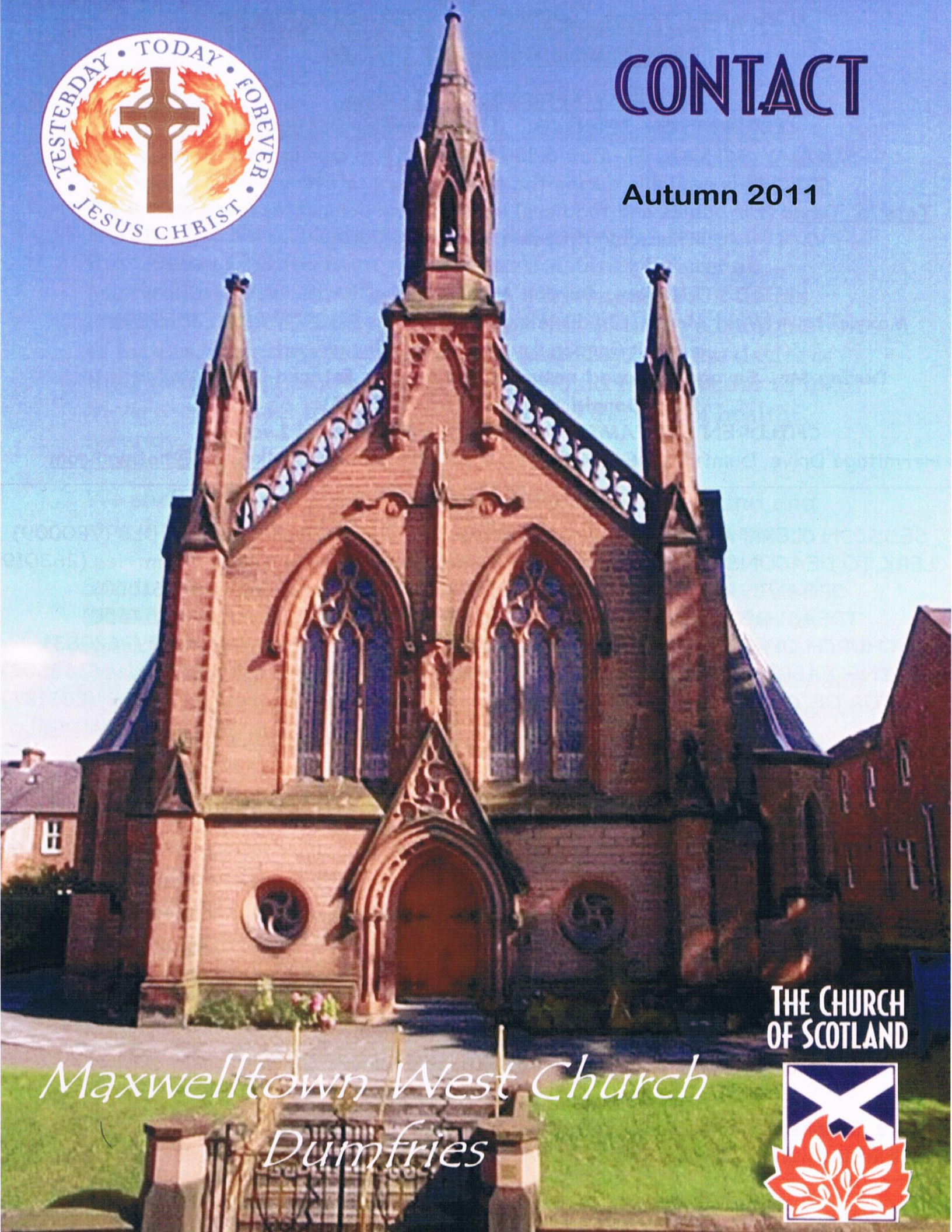


CONTACT

Autumn 2011



*Maxwelltown West Church
Dumfries*

THE CHURCH
OF SCOTLAND



MAXWELLTOWN WEST CHURCH, DUMFRIES

www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk

SUNDAY SERVICES: 11.00am

COMMUNION SERVICE: 11th September at 11.00am.

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

CRECHE is available during the morning service every Sunday.

Tots 'n' Tunes (for babies and toddlers) meets in the Committee Room on the 3rd Thursday of each month at 10.00am.

MINISTER: Rev. Gordon M.A. Savage, M.A., B.D.

Maxwelltown West Manse, 11 Laurieknowe, Dumfries DG2 7AH

During Mr. Savage's phased return to work, the Interim Moderator is Rev. Donald Campbell

CHILDREN'S & FAMILY WORKER: Mrs. Rachel Lyagoba

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: Mrs. E Riddick

TREASURER: Mr. D McNay

'ACTING' FABRIC CONVENER: Mr. D Miller

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Baptism

19th June: Adam John McNay

Marriages

28th May (at the Crichton Memorial Church): M S Duggan to K L Macleod

9th July (at the Crichton Memorial Church): A J MacDonald to C G S Abel

Deaths

9th June: Mrs. Norah Kirkpatrick

New Members by Transference

Mrs. E Adams

Rev. E Mack

Ms. J Hastie

Mr. B Peacham

Mr. C Hunter

Transference Certificates Issued

Rev. C and Mrs. M Sutherland

Mr. A Wallace

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.

Dear Friends

For me, this is a time for giving thanks, taking stock, and looking forward. Among those who have helped me through the period of 'phased return' to work have been Alison MacDonald (Y-Max), Rachel Lyagoba (school services), Liz Mack who has recently joined the congregation, our new printing team for the weekly Order of Service, and not least, Sandy Geddes, whose help and support to me and to the congregation have been invaluable. Thanks to all of these, and many others.

'Taking stock' means trying to assess where we are as a congregation, and where I am in terms of my ministry. As a worshipping community of God's people in Maxwelltown West, I believe we are carrying out a faithful witness to our Christian faith, and we are stronger when we help each other through times of difficulty. Saying goodbye to Sandy and Elizabeth Geddes will be very hard for us; as a congregation, we have been enriched by Sandy's ministry among us. For myself, accepting that I cannot pack as much into each day or each week as I used to, has not been easy: but that in itself may be to our advantage as a congregation, for we are learning to share more.

September sees the start of another Church year, and there is much to look forward to: the Harvest Carnival (11th Sept), organised jointly by the Presbytery and the Dumfries Christian Network; Presbytery Sunday (18th Sept) with the evening 'Songs of Praise' at Sanquhar; and our own Harvest Thanksgiving (25th Sept) are all events which remind us that we are part of a much wider Church ... and that's important. As we seek to do our best to worship God and serve Him in our daily lives, we do so as part of the great worldwide company of Christian folk. In the coming months, I pray that we may all be strengthened by the knowledge that we are part of God's family, and will come to know him better.

May God bless you all,

Gordon M.A. Savage

Editorial

I'm sure we can all remember when the front pews used to be full on a Sunday morning. Now you will read that Session are looking at the falling numbers in Sunday School and asking why this is the case. Maybe we should all be asking ourselves this question. At Family Services we have all enjoyed the contributions our young people have made – singing, taking part in sketches and acting out stories from the Bible – and over the years we have had a succession of very talented young musicians who have added a new dimension to our singing. They are the future of our church after all.

FS

Session

The Session met on 22nd June 2011.

Presbytery has been required to undertake a review of both buildings and the number of ministries in the region and their Implementation Team has drawn up a draft plan which was presented to Session for comment and discussion. Our own congregation is *not* involved in change in the draft plan.

Attention was drawn to the fact that numbers in Sunday School are falling and Session will look at this over the coming months.

Afternoon Communion in June and December will be held at 3.00pm in the Church Hall, but the September afternoon Communion will be cancelled to allow members to attend the afternoon Presbytery Harvest Event in the David Keswick Centre.

The Proposed visit of Winnie Owour from Kenya will not be taking place when planned, as the UK Border Agency has again refused her visa. (See 'World Church Team' article)

It was with regret that Session heard of the resignation of Rev Sandy Geddes – to take effect from 31st August. His leaving will be marked in Church on Sunday 28th August.

F S

Deacons' Court

Rev Donald Campbell, Interim Moderator, chaired the meeting of the Deacons' Court on 22nd June 2011.

D McNay, Treasurer, gave a detailed report on our financial position and was pleased to report that our finances were currently in a satisfactory position. He advised that an increase in offerings was beginning to show and expenditure was matching income.

Gift Aid claims were essential for our income and W Little was thanked for submitting the claims timeously.

D Miller agreed to take over as Fabric Co-ordinator on a caretaker basis for the time being. The Deacons' Court approved the following be appointed to serve on the Fabric Committee – D Crossan, H MacDonald, I MacPhee, D Rosie, F Saddington and J Wood. The following were co-opted on to the Fabric Committee – J Hastings, J McFadzean, W McLeod, J McNaught, R McWhirter and B Shepherd.

E R Clerk to the Deacons' Court

From our Former Assistant Minister, The Rev. Sandy Geddes

I would like to take this opportunity to explain to the congregation why, at this particular time, I have made the difficult decision to relinquish my position in Maxwelltown West. One way (and, I confess, the easiest way!) for me to do this would be to quote a few passages (slightly edited, taking into account the time lapse until you read this) from a letter read to the Kirk Session near the end of June.

"I am doing this for several reasons. Firstly, I have been feeling under extra pressure with a rather heavier workload after Colin Sutherland gave up as Locum so unexpectedly in March. Secondly, I shall reach my 75th birthday in July" (now history!). "Thirdly, (and perhaps most importantly), our family, who live in Newton Mearns, Troon and Kilmacolm, have encouraged us strongly for some time to move closer to them so that they are available to help out in the event of a medical emergency (to which both my wife Elizabeth and I are increasingly prone)" (because of our respective health problems). "Therefore, I have after much thought and with considerable regret, decided to tender my resignation as Assistant Minister at Maxwelltown West Church, to take effect at the end of August.

I am in many ways very sad about giving up my work at Max West, but having done that work (I hope satisfactorily) for over twelve years, I feel the time has come to go, although I have deliberately postponed my decision to resign, until Gordon Savage's health has improved sufficiently to give some hope that he will be able to make a relatively early return to full-time work.

I would like to express my thanks to both the Kirk Session and the Deacons' Court for their support, and my appreciation also to the many older folk in the congregation whom I have come to know through my regular visiting schedule and who, in many cases, have become my good friends."

Between June and the end of August, I successfully carried out my intention to make a final visit to all the folk on my visiting list to say farewell to them personally, and in some cases to break the news to them that I was leaving, and that I found stressful, particularly on the several occasions when tears were the order of the day. I have enjoyed my time in Dumfries with you, and I know how much both my wife and I will miss the fellowship of our many friends in Maxwelltown West. Since this is being written at the end of July in order to be included in the September issue of "Contact", it is impossible to say anything about where we shall be going or about my last Service on the 28th of August, when I have opted to speak to the children and preach the sermon, as well as to make a small parting gift to the church which I hope will mark permanently the bond between us and the congregation since 1999.

Thank you for your many good wishes for our future, and for the love we have received from so many of you.

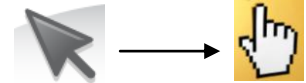
May the Lord bless you and keep you.

Sandy Geddes

After edging our way forward into the weird and wonderful world of the Internet, the fruits of our labours are gradually coming together and Max West has now joined the ranks of the very many other local churches who sport their own web site!

For those who might not already have stumbled across us, typing the above link will lead you to our new online world where you can read or listen to a **Bible Verse of the Day**, peruse a changing array of photos with **Max West on Flickr**, and find out the latest news about events via the calendar on the **What's On** page, as well as reading many other articles about Max West.

If you have not explored a web site before, move the mouse over the screen till you see the 'arrow' icon change to a 'hand' icon and then click. This will take you to another level with even more news and information.



Now it is over to you! Do you have some interesting news you could share via the web site; an article you feel would be of interest; a prayer or a poem; photographs or articles about past times or memories of the church; intimations about forthcoming events?

Under the enthusiastic encouragement of Ian Ansdell, our web site designer, J Love, J Denholm and M Newlands have been attempting to master the intricacies of Word Press (don't ask!!!) and are now happy to accept any news items, articles, photos or suggestions for consideration.

In the meantime . . . *Happy Surfing!!!*

JL, JD, MN

Harvest Carnival

The above event, which is for both children and adults from anywhere within Dumfries and Galloway, is being organised jointly by Dumfries and Kirkcudbright Presbytery and Dumfries Christian Network and is to be held at **The David Keswick Centre, Marchmount, Dumfries, on Sunday 11th September from 2.00pm to 6.00pm.**

This is a follow-on to the very successful Pentecost Family Event which took place at the Barony College on Sunday 23rd May last year. We hope that this year's event will be even more successful so we are urging everyone to note the date and make every effort to join us on the day. Please feel free to invite friends and family - the more the merrier.

The afternoon programme will run from 2.00pm to 4.45pm with a variety of activities and workshops (both indoor and outdoor) on offer – arts and crafts (painting and making things), music, dance, drama, storytelling, games etc. There will also be a Fairtrade Café, a Cream o' Galloway ice cream stand and we hope to have Emily Smith in attendance during the afternoon and taking part in the Harvest Praise Service in the Games Hall at 5.00pm which will also incorporate work done during the afternoon's activities and workshops. A praise band will lead the music, both traditional and contemporary.

Publicity for the event will be on the new Maxwelltown West website www.maxwelltownwest.org.uk on the 'News' page under 'Events' and DCN website www.dumfrieschurches.org.uk, as well as the local press, local radio and of course in our weekly intimations.

Events such as this involve a great deal of planning and to make it a success we need the support of members of all the churches, so please do come along and be part of the **Carnival**, and please publicise it as widely as possible. We would also be grateful for the offer of help on the day, as stewards and helpers in the workshops and activities. Please add your name to the **'Harvest Carnival Volunteers List'** on the Notice Board in the Simmons Hall or contact J Love or B Riddick for further information.

JL

World Church Team - Disaster in Kenya

As you will probably know from the media, Kenya is facing a national disaster with a strong drought. People and animals are dying along with thousands of refugees pouring in from Somalia. Our friends in Mathia and Bondo are both reporting hard times.

John from Mathia tells of basic commodities costing double the normal prices. Their tea bushes which are the main earners are dying from lack of water which they cannot afford to buy!

Sadly, John's father has died. Thanks for condolences sent on behalf of our church. Grandad Keroya was host to Wilson on his visit and a former soldier in the Kenya Rifles during the 2nd World War.

Four of our university students whom we have helped for the past two years are due to graduate soon and another five are continuing. The new term begins in September with further funding for them of £1,000 to be sent. Mathia Church send grateful thanks, appreciation and many blessings for this support.

Disappointing news from Bondo regarding Winnie's second visa application refusal, despite assistance from Russell Brown MP

The WCT decided not to pursue this matter any further meantime. The money raised for her visit will be used for the food programme and help to reimburse her application costs.

Although I have some bad news due to drought - animals are dying, food costs are doubling and people are again using polluted lake water which brings illness - the good news is that our deep well is the only source to provide the area with clean water, so the whole community queues for hours and Winnie has had to put limits on its use. The goats and chickens are surviving along with some crops. The Tuc Tuc which was provided lately, is hired out when not required and the profit used to give ninety 3-5 year olds a meal at Winnie's new crèche.

Many other small scale businesses are making a profit and the money has been used to start a church building. Bondo is progressing and we are told the people have much higher self-esteem now. However, as we know, water is of prime importance and when asked, this was Winnie's next priority. In view of this we asked for estimates to dig another DEEP well. The WCT are delighted that this was the correct choice last time and we now are beginning to see this community on the road to becoming self-sufficient.

Julie Smith and Sharon Fyall's Charity Run in aid of our two Kenyan projects raised a wonderful total of £850.00. Congratulations and grateful thanks to both ladies.

A D, WCT Convener

Relay for Life returns to Dumfries for 2012

Members will remember the fantastic results achieved in 2010 when the Max West Team participated in Relay for Life cancer research campaign which raised over £70,000 for Cancer Research. The Dumfries and Galloway Group had their fourth Relay for Life Weekend on 2nd & 3rd July 2011 at Wigtown and have now raised over £200,000 in four years.

These funds are saving lives. An oncologist friend from America wrote: 'All the monies raised by Relay for Life are greatly helping us in our fight against this dreadful disease and hopefully, eventually it will come to be that cancer will be a treatable chronic disease or even cured!!' Scottish Cancer Research is saying the same thing.

As the 2012 Relay for Life Weekend in Dumfries will be 30th June & 1st July at Park Farm, I am writing this in the hope that members of Maxwelltown West will again be happy and willing to enter a team and start fundraising now. Our Team had a fantastic result last year raising over £8,000. Many members made new friends. This must be good for the Church Family.

Can I please ask anyone who is interested in participating to contact me with their name and phone number and an initial meeting will be organised to set out the plans. Some members may not wish to join the team but may be willing to assist in fundraising and helping. Please can I have as many names as possible, as the earlier we start the better.

It is a fact of life today that very few people have not been touched by cancer, either with a relative or a friend, so please let us do our best to assist in raising funds for Cancer Research Scotland.

BR

14 Years Looking After Our Buildings

As you will all know, after 14 years as Fabric Convener, I have stepped aside to let some younger people take up the reins. I would like to thank the Fabric Committee for their assistance and co-operation during this time. I would also like to thank the members of Max West for their generosity and understanding in making donations when we had to find large sums to cover specific costs.

The most memorable projects were the moving of the Remembrance Gates to the front of the Church and the replacing of the two crosses that had been missing from the front of the Church for many years. The costs for both these projects were donated. We also had a major repair to the steeple and bell tower, when unfortunately the bell had to be removed. The Church was also completely rewired with energy saving fittings and repainted with a new colour scheme.

I hope everyone believes the Max West properties are in good shape for the future. My last (unplanned) project, caused by the severe frosts last winter, was to create new steps at both front and rear entrances. Owing to wet weather, this took longer than anticipated, but the end result has been very successful. I would like to wish the new Fabric Team all the best for the future.

BR

REPORTS FROM ORGANISATIONS

The Guild

I hope everyone has had an enjoyable summer. We in the Guild are looking forward to celebrating our 80th Anniversary year with a meal and entertainment at the Woodland House Hotel on 1st November 2011. To offset costs we are holding a coffee morning on 3rd September 2011 and we would welcome your support. Our first meeting of the new session will be on 4th October at 6.45pm and, as always, it is our Dedication Service held in the Church followed by a talk from Rev. Liz Mack. I look forward to meeting members old and new and hope to serve you well.

M H, Guild Convener

After Eights

The new session begins on Thursday 29th September with a Social Evening. The syllabus for the rest of the session is as follows:

October 27th - Helen Darwell speaking about the Loch Arthur Community
November 24th - Brian Hammond giving an insight into his work as a Ranger for the Drumlanrig Estate
December 15th - Christmas meal
January 26th - Tom Finlayson speaking about his years as a judge for Scotland in Bloom
February 23rd - Mary Buckley giving an insight into life backstage at the Theatre Royal
March 29th - Andy Armstrong relating his adventures when cycling across America
April 26th - End of session meal.

The meetings are informal and friendly and new members will be made most welcome.

J M

Good Companions

The Good Companions meet again on Wednesday 28th September in Maxwelltown West Church Committee Room at 2.00pm.

Everyone is welcome – male or female, new member or old. Come and give it a try! We meet fortnightly and usually have a speaker followed by a cup of tea and a chat with friends.

D W

Badminton Club

The new season starts on Tuesday 6th September and we will play every Tuesday and Thursday evening from then until the end of April.

During the season we will also have our annual dinner and at least one evening of ten pin bowling at Carlisle. The venue for the dinner usually varies each year. This year 21 members and friends had a most enjoyable meal at the Cavens Arms. New members will be made very welcome. All you need is enthusiasm and to be over the age of 16.

J M

Scouts

I am writing this on a sunny day in July - not quite the weather when this will be read. The leaders are enjoying a good break from the regular Monday nights for Scouts. At the end of the year we had 15 scouts in 3 patrols and three leaders, namely Hamish, Jonathan and Andrea. My thanks go to them for helping to run the Scout section.

Due to age, the following boys have left to move up to the Explorer section - M McGuire, K Riley, C Campbell, and R Milligan. J Singleton has decided to pursue his career in table tennis on a Monday. We may be losing R Winter as well. We do have two Cubs that I know of coming up to the Scout section in September.

The end of year barbecue for the whole of the Scout group involved parents as well, to look after their own children while the leaders did the cooking. We got through 80 sausages and 80 burgers - quite a feast. No leftovers this year!

The bowling went very well and we hope to be back there next spring. Some of the Scouts joined up, so I hope that they have been able to make use of the bowling green.

We also made model planes from balsa wood. They did fly, but got broken by the end.

During July there were Italian students over for two weeks and 4 of the Scouts went to the David Keswick Centre to join with them in their activities. They had a good time playing football and basketball. The only trouble was that they were about half the size of the Italians. K Eggo looked after them for me.

The sad news is that although we wish Andrea well in her future career, we are losing her to Carlisle and Newcastle Hospitals, where she will take up an Orthodontic teaching post. Our thanks go to her for being one of the leaders this year and hope that she can get involved in scouting elsewhere as well. Thanks go to Jonathan as well, for his work. We need more leaders!

The Beaver section had N Watson leading them up to the summer. She is having a year out and is in Europe until next summer, when she will continue her teaching course at the Crichton. Another student teacher called Bruce said he would take the section over, so hopefully that will work out.

The Cub section is being run by A Ainslie and J McNaught. They have had a busy year while John has settled in as a leader.

One of the Explorer Scouts, C Michael, is going to the World Jamboree in July.

We thank Maxwelltown West Church for giving the Scout Group the use of the Halls. It is a huge help to us all.

HMacD, J B and A M, Scout Leaders

Brownies

After Easter, the Brownies were very active. We attended the Dumfriesshire County Sports at Barony College and enjoyed an afternoon of games and activities. We then held a sponsored walk, walking over most of the bridges of Dumfries, and raised £300. The girls chose the charities of Marie Curie Cancer Care, Water Aid and the Dogs Trust for their donations and a cheque for £100 has been sent to each of these charities.

We also had visitors from the Go Smart! team who ran a workshop to encourage cycling and being more active. One week the Brownies played table tennis and tambourelli and the next week continued the theme by holding an Italian themed Promise Celebration.

In between these active evenings we also held Royal Wedding mini makeovers, made jewellery and had an enormous buffet at our last meeting of the term.

Brownies will resume on 30th August and we look forward to continuing our Brownie Adventure. Four girls have moved up to Guides at Maxwelltown West and we look forward to getting to know the new girls.

J McE, Brownie Leader

	Church Flowers	Memorial Vase
October		
2 nd	VACANT	Mrs. L Archibald
9 th	Mrs. M Allison	Mrs. Edgar
16 th	VACANT	Mrs. E McNay
23 rd	Mrs. M Brown	Mrs. Carruthers
30 th	Mrs. B Walker	VACANT
November		
6 th	Mrs. S. Forsyth & Mrs. I. Scott	Mrs. B Steven
13 th	Mrs. M Barbour	Mrs. M. Coulson
20 th	Miss S McDowall	Mrs. S Robin
27 th	Mrs. McCall-Watson	VACANT
December		
4 th	Mrs. B Shearer	Mrs. V. Saunders
11 th	Mrs. H Campbell	Mrs. Cameron
18 th	Mrs. M Wallace	Mrs. S Brown
25 th	Mrs. A Dunbar	Mrs. S Brown
January		
1st	Mrs. A Dunbar	Mrs. B Ivins

If you would like to take a vacant date or help to arrange church flowers, please contact A Dunbar or M Reading via the Contact page on the web site.

Dates for your Diary

- 28th August** 11.00am Farewell Service for Rev. Sandy Geddes; Sunday School (J-Max & K-Max) resumes
- 11th September** 11.00am Communion Service (no afternoon service)
2.00 – 6.00pm Harvest Carnival (David Keswick Centre)
- 18th September** 11.00am Presbytery Sunday – Rev. Val Ott
- 25th September** 11.00am Harvest Thanksgiving (Family Service)