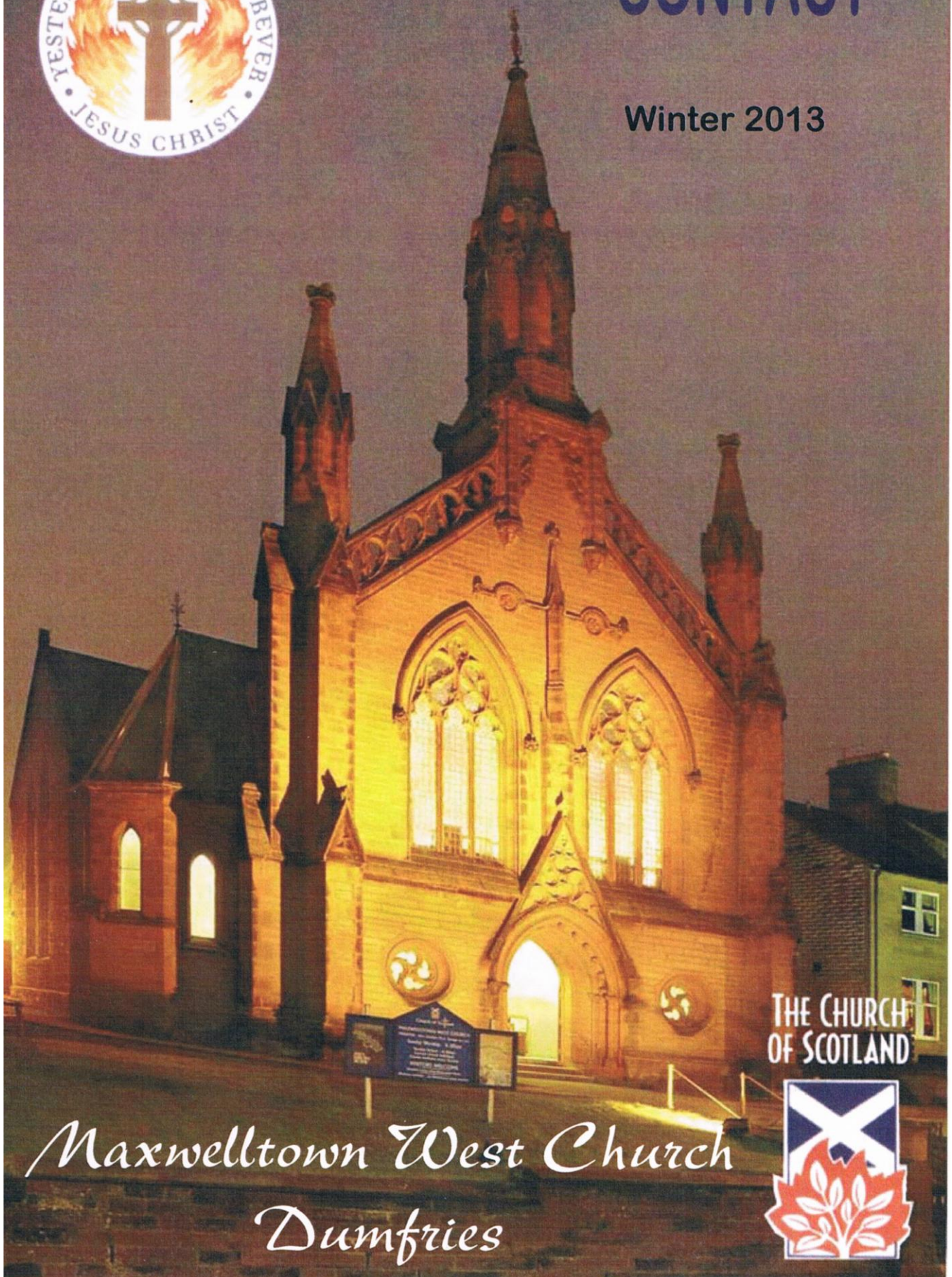


CONTACT

Winter 2013



THE CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND



*Maxwelltown West Church
Dumfries*

MAXWELLTOWN WEST CHURCH, DUMFRIES

www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk

SUNDAY SERVICES: 11.00am

COMMUNION SERVICES: 1st December at 11.00am and 3.00pm (in Hall)

SUNDAY SCHOOL (J-Max & K-Max): 11.00am during term time.

CRECHE is available during the morning service every Sunday.

During the vacancy, the Interim Moderator is

Rev. Donald Campbell

Pastoral care will be provided by Locum Minister, **Rev. Liz Mack**

Congregational Office Bearers

SESSION CLERK: Mr. T Bryden

ORGANIST: Mr. S Crosbie

CHURCH OFFICER: Mr. R Wilson

EDITOR OF 'CONTACT': Mrs. F Saddington

CLERK TO DEACONS' COURT: B Shepherd

TREASURER: Mr. D McNay

'ACTING' FABRIC CONVENER: Mr. D Miller

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Deaths

5th August: Mr. Christopher Ferguson

13th September: Mrs Jeanette Grady

15th September: Mrs Grace Robertson

New Member by Resolution

Mrs Jean MacLean

MAXWELLTOWN WEST MISSION STATEMENT

*Maxwelltown West Church seeks to be a place of welcome to all in our parish;
a centre of Christian worship and fellowship. We seek to provide a framework for family life and a place where
young people may be nurtured in Christian values.*

Locum's Letter

My Dear friends in Max West

Well, at last, as a result of much perseverance, persuasion, prayer and the backing of some new members of the Committee, the Ministry and Resources Committee changed their recommendation to Presbytery from a 7 year Reviewable Tenure to an Unrestricted Call and well done to the over 40 of you who made the journey to Twynholm in support of that recommendation. Thanks be to God we are at least now on a level playing field with all the other vacancies here and around Scotland.

We are under no illusions that finding a Minister will be easy with around 200 vacancies Scotland wide, but we have to believe that what we are offering in Maxwelltown West is an attractive package - a (rare) single charge with manse and hall on site, within easy walking distance of a pleasant country town, a church in an acceptable financial state and with a loyal and hardworking congregation. But now the work can get under way and we must seriously all pray for the right people on the Nomination Committee and the right minister to apply.

As I write, we have just celebrated Harvest Thanksgiving and after several wet, long, lean years for the farming community, this year harvest in the main has been abundant and a source of true thanksgiving. Maybe a parable there for us as we have waited long for the chance to move into the next stage in the life of our Congregation. Maybe it is also time for us to look at ourselves and see what kind of harvest, we as people can offer to God.

Hebrews tells us what to do. In chapter 10 we are encouraged to persevere and hold tightly to the hope we have in Christ, to think of ways to encourage one another, to let our good deeds be seen as our witness to others of our faith and to continue to worship together and not fall away as some are tempted to do and to be assured that all this is promised as we wait for Christ to Come again.

We look forward to Christmas, the manifestation in the flesh of God's promise of hope to all mankind. Let us rejoice and be glad together in His service and with love,

Liz

Kirk Session

The Kirk Session met for an ordinary meeting on 10th September when a number of routine items of business were dealt with. Since that meeting, Dumfries and Kirkcudbright Presbytery met on 25th September to discuss, amongst many other items, the future of Maxwelltown West. Session was extremely pleased with the number of members of the Church who attended to support our case. In fact by my reckoning we made up half of those at Tarff and Twynholm Church, so many in fact that I think there was some concern that the elements would run out at the Communion Service which preceded the business meeting. I would like to thank all those who attended. You will know by now that we were granted permission to make an unrestricted call and I have now had written confirmation of this.

This is only the beginning of the process, with a number of formalities to be followed. The first is the production of an Electoral Register which will not be finalised until mid- November. Following this, we move to the election of a Nominating Committee which at the time of writing is set for Communion Sunday, 1st December. Thereafter the elected committee will proceed in its search for a sole nominee. This will take time as the post has to be advertised and we have to wait for applicants who then have to be heard, usually in their own churches.

Because the work of that committee is confidential, we will only hear of its progress when its work is almost finished. We all hope that this stage will be a fairly speedy one.

T B, Session Clerk

Deacons' Court

The Deacons' Court met on 24th September 2013 with the Rev. Donald Campbell in the chair as the Interim Moderator. 34 members attended and there were 16 apologies. The Treasurer's report shows that for this period the total income amounted to £27,070. The same period last year was £18,429. This increase is mainly due to Gift Aid Tax recovered of almost £8,000 and therefore our finances continue to be satisfactory but we cannot sit back and should encourage those of us who pay tax to take advantage of this facility.

The Finance Committee reported that the Council Tax relief for the Manse is coming to an end and the Treasurer is writing to Dumfries Council to seek, if possible, an extension to this period on the grounds that we are a charity.

We have agreed to fund the hire of a minibus for a K-Max and J-Max outing.

J Marchbank has retired as the Finance Committee Secretary after many years of service but is continuing as a member of the Finance Committee and was thanked by the Deacons Court, on behalf of the Church. The Fabric Fund Box count was held on 23rd September and the sum of £787.55 was raised. We thank everyone for their continued support.

The Fabric Committee reported that the re-wiring of the flood lights has now been completed, ventilation problems of the boiler room have been addressed and work on the high level windows in the Centenary Hall is proceeding as planned.

As we are about to begin the process of calling a new Minister, the Manse was discussed at some length and the Fabric Committee is to carry out a review and an energy efficiency survey. The Social Group reported on how they are organised and the events they have been involved with to date. The Court congratulated them on their achievements to date and wish them continued success. It is however up to all of us to support them as it is for us they organise events.

D Rosie, on behalf of the Organ Fund Committee, thanked everyone for their help and support. The Dumfries Male Voice Choir is giving a concert on 25th October 2013 in aid of the Organ Fund. A vote of thanks on behalf of everyone was extended to A Beggs on her retirement after many years of service to all of us as the Sunday Tea & Coffee Rota Organiser. L Hyles has volunteered to take over this roll and hopes to introduce Sunday Tea & Coffee fortnightly over the winter months on a trial basis initially until the end of December. We wish her and her team every success. Please give her support in providing this service to us all.

The next meeting of the Deacons' Court will be Wednesday 20th November 2013.

B S, Clerk to the Deacons' Court

Kenyan Visit

Mathia

During our stay in Mathia we were hosted by John Njeru Karuoya and his wife Esther. John is the Senior Elder and Chairperson of Mathia Church and he stayed with us during his visit to Maxwelltown West in August last year. They and their lovely granddaughter, Gabrielle – Gabby, made us feel at home and during the next few days we had long conversations with John and his colleagues relating to the traditions, culture and religion of his country.

Mathia is one of twelve churches in the Parish of Kiangai, part of the Presbyterian Church of East Africa (PCEA) and its sole minister; Rev Erastus Mbaka Beta has considerable responsibility. We visited the manse and took the opportunity to present him with a Laptop provided by the Scottish Water Board who actively support Water Aid and other projects like our own. Unfortunately, Rev Erastus was unable to be present in Church on the Sunday but he was extremely pleased with this demonstration of support which will assist him in the administration of the Parish.

There are five elders in Mathia congregation, each being assisted by four/five deacons and they are expected to keep close contact with the folk in their district assisting family life where possible. They have responsibility to supervise services and members of the congregation are invited to participate. John's wife Esther convened the service we attended and another member of the congregation provided the Address. The hymns included Amazing Grace, When we Walk with God sung to Cwm Rhondda, Make Me a Channel of your Peace and What a Friend we have in Jesus sung by the ladies of the Guild with one lady – Harriet – being over 100 years of age.

The atmosphere in the church was of people living and proclaiming their faith, and singing with enthusiasm. When the Guild finished their hymn 'Young' Harriet let forth in Swahili and while we did not understand the rough translation was to let the Bible be their guide. During the service we again presented the Laptop to the congregation and we brought greetings from Max West and thanked them for being asked to join in their service. On a different occasion we also handed over several King James Bibles and three CDs of same.

The ministers in the PCEA are moved around every five years with Rev Erastus having completed just over three years in his current post. With his encouragement the dozen members of the Boys Brigade that we saw four years ago has increased to a Boys/Girls Brigade of sixty all in smart blue uniform and wearing hats! There are eighty children in the Sunday School and thirty in the Youth Club.

There are a number of committees and organisations including Deacons, Woman's Guild, Youth Fellowship, Church School, Education, Boys/Girls Brigade, Evangelism, Health, Development, Justice/Peace/Reconciliation, Men's Fellowship and an Intercession Group. The small church that was used four years ago has disappeared and the larger new church is now almost completed having been started prior to our last visit. They have curtains from floor to ceiling in the curved Chancel Area, with the Communion Table and two Lecterns on a slightly raised section – altogether something they can be proud of – and something created without the support of their Presbytery.

Education has a high priority in Kenya with many new universities constructed in the last twenty years and accordingly a number of young members of Mathia go on to further education and they are pleased and proud that Max West has assisted over thirty of them to be able to attend university.

When we asked how we could continue to support them their answer was

- a) help with the students
- b) provide cement
- c) provide sand

to enable them to complete the gable end of the Church.

We left an enthusiastic, forward-looking Church, who value our contribution and who perhaps could be an inspiration for our own church.

Psalm 147 :1

Praise the Lord. How good it is to sing praises to our God, how pleasant and fitting to praise him.

Bondo

Winnie Owuor visited Maxwelltown West Church in August 2006 where, over tea after the service, she related the problems being experienced in her community in Kenya.

We visited her in 2007, learned about the problems in detail and submitted a report to the Session who decided to start a project to help her.

She is still supporting approximately 250 orphans in three of the four adobe built Nursery Schools constructed before our involvement, taking in children between the ages of three – five years. Over the past five years the World Church Team (WCT) has supplied reed mats for the floors of the schools, books, shoes and toys and has supplied funding to build toilets at three of the schools. Three dozen of our congregation have faithfully provided £250 per month to assist in a feeding programme for the children.

From a suggestion and finance from the WCT a few years ago, she initiated a fund to provide interested parties with a loan to set up their own businesses. This has been a successful venture and from the proceeds and

revenue from selling water from the first Well (£0.02 for every five gallons of water) she is able to proceed with her vision which is to:

- a) provide education to the orphans
- b) sustain a supply of food
- c) improve the lives of the community.

When we visited Winnie four years ago, we worshipped in an adobe-built church that they had constructed a few miles from her home and we also saw the first stage of a brick build church. With assistance from Max West and income from her Business Enterprises this has now been completed along with an extension, which has enabled Winnie to start another school using the Church and extension to provide an educational facility for an additional 250 children. She has three nursery classes and two primary and five teachers, only one of whom is fully trained. Nursery education is not provided by the State so it is a considerable disadvantage to a child if they start primary education without the benefits of a few years at nursery.

During our tour of the school entertainment by some of the children included a song:

'The sun is there out in the sky
When I wake up in the morning
I wash my face and brush my hair
I put on my uniform, I take my bag
I run to school.

Winnie told us that there is no mention of breakfast as this is not part of the routine, so every lunchtime she provides all the children with a cup of porridge and a doughnut.

Also in the quadrangle (field!) are two toilets and the second Well financed by Max West and part of the old church is now used as a classroom.

With advice from the Ministry of Education Winnie and her colleagues in the Usenge Development Initiative (the charity set up six years ago by Winnie) intend to teach children up to primary 6. This will entail additional classrooms and to this end they intend to use land adjacent to Lake Victoria to grow kale and sell 100 kgs per week to a local Secondary School. Our WCT has undertaken to provide the finance to purchase the necessary equipment – a water pump, tank and pipes. In addition, the installing of fish cages in the lake is well under way and this will allow them to sell fish to the community and gain more income.

Winnie has included in the curriculum a period of Christian Education per week. The community at large is so entrenched with local and traditional customs that she feels it is better and easier to introduce this to the children who can absorb this along with their other subjects. At weekends the Church reverts to a Church! the services conducted by Michael, her deputy and a devout Christian. Every Sunday evening there is a Bible Class at Winnie's home attended by about six of her colleagues.

As with Mathia, when asked how we can continue to support her endeavours Winnie told us she requires

- a) kale seed
- b) fish and fish food
- c) books in English (Christian and otherwise) to form a library

The WCT feels that Winnie and her colleagues have achieved a great deal and that we should encourage them in whatever way we can.

Luke 18:16

Let the little children come to me and do not hinder them, for the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these.

The Town Band is providing a concert in Maxwelltown West Church for our Kenyan Projects on Sunday afternoon of 8 December 2013 at 2.30 pm.

No tickets required but there will be a retiring collection.

I & R Slack

Social Group

The MaxWest Social Group, over the summer months, has participated in 3 events :-

- Saturday 1st June – Assisted the Organ Fundraising Group with the Organ Recital. This event raised £2,000 for the Organ Fund.
- Saturday 17th August – The Social Group held a get-together for members of the Social Group and families. This was a very successful event and was much enjoyed by the members who attended.
- Saturday 31st August – The Social Group provided the catering for the Beetle Drive, which was held in the Church Hall. The general consensus was that this event was really enjoyed by all and the format allows many members of the congregation to meet other members who they may not otherwise meet.

Future events

Sunday 15th December – The Social Group will again provide a Christmas Brunch after the Service, which will be held in the Church Hall. All welcome.

The Social Group continues to evolve with the main aim of the members to develop friendship and fellowship amongst all those individuals who are associated in any way with Maxwelltown West Church and to provide a warm welcome to visitors.

Anyone who wishes to participate in the Social Group or can offer any assistance or ideas can contact the undersigned in the first instance.

The next meeting of the Social Group will be held in the Church Hall on Wednesday 15th January and all individuals, even if not a member of the Social Group, are welcome to attend and submit ideas.

I MacP

REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS

The Guild

"A fellowship to Build", the theme for this year's program for the Guild and used by Rev Liz at our dedication service in October is a very appropriate subject not only for our Guild but also for our whole church as our Locum Minister pointed out.

The first open meeting with Gilly Fraser of TV and journalist fame was undoubtedly a fellowship evening with new people and many friends to enjoy a good chat over tea.

The Moderator of the General Assembly, the Right Rev Lorna Hood, in her keynote speech encouraged us all at the local Presbyterian Autumn Rally at Troqueer Church with wise words and enthusiasm for the future. Guild Week starts with our Coffee Morning on 16th November. Afterwards our members who are no longer able to join us receive a personal visit and a small gift which is a great opportunity to keep in touch. We do hope for good support from our church members and friends to join us for coffee on this day.

Many interesting meetings, from Moat Brae to the Amazon, are planned for all to enjoy before the Christmas Celebrations.

The committee look forward to meeting you all again.

Correction from the last Contact Guild Report:

*The National Projects over the last group of 3 years raised **£790,555.57** (not £800 as printed)*

A D

Scouts

The Scout Group is working well. There are 20 Beavers, 18 Cubs and 9 Scouts.

Our thanks must go to the leaders, B Carr, J McKinnell, N Stitt, J McNaught, A Ainslie, S Sinclair and J Brett. We had a young leader, A Ainslie who has now moved on to University. These young helpers are such an asset.

The Cub section has two boys helping who are working towards their Duke of Edinburgh Award, one of whom is A Little.

J Brett, who has been with us for a few years, will be leaving us at Christmas, due to new work commitments. My thanks go to him for his work with the Scouts. This means that we are looking for a new assistant Scout Leader. If there is anyone who has a wish to help or has family members who may wish to help, please can they contact me?

The Group is always indebted to the church for the use of the halls.
We will be going to see Cinderella at the Theatre Royal in December.

H MacD GSL.

Cubs

Cubs at Max West have returned from their summer break full of beans and have been going from strength to strength. We have had a very interesting year so far working on our Fitness Challenge and have lots of exciting events planned for the coming months.

Our visit to the Pines Golf Centre to try out our golfing skills showed that we have some very talented golfers in our pack, but some of us may need a little more practice! We will also have the opportunity to meet other Cubs in our District when we take part in the annual Unihoc Tournament. This is always loads of fun. Hopefully you will have noticed our display for Remembrance Sunday. We each made a poppy to put up and it really made us think about what we were remembering.

Time always passes very quickly and we are already trying to arrange our visit to the local pantomime as our Christmas treat. Many thanks for your support.

A A & J McN, Cub Leaders

Brownies

Since resuming our Brownie Adventure, the girls have been working on the Girlguiding themes of You, Community and World.

We visited the Fire Station to find out how the Fire Service operates and learn about fire safety. The following week a Community Fire Safety Officer came to help the girls achieve their Fire Safety badge. He returned later in the term to present the badges.

The Brownies have also had a visit from a member of the World Church Team and we are now collecting 20 pences to help Sharon in Bondo.

The girls enjoyed an activity evening when they took part in parachute games, badminton and table tennis. Our last meeting of the term involved a Promise Celebration for three new Brownies who chose to have a chocolate fountain with lots of chocolate, strawberries and marshmallows after they had all made their Promise. Should you want any details about Brownies, please get in touch.

J McE Brownie Leader

After Eights

The first meeting of the new session in September was a "Celebration Evening" marking 20 years of the group. Members enjoyed music played by Jamie Young on his accordion and a delicious cake made by F Dickie was enjoyed by all.

An interesting and varied programme has been arranged for the year and new members would be most welcome.

J W

Good Companions

We are now into our Autumn session which will finish with our Christmas lunch. Looking ahead, we do not meet in January or early February to avoid clashing with the Guild, so the opening date of the Spring Session will be Wednesday, 26th February 2014 at 2.00 pm. All welcome.

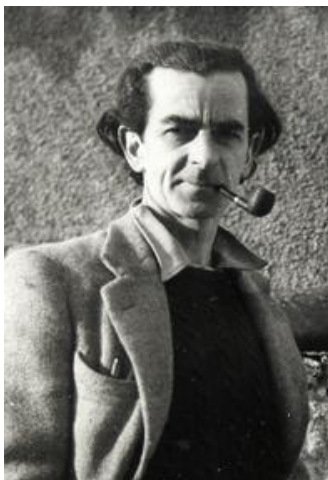
S H

Maxwelltown West in Art



Many of you will recognise the picture on the left, painted by John Henderson, retired Chief Architect for the Council and sent by many in recent years in the form of a Christmas card. But what do you know about this other picture below which is also currently hanging in the Committee Room?

*“Water-Colour of Maxwelltown West, Dumfries
J.G. Jeffs
Presented to
Rev. H.G.A. Simmons, M.A.
by the Members of the Congregation
on the occasion of his Semi-Jubilee
and in appreciation of his Ministry over
a period of 25 years
27 April, 1969”*



The artist is James Gunyeon Jeffs, known as Tim Jeffs. He was born in Dumfries in 1904 and was educated at Dumfries Academy. Initially he trained as a motor engineer with Arrol Johnston and at various times lived at 41 English Street, Dumfries; 9 High Street, Kirkcudbright and 12 Loreburn Chambers, Great King Street, Dumfries.

In 1941 he was appointed curator of Dumfries Museum and also taught Arts and Crafts before moving to Kirkcudbright in 1945 where he was an associate of Jessie M. King and Thomas Lochhead and a founding tutor of the Kirkcudbright Arts and Crafts Summer School. His work varied from poster design to textile work and furniture making. He was best known for his carved caskets and illuminated scrolls and produced memorial work for Churchill and Eisenhower. He is represented in the Paul Jones Crypt at the Naval College, Annapolis, USA.

Several of his paintings are owned by both Dumfries Museum and the Stewartry Museum. He died in 1975 as a result of a tragic boating accident in Loch Ken.



Children's Corner

Word Mine Activity
How many words can you make from:
TEN COMMANDMENTS
Do not write words of less than 3 letters and do not write any words that need a capital letter (E.g. Stan). See how many big words you can come up with too and we will compare your answers at Sunday school. There may even be a prize for the largest number of words handed in 😊

Hi boys and girls and welcome to another children's section.

We have been very busy in Sunday School completing our Moses topic before the holidays, which included making parchment, looking closely at real locusts as one of the 10 plagues and learning about the 10 commandments.

We then went on to create a fabulous wall display with all our work. We will continue on from this story up until Christmas looking at Caleb and Joshua.

As you have been working so hard this year we will be having our first Sunday School trip for a number of years, with a visit to the Cocoa Bean Factory in Twynholm on 10th November. This should be great fun for us all, and I'm sure you will come back with loads of exciting stories for your Mums and Dads. A big thank-you goes to Chrissy who has been working really hard to put this trip together for you all.

Our run up to Christmas should be busy with many opportunities to take part in singing and drama in preparation for our nativity play in church, and of course not to forget our Christmas party, with plenty of games, music and fun. Remember and invite your friends and family along to Sunday school as they will be made very welcome.

Our team consists of Chrissy, Davie, Sharon and myself (Dawn) at the moment with our 2 helpers Emma and Emma. We wish Sharon a speedy recovery and thank Davie for stepping in at short notice. Should your Mums or Dads need to get in touch they can contact me. I have put in a little taster of the story we will begin with next week and a couple of puzzles for you to try. You can hear more on your return to Sunday School. I look forward to seeing you all.....Dawn 😊

Twelve Spies

Finally God's people came to the land God had promised them. Moses chose 12 men and sent them to check out the land of Canaan. He said "Go into the land. Then come back and tell us if this land is good or bad. Are the people strong or weak?" They returned very negative news. Two of the men who had spied on the land, Joshua and Caleb, were the only two who truly believed that God would be faithful to his word and help them go to the promised land, battling with a much stronger people. Because of their faithfulness, Joshua and Caleb were the only two allowed to enter Canaan. Come and hear of what happened and how Joshua went on to lead the people.

Unscramble the letters to find the words in our:
Moses Anagram

abekst -----

aeglpsu -----

aahopr -----

acdemmmnost -----

I sometimes wonder who notices the flowers in church or at the door. Perhaps if they were not in place people would notice them. In fairness, some ladies do comment to me occasionally and they know that if they have donated the flowers they will not be left to sit around until they wither away.

Maxwelltown West has a history of an excellent flower ministry.

After church on Sundays a dedicated team separates the dishes of flowers and delivers to people who need cheering up. Many are already happy as it is their birthday or anniversary (some gold or even diamond); others have been ill or bereaved. This visit carries a powerful message, not only from the minister but especially of God's love, and shows we care for them.

Flowers are the illustrations of all our moments of joy and sorrow. When arranging flowers for someone special I always think of that person I am arranging for and pray that the finished result will lift their spirits a little.

Special celebrations like Harvest, Christmas and Easter of course are a great opportunity to really give the flower ladies and helpers fun and friendship in knowing the pleasure it will give to the people in church as well as those who receive the gifts later. I know on these occasions when the church looks bountifully decorated that our efforts are greatly appreciated by the comments of those attending and the glory is in the name of the one we came to worship.

A D, Flower Convener

	Church Flowers	Memorial Vase
January		
5th	Mrs. J Sloan	VACANT
12th	Mrs. M McLeod	Mrs. M McLeod
19th	Mrs. McCall-Watson	Mrs. B Ivins
26th	Misses Gemmill	VACANT
February		
2nd	Mrs. R. Slack	Mrs. E Wilson
9th	Mrs. Train	Mrs. M. Gibson
16th	Mrs. M Wallace	Mrs. F. Saddington
23rd	VACANT	Mrs. P. McKenzie
March		
2nd	Mrs. M Wallace	Mrs. S. Aird
9th	Mrs. A. Marriot	Miss L. Riddick
16th	Mrs. O. Woods	Mrs. E. Riddick
23rd	Mrs. E. McNay	Mrs. M. Holmes
30th	Mrs. H. Campbell	Mrs. M. Bryden

If you would like to take a vacant date or help to arrange church flowers, please contact A Dunbar

Dates for Your Diary

Sunday 1st December: Communion (11.00am and 3.00pm)

Sunday 8th December: Gift Service

Sunday 15th December: Family Service followed by Christmas Brunch

Wednesday 25th December: Christmas Day Service at 10.00am

Sunday 29th December: End of year communion