

# Link Magazine

## Summer 2016



## St Ninian's Stonehouse (LEP)

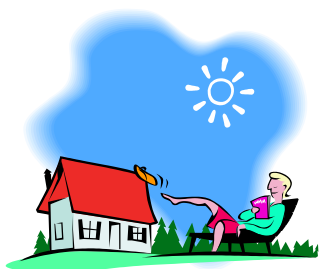
*(The LEP stands for local ecumenical partnership)*



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Website: [www.hjcddance.co.uk](http://www.hjcddance.co.uk)



[kirkdec.co.uk](http://kirkdec.co.uk)

### Painting and Decorating

Office 01698 791678

Peter Kirkland

07709 354 039

*Just to say...* Welcome to our summer issue of the Link magazine. I am so aware that potential candidates for our vacancy may be reading our church magazine perhaps for the very first time. As editor, I have noticed as I collate the articles for the magazine a theme tends to emerge. This issue of Link is of no exception and this copy's topic that materialised is 'local history and change'. The 'change' is of no surprise as we are obviously going through transition just now. However out of the blue, two articles submitted reflect our local heritage. These inspired additions to this issue will provide a little insight into the place we call 'home'.  
May you all find words that comfort, encourage, or inspire; or simply capture 'a feeling of warmth and a sense of home, here in Stonehouse'.  
Enjoy,  
Margaret McM

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## **Recycle your old Inkjet Cartridges** St. Ninian's in association with The



Recycling Factory are recycling your old Inkjet Cartridges with all the proceeds going to church funds. We receive up to £4.50 for every Inkjet Cartridge recycled. (Please note no longer accepting mobile phones).

Special drop off points are available at The Post Office and The Back Road Pub, where recycling boxes and envelopes available.

Recycling boxes and envelopes are also available within the church.

Cameron Weir

P.S. the church is still looking for a 19" Flat screen monitor. If you have one you could donate to the church; please contact Brian Tel: 01698 791 006

Don't forget to save stamps from your post at home and in your workplace and pop them in the box in the vestibule.





# *Eric's message*

## **Reflections – Spring 2016**

In conversation after the Service this morning, I was doing a bit of reminiscing about my time as a young surveyor in the early 1980's and how we used typewriters in the office. We were quite a posh Company and used electric IBM's and woe betide you if you made a mistake in your letters, as you would have to face the wrath of the secretary who had to retype the whole thing from scratch. A couple of years later we took delivery of our first computer which was also an IBM and did Word Processing and Spreadsheets for our big valuations! And this was in the days before we even had a mouse, MS Office or Smart Phones and Tablets. And that IBM in 1984 cost more than I earned in a year!

So much has changed since then and when you look back at all the innovations we take for granted today, I wonder how many of us could have predicted the advances we would make and the things that we would put this new technology to. It would be easy to say that I saw it all coming, until I tell you that I once told my pal not to bother with these computers 'cos, "they will never catch on."

Having said that, all the changes we see in our lives can sometimes be quite scary and it's easy for us to hold onto the old ways. For many years the 'self-scan' was a no go area for me unless I was laden down with coins, as how will the machine know the difference between a fiver and a tenner? But now it's the first place I go with a basket of messages.

Despite the fact that they tell you that the only constant in life is change, it's still quite scary for so many of us.

I am not suggesting that we ignore technology and all join The Flat Earth Society, but I think that we have to acknowledge that sometimes the pace of change today can be frightening. It's at times like this that we have to look at what are the real constants in our life particularly as we try and unpick the things we see happening in our world. This is when we really have to fall back on the important things in our life, our Faith, our Call and our Church.

The Church is and should be the one constant in our lives that will help us see our way through all the mysteries that our world seems to deal out on a daily basis. In my time at St Ninian's, I have always been stuck by the overwhelming warmth, love and caring that I see from the folks I meet Sunday by Sunday. This warmth, love and care is one of the great benefits that we as Christians get from following Jesus.

So, if you are having a tough time and seem to spend lots of time looking on in wonder at the world in which we live whistling by; come and meet with your friends at the Church. I can promise you a good sermon ..... maybe one of these days, but what I can really

promise you is that you will find the love and care from the folks who come faithfully week by week. And if you aren't able to come on a Sunday let us know, (try the technology) and we'll come and see you.

May God bless us all.

Eric

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## *From Margaret Macgregor*

Hi Folks, time passes quickly and here we are in our lovely Scottish summer time. Things have been moving forward since my last letter and we are now at a stage where we are just about ready to advertise for a new Minister (I know the wheels move slowly). This is a very exciting time for our church and I hope you will keep the nomination committee in your prayers as we progress with all the formalities and paper work.

Not only have we been busy with outlining our hopes and aspirations for the way forward but we have also been dealing with the problems of the heating. As most of you will know the heating has been burning constantly for the last few months as we were advised not to switch it off by the heating engineer. If we had switched it off, we possibly would have been left with no heating over the coldest months of the year. As you can imagine this has been expensive and unfortunately we cannot sustain this over the summer months, the Board therefore took the decision to switch the heating off after the communion service on the 8th May. I hope you will understand why this decision was made and be patient with us as we try and select the best way forward. We have to work with the Church of Scotland at 121 George Street on the best heating system for the church in the years ahead and this will entail a lot of hard work for office bearers. There are grants available but sourcing them is not easy. Jillian Storrie has been appointed by the Board to see this through with the help of friends from other churches who have needed similar work done in the recent past.

I hope by the next magazine we will be all singing and dancing with new heating and a new Minister but maybe I am being a bit unrealistic, it's in God's hands. Just keep us in your prayers, I have no doubt that the right person to lead us forward is just out there waiting and will be guided to us.

The Prayer and Reflection which takes place each morning from Monday to Friday is still taking place and there is a prayer box available in the vestibule of the church for prayer requests. We also pray for a street in the village each week and the list is attached to allow you to include them in your prayers. Can I encourage you to come along of a morning and join the group we meet at 9.15am in the prayer room you don't have to come every morning just when you feel able?

Monday – Friday at 9.15am

in the Prayer room.

Streets to pray for –

05/06/16 St Lawrence Place

12/06/16 Wilson Place

19/06/16 Violet Cres

26/06/16 Hareshaw place

03/07/16 Beechwood Drive

10/07/16 Naismith Court

17/07/16 Davidson Gardens

24/07/16 Lintaugh Gdns

31/07/16 Cairnsmore Drive

07/08/16 Dunside Way

14/08/16 Todlaw Way

21/08/16 Hawkwood Way

28/08/16 Glenburn Ave

04/09/16 Muirhead

11/09/16 Brankston Ave

18/09/16 Marleyhill Ave

25/09/16 Merrick Drive



Sadly a few of our members have passed away since the last magazine was printed Mrs Mary Pollock, Mrs Isabella Mitchell and Mr Douglas Moody. All three were faithful members of St Ninian's and Douglas served as an Elder for many years until his health deteriorated. Our thoughts and prayers are with the families.

Rev Alan Paterson our Interim Moderator has been kept busy over the past few months and his help is much appreciated.

Our Sunday services are conducted by Eric Hislop and everybody looks forward each Sunday to what he has to say. I think we all would have liked Eric as our Minister but that's not possible.

As I write this I am getting ready to go on holiday, it will be nice to get some sunshine and I hope I can bring some back.

God bless you all and thank you for your support and patience.

Margaret

*"There is a quiet light that shines in every heart.*

*Though it is always secretly there,*

*it draws no attention to itself.*

*It is what illuminates our minds to seek possibility*

*And our hearts to love life....*

*This shy inner light is what enables us to recognize*

*and receive our very presence here is a blessing"*

#### **The Nomination Committee**

Jim Cowan, May Fairley, Bill Grainger, Yvonne Hamilton , Ally Kirkwood, Amy Kirkwood, Robert Millar, Margaret Macgregor ,Margaret McMeekin, Sarah Jane Ramsay , Jillian Storrie

## **URC Synod Meeting at Tulliallan Police College**

In March, we again attended the residential meeting as we felt it was important that our church be represented now that we were without a minister – it was a good opportunity to remind people that there was a vacancy at Stonehouse. Lisa Cameron helped us put together a presentation on our increased support of The Hope Café, which had been visited by staff and pupils of the United Reformed and Congregational College, including Stewart Cutler.

Friday evening started with reports from Policy Planning & Strategy and Finance & Property Committees. We then divided in to the four Link Gatherings. Our South Link spent the next hour and quarter discussing the proposed groupings of churches within the Link and the deployment of ministers and lay preachers within our congregations. At 9.45 we met for the last time that day at a Reception for each other and our Ecumenical Guests.

Saturday was taken up with more meetings and Workshops, which this year covered Interfaith Relations, The Church and Rural Communities, the Future of Synod Teams and Transitional Ministry. After the meetings we gathered for a presentation to our Moderator, Rev John Humphreys who retires in June. After the speeches and handing over of gifts the evening moved to an impromptu Ceilidh, with music, dancing and a dram or two, before we all retired to bed.

Sunday morning starts with Holy Communion and it's always a moving service. A final talk by David Bradwell of the Scottish Faiths Action for Refugees was packed with information and we then had the final reports from the Synod Committees – Children & Youth Ministry, Church & Society, Church Life and Ecumenical & World Church.

Apart from the business meetings and workshops mentioned above there is plenty of time over coffees and lunches to talk to other representatives and ministers and Jim spent time this year finding out how other churches had dealt with modernising their premises. The folks from Annan were particularly helpful concerning availability of grants – although it was a bit off putting to hear that their improvements had been a three year project. Rev Leslie Morrison, the convenor of the Finance and Property Committee (which looks after the money from the sale of our Angle Street premises), offered to come to St. Ninian's and hear what we were proposing to do and see if he could offer any advice or financial help.

There was also a very interesting presentation by the Children and Young People Committee – 20 of whom attended between the ages of 11 and 24. They had made some challenging lists for us.

Things they most like about church –

- ❖ *Monthly Church Lunches;*
- ❖ *When they take over service;*
- ❖ *Playing games; Sunday Club;*
- ❖ *Lego; People;*
- ❖ *Being challenged to think about God in new ways in sermons.*

What they would like to put in the rubbish bin –

- ❖ *Church only happening on a Sunday;*
- ❖ *Hymn books;*
- ❖ *Hymn-sandwich services;*
- ❖ *Organs;*
- ❖ *Stopping Sunday School early to come through for Communion;*
- ❖ *Stained glass windows;*
- ❖ *Slow, long or boring hymns;*
- ❖ *Church meetings;*
- ❖ *Victorian rules; Children's addresses;*
- ❖ *Common cup at communion;*
- ❖ *All ages services;*
- ❖ *Pews.*

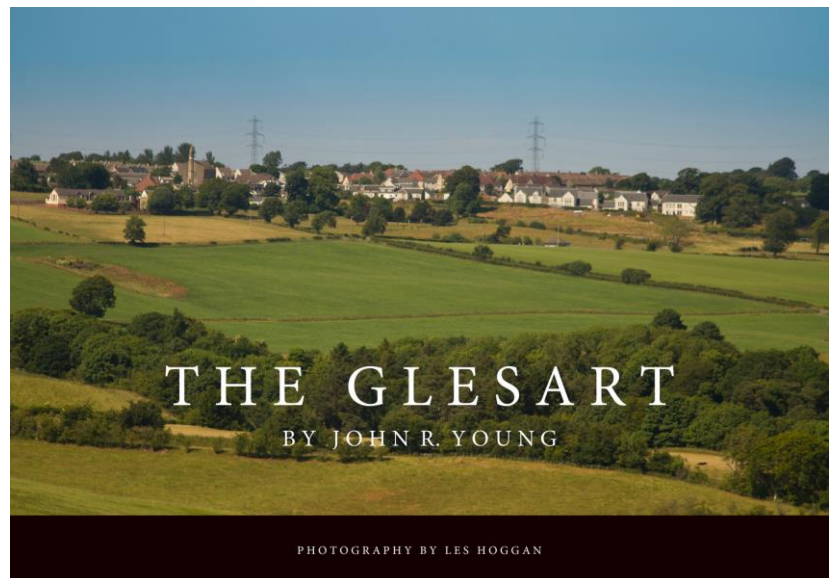
Their wish list –

- ❖ *Monthly youth service across Synod;*
- ❖ *Live Music (not an organ) with multiple players;*
- ❖ *More use of technology (and competent users);*
- ❖ *People under the age of 70;*
- ❖ *Deconstructed worship, with "stations" led by multiple members of the congregation;*
- ❖ *Ecumenical cross youth groups;*
- ❖ *PowerPoint presentations that properly follow the sermon;*
- ❖ *Good coffee and other drinks, cup holders in seats like at the cinema;*
- ❖ *Lending library of current Christian books: Modern worship music, e.g. Stuart Townend.*

Well some food for thought for us all in that lot - Anne and Jim Cowan

# 'The Glesart'

Aloft the Avon river rests the sleepy hamlet of 'the Glesart'. As we travel past the A71 to Strathaven few venture over the Glesart brig to explore the environment and historical sites that lie in abundance within this former barony and parish. Glassford, to give it its Sunday name, is full of surprises and it was whilst uncovering its story I felt compelled to recognise the villages past by writing a new publication of those who have contributed to its development over the years and its historical past.



Some may know of the pre-historic standing stones that overlook the Avon waters but how many have taken the time to see them for themselves in understanding why our ancestors chose to settle in such places or appreciate the peoples beliefs and skills in making a life in the beautiful surroundings of the Avon Valley?

A parish rich in history, Glassford was where the Quakers first established themselves in Scotland in 1653, holding to their faith under persecution of other faiths, as the covenanters themselves experienced soon after. How many know that Glassford was also the site of a Napoleonic prison at Glassford castle at the beginning of the 19th century? Few I expect, but these events have shaped a community over hundreds of years in a story that deserves to be told.

From statistical accounts, national archives, local documents and personal research I have sought to recall Glassford's story in a publication simply called 'The Glesart'. When complete the book will provide residents and readers with a reference and greater understanding of the area and the characters who have played their part in the villages history.

Originally the village was formerly known as 'Westquarter', with further villages of 'Heads' and 'Chapelton' forming the 'Parish of Glassford'. However for the purposes of this account the publication focuses of the village we now know simply as 'The Glesart'. All going well the publication should be launched in early autumn of this year coinciding with the erection of a new primary school in the village.

So if you want to find out more about the environment in which you reside and learn of those who built our communities then watch this space for further information as hopefully a small exhibition of the research will accompany a formal launch of the book sometime soon.

# *Thoughts on Prayer*

THOUGHTS ON ..... BEING

## ALONE

On a recent visit to my family, I was chatting with a lady who showed me a beautiful patchwork quilt she had made to raise funds for a charity. The charity is run by a gentleman who is a member of the church she belongs to. He tells of work he does with orphanages in Uganda and Ethiopia.

On one visit he took soft toys for the children. He gave a little bear to a terminally ill 8 year old girl. She asked him where he came from and when he said Ireland, she said 'Oh, Irish people eat potatoes'.

'Yes', he replied 'but we call them spuds'.

'I'll call my bear Spud' she told him and so the SpudBear ministry was born.

She was very happy to have a bear to hug because when these children die, they are put into bin bags and put out with the rubbish. She didn't want to be alone in a bin bag. The next time he visited the orphanage she was gone.

This man and his team not only give toys to the children but hopefully give some happiness and confidence that they are never alone, bringing them the good news of the Gospel.

Many people feel that they are alone. It's good to know that we are never alone for God's presence is all around us.

Ann Woods.

Did the visual literary on Sunday move you?

Did the service stir you?

Did you miss the service on Sunday?

Then as Eric suggests: visit the church web site

[www.st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk](http://www.st-ninians-stonehouse.org.uk)

# *Sunday School*

We continue to use the Spill the Beanz

material.

We have had another fund raising collection which has realised the sum of £283. Thank you to all who contributed and made this possible. Thank you to George and the Boys Brigade for moving the bags down to the hall ready for uplifting. Thank you also to Alex Pate and Gavin for helping to load the van.

We have had another Movie night on 20th May. This has proved to be very popular and will be a regular event.

We have had a Lego day and again because the children enjoyed this so much it will be repeated on 15th May. The children use the Lego blocks to illustrate the Bible story.

On 22nd May a team with Puppets will be joining us to tell Bible stories using puppets. This too is popular with the children.

We plan to reinstate our Breakfast days again in the new session. These will take place on every third Sunday. We have had a trial run which was successful.

Our final Sunday of this session will be on Sunday 12th June and this will take the form of a party.

The team would like to thank all the adults who bring the children along each week, so that we can teach them about the love of God.

We hope everyone has a good summer holiday with lots of sunny days.

The Sunday School Team.

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**I would like to thank the Flower Committee for the lovely flowers I received on Easter Sunday.**

**They were very much appreciated.**

**Yours faithfully, George Gray**



# *Treasurer's Report*

Hello again,

This year seems to be flying past and summer is almost upon us. We hope and pray for warm weather because, as you know, we have had to switch off the heating in the Church and halls.

This decision had to be taken as our income is unable to sustain our expenditure on the heating bills. Since Christmas, Gas has cost us £9373 and Electricity £3288 and with our obligations to Ministries and Missions, wages and other running costs there is simply not enough money coming in each month to pay for everything.

A fund has been started for the new heating system. Although we intend to apply for grants, we do not know how much will be available but we are aware they will not cover the entire cost and we will have to fund the balance ourselves. I have already received some generous donations towards the cost and by the time you read this our Gift Day will have taken place, the proceeds of which have gone into the heating fund. Thank you all for your generosity.

At this time it is important to maximise our income so can I remind those of you who pay Income Tax or Capital Gains Tax, which is at least equal to the tax on the amount you give to the Church, that it is possible to Gift Aid your offerings and donations. The Church will claim tax back on your donations. For example, every £10 given by you, the Government will refund tax to us of £2.50 at no extra cost to you. All that is required is for those of you who have not already done so, to complete the forms which are at the Church door, and return it to me. Any amount can be gift aided no matter how small and it means that your donations are increased by 25%.

Other fund raising for the new central heating system is in progress and I hope that you will enjoy taking part and sharing the fellowship at these events.

Gavin Ferguson (Treasurer)

on behalf of the Finance Team.

**Hope Café Stonehouse      St Ninians Church Hall**

**Vicars Road Stonehouse ML9 3EB**

***\*Hope Café, promoting positive mental health &  
well-being in Lanarkshire\****



***\* At Hope Café, we focus on what`s strong, not what`s wrong \****

**Stonehouse Café dates March – May 2016      10.00 am – 2.00pm**

**Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> June**

**Thursday 14<sup>th</sup> July**

**Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> July**

**Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> August**

**Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> August**

**For further details please contact Lisa Cameron:**

**07851823683      [lisa@hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk](mailto:lisa@hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk)**

**[www.hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk](http://www.hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk)**

It was with a heavy heart that board of trustees at Hope Café Lanarkshire had to make the difficult decision to close the Lanark Community café at the end of April this year. As an organisation we were unsuccessful in securing core funding and the Lanark café unfortunately wasn't generating enough income to enable the project to continue. We wish to thank everyone from St Ninians who has visited and/or supported the Lanark café in any way and as an organisation we feel together we have accomplished great things in Lanark and the surrounding areas by promoting positive mental health and well-being. As a new charity we continue to face many challenges but we hope as an organisation to gain some valuable lessons from these difficult experiences.

We are currently working our way through an asset register at the Lanark café and have identified many items which we feel will be beneficial to the community of St Ninians. At present we have identified a small fridge, a small table top freezer, a dishwasher, a large flat screen television and some cameras.

Thankfully due to the generosity of the community of St Ninians church, our amazing group of volunteers and the regular customers who continue to engage with the project at Stonehouse we are able to continue operating the Stonehouse community café on a twice a monthly basis. Our hugely successful See Me funded project Bun & a Blether has also successfully been re-funded for another year. Sadly though the funding which helped us provide free complimentary therapies to all Stonehouse café volunteers and customers has

also come to an end but we are currently appealing for volunteer therapists and will update with any new developments.

Hope Café at St Ninians is for everyone. You don't need to be living with mental illness to engage with the project you just need to be human because every human being has mental health. As an organisation we are passionate about encouraging people to look after their mental health by engaging with activities that are proven to support good mental health hygiene. It's a special place to come for some delicious food and some lovely company and we have been recently blessed with the company the lovely Adrian who is leading a 'Spirit and Literature' group where we explore literature and spirituality. Regular features within the café are our walking group and relaxation sessions led by volunteer Beverley Reid. I would like to take this opportunity to convey Hope Cafes deepest sympathies to Beverley and her family who have recently experienced the tragic loss of Beverley's son Sean.

So we once again thank everyone within the community of St Ninian's for the on-going support they give to our project. We are continually receiving new customers every time we open and it continues to be a place of Hope for people from a diverse range of circumstances. Together, we hopefully continue to stamp out the stigma that not only surrounds mental health but the stigma that can also surround church and religion.

Lisa Cameron The Hope Café Project Co-Ordinator

**"We don't come to church because we are perfect, we come because we are not."**

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### **Volunteer Therapist Appeal**

#### **Volunteer therapists required for busy community café**

**Are you a qualified or trainee beauty therapist and/or alternative therapy practitioner?**

**Do you have a few hours to spare each month to join a special team of individuals at Stonehouse Hope Café where we promote positive mental health and well-being in Lanarkshire. All volunteer expenses covered and excellent training opportunities.**

**Please contact Lisa Cameron on: 07851823683 or [lisa@hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk](mailto:lisa@hopecafelanarkshire.org.uk)**

***At Hope Café we focus on what's strong, not what's wrong***

## *The Guild* BE BOLD BE STRONG.

We have had a really good season of the Guild this year again with interesting visitors and entertainment. The months have gone in so quickly but we have enjoyed our time together as a group.

We are looking forward to going to St Andrews in September so if you want to go please make sure you have your name down as the seats go quickly.

A big thank you to the committee for all their hard work throughout the session. We wouldn't be able to do so much without their help. Also to thank members of the Church who baked for us when the Salvation Army came to play; it was all really appreciated.

Enjoy your holidays and we look forward to starting up in September again.

Wilma Johnston.

## *Link Committee* Well that seems to have been a quick

season between spring and summer issue! In the last issue, I encouraged you to enter the Cross Reach Christmas card competition. I have knowledge of one person taking part but unfortunately they did not win. However I thank them for taking an interest. They did receive a certificate for their entry!

We have been extremely uplifted by a very generous donation for the spring issue of Link. Although this person also wishes to remain anonymous we felt we had to acknowledge it and thank you. All monies are for church purposes and our treasurer will advise us what the Link Fund will be spent on when required.

We appreciate all our distributors' efforts to deliver and collect donations for the magazine. May we urge you to remember to **put your name** on the envelope of monies collected or put the slip of paper you get with your bundle of magazines inside an envelope with your collections? This makes it easier for Margaret's book keeping records.

Margaret and I will be in the vestibule on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> June for any donations for this issue of Link.

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Margaret McM and Margaret Murray

## Church Register

**Eternal rest grant unto them, O Lord,  
and let perpetual light shine upon them.  
May the souls of all the faithful departed,  
through the mercy of God, rest in peace.**

*Mrs Mary Pollock, Mrs Isabella Mitchell*

*Mr Douglas Moody*



## Flower Arrangers and Distributors

**June**            Joyce & Bob Millar        792736

**July**            Ann Mair                    793633

                  Margaret Meikle        791217

**August**        Ann & Douglas Thompson    792002



# Church Flowers



## Summer Church Flower Rota

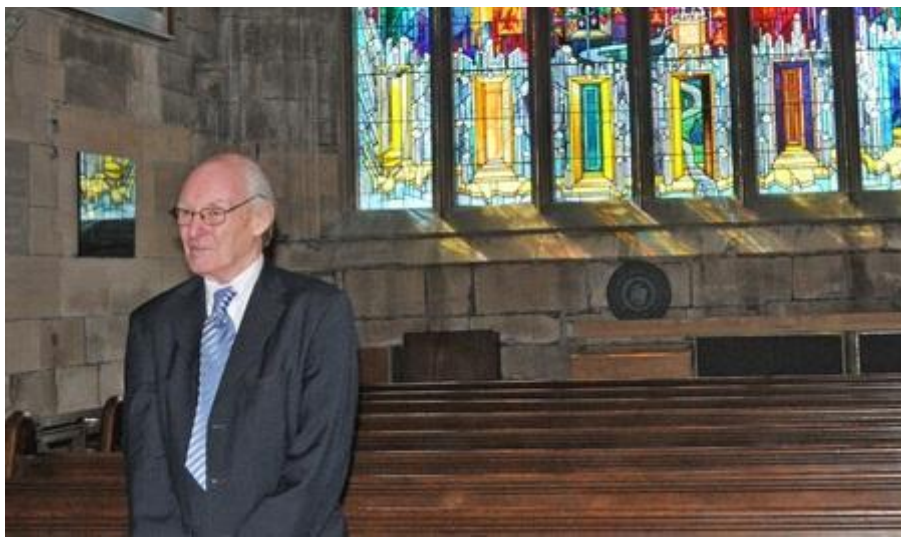
June		
5 <sup>th</sup>	Anne Macleod, June Russell,	In Memoriam
12 <sup>th</sup>	Elizabeth Bridges, Betty Campbell, Helen Scully, May Twaddle	All In Memoriam
19 <sup>th</sup>	Laura Wilson Helen Leggate, Shona McMillan,	All In Memoriam
26 <sup>th</sup>	Betty Biggar, Agnes Barr, Greta Struthers, The Davidson Family	In Memoriam
3 <sup>rd</sup> July	Ruth Templeton	Birthday Celebration
10 <sup>th</sup>	Margaret Mair, Mary Lochhead	Both In Memoriam
17 <sup>th</sup>	May Boslem, Mary Hamilton,	Both In Memoriam
24 <sup>th</sup>	M MacGregor, Norma Johnston	In Memoriam
31 <sup>st</sup>	E McGill, The Tully Family,	In Memoriam
7 <sup>th</sup> August	Barbara Brown	In Memoriam
14 <sup>th</sup>	Sheila Hamilton	In Memoriam
21 <sup>st</sup> August	Mrs Richmond, Anne Thompson	
28 <sup>th</sup> August	Christine Blackwood	
September 4 <sup>th</sup>	Grace Allan	

# Obituary - Crear McCartney, one of Scotland's finest stained glass artists

(ALISON ROBERTSON Extract from the Glasgow Herald 10<sup>th</sup> May 2016)

*Stained glass artist Born: February 4, 1931*

*Died: February 24, 2016*



CREAR McCartney, who has died aged 85, was one of Scotland's finest stained glass artists who, during his long career, produced 112 largely religious works at sites from Aberdeen to Ayr, from Kirkwall to Cornwall and beyond.

His vast window in St Magnus Cathedral in Kirkwall, created to celebrate its 850th anniversary, was dedicated in the presence of The Queen. Dornoch Cathedral also has six of his windows and **St Ninian's Stonehouse Church in South Lanarkshire has 11**. Professor John Hume, chairman of The Scottish Stained Glass Trust, has described Mr McCartney's contribution to 20th century stained glass art in Scotland as distinguished and distinctive

With a rich and original imagination, a deep love of nature, and a prodigious knowledge of history, languages, literature, music and the Bible, Mr McCartney found in stained glass a perfect medium. He readily

translated vision into reality - "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel" with a railway engine for example. He also strove to convey abstract power which transcends mere representation and to fill the spirit of the viewer with a comforting light. His conceptual ideas came in elegantly hand-written and illuminating statements.

Artistically, he was a worthy successor to earlier Scottish stained glass artists such as Douglas Strachan, Gordon Webster, and Sadie McLellan. His sense of colour and his colour-memory were superb. He chose each piece of glass himself, and liked the way streaky or uneven glass put movement into the window. The leads were designed to create what he called a dark black web to add brilliance.

Before starting on a new work, he had to find the right piece of music to inspire him. He experienced sound as colour (synaesthesia): red for G or F, purple for D minor. And he needed stained glass art, "because I could not find the words to express what I felt".

Christian Shaw, with whom he made many windows, notes that he had an ability to combine the very old within the new in his designs. Through his varied handling of figure-representation, aspects of history or meaning could be subtly implied. Plants or animals complemented primary figures – the details scraped out (sgraffito) instead of painted on. Biblical quotations abounded. Lettering and heraldic motifs were immaculate. "The hardest part," he said, "was trying to imagine what a new window would look like because it is never seen until it is finished".

Robert John Crear McCartney (always called Crear), the son of David McCartney, platform foreman at Carstairs Junction, and Elizabeth, née Crear, was born in Lanark and reared in Symington, South Lanarkshire. Growing up in a happy family and in a rural context he absorbed everything - nature, literature, Scottish history, railways and model railways, butterflies (photographed), river trout (guddled): most of them turning up later in his designs.

Educated at Symington Primary and Biggar High School, he was taught to draw by a Polish expatriate billeted in his home. He sang in Biggar Kirk choir and, with his father, attended Polish services nearby where he learned to love Polish and Czech music.

After 18 months of national service in the RAF, he enrolled for the DA course at Glasgow School of Art in 1950. A highlight was Elizabeth P Hamilton's class in puppetry. A further year enabled him to study stained glass under a notable sculptor and stained glass artist, Walter Pritchard.

A travel award from GSA took him to Europe's mediaeval cathedrals and abbeys, especially Chartres and St Denis.

In 1955, he was invited by Dom Ninian Sloan, OSB to run the stained glass studio at Pluscarden Priory near Elgin. For the first of five years, he lived in a cell and ate with the silent Benedictine monks while the Bible was read aloud. After his marriage to Catherine Jack in 1956, they moved to New Elgin.

From teacher training in Aberdeen, he went to Elgin Academy, before being appointed principal art teacher at Lesmahagow High School in 1964. His studio was in Crawford. From 1971, the family lived in Wiston School House, Catherine being headteacher there. For more than 20 years Mr McCartney taught art and practised stained glass, becoming a full-time freelance stained glass artist in about 1988.

The window in St Katherine's Aisle in St Michael's Church, Linlithgow, with six lancets in two stages and a rose window above, is widely considered to be his greatest work. In the upper stage, the Godhead, the Holy Spirit, the 12 Apostles and the Last Trump are represented by strong reds and yellows inspired by the opening horn and trumpet fanfare from Leos Janacek's Sinfonietta. Below, the River of Life, the golden streets and doorways leading into heaven - based on verses from Revelation 22 - were inspired by the hauntingly beautiful melody in Joel's prayer from Elgar's Oratorio, The Kingdom.

Enthusiastic, personable, hard-working and unassuming, Crear McCartney knew how to carry ideas forward and make things happen. At home, he landscaped the garden at Wiston. An early campaigner for Scottish independence, and programme secretary of Biggar Music Club, he supported many causes. A congenial socialiser, he kept his friends because of who he was. Above all, he loved, and was loved by, his family, who tended his latter years with great commitment. He died peacefully in hospital after a short illness.

At his memorial service in Biggar Kirk, family, friends and former colleagues gathered from far and near, past and present. The sense of love, admiration and gratitude for Crear McCartney was palpable. His beautiful Rae Memorial window, To Everything ... a Season ... A Time to Mourn shed light and hope on the occasion. The telling and moving tribute, prepared by his family, was read by the minister, Rev Mike Fucella. He is survived by his former wife, Catherine and their children Colin, Aidan and Ilene.

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