

# The Dunscore Digest

Dunscore Parish Church Magazine  
March 2013



Russell Brown MP laying a wreath at the Jane Haining Memorial  
after the service on Holocaust Memorial Day  
Jane Haining Update on Page 2

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**Free!** The church is  
pleased to provide the Digest  
free but any donations to pro-  
duction costs are welcome.

## Minister's Musing

David Bartholomew

It was battered and scarred and the auctioneer thought it hardly worth his while to waste much time on the old violin, so he held it up with a smile. "What am I bid for this old violin? Who'll start the bidding for me? A pound, a pound, who'll make it two? Two pounds, and who'll make it three? Three pounds once, three pounds twice, going for three?" Then a call came for a pause in the bidding from a grey-haired man at the back of the room. He came forward and picked up the bow. After sweeping the dust from the old violin and tightening up all the strings, he played a melody pure and sweet, that took the breath of the crowd away. The music ceased and the auctioneer, with a voice that was quiet and low, said, "What am I bid for the old violin?", as he held it up with the bow. "A thousand pounds and who'll make it two? Two thousand, and who'll make it three? Three thousand once, three thousand twice, going, and gone."

The people cheered. But some of them said, "We don't quite understand. What changed its worth?" Then came the reply, "The touch of the Master's hand." And many a person with their life out of tune, battered and scarred by the events of their lives, may feel their lives are worthless and going nowhere. They need to know that there is One who values them dearly, who has higher and better purposes for them. They need to open their lives to the touch of the Master's hand. He can lead them out of their valley of despair to a better and brighter day. He can meet with us in our emptiness and lostness if we would but call on him in our hearts and make space for him in our daily lives.

I wish God's blessings upon you in this new year. It can indeed be a year of new beginnings. A year to discover in fresh ways God's love for you, a love that reaches to you right where you are and can unravel the twisted strands of your life.

## Jane Haining Link Update

Pam Mitchell

In January I met with the Secretary of the World Mission Council, Rev Ian Alexander and Carol Finlay to talk about the continuation of the visit to Scotland by pupils from Hungary in memory of Jane Haining.

This meeting came about because, following the visit last August, the Glasgow group from Queen's Park Church decided they wished to withdraw from hosting. Rev Aaron Stevens, in Budapest, joined the discussion by video link and the Moderator and Clerk of Glasgow Presbytery also attended.

It was decided that new questions should be asked regarding the selection of the youngsters and the preparation for and follow up of their visit. In the meantime I have said that we in Dunscore are reasonably happy to continue this year along similar lines as before if the students have already been selected but would value assistance from the World Mission Council and / or Glasgow Presbytery if Queens Park is not being involved.

I hope you will agree with this and will support the visit with your usual willingness. I feel it is a great opportunity to remember "our" Jane Haining and work to keep her memory alive.

Also Dumfries and Kirkcudbright Presbytery now have a twinning link with Hungary. Although we have our own twinning with Lubuto we are allowed more than one friend! Watch this space to see our link resolves over the coming months.



The Jane Haining Memorial with the wreath laid by Russell Brown

## Editor's Footnote

The December edition of the Digest marked the end of an era. It was the last one to be printed by Mary Donaldson who has done so for the past five years. Many thanks Mary for doing such a good job and always really quickly.

As with many things in life, you only really appreciate them when you no longer have them! When I went to find out the cost of printing in Dumfries, the quote was more than twice Mary's cost. Not good news as the church is very short of cash at the moment. You may have noticed the note on the front cover that the Digest remains free but if you would like to make a contribution to the cost of paper and printing, it would be gratefully received!

This is the first edition of the Digest to be printed and collated by a team of volunteers. Recipients of the printed version can be the judge of how this has worked out.

As ever, opinions expressed in the Digest are not necessarily those of the Church of Scotland, the Interim Moderator or the Editor.



# Thornhill Services

In the last edition of the Digest, Mary Whittle wrote about the services for people in the care homes in Thornhill.

As you can see, they are enjoyed by the teams and the residents with a large proportion of the residents joining the services.



## Charity Choices

**Agnes Riley**

### Bhopal Medical Appeal

I first learned of the appalling explosion at Union Carbide's factory in Bhopal, India, when it was first reported worldwide in 1984. They were already desperately poor people living in this city, tens of thousands died in the immediate aftermath and thousands more have died since, whilst survivors and their children remain seriously ill and malformed.

Five years later, with no help and in desperation, some of the women walked 500 miles to Delhi to see the Prime Minister but he would not meet them. Although they failed in their attempt, they have grown in strength "no force on earth can stop us".

Twenty-nine years on from the explosion, although it rarely makes the headlines, the campaign is still going on. Before Christmas I received a magazine through the post bringing my attention again to the endless dedication of volunteers who have set up two very special medical clinics which treat, heal and support the survivors and their children.

With the 30th anniversary of the explosion next year, the Bhopal Medical Appeal needs our help to raise much more needed money to continue and extend their work. Please read the leaflet "Hope in Hell - the Appalling and Inspiring Story of Bhopal" and help to make a difference to these peoples' lives. *Copies are available in the Hall of Fellowship in Dunscore church. Donate at [www.bhopal.org](http://www.bhopal.org) or phone 0800 316 5577.*

A few excerpts from *Hope in Hell*:

Half of all pregnant women exposed to the gas spontaneously aborted. Those that came to term often bore babies so disfigured they couldn't be recognised as human.

There was little help for the victims: Union Carbide refused to share data about the gas, claiming that these were a trade secret. The only antidote shown to work was stopped at Carbide's insistence.

Carbide abandoned its factory full of dangerously toxic chemicals. Soon the water of nearby communities began to smell and taste bad. The families hit hardest by the gas were being poisoned a second time. In contaminated areas many children were being born damaged.

The Bhopal Medical Appeal began in 1994 when a man from Bhopal came to the UK to tell whoever would listen about the situation of the survivors. They had decided that instead of waiting for help that was never going to arrive, they would start their own medical clinic and give free care to whoever needed it.

The Sambhavna Clinic opened in 1996. The clinic has to date provided free medical care to almost 35,000 people and won major international awards.

# Dunscore Freecycle

Freecycle continues to be a big success - here are a few comments from users:

**Pam Shephard:** I needed manure for my vegetable garden and only had to ask Freecycle. After looking and asking around for weeks I had three offers!

**Judith Campbell:** I think Freecycle is a great idea. We've picked up quite a few things on it and also managed to pass on things that are no longer any use to us but are useful to somebody else.

**Alison Boyes:** I once found a home for some old doors and a piece of worktop. I think John D. used some of them for village event signs. The nicest thing I've got was an old rocking chair. I'd always wanted one and it appeared on Freecycle. Had to battle Kay Keith for it!

**Rosie Rutherford:** When our children were little we inherited two old style school desks which for many years were used and loved - they stored treasures and artworks and poems and stories and secrets. I really wanted the space but didn't really want to get rid of them and I couldn't have sold them, it wouldn't have felt right at all!. Freecycle has ensured that they have gone to another family and I hope that they are once again be loved and used and filled up with treasures.

**John Drabble:** Got an excellent and free greenhouse from a Moniaive donor – magic! However, transporting 8' by 6' frame on 6' by 4' trailer was an interesting challenge.

**Joy Cherkaoui:** Freecycle has been great for me. I got the eco paint I wanted (the exact colour and make!) and was able to re-home my raised bed within a few short hours ... all without needing to sign in and remember a password. I love how easy Dunscore Freecycle is to use.

**Judith Mylne:** Things I dispose of via Freecycle included the worktops - it was SO GOOD not to have to take them to the skip, but to know they were being used. Best thing about Freecycle is that those things one always felt could be useful if only you could find the right person to use them, have a chance of linking up with the "right person". Good stewardship of the earth.

**Carol Godridge:** I just wanted to say how lovely it is to be part of the Freecycle network. I have acquired a wonderful massage table (I've always had to borrow one for my Reiki work). It was offered by another Reiki practitioner who has retired and it seemed just right for it to find a new home with me. Meantime my old greenhouse, I hear, is gearing up for its first season in its new home in Dunscore.

To join the Freecycle list, just email: [eco@dunscorechurch.co.uk](mailto:eco@dunscorechurch.co.uk) and ask to be added to the circulation list.

## A Summer Picnic

**William Crawford**

Crannogs are to be found at the opposite end of the Parish, as well as at Friar's Carse! There are several on the west side of Loch Urr, visible when the water is low. Dating as they do from the Early Bronze Age, they are another reminder of why this magical area around Loch Urr should be protected.

The Save Loch Urr Association is sponsoring a Picnic at Loch Urr, to be held in the summer, to enable those who do not know the Loch, to see for themselves one of the last remaining areas of unspoiled Dumfriesshire moorland. The Association will invite you all to come, whatever your views about wind turbines, to see where

"Blows the wind to-day, and the sun and the rain are flying,  
Blows the wind on the moors to-day and now"  
Where swans and much bird life comes, to what is still a haven of peace.

## Dumfries Presbyterial Council

### Guild 125 Year Celebration

Sunday 28<sup>th</sup> April 2013 at 2 for 2.30pm  
Easterbrook Hall, Dumfries

Afternoon tea and Fashion Show by Livingston of Castle Douglas  
All welcome

Tickets £15 available from Jan Patterson or Mary Whittle

## Dunscore Hill Walking Group

Colin Mitchell

Our first walk of 2013 was the ascent of Cairnsmore of Fleet. This is usually a pleasant walk that gently climbs this interesting hill with great views. However our outing in February was in thick mist and drizzle with horizontal heavy rain on the upper slopes. There was no view either!

We hope for better weather on our remaining climbs which includes Cross Fell (near Penrith), Crinkle Crag (Lake District), Pentland Hills, Tinto, Saddle Yoke and the Covend Coast.

We try to organise a range of types of routes ranging from moderately strenuous to more straightforward. New members welcome. Contact Pam or Colin Mitchell for more details: on 820455 or c.mitchell50@btinternet.com.

## Some Good News!

Virginia Hanson

For some time I have been finding that we rarely hear from the various news media report of wonderful things that are occurring today. I feel that even in the midst of all today's problems including family, political and world carnage, there must be some kind and good things taking place.

Perhaps it would be possible to collect knowledge of such and publish them as a routine addition to the Digest. Obviously THE BEST GOOD NEWS is the LOVE of GOD and the life and death of OUR saviour who gave His life for us and our sins are vanquished!

Every day we show by our acts and speech this remarkable love. Maybe it would be of some cheer to people to hear or read the good things happening, this will help to encourage everyone. I am sure that some of us know of such events and would, perhaps, share these with us. For example, the new initiative in Glasgow called "Passage from India". A small group of women went to India and came back to start training immigrant women to produce articles for sale thereby helping their families and also their self-esteem. This IS good news. Glasgow is surely benefitting from the work done in Maryhill and Pollockshaws. This work is one of the projects to be supported by the Church Guild.

**Not the end I hope but a beginning!**

## Faith and the Future

### The church and Our Environment

We cannot combat the effects of climate change without altering how we behave. With 2,000 years of experience in guiding our faith and behaviour, what role could the church have to play in the future of our environment?

Lesley Riddoch will chair a fascinating panel discussion with Professor Michael Northcott (of Durisdeer) from the University of Edinburgh, Professor Stephen Reicher from The University of St Andrews, Dr Rebekah Widdowfield from the Scottish Government and Morag Wilson from WWF Scotland. Tuesday 2 April, 6:00pm (90 minutes) • £8 / £6. Venue: Dining Room, Teviot Row Student's Union, Bristo Square, Edinburgh.

Tickets can be purchased from online from the Science Festival web site or by phone through the Science Festival Box Office on 0844 557 2686.

*If anyone goes to this, please write a report for the Digest!*

## From the Archives... Five years ago

**Eco-Congregation News** We recently held a speaker evening in church where Martin Phipps talked about worm farming (for use in fishing) in Dunscore. He brought along some of his worms, much to Christine's amusement.

**Are we doing enough for our young folk?** This was a question that came up at the recent Church Without Walls Supper. We do have contact with younger age group through Rock Solid and the leaders will be encouraging them to go along to what is being described as the "event of the year" for young people. What about the older age group, the 14 year olds and above? *And so SLYC was born!*

**A Chat With...The Minister** *What brought you to Dunscore?* A Peugeot 206... No seriously – I didn't actually apply for the position but a friend who had been offered the post (but took up another offer) suggested me. After an interview in early May with folks from Glencairn & Moniaive and Dunscore on the Saturday (I was given a tour of the parishes by Barney), On the Friday evening I was phoned with an invitation to preach as sole nominee. *Oh that is was as fast now!*

## A Chat With... our *Life and Work* Distributor

*The Assistant Editor interviewed Stella McCubbin at her home after church one Sunday morning. Stella distributes the monthly magazine of the Church of Scotland.*

*How long have you been doing this, Stella?* I took over from Caroline Little when she moved to Hawick 30 years ago. I'm happy to carry on – it's an easy job.

*What does it involve?* The magazines are sent to me from Edinburgh. If I'm out, the driver just leaves them at the door. I take them to church to give out and once a year, I collect the money (£21). 27 people took the magazine when I started, now there are only 12.



*Have you always lived in Dunscore?* No, we moved to Mansegate from Dumfries when I was 12 years old. I was born in Birmingham, my brother was born in St Albans and my sister (Lorna Muirhead) was born in India, where our father worked as a tea planter. I had a wonderful mother and father. I met Leslie in Dunscore and married him in November 1960 – one of the best things I ever did.

*What do the church and your faith mean to you?* I have been coming to Dunscore church for over 30 years. I love the welcome you get when you come in. My faith in God gives me great contentment and makes me feel at peace with the world. But I wish that it didn't take so long for us to get a new minister.

*What do you do in your spare time?* I love my walks! I go out every day, down the road to the Holm field and back up, stopping for a wee rest on the way. I always take a bag to collect litter - I feel that the countryside is God's garden and I don't like to see rubbish in it. I also like swimming and doing crosswords. Leslie and I enjoy holidays in our caravan at Garlieston and Kirkcudbright and we also like to go abroad to somewhere hot and sunny.

*What is your favourite food?* Roast pork, cooked by Leslie!

*Tell us something else about yourself* In 2014, I shall have been a diabetic for 50 years and Dr Bell at the hospital in Dumfries is going to give me a medal to congratulate me on keeping my diabetes under control.

*That's great, Stella. Keep up the good work!*

*Note from the Assistant Editor: Life and Work is well worth £21 a year. It is full of interesting articles and news about the church. Recent issues have even featured members of our congregation! Speak to Stella if you would like to start getting the magazine. You only need to pay in April. Dunscore Church receives money for every subscription taken out.*

## Service and Diary Dates Sunday morning services continue at 10:00 am

Date	Time	Details
14 March	7:30 pm	Guild (in the Glenriddell Hall) - Judy Shaw talking on Alzheimers Scotland
17 March	11:00 am	Annual Stated Meeting - immediately after the service
29 March	7:00 pm	Good Friday Service - Dunscore Church
31 March	8:00 am	Service at the Mast above the manse. Meet at the manse at 7:00 am or mast at 8:00.
31 March	10:00 am	Easter Service - Dunscore Church
12 April	7:30 pm	Guild (in the Glenriddell Hall) - Rev Neil Campbell on being a prison chaplain
27 April	3:30 pm	Afternoon Tea & Concert with Members of the Cairn Chorus
28 April	2:00 pm	Guild 125 Celebration at Easterbrook Hall
30 April	6:00 pm	Presbytery Eco Evening in Dunscore Church
8 May	7:30 pm	Poetry Evening with Cheese and Wine
9 May	7:30 pm	Guild (in the Glenriddell Hall) - Gus Langlands on Amnesty International
12 May	7:00 pm	Evening Service - Dunscore Church
18 May	TBC	Plant Sale
9 June	7:00 pm	Evening Service - Dunscore Church
14 July	7:00 pm	Evening Service - Dunscore Church

## Guild News

**Judith Campbell**

Until further notice the Guild meetings will take place in the Glenriddell Hall at the usual time – 7:30 pm on the second Thursday of each month.

The next meeting is on the 14 March when Judy Shaw will be speaking to us about Alzheimer's Scotland. At the April meeting Rev. Neil Campbell will be speaking about his work as a Prison Chaplain. 9 May is our AGM and our guest speaker that night is Gus Langlands. He will be talking to us about Amnesty International.

Why not come along to our meetings? Everyone will be made very welcome!

## Flying Pig News

A note to all you budding George Formby's, we have a Ukulele workshop on Sunday afternoons at 4:00 pm in the Flying Pig. All ages welcome. Come along and learn to play this wonderful, fun little instrument. We have a lovely group learning at the moment and we are having a great time, I heartily recommend it anyone to give it a go. It is hoped to get mid week lessons for school pupils organised from 3:15 pm anyone interested in their child taking part please contact me on 820795.

Bookings now being taken for Easter Sunday lunch 31 March noon - 2:00 pm. Opening times from Easter: Thursday, Friday, Saturday, Sunday from 5:00 pm. Meals Friday, Saturday 6:00 - 8:00 pm. Sunday lunch noon - 2:00 pm. Private party's catered for.



## Eco Presbytery in Dunscore

Following the fascinating Christian Aid Eco Roadshow in Dunscore church last year, we have been asked to host a Presbytery gathering with a "green" theme.

The evening will start with supper (one of Dunscore's many strong points!) followed by a series of workshops with topics including:

Food Miles; The "Enough Food for Everyone - IF" campaign and Waste with contributions from Christian Aid, Zero Waste Scotland, Eco Congregation Scotland and us!

Please keep the evening of Tuesday 30 April free to come along.

## Lubuto Twinning Update

**John Drabble**

### Tuli Pamo – We Are Together

We received the following message from Lubuto following their receipt of £1,500 from Glencairn, Moniaive and Dunscore Churches at Christmas:

*"Good Morning Scotland. The money has finally hit our account and we are now proceeding with the intended plans and goals. The playground is almost done pictures will be sent in my next mail. Kindly convey our gratitude to all our friends that work tirelessly to see Lubuto revamped. Tulipamo,*

*Martha for Lubuto UCZ congegation."*

We still await some pictures of the new playground for the thriving school.

The congregation there have recently re-painted the Church which looks very smart (as you will from the photo).

Please do not forget the "Mile of Pennies" - for your small change please. I have asked Lubuto for a small project to support so that we can use this money for something tangible and specific.

Just a reminder that Lubuto really do value our twinning though prayer and financial support. Let us continue to remember them in our prayers especially at Easter.



The re-painted church



## Lubuto Visit

**Dave Ball**

For nearly five years, the Lubuto congregation of the United Church of Zambia has been twinned with our own in Dunscore, Glencairn and Moniaive. In February this year, whilst on a visit to teach in the capital, Lusaka, I made a visit to Lubuto. I was kindly looked after by Martha Lunga, who visited us in 2007. She is one of the church elders, and does much work for the community. This was a flying visit, since my time was short- a bus ride to Ndola, an introduction by Reverend Kamuya Munjita, then touring the compound as the Marching Band of the Boys' Brigade practiced their pieces and dusk gave way to dark.

I stayed at Martha's house for the night, and am thankful to her and her family for their kindness. The next day dawned hot and dry for my tour, although this was the rainy season. I was escorted by Reverend Munjita and Martha, with church elders to greet.

The church is strong in spirit, but the building is, unfortunately, at risk. One corner is structurally unsound, with a big crack up the wall; if that's not bad enough, I was told that the roof is too heavy for the walls, and remedial work, with metal pillars, will be needed to shore up the building. Despite these problems, there are plans drawn to extend the church when it's safe to do so. I was sad to learn that the bore hole, drilled in 2008, is currently not working. I hope that plans to repair it, which involve moving the water tank, will be completed soon.

Next, I visited the school, a happy and thriving place, with about 120 children enrolled. I toured each class in turn, offering a few words of thanks and encouragement to study. At first, the children were mostly shy of this unusual visitor, but by the school break time they were far more approachable and were always smiling for the pictures I took. The classrooms were very neat and well tended, although text books were not available. The school is, however, growing. Presently two classes are accommodated in one classroom.

The good news is that for the first time all four teachers have been paid without incurring arrears in the budget, and there are plans to build another educational block, needed because the school is so popular with the surrounding community. The construction of the "ablution block" (the staff and school toilets) was about to be finished, which was heartening.

I presented a "Tuli Pamo" banner to the Church and handed over the letters which had been sent with me from members of our congregation. I gave Reverend Munjita a copy of the Dunscore Digest and also the latest "Life and Work" which



has a piece in it by Pam Mitchell, who came to Lubuto in 2007. Then with lots of goodbyes I left to visit Kantalumba, a township on the edge of Ndola. Here there is a feeding station for 800 children. Here they receive a meal which may be their only one of the day, the only food protecting them from starvation.

As I left on the bus back to Lusaka, I could quietly reflect on all the sights and sounds I witnessed on my short visit to Lubuto. I was impressed by the uplifting mixture of kindness and happiness shown by all, young and old alike. I was honoured to visit this happy and lively church community; a church that is growing in strength despite the many challenges it faces. The Reverend asked us all to keep the Lubuto congregation in our thoughts and prayers. Please do so.

Again, many thanks to all, especially Reverend Munjita and Martha.

## Evening Services Return

After few month's break, evening services are back for a trial period. They will be on the second Sunday of the month (starting in May). While we are without a minister they will mainly be led by elders. Evening services are often quieter and are usually shorter than morning services. Everyone is welcome. See page 6 for dates and times.



# The Marriage Course

*Two of the participants on the Marriage course "volunteered" to write a little about the experience...*

**Robert Waugh:** We entered the building, half a dozen tables were neatly set at one end of the room, amply distanced from each other in order to ensure privacy, whilst managing to avoid a feeling of isolation. The room lighting, subtle yet adequate, contributed to a welcoming atmosphere. The individual tables, lit by pillar candles, created a lasting intimacy which enhanced the general ambience. Music, carefully chosen to suit the mood of the occasion, was pitched at a level so as not to intrude on any conversation. The food, an inspired blend of traditional and contemporary dishes with variations to suit dietary requirements, is backed up by discreet yet friendly service. Yes, we had arrived at the Glenriddell Hall for the Marriage Course.

Five couples had signed up for this course which had already received good reports from the organisers who had previously participated in it and were obviously impressed enough with it to decide to run it in Dunscore. The course, which was introduced by Matthew and Kath, is designed to help improve the marriage experience and is based on Christian values. It is however completely suitable for non-believers also.

The course itself is on DVD with accompanying course books given to each person participating. It is presented on the DVD by a couple, Nicky and Sila, who have a successful marriage but do admit that there have also been difficult times. Their experiences and those of a wide variety of other couples of all ages feature in each weekly session. The subjects covered are far-reaching with most matters being at least touched on if not dealt with in depth.

I find the course content to be very interesting and useful and there are many points which are relevant to us all. It has become a very enjoyable way of spending Monday evenings and I feel that we as a couple have benefited from the experience. I am sure the other participants would endorse this opinion.

Finally I'd like to give a big thank you to Matthew & Kath and Cliff & Carol for all their hard work.

**Pauline Johnstone:** For the last seven Monday evenings my husband and I have been privileged to have attended the "Dunscore Bistro".

Weary from the day's work, we and four other couples have wandered along to the village hall - to find an unexpected and calm ambience: soft lighting; music; small tables beautifully set out with pretty tablecloths, flowers and candles; attentive hosts who have taken every trouble for our comfort. We have been served with lovely meals, been educated and entertained by a range of learned couples through DVD, and got to spend precious private time with our respective spouse.

Is this a new restaurant which has opened in Dunscore? No, it is the MARRIAGE COURSE!

As I discovered when encouraging others to attend, the words "marriage course" seem to have something of the "taboo" about them for many people ; instill fear into the eyes of others or provoke snorts of derision or amusement .

However, what could be a better way to spend a Monday evening, whilst improving our lives by learning about and considering key issues which affect all couples (such as communication, resolving conflict, building strong foundations, the power of forgiveness, good sex, the impact of family)?

One obvious element the course brings out is how little "quality" time most couples actually spend together and how important it is to arrange this proactively.

I would recommend the course to all. Many thanks to our generous hosts (Kath, Matthew, Carol and Cliff).

When the course is finished we will miss all the characters we have been introduced to and have lovely memories of the experience that has been Monday evenings at "The Bistro". Furthermore - we shall be living in contentment and harmony...

## The Good Wife's Guide

**Thanks to Chris & Mary Whittle**

A few excerpts from *Housekeeping Monthly* - 13 May 1955. Prepare yourself, take 15 minutes to rest so you'll be refreshed when he arrives. Touch up your make-up, put a ribbon in your hair.

Be a little gay and a little more interesting for him. His boring day may need a lift and one of your duties is to provide it. Arrange his pillow and take off his shoes. Speak in a low, soothing and pleasant voice. Remember, he is the master of the house and will exercise his will with fairness and truthfulness.

A good wife always knows her place.

*I wonder if it's like that at the Whittles.*

# Earth Hour

Alison Boyes

## Uniting People to Protect the Planet

Earth Hour started in Australia in 2007 when 2.2 million people and 2,100 businesses turned off their lights for one hour creating a visual mandate for action on climate change. By 2009 4,000 cities and towns across 88 countries took part rising to 6,950 cities and towns across 152 countries last year.

This year Earth Hour is on Saturday 23 March from 8:30 - 9:30 pm. The Eco Group ask you to join them in turning off our lights for at least part of the hour and please pray:

*Turning off the lights, we turn to you Creator God, seeing, in our mind's eye, what you have made: The beauty of stars on a dark night and the incomprehensible vastness of space. A waterfall, a fruit tree, a forest, the smile on a child's face. Rivers, sun, sea, wind and rain to warm and nourish. A bright bird, a friendly dog, family to love and friends to cherish. Mountains to be climbed, dazzling flowers and bright new mornings fresh with promise. Such generosity, such abundance! Enough for everyone IF...*

*Turning on the lights, we turn to you, Light of the world. Show us a way to live lightly on this earth and to share our wealth with those who need it. Instead of squandering your gifts, may we keep them in trust for those who come after us.*

*In your loving name, Amen*

## Why Dunscore Church?

Brian Lord

I think that first impressions do count. That is why I come to Dunscore church. Meeting members of the congregation in their various ploys and situations, be it as members of Rotary, Dalgarno Singers, out shooting or as personal friends, and knowing that they are of a like persuasion draws you to an understanding of what makes them tick and to see that there is a common reality of well being. They all care for their fellow human beings and I am sure this comes from a deep faith developed over the years and through much practice as well.

The warm welcome I received when I came to my first (and subsequent) services gave me a feeling of being part of the church community and one which will grow through sharing and involvement. Another "homecoming" was the presentation to the congregation of the Freedom to have the open Bible in our midst. This was a feature of the congregational church of which I was a member for many years when young.

If the church needs "Brownie points" then look no further than the two screens on the wall. What an innovation to be able to stand up, look up and sing out without trying to follow the printed word. The only thing I might comment on is that for those of us who read music might be given an opportunity to pick up some of the tunes that are new to the ear. I do think that the singing gets better each time I visit the church - mind you I am a little deaf! The refreshments after the service and conversation with others whom you might not know are good. I expect other activities on the social calendar help to keep us bonded and that is important, especially when one feels vulnerable or in need of company.

But why did I wish to go to church? When my wife Sheila died in November last year, a large void appeared. In my mind there was a jumbled mass of thoughts. Many of those thoughts were of what was, what is and what might be, all connected to daily happenings. I found it extremely difficult to find calm so that I might manage a prayer without the disruption of thoughts of daily events. I gradually managed at bedtime, at least most nights, to get on the right wavelength and find a peace that enabled me to sleep, a peace difficult to understand when it is experienced.

Remembering that "where two or three of you are gathered together, there I am in your midst! Jolted me to seek collaboration with others to strengthen the power of prayer through fellowship and togetherness. The church at Dunscore, with a simple clarity of worship and a congregation that blends harmoniously, demonstrates that through sharing we can all be encouraged and strengthened.

I leave the service with a resolve to do better next week by looking upwards and outwards. I know that I am not very good at expressing myself, but many of you will, through experience and being on your own journeys of faith, be able to fill in some of the gaps.

*Thank you Brian. We would be interested in other readers' answer to "Why Dunscore Church?"*

## A Couple of Thoughts

A self-made man tends to worship his creator *Anon*

To me old age is always a couple of years more than I am *Bernard Baruch*

# Paddy's War

Paddy Cooper

## A Teenager in the Blitz

Paddy, in conversation with her daughter Aly Robertson recounts some war-time memories.

**What were you doing at the outbreak of war?** I was 13 in 1939 and, just before war was declared, was evacuated to Sussex, not far from the South coast. I hadn't had the chance to say goodbye to my family properly so it was very upsetting. My whole school was evacuated and it was disruptive for my education. The people in the second home where I stayed, weren't very pleasant. My sister, Olive, who was older, came down from London in a coach to see me. She discovered how unhappy I was and she went home to tell my mother. I was put on a train back to London.

**Where did you work and how did you get there?** I started work when I was 15 in the office of a tool making factory (Ryder and Davidson in New Cross) which was a tram ride of about eight miles. My sister worked at Siemens, making parts for telephones. My other sister worked in a local mental hospital, which was evacuated to Gartcosh, near Glasgow, during the war. Before she left, she saw the planes which bombed a school in Catford flying in. I had a younger brother but he didn't go to that school.

**Did you have any pets?** I had been given Laddie, a lovely black cocker spaniel, before the war. When I came back from being evacuated he had gone - my parents told me that he had been sent to live on a farm but I found out after the war that he had been put to sleep. He had been frightened by the noise of the bombs and it simply wasn't practical to keep a dog. We kept chickens, called Fish and Chips, who gave us a regular supply of eggs. We also kept rabbits - they weren't pets, we ate them.

**What sort of music did teenagers listen to?** We mainly listened to light music. A Swiss colleague and his wife used to take me to the Albert Hall. We also listened to music on the wireless, I liked Edmundo Ross. There was music in the local pub and I occasionally went along with Olive, my sister. We had a piano and we used to sing songs every Sunday when my Uncle Jack, who played by ear, would entertain.

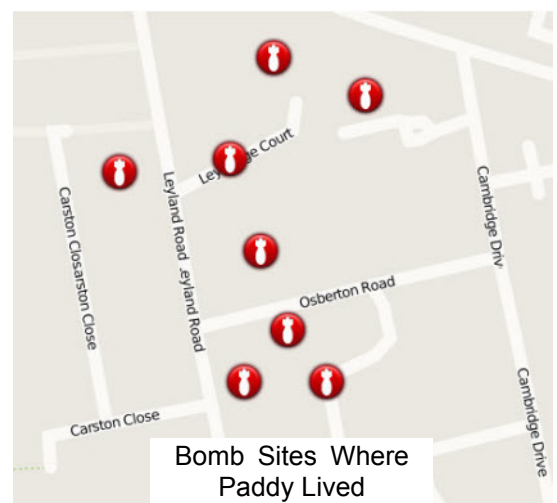
**Clothes can be very important to a teenager - did you get many?** Very few. We needed coupons to buy clothes as they were rationed. My mother used to take me to the market to buy clothes. One girl couldn't afford to buy clothes so I bought her coupons. I used to sew a lot of my own clothes. I wore very little makeup - foundation came in a tube and I would wear pale lipstick when I could get it.

**What did you do to amuse yourselves during the blackout?** We used to knit and listen to the radio. Most importantly I used to read, I couldn't be without a book - I would walk to the library, a couple of miles away to get library books for myself and my mother, at least six at a time

**What was travel like?** Blackout screens were over all the windows on the trams, buses and trains. There was a little diamond that was clear for you to look through. The conductor told you where you were.

**Did you go to the pictures?** At least once a week. If the air raid siren went off whilst I was at the pictures, at the Savoy cinema in Lee Green, I would rush to get home. We would see the Pathe news, but we mainly heard the news on the radio.

**What did you do when the air raid siren sounded?** We used to get down to the shelter - fast! It was an Anderson Shelter made of corrugated iron and covered with earth, erected by workmen who went round the neighbourhood. There were six bunk beds inside so that I, my two sisters, my brother and my parents could all fit in. It was horrible - dark, damp and cold. The condensation would drip from the roof onto our blankets. Mum would occasionally dash in to the house and make sandwiches and tea and bring it back, because you couldn't cook inside. It was also extremely frightening hearing the bombs going off. It was such a relief when the 'all clear' sounded and we could go back into the house. Sometimes the bombs were so constant that we slept in the air raid shelter every night. We were fortunate, our home did not receive a direct hit, although bombs fell all around. It went on for months - sometimes I had to go to work from the shelter. I would get out of a train at Charing Cross Station, walk up Bond Street and then go down Oxford Street, where I was working at a solicitors. They had been bombed out of an office in another road. I was sometimes sent to this site to look for files, which were damp and dirty, in amongst the chaos. I sometimes went into the communal shelter in St John's Church grounds, if the sirens went off when I was nearby, I didn't stay all night. This was horrible - cold and damp although they had installed lights. Everyone was frightened and were trying not to show it. When the all clear went, usually in the morning, those that had them, went back to their homes. I remember going to London to see a show with my sister and staying put when the air raid siren started.





**You were evacuated again in the middle of the war - where did you go?** We went as a family - my father worked as a toolmaker for the Air Ministry and his place of work was evacuated to St Athen's in South Wales. It was within walking distance of the sea at Llantwit Major.

**Do you remember the V1 and V2 rockets?** This was toward the end of the war - we called them the 'buzz bombs' or the 'flying bombs'. The V1 rockets were very frightening - they were propelled by an engine. When the engine cut out there was a short silence whilst the bomb dropped and then the bomb exploded. I saw the effects of one from my parents' bedroom. I was working as a shorthand typist in central London at the time. We heard one of the V1s and a brave man in the office said to go under the table and he would stand in front - I actually rushed down to the basement.

**How did you celebrate the end of the war?** I was 19 when the war ended. My sister and I went up to central London on VE Day - it seemed as though everyone was celebrating, there were tremendous crowds. On VJ day we had a party in our street and everyone hung flags from their houses.

Postscript: Paddy married John, who served in the RAF then worked alongside her father, after the war. John continued to work for the Ministry of Defence. He was employed latterly at S.H.A.P.E. (Supreme Headquarters Allied Powers Europe) in Belgium, where he worked beside and befriended people of many nationalities, including individuals from countries whose citizens were formerly our enemies.

*If other Digest readers have memories to share, please send them to the editor at the usual addresses.*

## Several Big Questions

### Dunscore in *Life and Work*

If you are a *Life and Work* reader you may have spotted that three members of the Dunscore congregation appeared in the Big Question feature recently. In the February edition, both Alison Boyes and Matthew Aitken were asked "What is the Biggest Change You Have Made to Go Green".

Alison replied that it was to become a vegetarian. "Being vegetarian for just one day a week can make a difference - in 2009 the Belgian city of Ghent declared Thursdays to be meat free and estimated that if this was adopted by everyone in Flanders for a year it would save the equivalent in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in taking half a million cars off the road." She went on: "Eating local food (and organic if possible) is not only good for our planet but also for small producers in our community".

Matthew's biggest change was to install a hydro-electric system on the farm. "We now have a wonderful scheme that not only makes us some money but also generates a not-insignificant amount of "green" electricity." The piece ended with: "We have, in effect, powered around another 20 homes with clean, low-carbon electricity from our small burn."

The Big Question in the March edition of *Life and Work* was: "Which Missionary Inspired You?". It is probably not a surprise to many to know that, in Pam Mitchell's case, it was Jane Haining. The piece concluded with the following: "She served her charges with compassion, humility and love and courageously made the ultimate sacrifice with her life. She was an inspirational missionary. Thanks be to God for Jane Haining."

## Nom Com News

**Matthew Aitken**

"Any news of a new minister?" A question that is familiar to me and, I don't doubt, to all the other members of the Nominating Committee (as well as members of the congregations). The response is usually something like: "Not much to report yet but we are still working on it". And, indeed, we are. I knew that it was going to be difficult to find a new minister but probably had not realised just quite how hard. We have done a great deal to be different and innovative in the hope that we might attract interest. You may well be aware that instead of the usual printed Parish Profile, we created a web site [www.cairnvalleycalling.co.uk](http://www.cairnvalleycalling.co.uk). This has been well received and has generated some interest.

We have been very surprised how few ministers come through training each year (the list from last year's trainees now has just six names remaining on it, some of whom we know are already "spoken for"). We have invited all new trainees (the list was then 13 people) to a Parish Preview and received a small handful of replies. Having investigated bringing ministers from abroad, we have been amazed by the length, cost and complexity of the process. This is virtually impossible.

Despite all of these hurdles, we are not downhearted! We continue to come up with new ideas to promote the vacancy, chase up leads and listen to ideas from the congregations. We plan to have a joint church stand at the Heart and Soul event in Edinburgh to promote the congregations to potential ministers. Please help with this if you can. If you have ideas or suggestions, please speak to a member of the committee (Dunscore members are: Colin, Kay, Alison B, Claudia, Derek, Doug and Matthew).

# Cut Your Carbon Footprint

## It's Time to Take Your Readings

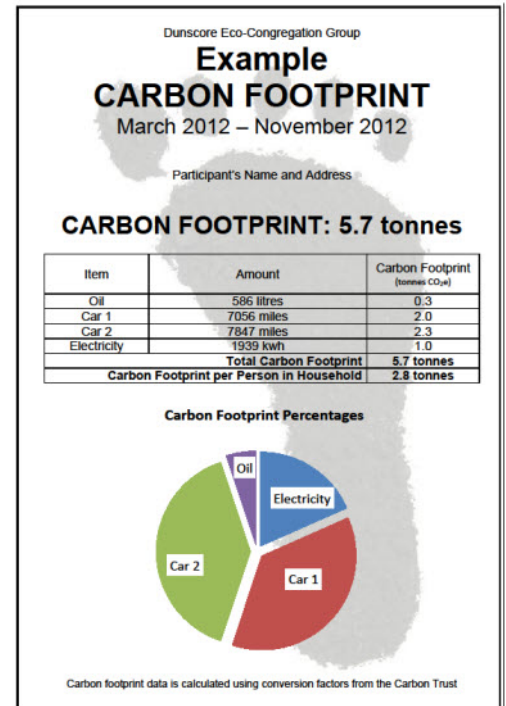
It is nearly carbon footprint time again. This time last year 14 households recorded their oil tank level, car mileage and electricity meter reading. As we are coming up to the anniversary of the readings it will be time to take the readings again so that the carbon footprints for the past year can be calculated.

A Carbon Footprints is an estimate of the amount of carbon that any household uses for some of the main things that burn carbon such as heating, electricity and car travel. The amount of carbon burned for each can be calculated giving an overall Carbon Footprint for the household. This is a measure of the impact that this household is having on the environment.

Every church in the Church of Scotland is required to reduce its Carbon Footprint by 5% every year and we have to report our progress to the Church of Scotland annually. We have extended this to ask households making up our congregation and community to try to do the same. The Carbon Footprint measurement is a way of monitoring progress.

Our six monthly readings showed that, over the summer months the households that participated generated an average of 3.7 tonnes of carbon dioxide (or 2.2 tonnes per person). The highest was 6.1 tonnes of carbon dioxide and the lowest 1.1 tonnes. Each household receives a carbon footprint certificate but individual footprints are confidential and are not disclosed to anyone other than the household concerned.

Why not join the households measuring carbon footprints? This month is a great time to do so. Either pick up a form from the church or go to the church web site [www.dunscorechurch.co.uk/carbon-footprint](http://www.dunscorechurch.co.uk/carbon-footprint) and print out the form there (the form includes some ways to cut your carbon footprint). Take the readings any day near to clock-change Sunday (this year it is Easter Sunday, 31 March) and send the form with the readings to [eco@dunscorechurch.co.uk](mailto:eco@dunscorechurch.co.uk). We will calculate the footprint and send you a certificate with your carbon footprint.



## Dunscore Superfast Broadband **Matthew Aitken**

I can hear you now - "Aye, right - that'll be the day!" Well, it might just happen. David Marshall is carrying out a survey of current broadband speeds in Dunscore on behalf of our Community Council. To take part email him at [davidmarshall1@btinternet.com](mailto:davidmarshall1@btinternet.com).

An organisation called the South of Scotland Broadband Team (*no, I had never heard of them either*) is working with the Scottish Government to "support the case for the rollout to reach the South of Scotland as one of the early rollout areas." They say that "It will not be possible to fund 100% coverage across the South of Scotland with the public sector funding available. However ... the Team will work with the remaining communities to identify potential sources of funding to achieve 100% coverage of at least 2 mbps." As someone who has a speed of just 0.2 - 0.7 mbps, even that would be a major improvement for me!

The South of Scotland Broadband Team is very keen to have as many people registered with them as possible to show demand for improved broadband. Please go to <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/SOSBroadbandRegistration> and complete the very short and simple survey (it is little more than your name and contact details).

## Dunscore Bird Watching Group **Colin Mitchell**

2012 was another rewarding year for the birdwatching group. We had monthly outings to local sites as well as travelling to Cumbria and to Leighton Moss RSPB reserve near Lancaster in June.

The group has now seen 131 different species of bird including scarce ones such as great egret, bittern, avocet, garganey, spoonbill, grasshopper warbler and marsh harrier.

The 2013 programme includes outings to Wood of Cree, Threave, Leighton Moss, Upper Solway and Mull of Galloway.

New members, including beginners, are always welcome. Contact Pam or Colin Mitchell on 820455 or [c.mitchell50@btinternet.com](mailto:c.mitchell50@btinternet.com).

# SLYC Slot

**John Drabble**

**What is SLYC?** SLYC is a youth club for secondary school aged young people who live in the Cairn Valley.

**Who runs SLYC?** SLYC is run by a Management Committee. Committee members are all members of Dunscore or Moniaive churches and are committed to providing opportunities for the young people of the Cairn Valley. This is in line with our two Churches' commitment in "Mapping the Future" which is to "continue to work together on Youth Work". SLYC is affiliated to Youth Scotland which provides insurance for club activities and access to safeguarding procedures for volunteer helpers. **Committee Members are:** John Drabble (Chair), Colin Mitchell (Treasurer), Rona Gunnell (Secretary), Dean Goddard (Youth Leader), Kath Aitken (Dunscore Church), Nan Tait (Moniaive Church) and Rab Marchbank (Moniaive Church). In addition it is hoped that one or two youth members will feel able to join the committee in the future. Committee members take turns to help Dean on club nights. Laura Dykes, Margaret MacKenzie and Pam Mitchell though not on the committee help on club nights.

**Where and when does SLYC meet?** SLYC meets on Monday evenings from 7:15 to 9:15 pm. The usual meeting place is the Institute in Moniaive, but occasionally SLYC meets at the Glenriddell Hall in Dunscore. There are also occasions when the club has trips out, for example, into Dumfries to visit the YMCA or the Oasis Youth Centre.

**Who attends SLYC?** At present an average of 15 to 16 young people attend the club nights. Most are from Moniaive with 2-3 Dunscore members. The membership is predominately male but recently one or two girls have been coming along.

**What happens at a SLYC meeting?** Usually the club members play energetic games such as five a side football or handball. Recently new equipment has been bought with a grant from the Moniaive wind farm money. This includes large scale "Meccano" type building materials for team building activities and some musical equipment.

**How is SLYC financed?** SLYC needs funds to pay for the hire of halls, volunteer expenses, travelling expenses and refreshments. The funding comes from a number of sources for example: Hollywood Trust, Dunscore and Moniaive Churches, Council Grants and Community Council Grants (Wind farm money). SLYC also raises funds itself for specific projects. The current financial position is healthy.

**What future plans are there for SLYC?** The committee is keen that the young people attending SLYC are aware of the Christian commitment of the SLYC committee and volunteers and the support of local churches. It is proposed that more opportunities will be given for issues of faith to be discussed by the group. Last year a group of young people went to Wiston Lodge Outdoor Activity Centre during their summer holidays and in 2011 a group went to Zambia to mix with and help with projects in Lubuto. This year SLYC intends to send six young people to Prague to join in with 15,000 other young people in an international Christian youth festival organised by the YMCA. Dean will lead the group and will be assisted by Colin. The SLYC Committee and the young people who are going to Prague will be meeting in the near future to plan fund-raising activities to help raise the £500 per participant that will be needed. Your support for any of these events will be much appreciated.

## Dunscore Church on the "Net"

If you are a Facebook user, look for the Dunscore I/w Glencairn and Moniaive Church page. "Like" the page and you'll be kept up to date with future events, photos of recent events and other useful information about Dunscore church as well as Glencairn and Moniaive. Photos can also be found at [www.dunscorechurch.co.uk/recent-events](http://www.dunscorechurch.co.uk/recent-events).

## A Stranger In Town

Henry Ford was travelling on business and arrived in a small town where the local convent had a fund-raising campaign to build a small old-people's home. After checking in to his hotel, he had a call from the Mother Superior. She used all her charms on him with the effect that he gave her a cheque for \$2,000 and she went away seemingly very happy.

On his breakfast tray the following morning was the local paper and, on opening it, he was horrified to see in large letters "Henry Ford Arrives in Town and Donates \$20,000 to the Convent". Very soon there was a call from the Mother Superior full of concern. She told him that she had seen the editor who had promised to publish an equally prominent apology the following morning to the effect that the gift was \$2,000 not \$20,000. Unless of course...

Henry Ford agreed to give the Mother Superior a further cheque for \$18,000, provided that he could dedicate the inscription over the door. This was readily agreed.

Once the home was built, Henry was given the honour of performing the opening ceremony. A curtain was draped over the entrance and pulling the cord he exposed the inscription that he had chosen: "A STRANGER I CAME AMONGST YOU AND YOU TOOK ME IN".



## **Dunscore Book Reading Group**     **Chris Whittle**

As I was the only one left standing in Church last Sunday I became the Editorial choice for providing a piece for the Dunscore Digest, and me - the only male in the group!

Well, for those who are unaware, there is a book reading group set up some five years ago by the Board, as a way of bringing like-minded people together to select a total of 12 books to be read in the year. We meet on the first Thursday in the month to discuss that month's choice. There were ten members in the group and currently we have eight. During the years, several of the original members have dropped out for various good reasons. Others joined the nucleus from that first group, all of whom have been women!

The group use the excellent Library Book List of ten book sets, to select the year's choice. This of itself can be amusing, with each member going for their particular preference but an amicable result is always reached.

We have read a wide selection of books from Wilkie Collins "The Moonstone", to Robert Douglas's "Night Song of the Last Tram" via a "Short History Of Tractors in Ukrainian" and Janet Paisley's "Not for Glory". These have been liked or disliked by the various members according to their temperament or tolerance.

We are asked to rate the books from 1-10 and register our thoughts and comments. This can be sometimes tricky with the disparate views held and expressed by members.

My preference is for police procedurals and crime books in general which I can understand may not be the choice of others in the group, but they have read the Ian Rankin book chosen by the group. We have given scores of zero for a particularly grim book, whilst for our last book, we gave nine (two members gave eight and the rest ten). This book was "The Help" and we all considered it a very good read which prompted long discussions. Not all books do! The blurb saying "Booker Prize Winner" on any book is a guaranteed off-putter to me and some of the others, as does the word "Classic".

Our group would love to be brought up to ten members again and if the foregoing hasn't completely put you off, please get in touch with me on 820401 or Rona on 740326. We members consider it a jolly good chance for a blether with coffee / tea and cakes in one another's home. Great fun indeed every time. Do come and share, be you male or female!

## **Community Council Column**     **Colin Mitchell**

The recent bad weather has caused significant problems with icy and snowy roads. This has been the subject of much Community Council debate. Additional grit bins and grit spreaders have been requested from the Regional Council and some of these are now in place. We hope that we can gain more for the areas not yet covered. These allow local residents to treat the roads and pavements in their area. A big thank you to all those who help out with this task.

A Christmas tree, donated by William Crawford, was erected in the village by Archie Anderson and Colin Mitchell.

We are also working on trying to have broadband improved in the area. David Marshall is leading on this big task. Thank you to those who have given him information on broadband speeds. This helps us gain evidence in support of the need for improvement.

Other tasks at the moment include commenting on the Local Development Plan proposals and also on the Review of Community Councils

We continue to work on the Tom Carrick legacy and have used these funds to purchase football nets for the park and further memorial benches for Mansegate and the Holm road.

An excellent Community Newsletter was put together by David Marshall and delivered by hand or post. We hope everyone found the contents informative

Finally thank you to the Fairtrade Group for supplying Fairtrade tea and coffee at our meetings.

Look at the Community noticeboards, the village website ([Dunscore.org.uk](http://Dunscore.org.uk)) for further information and / or have your e mail added to the Dunscore Information list . To have your name added contact me at [c.mitchell50@btinternet.com](mailto:c.mitchell50@btinternet.com)

Our meetings are all open to the public. You are most welcome to come along.

### **More Thoughts**

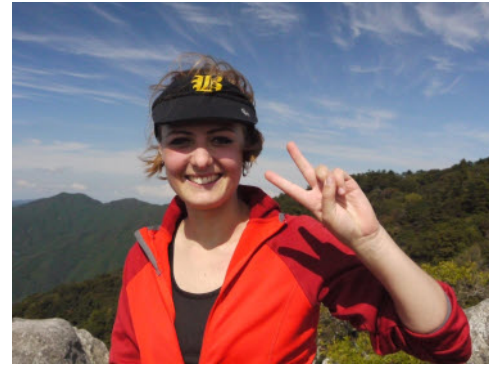
I may have my faults but being wrong is not one of them *Jimmy Hoffa*

People who think they know everything are very irritating to those of us who do *Anon*

# Letter from Japan

Dear Dunscore Digest,

I hope everyone is keeping well! I have been in Japan for five months now, and am finding it a wonderful place with great people and many interesting things to do. I am staying on the southern island of Kyushu and studying Japanese language for one year at the Japan University of Economics. There are 10 of us on the scholarship program from both Oxford and Cambridge Universities, and we all get on well. My boyfriend, Luke, is also currently living in Japan, which I am very thankful for, although he works for a science company in Tokyo around 500 miles away. He and I have been to see some amazing sights together so far, so I thought I'd share them with you all. First though, I'll just write a little more about what my daily life is like. During the week, I have classes every day for around three hours. All meals are provided in the university canteen, which is very convenient, and makes it much easier to be a vegetarian in what is, at times, quite a non-vegetarian friendly country! After school, I have various part-time jobs teaching English, including a conversation class with a doctor and a play session at a kindergarten. I also spend two afternoons a week helping at an after-school class at an English-speaking primary school affiliated with my university, which is a lot of fun.



In November, Luke and I spent a long weekend in Kyoto, a beautiful city with lots of history. Kyoto is also a famous place to indulge in the Japanese tradition of 'momiji-gari', which involves enjoying the beautiful colours of autumn in scenic spots. We visited various temples, including Kinkaku-ji (covered entirely in gold leaf), and Sanjusangendo-do, built in 1164, and housing 1001 statues of the 1000-armed Kannon (the Buddhist goddess of mercy). My favourite place was a huge temple complex named Kyomizu-dera, where there were many beautiful women dressed in kimonos posing for pictures with the autumn foliage, and a large veranda where you could see the city of Kyoto spread out beneath the vivid trees of the temple. We tasted Amazake, a sweet drink made from fermented rice and traditionally drunk at festivals, especially during the colder months, and visited another temple later that night to see the momiji lit up by hundreds of lanterns in the darkness, a sight which I count among the most beautiful in my life so far.



During the Christmas holidays, Luke's family came to visit, which was lovely. We spent a snowy weekend in a small town near the mountains named Yudanaka, famous for both its monkeys and its onsen (Japanese-style baths, often hot springs). The monkeys of Yudanaka are known for their love of steaming in these onsen, a great way to keep warm during the cold of winter... Luckily there were separate baths for us humans too, otherwise I would have been pretty jealous!

We also visited Nara, a city which boasts both the oldest and the largest wooden buildings in the world. The latter, Todai-ji, is surrounded by a large park filled with tame deer, which are sacred as they are the messengers of Shinto gods. It also houses a huge statue of the Buddha which is over 16m tall, weighs 500 tonnes, and bankrupt the Japanese economy when it was first cast in 750 AD. One pillar of the building has a small hole

at its base, and it said that if you can crawl through this space then you are guaranteed a place in paradise. We all managed to squeeze through!

In the New Year, Luke and I spent a great day finding out about the fascinating Japanese sport of sumo wrestling. As we stood in line for cheap seats at 7:30 am on a cold Saturday morning, a taiko drummer sounded out a beat from the top of a tall wooden tower in honour of the coming fights. Inside, a small circular combat area was surrounded on all sides by hundreds of seats (luckily, ours weren't kneeling!). The aim of sumo is to force your opponent to either place a body part outside of the ring or to touch the ground with anything other than their feet. The judges dress in ceremonial kimonos in a historical style and announce each of the fighters from each corner (East and West) with a wailing cry. The wrestlers then each attempt to stare out the other, before coming together in a great slap of flesh and power. The fighting was very impressive, even though most bouts only lasted 10 seconds or less!



There are many more exciting things in store over the coming months, which I hope I can keep you up to date with! I do miss all my family and friends in Dunscore, but am very much looking forward to seeing you all again in the autumn.

Lots of love, Sarah

## Fairtrade Farmer in Dunscore

Alison Boyes

Saturday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> – Big Brew time again. The hall was set up with stalls selling Fairtrade goods, local food and crafts. Tables were groaning under the weight of delicious cakes. There was that unmistakable Dunscore ‘buzz’.

Into all this, we welcomed Justine Watalunga, an organic coffee farmer who was touring the south of Scotland with the Fairtrade Foundation. A small lady with a soft voice but an impressive CV – as well as caring for her own six children and four adopted orphans, Justine is treasurer of a growers’ cooperative and chair of a women’s group which built and runs an AIDS orphanage, a nursery and a primary school. All this while her day on the farm often runs from dawn until dusk.

Justine’s message was simple and moving. Fairtrade has changed her own life and that of her community. The growers (mostly women) now receive a guaranteed price for their coffee, even if world prices are low, plus a Fairtrade premium of 20 cents per pound. If world prices are high, as they are now, they receive that price plus the premium. This allows them to plan and grow the business and to have a proper income.

Before Fairtrade, Justine said, when the family had little money, her eldest daughter had to leave school. Now that their income had improved, she had returned to education and is now an accountant. Women meet to discuss how to spend the premium to improve their communities. This can be on schools, clean drinking water, electricity for the village or on equipment for their business. Before Fairtrade, women were bent almost double under the weight of 60 kg sacks of coffee beans which they carried down from the plantations. A new road accessible by truck has eased their burdens considerably.

Justine used one of her hands to represent a coffee farmer like herself, the other to represent the customer in the UK who buys Fairtrade coffee. Bringing her hands together, she said “Together they make a good clap!”



Justine coloured-in a shape to add to the frieze

Buying Fairtrade coffee brings women like Justine a better standard of living and more control over their lives and in return we get an excellent, organic product. It was a privilege to have Justine visiting our village and telling us her story.





# Reader's Recipe

## Julie's Curry Loaf

People who go to the Thursday bible study love to travel. Last year we made a pilgrimage to Whithorn in the Community Bus. This year we used all seven seats in Alison's car and went over the moors to... Corsock.

Julie had been looking after Martyn and Pam Wrathall's house while they were in New Zealand and she invited us all for lunch. One of the dishes she made for us was a curry loaf and everyone enjoyed it so I have asked her for the recipe. Julie had to go and cook it again before she could write the quantities down as she made up the recipe for this special occasion!

### Ingredients:

3 large carrots, grated  
1 large onion (grated)  
4 oz breadcrumbs  
2 oz chopped nuts  
2 small eggs, beaten  
Oil to bind  
1 dessert spoon curry paste

### Method

Mix all ingredients together, press into a lined 2 lb loaf tin. Bake at 150°C for 40 mins, Eat either hot or cold.

You can vary the recipe by using different vegetables.

Thank you, Julie, for hosting the bible study and for a truly delicious lunch.

## Eco Congregation Update

**Katie Easton**

The Eco Congregation Group met recently to review last year and plan for the year ahead. A few of the highlights are:

- The church now has an Eco Policy. It includes things like using local produce and Fairtrade where possible; using recycled products such as printer paper and avoiding food waste at events. You can see a copy of the policy in the Hall of Fellowship.
- We are hosting the Presbytery Mission and Discipleship eco evening on 30 April (details elsewhere in the Digest).
- The congregation and community carbon footprinting continues and will be measured again in March.
- We will find a suitable place to display the Eco Congregation banner in the church.
- The church monthly Fairtrade stall now includes several "green" products.
- Church groups have been sharing lifts effectively when going to meetings. We continue to encourage this.
- A new rota has been prepared for the Church Family Notice Eco Snippets - watch out for some different snippets in the coming months!

The Eco Group meets every couple of months and is always very happy to welcome new members. If you would like to be kept up to date to activities, please speak to me or any member of the group.

## Contacts

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