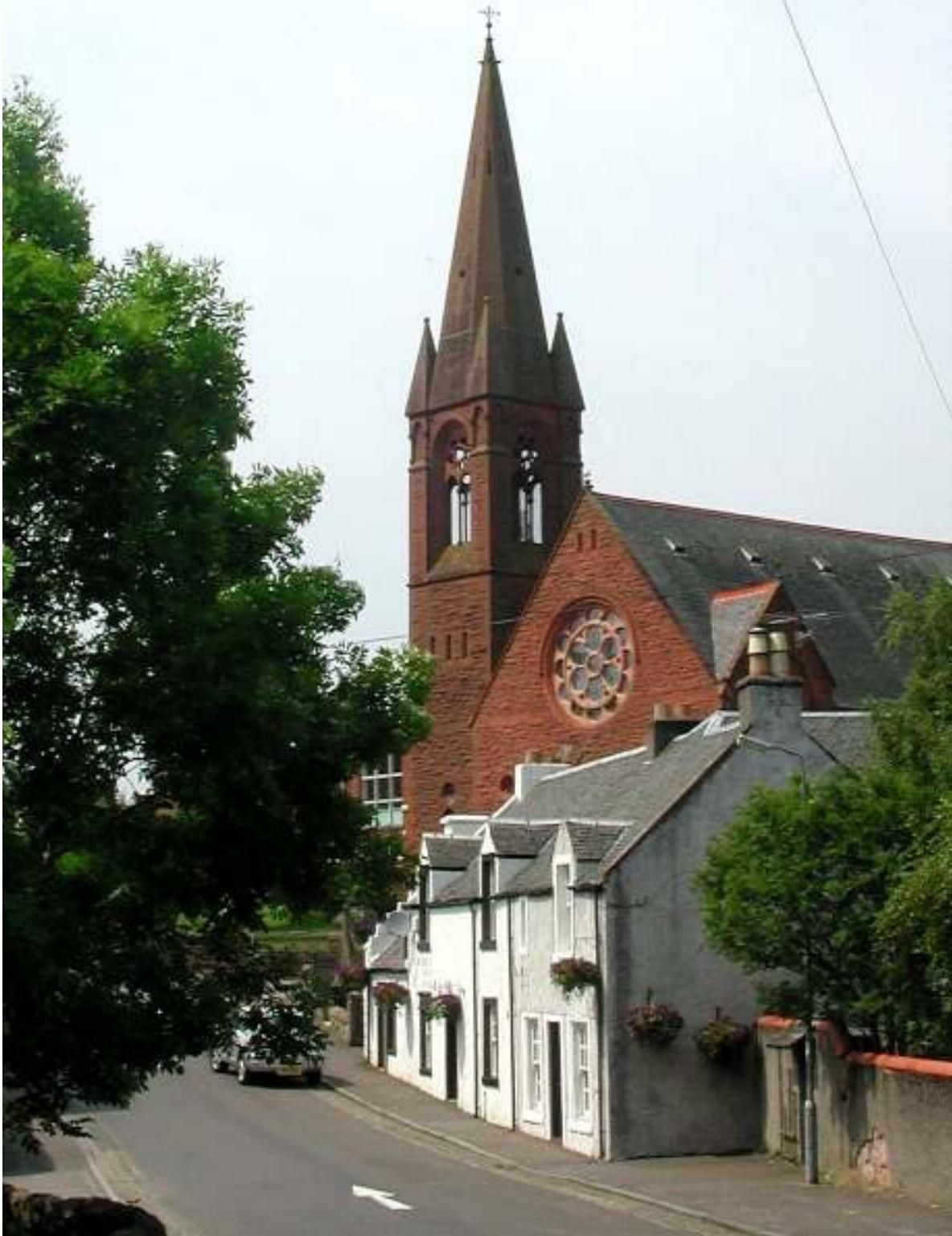


Church Matters

West Kilbride Parish Church Magazine

Issue No. 7 April 2011



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*I would appreciate articles for the next issue to be emailed to me at brianseamill@aol.com by 17th April or, if you do not have access to email, to be handed in to Jo in the church office by 14th April.
D. Murray, Editor.*

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Minister's Letter

In the Easter story at the end of Luke's Gospel, there is an amazing contrast at the very point where Jesus dies on the cross. Jesus calls out with a loud voice, 'Father, into your hands I commit my spirit' and then he breathes his last. At the foot of the cross there is a centurion. And Luke's account says that the centurion '...seeing what had happened praised God and said 'Surely this was a righteous man'.

But then, in effect, the camera pans away from the centurion to the crowd who had come to witness the sight. And it says that when Jesus died, they 'beat their breasts and went away'. And so at the foot of the cross, you have one man praising God - perhaps for the first time, and a crowd who are in mourning.

Now I'm not sure that the centurion's words are as theologically profound as other statements of faith - for example Peter's confession of Jesus as the Son of God. But clearly Luke sees the centurion's confession as significant. It was an indication of Jesus innocence - and perhaps the beginning of faith in the centurion. And so he praises God.

In contrast, the crowd see what has happened to Jesus - and they simply leave, beating their breasts - a sign of grief or mourning. One man praising - a whole crowd grieving and leaving.

I suppose these two examples are among the myriad of examples of how people respond to Jesus - and how they respond to the cross in particular.

Some will be like the crowd. They will simply see it as a sad event that took place in history - if it took place at all. A curiosity to look at before turning away and getting on with life. What is interesting is that the centurion saw exactly the same sight as the crowd. He heard the words Jesus said. He saw how Jesus died - and yet he responded not with grief - but with praise for God.

My prayer is that this Easter we will not see the cross like the crowd - but we will see it like the centurion. For the cross is not something which is sad - but it is something which is glorious - and maybe, just

maybe, the centurion just caught a glimpse of it. You see, this was a righteous man that died. An innocent man. He died, quite simply, that you might live. Surely that is something worth praising God for.

May you have a blessed Easter.
Yours in Christ, **James**

EDITORIAL

By the time you read this it will be summertime, according to the calendar although, as I write this, the spring flowers are trying their best to burst forth. We may have had our wee moans about the weather over this winter but we are so blessed to live in a country that doesn't have extremes of weather and disasters happening. Our thoughts and prayers are with the people of Japan who have suffered so much devastation in the earthquake and subsequent tsunami and now possible nuclear disaster. The chorus, "Count your blessings, name them one by one" comes to mind.

We are looking forward to the Easter celebrations and the joy of praising Jesus for His death and resurrection so I do hope as many of you as possible will join us at the service at the top of Law Hill on Easter Sunday. It is such a blessed time and, when it is over, the wee ones roll their eggs and then we come back to the church hall for a lovely breakfast of rolls and sausage.

The church conference was held last month when we were on holiday and, from all accounts, it was excellent. We are sorry we missed it and I'm sure there are others who feel the same. It would be great to get an account of it in the next issue so I will do my best to get a 'reporter' who will do this.

We do need more 'reporters' for Church Matters, so please don't be shy and send in anything you think may interest the church family. Many people pass their copies on to friends or family and it is on the church website so our magazine reaches a wide readership all over the world.

D. Murray

Diary Dates for Church Matters ***April 2011***

3rd April	10.30am Morning Worship – Mother's Day 2.00pm Service at Headrigg Gardens
5 th April	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous
10th April	10.30am Morning Worship
12 th April	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous 7.30pm Kirk Session meeting in the Lower Hall
17th April	10.30am Morning Worship – Palm Sunday
19 th April	10.00am – 12 noon Rendezvous
21 st April	Maundy Thursday 7.30pm Communion Service
22 nd April	Good Friday 7.30pm Good Friday Service
24th April	7.45am meet at Church gates for Sunrise Service on Law Hill, followed by Breakfast in the Bill Penny Hall (approx. 9.30am) 10.30am Easter Worship 2.00pm Easter Service at Headrigg Gardens 8.00pm Evening Celebration of “Passion Conference” at Stevenston High Kirk – speaker Rev. Tony Sargent

CHURCH REGISTER - DEATHS

Miss Christina Gardiner, Arranview Nursing Home, formerly Headrigg Gardens, on 4th February 2011.

Mr William Murdoch, Burnlea Nursing Home on 7th February 2011.

Mrs Margaret Cunningham, Arranview Nursing Home, formerly Headrigg Gardens on 21st February 2011.

Mrs Elizabeth Aitken, 13 Drummilling Road on 27th February 2011.

Mr William Wilson, 40 Overton Crescent on 9th March 2011.

Our thoughts and prayers are with their families and friends at this time.

1st West Kilbride Boys Brigade

Scottish National Chess

The last remaining West Kilbride chess team was in action against 4th Dunfermline on Saturday, 5th February. The outcome of the competition could have gone either way with matches being won on a tit for tat basis. Eventually 4th Dunfermline squeezed through to win the fixture by the narrowest of margins winning the match by five games to 4 games. This has been an excellent adventure and experience for the boys reaching the last eight in Scotland and will certainly encourage the company to enter teams into this competition next year. (Team: J Thomson, Jack Cooper, Calum Cooper)

Junior Section General Knowledge

There was an excellent result in the Battalion general knowledge competition with the company coming in the joint first position alongside 1st Largs. Many thanks go to Miss McGilvray for taking the team (team: R Lennie, Gavin Lidbury, Robert Jack, Paul Lidbury)

Company Section Scripture Knowledge

The boys had put in a lot of work and effort to this competition under the guidance of our Minister, James McNay. So it was fantastic to see that West Kilbride, were able to win this event by some margin. The boys had been preparing for this competition for a number of months on a Friday evening and it was great to see their efforts rewarded. Huge thanks goes to James McNay for preparing the teams (team. A - Calum Cooper, Jack Cooper, Euan Rankin, Ross Wilson)

Primary Seven Induction

On Friday, 25th February the primary seven boys have the opportunity to experience the company section. This induction process will continue for the first hour of the company section until the end of the session. The boys had been introduced to their squad for session 2011/12. Inclusion of the primary seven boys made for an impressive sight with company section numbers now just below 50 boys.

Swimming Competition

West Kilbride had an impressive number of boys entered for the swimming competition that was held at Auchendarvie on Saturday, 26th February. Alistair Lennie was very successful at the senior event, picking up three silver medals. The company dominated the junior (S2-S3) event with Ross Taylor collecting a gold medal for front crawl along with two silvers for breast and backstroke and Cameron Watson, picking up gold in breaststroke and backstroke along with the silver in front crawl.

Along with Jamie Thomson and Ross McNeill, who made it to the finals this allowed West Kilbride to win the junior trophy with 46 points. In the minor event Ross Jack won bronze medals in the front crawl and breaststroke events, while Ruairidh Lennie won the bronze medal at backstroke.

In the junior section event at primary five Andrew Taylor won bronze at backstroke. Primary six - Andrew Parker won gold medals at front crawl and breaststroke, Nathan Priceman won silver at front crawl and bronze at the breaststroke while James Jack won bronze at backstroke. Primary seven - Ruairidh Lennie won gold in the breast and backstroke, as well as a bronze in the front crawl. Ross Jack won silver at front crawl and bronze at breaststroke. Ross Kindness completed an excellent performance for the primary seven boys with a bronze in the backstroke.

These results and numerous additional finalists allowed West Kilbride to lift the junior section trophy with 94 points, 1st Largs were second and 1st Stevenson claimed the bronze medals.

Alex Jack

Sign (outside a church)

The nails didn't keep Jesus on the cross- His love for you did!

Monthly Prayer Diary April 2011

Fri 1st	We give thanks for the delights of Spring
Sat 2nd	God's leading and guidance for the future of our Church and also the Church in Scotland
Sun 3rd	Mothering Sunday. We give thanks on this day for the special ladies in our lives
Mon 4th	Our Minister James, Anna and their baby John
Tues 5th	Graeme and Carol our Session Clerks, and all our Elders. We give thanks for all the work that goes on behind the scenes
Wed 6th	Human Trafficking – people bought and sold into slavery
Thur 7th	Our youth organisations, Junior Church, YF and Crèche
Fri 8th	Our local schools
Sat 9th	We give thanks for all who work with our young people, may they be encouraged in the valuable work they are doing for the Kingdom
Sun 10th	We give thanks today that we can attend church and worship in freedom
Mon 11th	The Persecuted Church and all who are in prison because of their faith in the Lord Jesus
Tues 12th	Our Missionary Partners working in this country and those who have been called to serve in other parts of the world
Wed 13th	All whose lives have been devastated by natural disasters, war and poverty.
Thur 14th	Aid Agencies and our soldiers who are helping people to rebuild their lives
Fri 15th	World Leaders and all who are in authority over us
Sat 16th	All we know who are sick and those who are caring for them
Sun 17th	We give thanks that Gods' plans for us are to prosper and not to harm us, they are plans to give us hope and a future
Mon 18th	Rt Rev John Christie. We also remember the preparations being made for the General Assembly
Tues 19th	We think too of the Scottish Parliament elections to be held next month. Pray for Christians standing for election
Wed 20th	All who are struggling with the darkness of depression

Thur 21st	All who are caught up in addiction. Lord, be their strength in times of weakness
Fri 22nd	He was pierced for our transgressions, he was crushed for our iniquities; the punishment that brought us peace was upon him, and by his wounds we are healed. Isaiah 53 v5
Sat 23rd	We pray for all who are bereaved, may they be comforted
Sun 24th	Easter Sunday. We give thanks. Jesus Christ is risen today, Alleluia
Mon 25th	Pray that we will have the desire and that God will give us a greater boldness to share about the Good News of Jesus
Tues 26th	All who are sad, lonely or fearful – that God will make a way where there seems to be no way – for a brighter tomorrow
Wed 27th	Our GP Surgery, local hospitals and Care homes
Thur 28th	Our Church Family, we give thanks for how far we have come on our journey together, and pray for what the future holds for us
Fri 29th	The Royal Wedding. We pray for God’s richest blessing, and that Prince William and Kate will seek Gods guidance for all the future holds for them
Sat 30th	We give thanks for marriages that work out well and pray for those that are struggling

“Then Jesus came to them and said, “All authority in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptising them in the name of the Father, and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age.”

Matthew 28 v 18 - 20

THE GUILD

We are about to have our Annual General Meeting and closing lunch, bringing to an end the second half of the session “Called to love mercy”, which started on 11th January when our local travel agent Linda Hill talked and showed us a DVD of what looked like a lovely cruise in the sunshine and on 18th we had Mr Ron Lavalette to tell us about the Crossreach Project that the Guild is supporting this year, called “The Other Side”, the Visitor's Centre in Perth Prison. The 25th, being Burns' Day, we were entertained by G. McKellar and Ruth Gregory to a very happy afternoon.

On February 1st we saw the video of the Annual Meeting held in the Caird Hall in Dundee and which four of our members attended, followed on the 8th by a visit from Rev. Ross Mitchell who told us about his visit to Oberammergau and some of the highs and lows of the trip. On the 15th, four of our members shared their favourite memories with us and we had a “Bring and Buy” in aid of the Erskine Hospital, which raised £140. On February 22nd our speaker was from Hollybush House, and was about “Combat Stress”. It was a very interesting afternoon at which the Men's Fellowship joined us.

On 1st March we had Mr Walter Kola to talk about Portencross Castle and all the work and fundraising that is going on, and once again we welcomed the Men's Fellowship.

On Friday 4th March we joined the members of St Bride's for the “World Day of Prayer” this year presented by the Christian women of Chile. Mrs Moira MacKinnon gave us a lovely afternoon on 8th March with some beautiful displays of flowers for spring. Some of our members took home a display.

We do hope that we have had some meetings to suit everyone, and we share in worship and fellowship together. We would always welcome new members, both ladies and gentlemen to our next session.

May Paton

MEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Time certainly does fly and it hardly seems so long at all since we returned from our Christmas break and, before we realise it, here we are nearing the close of another session.

Early January saw our activities continue with one of the highlights being our biannual visit in January to our counterparts at Beith Trinity where, as usual, we were made very welcome and another enjoyable evening was had by one and all. The competitions there were keen and played in good spirits and we were successful in being among the prize winners at the carpet bowls with the last delivery; while a certain gentleman (who shall remain nameless having shown signs of a misspent youth) achieved an unbelievably high score to win at the darts.

Since then we had, as our guest speaker in February, Father J. Boland from St Brides who gave a lively, informal address on his favourite subject, Spain and all things Spanish. He recalled his early vocation to be a priest and his eventual opportunity to pursue that aim with several years of study at a Catholic collegiate in Valladolid, where Spanish was the compulsory language, which he had to learn from scratch. His knowledge of Spain's history was boundless, as it was on the country's culture, and he gave a lively insight into its many national customs, including the now controversial practice of bullfighting explaining in great detail how it was seen so differently from a Spanish viewpoint. He was a captivating speaker, with plenty of good humour thrown in, and one to be recommended.

Since the start of the year we have, unfortunately, been without Peter Hinde who, as the result of a stroke, has been in hospital. He has, with great patience, been gradually responding to treatment and is now making good progress. Hopefully, it will not be much longer before we see him back home and eventually participating in our activities once again.

Fred Baxter

As an Occupational Therapist, I have worked with people with a range of needs. I particularly enjoy working with people with learning

disabilities. I recently searched the net to see how churches were seeking to achieve inclusion for this group. I stumbled across a report produced by the Church of England – Opening the Doors: Ministry with People with Learning Disabilities and People on the Autistic Spectrum. Several people contributed to this report; perhaps of most importance people with learning disabilities themselves and their parents/ carers. The report includes snapshots of personal experience one of which really touched me (although the entire report is worth a read). When I first found this report it was only a few days after my Gran had died so I was feeling rather emotional. Reading it moved me to tears but gave me great comfort. I thought it was well worth sharing –

“Mine was a church that offered communion to children, but the Diocese expected every child to attend catechism classes prior to receiving the elements. My son, James, is autistic and couldn’t sit through the classes but he wanted to take communion.

One Easter Sunday he decided that today would be the day he received communion and so we stood in the line before the chancel steps. James was desperately trying to remember the social graces expected of him – “Stand still. Wait. Not first. Need to wait.” He found it hard; he likes to be first; he likes to hurry. But he did wait and eventually it was his turn to climb the chancel steps and move toward the communion rail. Suddenly, he collapsed in a lump on the carpet and began to beat his head on the floor. “James bad” he said. “James bad – Jesus good. James bad – Jesus good – Jesus dead. James bad – Jesus dead. James bad so Jesus dead. Jesus dead because James bad. James bad.”

I went up to comfort him but he immediately grabbed my ankles and remained on the floor. I was left standing, unable to pick him up or bend down due to the way I was held. We stood in the middle of the chancel steps; him crying and banging his head; me standing, desperate for help. People continued to queue; to come up the chancel steps and receive communion. We were obviously an obstruction, but they weren’t daunted. They simply gave us a wide berth and walked around us. Going up and coming down, the line of communicants parted around us like the Red Sea – but it was me who wanted to escape.

Eventually, the priest refused to administer communion to anyone else until we were helped. He came over to James and knelt before him, holding him, cradling him, assuring him of God's love. Eventually, James recovered enough to walk and we left. We escaped home and tried to wipe the experience from our minds – busying ourselves with the attempt to locate normality.

The priest phoned in the afternoon to see how James was. "Who was that on the phone?" asked James. "It was the vicar", I replied, "phoning to see how you are." "What do you mean, how am I?" "He saw that you were upset at church today", I said. "I didn't see him", James replied. "Oh James, he came and helped. He cuddled you and assured you of Christ's love."
"Oh", James replied, "I thought that was God."

*I think James understands communion without taking the lesson.
James' Mum*

Shona Lidbury.

Humility

Religion says, 'Be good, conform yourself.'
Epicureanism says, 'Be sensuous, satisfy yourself.'
Education says, 'Be resourceful, expand yourself.'
Psychology says, 'Be confident, assert yourself.'
Materialism says, 'Be possessive, please yourself.'
Ascetism says, 'Be lowly, suppress yourself.'
Humanism says, 'Be capable, believe in yourself.'
Pride says, 'Be superior, promote yourself.'
Christ says, 'Be unselfish, humble yourself.'

Chuck Swindoll.

PROPERTY UPDATE

There are a number of matters currently being considered and discussed by the Property Team, in conjunction with Session. Some of these involve fairly major proposals, which will take considerable time to be pulled together and then presented to the Congregation. Other issues, as found during the most recent Quinquennial Report and subsequent surveys, continue to be addressed. However, one area which most of you will have been aware of over the past few months is the work in and around the gallery stair, with access to the gallery being blocked off.

The fact is that the work, which is visible from the bottom of the stairs, is the smallest part of the project. The main part of the contract consisted of totally replacing the tower (internal) roof timbers/ lead work and forming larger water outlets and overflows (where the bell once was.) Once this was made water tight, the lower floor/ceiling was fully replaced. Unfortunately, during this work, we discovered that the wet rot, caused by water ingress from the tower roof, had continued throughout the full lathe and plaster on the stair well; hence the “visible” disruption in that area. At the time of this report, we have yet to complete the replacement of the floor and joists immediately outside the gallery entrance door. This will then allow the remainder of the ceiling and plasterwork to be completed. In the meantime, thanks for your patience in not being able to use the gallery. We are attempting to have this area finished by Easter but this will depend on the results of further inspections.

Lastly, for the moment at least, some observant members will have noticed a few small plasterboard “pads” in various locations around the buildings. These are there simply to, temporarily, cover access holes made to investigate potential sources of dampness/water. We will address the results of these investigations once we have received the appropriate reports.

Billy McFarland.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Belated birthday wishes to Anna McNay who celebrated her 30th birthday on 2nd March. We hope you had a wonderful day, Anna.

Happy birthday to her husband, James (our Minister), who will celebrate his 30th birthday on 30th April. May you both enjoy the day and look forward to God's many blessings for both of you and wee John in the years to come.

Banner Group

Many people have commented on the beautiful banners that go up on the sanctuary wall each week. These were all made by the banner Group of the old St Andrew's Church. Eileen Hinde, who was one of the members that made the banners, would like to know of anyone interested in being part of a Banner Group to make some new banners. It would be lovely to have some made specifically for West Kilbride Parish Church. It is not necessary to be able to sew to be part of the group. Please speak to Eileen or contact the Church office if you are interested in this ministry.

Craft Group

There is a craft group which meets every second Tuesday evening from 7pm – 10pm in the Session Room. The dates for April are the 5th and 19th. The main activities are scrapbooking and card making but other crafters are most welcome to join us. We are a very friendly, happy group so why not come along?

Deirdre Murray

THE SUNDAY JAUNT

We go for a run on a Sunday
We don't really care where we go.
We've been in the brightest of sunshine,
We've even been up in the snow.
We've been to Inverary,
St Andrew's and Dundee,
We always find a nice wee place
To have a cup of tea.
We go into the countryside
It's always changing there,
We see the pheasants and the deer
And even the odd hare.
It's nice to see them in the wild
And that's how it should be,
Not tied up or in cages
But out there roaming free.
We sometimes take a picnic,
The weather must be fine,
We take the chairs and sit outside,
The views are just divine.
We've been to Castle Douglas,
Port Patrick and Stranraer,
We've also been to Girvan
And all of this by car.
Well, the summer days are over,
The nights are drawing in,
The days are very cold and damp
But we're looking forward to the spring
When the Sunday jaunts begin.
Submitted by CatherineCarlin

*This wee poem will
invoke memories of a
by-gone age in some of
our readers. I wonder if
it was the 'Sunday
jaunts' that started the
decrease in church
attendance? Ed.*