who kept everyone dancing all afternoon. Honestly it was like we had been transported back in time. There was a wonderful afternoon tea of sandwiches, sausage rolls, scones and selection of cakes. Thanks again to everyone who helped us on the day.



We hope you all enjoyed the weekend and were able to get along to some of the events. Watch this space to see if we can bring it back next year!

Jac Seggie

SOUL SEARCHING

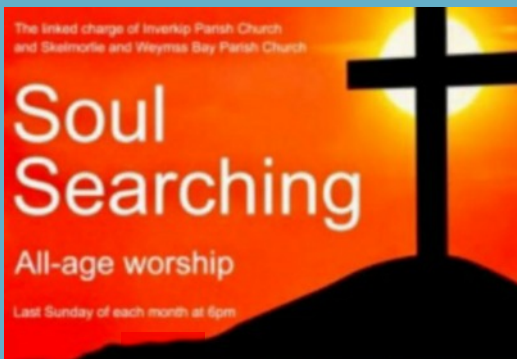
Thanks to everyone who came along on Mother's Day in March to Soul Searching. We had a poignant opening hymn (Kyrie eleison) to remember the people of Ukraine in our hearts. We gave thanks for all the special women in our lives, then Graham retold us the story of the prodigal son and Morag gave a special reflection on mothers including the strength of Jesus' mother Mary.

Unfortunately we had to cancel April's soul searching as our team were struck down by illness but we were back in May and eager to share what we had prepared for April. Who wouldn't want to go back and revisit

Easter when it is such a special time in the church and there was just soooooo much to cram into Holy Week??! We had a drama about doubting Thomas and some great Easter hymns (Muriel even taught us a new one!).

We are having a break for summer after June's Soul Searching. We hope you joined us on 26th June but if not there will be plenty more before the end of the year. When we come back in September we will be refreshed and ready to welcome you for tea/coffee/fellowship and informal worship once again.

Jac, Lynsey, Morag, Ian, Siona, Muriel, Jennifer, Chris & Graham



TREASURER'S REPORT

It's been a good start to 2022 which is partly due to our church hall which is thriving with all of our groups back and it was our pleasure to host the ceillidh and tea dance during Kip Fest. We have also received generous donations of £40 from bowling club, £83.65 from badminton club, £200 from Inverkip S.W.I. and £200 from the keep fit class so far this year. As a result we only have a small excess of payments over receipts and that will be easily cleared with fabric fund and gift aid claims made later in year.

Thank you to everyone who donated to our Ukraine appeal which raised £516. Myself and Marion were blessed to lead worship on Christian Aid week and you generously donated £264.50 that was sent to spread HOPE to people like Jessica and Janet. Thank you also for your continued support for Starter Packs and Inverclyde Foodbank each month.

Thank you.

Jac Seggie

SENIORS KEEP FIT CLASS

Why a photo of the damaged Pavilion? Read on and you will see.



As our entries are becoming 'a bit of the same' we thought it might be a good idea to celebrate our 10th Anniversary in the church hall with a wee bit of history or "how we have become what we are today"!

Around 2010 a keep fit class (and a computer group) were organised by the late Cliff Lyons and held in the Pavilion. Now I am positive everyone who lived in Inverkip on January 2012 will remember the horrendous storm which hit the area and did a considerable amount of damage everywhere including the Pavilion. Cue the photograph from 2nd January that year.

Mr Lyons then approached the church to see if they would be able to accommodate the keep fit class and, fortunately, the answer was "yes"! Cliff arranged everything and the transfer to the hall was smoothly carried out under ICE (the Inverkip Community Enterprise that he had set up).

At that time, both gentlemen (and there were quite a few) and ladies attended the group on a Friday morning with Cliff making all the arrangements, including finding an excellent instructor. As time passed Carol (the instructor) decided to take up full time employment with Inverclyde and could no longer take the class. This was a sad time as it coincided with Cliff becoming quite ill. Although two or three new instructors tried, they were just not suitable and the class folded early in 2018, and we also lost Cliff. A sad time indeed.

However, unknown to the keep fitters, ICE was still working away behind the scenes and later that year they approached us to see if we were interested in starting up again - if they could find a good instructor. Absolutely! Well, they couldn't have found a better person than 'our' Grace Gilchrist.

So, our sincere thanks to the late Cliff Lyons and ICE who have enabled us to celebrate 10 years in the church hall, also to Grace for being such an excellent teacher ... mind you we still don't know our left from our right on occasions! Classes recommence on Friday 26th August at 10am so, if you would like to come along, even just to try it out, we would be delighted to welcome you for an hour of fun, fitness and friendship. **Anne Skedd**

FOODBANK AND STARTER PACK COLLECTION

Your continued support for these wonderful organisations is even more important now with rising costs which will hit the poor harder than ever. Here are the dates for the July-Sept collections at the Church Hall, Bonomy Room, or call Jean Benson (520975) for uplift.

- Tuesday 19 Jul, 16 Aug, 20 Sept 6-7 pm
- Wednesday 20 Jul, 17 Aug, 21 Sept 1-3 pm



On these dates we can also take newspapers / magazines for recycling by White House Products, used medicine foil bubble packs, plus old spectacles and stamps.

Foodbank – Urgent items – Tinned Fruit, Rice Pudding, Custard, UHT Milk (1L), Breakfast Cereals. Also required – Soup, Rice, Pasta Sauce, Tinned Meat, Tinned Veg, Beans, Coffee, Tea Bags, Sugar, Biscuits and Snacks.



Starter Packs- Kitchen Towels, Kitchen Cleaner, Bathroom Cleaner, Cleaning Cloths and Tea Towels.

Hygiene items needed – Shampoo, Ladies Deodorant, Gents Razors, Soap, Bubble Bath and Shampoo for Children and Babies. Good quality bedding also acceptable but no duvets unless new.



The organisation started 20 years ago as a temporary project but, with the cost of living and poverty, there is an increased need for the service. They are currently supporting 46 homes a month and already have given out 287 packs with 5 months to go. Your support is much appreciated.

Jean Benson

Inverkip Bowling Club

Thank you to everyone who came along to Kip Fest and to Try Bowls. We would like to welcome new members so why not come along on Monday evenings at 6.30 or Saturday afternoons at 1.30 for an informal game. Membership is only £40 for the first year. A limited number of bowls are available for new members to use. In the near future we hope to establish a junior section, checks and paperwork are almost complete and the bowls have been purchased thanks to a grant from ICE.

Janet Scally, Treasurer

inverkipbc@yahoo.com

CHURCH FLOWERS



Once again, thanks to all who contribute to putting flowers in the Church Sunday by Sunday, and to all who help deliver them. If you would like to help by putting flowers in the Church please let me know as they are always greatly appreciated by anyone who receives them.

Joyce Brown

COUNTRY DANCING

The class ended with a wee social night on 7 April. It was a fun night and included visitors from Skelmorlie. A few of us attended the Summer Dancing at Troon. On 6 June they held a special Platinum Jubilee dance. Many of the dances were new to us so it was a bit crazy, but we had a really good laugh. Amazingly NONE of the dances completely fell apart. The class starts again on September 22nd. We would love to see some new members. If you feel inclined come along and try. Good exercise and great fun.

Gaye McIntrye



CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

Can all scheduled hall users please notify me when they are not meeting. **Joyce Brown – 01475 521215**

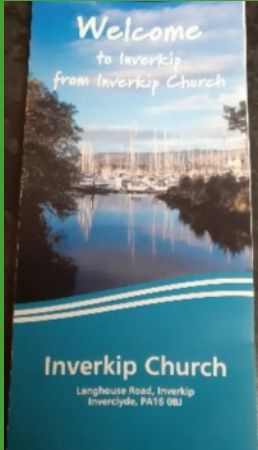
joycekbrown@hotmail.com

If you experience any problems with the heating in the Church Halls please contact

Douglas Vallance 07599 074579



WELCOME PACKS



The Mission and Outreach team continue to give out Welcome packs to new people moving into the village and they rely on being told by church members and the community if they have any new neighbours.

The packs contain a small plant or candle, a bar of Fair Trade chocolate and the Church Welcome leaflet. Please let Jean Benson or any Elder know if you have a new neighbour. Tel: 520975

FAMILY NEWS

New Arrivals Congratulations

Robin Alan Andrew Currie, Parents Emily & Jonathan
Grandparents Dave & Mary.

Evie Elaine Karly Burns Parents Philip & Haley Gran Helen.

Harrison Elliot Chalmers Parents Tory & Stuart Grandparents
Duncan & Alison.

Mily Mary Hardie Dunn Parents Holly & Richard Grandparents
Alistair & Diane.

Archie Mason Parents Lesley & Sam Grandparents Alison &
Harry.

Alfie Hunter Parents Sean & Sharon Great Grandmother Ann Hunter
Eilidh Barbara Harper, Parents Fiona & Kevin, Grandparents Anne &
Ian

Isobel May Scally, Parents Beth & David, Grandparents Janet & Mick

Archie



Isobel



Eilidh



The following Church Members have sadly passed away since the
last newsletter:

Derek Harvey and Norma Houston

FAMILY NEWS

Special Birthdays

Euan Leslie

Jamie Queen

Agnes Docherty

Chris Barlas

Gordon Brown

Lynne Leslie

Ruaraidh McBain

Newly Weds

Donna McPhail & Gordon
Dickson

Calum Scott & Chantelle
Murdoch

Nicola Brooks & Brian
Greene

Robbie Smith & Yvonne
Anderson

Congratulations

On passing your driving test
Scott Braid & Blair Harkins

On your Retirement
Joyce Murphy & Ian McAdam

On your Golden Wedding
Anniversary
Angela & George McAleese



Good Luck to all
starting Nursery, School,
College and University

THE GUILD



I hope you all have a lovely summer.

We plan to restart the Guild on Monday 3rd October at 2pm. More details to follow.

We really need to encourage more interest in the Guild or sadly we may not be able to continue. Please tell your friends & neighbours.

Joyce Brown

BOOK BASKET

Hi Folks,

It is definitely time to celebrate. Your generosity and support has raised the total, made from recycling books, to a fabulous amount of £1057.41p.

It is a fantastic total and Ardgowan Butterflies are delighted with it.



The total includes the £242 that was collected as a retiring offering after Linda from the project came to speak to us.

Please continue to donate good quality, reasonably new books to help us continue supporting this worthwhile project.

I have seen first hand how much this project does for young people who find themselves dealing with bereavement, or living with a family member who is dealing with a cancer diagnosis.

A huge Thank you to everyone who contributes. Keep reading!!!

Kindest regards

Anne and Joyce

THE SCOUTS

The Scouts have returned to normal in recent months holding the first of a series of camps as part of their Zodiac Awards. They started with a training camp at Everton campsite in April followed by the District Itchy Midgie camp in May, with their own 85th Group camp in June.. The group have tried their hand at lots of activities including powerboating off Ardgowan Beach as well as around the sugar boat off Greenock.



Some of the Scouts went on a 2 day expedition near Loch Lomond in June, and they are also looking forward to their summer camp in the Lake District in August.

Andy Yarr

I. Scout @ 85th G&D

Mob: +44 7747 457 320



GUIDES

Thanks to a grant from Tesco's and Arnold Clark the Brownies and Guides from Larkfield district had a fun day recently at South Newton. Due to the weather alternative activities had to be arranged.

The girls had a great day. They participated in indoor Archery, 10 pin bowling, silent disco, hoopla, coconut shy, etc. They also tried their hand at face painting, learned new songs, and made 'armpit' fudge, and in true Girlguiding fashion they finished the day with campfire songs.



Sad to say that after 20 years service Heather is leaving Brownies Thank you Heather for what you've done for the girls.

Jenny Scott
Leader



CUBS

The 85th Group all got together to say thank you as part of the Queens Platinum Jubilee at annual Group Camp at Everton where we planted a tree next to a plaque to commemorate the occasion. A great time was had by all. Next term Cubs have an Autumn Camp coming up at Kilmacolm and will be working on a new set of badges for the new term.



We hope everyone has a well deserved summer break as the Cubs, leaders, parents and young leaders all worked really hard this term and devoted a lot of their time to community events. We are always on the look out for adult support to enable our Sections to run, so if you can spare a couple of hours a week, love being outdoors and learning new skills-please get in touch.

See you all next term!

Janice McAdam

Cub Section Leader

85th Inverkip & Wemyss Bay Cubs

Mob 07563 372811



PROPERTY GROUP



Save on gym subscriptions and exercise class fees - join the Property Group on Tuesday afternoons between 1 and 3pm.



Soprano Pipistrelle bat,
currently 1,000 of them in residence
in the Church roof ! Protected
species



Susie Gemmill

Property Convenor



Jimmy Law and Forbes Dowling recently completed The Glasgow Kiltwalk.

25 miles in total was done for Breast Cancer UK.

Two of Jimmy and Mary's friends are undergoing treatment for this disease, so that is the Charity we chose this Year.

We raised £4000 which included a 50% top up by Sir Tom Hunter.

Many thanks to all who so kindly donated to this very worthy cause.

Jimmy and Forbes



CAFE CHURCH

The Café Church continues to be held in the Wemyss Bay Station Café on the last Thursday of the month at 7pm til 8pm. Everyone is warmly invited to attend, whether its been a while or whether you have never attended before.

In March we focused on the idea of 'The Journey', in April Chris lead on the theme of 'New Life' and in May we covered 'Fear'. The overarching theme is always relying on God to bring us through.



We are so blessed to have so much talent from Jimmy's recitals, Gloria's Poetry and Sheila's wonderful playing of the accordion.



The word is spreading and on the last night of my Glasgow Uni course I invited anyone wanting to come along and see how Café Church operates. Much to my delight 2 of the class mates did come and are looking forward to coming back again at the end of June. How lovely to see Ken and Susan in person for the first time after months of learning over Zoom!

Although we discuss serious topics we always aim to have fun and help people feel relaxed with singing, fellowship, and even cake. We encourage discussion and questions and are here for anyone, with or without a church connection.

Thanks to all who have supported the work of Café Church and please keep us in prayer as we continue to bring God's love out to the community. Why not come and join us some time?

“ We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son, Jesus Christ “

1 John Chapter 1 Verse 3

Lynsey Graham, Pastoral Assistant

AT THE BIRD TABLE

“Spring has sprung, the grass is ris, I wonder where the boidies is? The boid is on the wing, but that’s absoid. From what I hoid, the wing is on the boid!” Apologies to all poetry lovers! I have not been able to identify the author (perhaps just as well) but apparently a New York accent is required when reciting these lines.

Bird watching during the summer, for me at least, takes a back seat as trees are in full leaf, shrubbery is dense and grass, wildflowers, etc. provide much needed cover for birds nesting and rearing their chicks. Parent birds are constantly food gathering during daylight hours and, with fewer hours of darkness, adult birds must be close to exhaustion by the time their broods are fully fledged. Certainly, their plumage, by the end of the season, looks somewhat tatty.

Many of the summer visitors are not “garden birds” but occasionally I have seen migrants at my feeders. For several years, a pair of Blackcaps would appear in April but for the past two years I have only seen a male.

During a fishing trip to Northern Ireland, I was fortunate to see a pair of Little Egrets feeding at Lough Erin and apparently there are a few more in that area.

The little egret is a small white heron with attractive white plumes on crest, back and chest, black legs and bill and yellow feet. It first appeared in the UK in significant numbers in 1989 and first bred in Dorset in 1996. Its colonization followed naturally from a range expansion into western and northern France in previous decades. It is now at home on numerous south coast sites, both as a breeding species and as a winter visitor. (courtesy of RSPB) One or two have been seen in Scotland at the Montrose Basin but no details of breeding success.



In Scotland, the Eurasian Common Crane was once a widespread and common species. As in most of western Europe, it became extinct by the 16th century. However, since the 1950s, the population has recovered and recolonised areas of the UK. The first recorded breeding of cranes in Scotland was in 2012, in North Aberdeenshire, where today the population is thought to be around a minimum of five to six breeding pairs and up to 20 non-breeding adults. It's hopefully on the cusp of a significant expansion in range and numbers. (**Scotland's Nature**, Email Address www.nature.scot/)



Recently a Nuthatch was spotted in a local garden. Nuthatches declined in Northern Britain in the 19th century but in recent years numbers have been increasing and are working their way steadily northwards. About 10 years ago they were recorded nesting in a woodland in Wemyss Bay and hopefully we'll begin to see them

established again in Inverkip.

Lookout for butterflies on warm, calm and sunny days if you're out and about or sitting in the garden. We have quite a few species locally and today I saw an "Orange Tip" sunning itself in the rockery, a sure sign that summer is here, sadly along with Midges.



Just a reminder that when putting food out on a bird table you should not use loose peanuts at this time of year since a whole peanut from an adult feeding its brood could unwittingly choke a young bird.

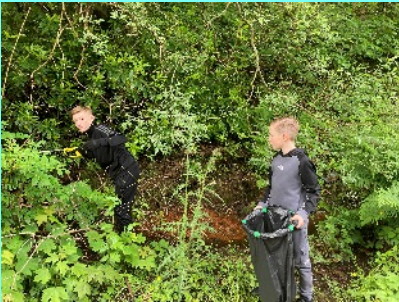
I hope that we all have a good summer and that you enjoy your bird watching and holidays.

Dunnock

LITTER PICKING

The litter picking group started the new year with a new name - Litter Kippers, and there is now a dedicated WhatsApp group to keep up to date with information and arrangements. Anyone interested in being added to the group can send a direct message to the church Facebook page or email the church.

The group has continued to meet on the third weekend of the month, alternating between Saturday mornings and Sunday afternoons. There are normally around 12-15 volunteers each month but we would be delighted if more people were keen to become involved, especially any youth organisations. We were so pleased to welcome both the Cubs and leaders of the 85th Greenock & District Scouts, and some boys and coaching staff from Ardgowan Thistle FC to our latest litter pick, swelling our numbers to around 50! This not only makes a huge difference to the appearance of our local community, it helps to reduce the amount of plastic which ends up in the marine environment.



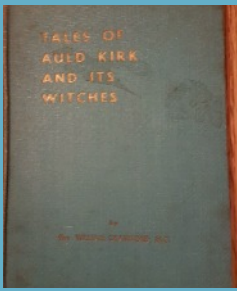


The group continues to support and be supported by Literati Guide to Inverclyde with environmental issues and campaigns at both a local and national level.

Upcoming dates:

- Sunday 24th July 13:00-15:00
- Saturday 20th August 10:00-12:00
- Sunday 18th September 13:00-15:00





TALES OF AULD KIRK AND ITS WITCHES

By Rev William Crawford, MC

Continued from the previous issue:

The Old Castle and the Roman Bridge

Though the village of Auld Kirk has such a long history, reaching back into the remote past, there are very few buildings left upstanding to serve as a witness of these ancient days. I propose to tell the story or so much of it as has survived of two of these monuments of the past. The first, and by far the older of the two, is the old castle at Ardgowan. It was not a castle at all, in the strictest meaning of the word, but a Fort or fortalice erected, it is thought, in the reign of Edward the first of England. it was one of many of its kind which that king built in the lowlands of Scotland to keep that country in subjection. this were to act as strong points or places of defence to the English garrisons holding them. few of them have survived the wreckage of time. the castle of Loch Leven as one, and it has a tower which is almost an exact replica of the tower at Ardgowan, though it is built on a larger scale. it was at this castle that Mary Queen of Scots was kept prisoner for a time escaping, alas! only to fall into the clutches of Elizabeth of England. A visit to the old castle will reveal, at a glance, that it must have been a place of considerable strength. its massive walls several feet thick, its commanding position on the edge of a steep rock, surrounded as it was then by the sea on two sides of the promontory on which it stands, would make it practically impregnable to attack. In the year 1301, Henry Earl of Lincoln, wrote to Edward that he had sent a ship carrying Wine and food to victual the castle of Inverkip. These were the days when the Scots, under their heroic leader, Sir William Wallace, were rising in insurrection against the invaders of their country. Castle after castle was falling into their hands and the garrisons in them ejected or, in some cases put to the sword. The castle at Inverkip seems to have been strongly held doubtless because it occupied such a strategic position on the Firth, offering a speedy means of reinforcement and, in the event of defeat, a way of escape by sea. In the year 1307, Sir Philip de Mowbray, in a skirmish with Sir James Douglas, was defeated. being compelled to seek refuge in flight, he, with difficulty, reached the safety of the castle of Inverkip. Barber tells, in his "Bruce," The way of retreat that he chose: "Through Largis till Ennerkip, Rycht to the Castel that was then Stuffit all with Ynglis men!"

These days of storm past and Robert the Bruce became, after the Battle of Bannockburn, The un- challenged King, and Scotland regained her liberty. In 1403, Robert the third conveyed by charter the lands of Ardgowan and Blackhall to his natural son, Sir John Stewart-the grant including the castle of Ardgowan. Sir John was the ancestor of the Shaw Stewart family, and the lands of Ardgowan given then have remained in their possession ever since, being handed down from generation to generation in direct male descent to the present holder, Sir Walter Guy Shaw Stewart, Bart., M.C. (now Sir Ludovic) Sir John Stewart and his successors lived for nearly 200 years at Blackhall, their residence near Paisley, situated on the banks of the River Cart. During this period the old castle remained untenanted; but, sometime in the end of the 17th Century, certain other lower buildings having been added lying to the South-west, the castle of Inverkip became the recognised home of the Stewart family. Crawford, in his History of Renfrewshire, published in 1701, describes it as a pleasant mansion, surrounded by beautiful gardens and fine trees, with an uninterrupted and unrivalled view of the Firth. There is not much more to tell of the old castle, save to say that, In the year 1798, the present Mansion House of Ardgowan was built, And the old tower was once more left untenanted as it is still today, save for the Owls that make it their abode, And the Ivy and Tufts of grass that grow upon its walls. The other structure that has survived the passage of the years as the Roman bridge. situated in a sheltered spot the beautiful lines of the old bridge itself, set in Sylvan scene of much beauty, with the water rippling pleasantly beneath, it is no wonder it is an attractive spot to the visitor and their favourite was the photographer. Yes! it makes a beautiful picture but it is not a Roman bridge! how it came to be called by that title is not known. it may be due to 4 his venerable appearance. Old it certainly looks; But it is a comparatively recent structure. Indeed, the Romans had left the country for 1000 years and more before it was ever contemplated. it was not built before the latter half of the 16th century and is one of the improvements in communication following the Scottish reformation in 1560. It must be remembered that the road leading across the Kip at this point was for hundreds of years the only means of transit between Greenock and Inverkip. There was no other, and the road itself, for long stretches, was little better then a rough cart track, with many steep gradients.

Besides, the floor of water would be much greater done it is now when so much is diverted by the cut, at the water schemes of Greenock Corporation. In a preamble stating reasons for the erection of a parish church in Greenock, Sir John Shaw states not only the length of the road that his "puir pepill who are all fishers" Have to travel to their church at Inverkip, but that they have "ane greit river" to cross. As the charter was granted in the year 1589, it seems as though it must have been late in the sanctuary that the bridge was built. the bridge is clearly marked, for the first time, in a map of the district published in 1654. It is interesting to think of the many interesting people that must have passed over it. it may have been there when the last procession of monks from Paisley Abbey to Innerkip Church would make use of it, and picturesque figures they must have seemed-the Abbot on his white palfrey closed in magnificent vesture, and the Cistercian monks and their flowing white garments, in contrast to the Benedictines, who went in black. 100 years later some covenanters might have been seen, especially after the battle of Bothwell Brig. in twos and threes, gaunt and hungry men, footsore and weary, would cross the bridge, making their way, with as much speed as possible, to their homes in Ayrshire. But it was on a Sunday morning that the bridge was busiest, for then the worshippers converged from many quarters, men, women and children. the happy laughter of the children ringing out and their joy manifest as they based their tired feet in the cool waters below. from there they walked and a steady stream to the Kirk, a goodly company to join in the service of God. the old bridge has been superseded by a more modern one, but it seems in a good state of preservation, attribute to those men who built it some three and a half centuries ago. It must surely not be allowed to fall into decay and perish through the indifference a neglect of a succeeding generation. Close beside the Roman bridge are the ruins of an old flax mill. Flax used to be grown and gathered in some quantity on the neighbouring Moor and converted here into cloth. The remains of the late carrying water to the huge water wheel can still be traced in spite of the lapse of years.

Thanks to Jim Brown for transcribing the text from the original publication

Interim Moderator:	To be confirmed	
Session Clerk:	Ewen Cameron	07394 970150
Depute Clerk:	Morag Cowe	01475 521455
Treasurer:	Jac Seggie	01475 529614

SERVICES

Sunday - 10am

Communion is celebrated on the first Sunday in February, June and October.

CHURCH ACTIVITIES

- Sunday:** Creche - 10am
Sunday School - 10am
Soul Searching - (monthly, with S&WB Church)
- Monday:** Rainbows
Badminton
Brownies
Guides (in school)
SWI (monthly)
Guild (fortnightly)
- Wednesday:** Scouts
Cubs & Beavers (in school)
- Thursday:** Country Dancing
- Saturday:** Messy Church (last Saturday of the month)

Not all groups have resumed following lockdown, hopefully all should be up and running in the near future.

Website: www.inverkip.org.uk
Facebook: Inverkip Parish Church
Charity No.: SC001079