



# St Augustine's Dumbarton

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## the new look

### Synod Takes Historic Vote

The Rector was at General Synod in Edinburgh in early June, and was party to an important vote which refused to sign the much debated Anglican Covenant.

This debate has been ongoing for eight years now, and it was good, eventually, to let the world know how we feel about the proposed Covenant, and indeed how we feel about being a part of the world-wide Anglican Communion.

Of course, it was the Scottish Episcopal Church which started it all off by consecrating Samuel Seabury for the Church in the USA all these years ago, Seabury having been refused consecration by the English bishops. However, that's all history, and the modern Communion has to learn new ways of living in its multi-cultural diversity!

The SEC contains a range of views on authority of scripture, approaches to sexuality and relations between churches, and these views were represented in the debate.

The Primus, backed by Synod, spoke well of the Anglican Communion and the SEC's future part in it. From giving thanks for the SEC's role in Anglican development by the consecration of Samuel Seabury, to affirming our continued membership of the Communion whilst 'celebrating our diversity,' the new motion clearly stated that the SEC valued the Communion, and wishes to partici-



pate, without the Covenant, in its future life. Members of Synod spoke to this motion, with clear support for the part that the SEC should be in play in trying to heal and reform the Anglican Communion. The synod overwhelmingly voted to support this motion, with its affirmation of the Communion and encouragement to the Instruments of Unity to 'encourage the development of bonds of shared mission, respect and mutual support through which the Anglican Communion can help spread the love of Christ across the world.'



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## From Kenny....

Sometimes good things just sort of creep up on you! We are rightly proud that our Community Hall serves so many groups and meets real needs within our community. Jings! It's sometimes hard to find a space for church meetings. We are proud of our link with Circle (Scotland), and now Bethany Trust with the the Passing the Baton project, but something else happens on Tuesday evenings which has been almost under the radar.

St Augustine's Girls' Group (STAGG), meets on Tuesdays and is made up of a decently large group of young teenage girls who meet to be creative, discuss all sorts of issues that may be on their mind in safety, dream dreams, raise money, and have a great laugh together at the same time.

It is really the brainchild of Anne Dyer, who has been 'chomping at the bit' for a while to get something organised for this particular age group. We had talked about setting up a uniformed organisation, but I'm glad that we didn't.

Most of this wee group may have met occasionally in each other's homes, but now they have the platform to add to their numbers and do lots of constructive things together. Anne has enlisted some other mums and one or two of the congregation to help.

Sunday Coffee is always a surprise as we see their latest offerings hung up on cupboard doors, and it was super to have them in church one Sunday, explaining to us all what they are doing and what their future plans are.

This is the coalface of mission, and by feeling wanted, accepted, and encouraged by St Augustine's members, these girls will inevitably grow to see us as something they have respect for, and maybe even want to join one day. Have a look at the couple of pics on the centre pages!

Anne and her team put in an enormous amount of work, and we are very grateful.

Much of our mission is like this, sowing seeds that will hopefully grow in the future. There are seldom instant mass conversions in the way we do things, but I believe that the future looks bright for St Augustine's. We need to ensure there is a future, and



financially, things are not looking so hot at the moment.

We have had to draw on a significant sum from our little Investment Fund, just to keep going. The cost of heating and lighting has soared, as have pension contributions, water bills, and so many other things. We are being squeezed as much as anyone else.

I never thought that I would have to say this, but a pound or two in a weekly envelope just doesn't cut it! We should all be thinking of tithing, at least 10% of our income or at least our disposable income. I know some of us do this, but not nearly enough.

Through our mission, we are always adding new people to our Parish Roll, but we need to have the level of financial support we require or ministry will eventually go, certainly on a full-time basis.

It had been my hope that the Community Hall would fund our shortfall, but because we have so many groups who genuinely can't pay rent, and it costs for heating and lighting, this has turned out not to be the case. Things have still to come out in the Annual Accounts, but we may find that we are actually subsidising this Community Ministry to a fair degree. It doesn't help, but it's an essential ministry.

Pat Smith is due to be ordained Deacon in The Cathedral on September 8th, and her ministry here will be non-stipendiary, but expenses will have to be found to support this ministry too. This will not be a burden, as Pat will bring so many gifts to the Ministry Team. She will be more than excellent value!

However, the fact remains that if our effort in Mission & Ministry is not supported financially, then there may not be the sort of future that many of us would hope for.

I know you will rise to the challenge!

Kenny

## APOLOGY FROM THE PHOTOGRAPHER

To those who had hoped to see themselves dressed in red, white and blue (at the Murder Mystery Night) apologies. No photographs. A technical glitch with the camera. (Serves me right for not relying on the trusty phone.) FW

## Rotas: June/July 2012

### Sunday June 24<sup>th</sup>

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Evelyn O'Neill & Jean Carr.

Intercessions: Margaret Hardie.

Chalice: David Rowatt & Barbara Barnes.

Sidespersons: Ronnie Blaney & Vernon Perrin.

### Sunday July 1<sup>st</sup>

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Margot Rhead & Ghislaine Kennedy.

Intercessions: Evelyn O'Neill.

Chalice: Tim Rhead & Vernon Perrin.

Sidespersons: Gavin & Ross Elder.

### Sunday July 8<sup>th</sup>

11am Eucharist.

Readers: Morag O'Neill & Tim Rhead.

Intercessions: Peter Cairns.

Chalice: Sharon Rowatt & Barbara Barnes.

Sidespersons: Roberta Mailley & Jean Carr.

### Sunday July 15<sup>th</sup>

11am Eucharist

Readers: Vernon Perrin & Barbara Barnes.

Intercessions: Maggie Wallace.

Chalice: Janette Barnes & Tim Rhead.

Sidesperson: Chrissie Ashman & Margaret Swan

### Sunday July 22<sup>nd</sup>

11am Eucharist

Readers: Linda Macaulay & Janette Barnes.

Intercessions: Vernon Perrin.

Chalice: Margaret Hardie & Maggie Wallace.

Sidespersons: Linda Jenkinson & David Ansell.

### Sunday July 29<sup>th</sup>

11am Eucharist

Readers: Margaret Hardie & Maggie Wallace.

Intercessions: Tim Rhead.

Chalice: Vernon Perrin & Barbara Barnes.

Sidespersons: Roberta Mailley & Ronnie Blaney.

## FLOWER ROTA FOR REST OF JUNE & JULY.

This has already been arranged for the holiday period.

## Flowers in church

Last month I wrote a short article about flowers in church. Sadly, I had very little response. For the next few weeks, the present flower list people are happy to continue, with one former member returning to the list.

There will probably be fewer flowers during the rest of June and July, which is unfortunate, as we often have a good number of visitors and tourists during these months. The situation will be reviewed later in the summer.

## Cursillo

Arrangements for the next few months are as follows:-

### Dumbarton meetings

*All these meetings start at 7.30 pm.*

Mon June 11<sup>th</sup> – Anne Dyer leads a discussion group at Maggie's house.

July - Holiday

August – Week commencing Mon 13<sup>th</sup> August (exact date to be confirmed). Meeting in the hall with a talk from Peter

Wed September 12<sup>th</sup> – Eucharist in the church led by Kenny

October – to be confirmed

November – to be confirmed

December – holiday

### Diocesan/Provincial Meetings

Saturday June 23<sup>rd</sup> – Provincial Ultreya at St Baldred's, North Berwick. 10 am start

Saturday July 14<sup>th</sup> – Diocesan Ultreya at St Ninian's, Castle Douglas. 12 noon start. Bring and share lunch.

Friday August 24<sup>th</sup> – Diocesan Ultreya at St James the Less, Bishopbriggs. 7.30 pm start.

September – to be confirmed

Saturday October 20<sup>th</sup> – Provincial Day of Deeper Understanding. To be held in Glasgow and Galloway Diocese. Time and location to be confirmed.

Friday November 23<sup>rd</sup> – Church of the Good Shepherd, Hillington, Glasgow. 7.30 pm start.

December – holiday.

# St James the Least of All...

*Here the elderly Anglo-Catholic Rector, Eustace, continues his correspondence to Darren, his nephew, a low-church curate recently ordained...*

## The Rectory

*My Dear Nephew Darren,*

This has been an unusual month: we have moved from hysterical excitement to deep disappointment within the space of days.

For many years, our vestry has displayed an oil painting generously donated by the dowager duchess of Auchtermuchty – given to us, I suspect, because her son, the tenth Duke, would not allow it in his house. It was supposed to depict Daniel in the lions' den, although I always thought it looked more like a prospective adopter visiting a dog rescue centre. The dowager was less than pleased when it wasn't made the centrepiece in the sanctuary, but we managed to persuade her that her exceptional work of art would be safer from theft if locked away.

Our cleaner happened to knock it off the wall. If it had landed in her bucket of disinfectant and been totally destroyed, it would have been a sadness I suspect I could have learned to bear. But something more interesting happened. Some of the dowager's oil was chipped off – to reveal a painting underneath of what looked like a cherub.

The cleaner told the churchwarden, who instructed her not to tell anyone about the find. This inevitably meant that, within the hour, the entire parish knew of the discovery of what had already been transformed into a priceless pre-Raphaelite treasure. Our churchwarden has yet to learn the fact that if you tell someone something in complete confidence, they assume it means they can only tell one other person at a time.

By evening, mutually opposed camps had already formed. Miss Timmins wanted the treasure to be placed in a side chapel, as a shrine, preferably with candles permanently burning beside it. She envisaged St. James the Less becoming a place of pilgrimage and that this yet-to-be revealed cherub may work miracles of healing. She was already asking for opinions about where the car park should be built to cater for the thousands of tourists who would soon be flocking here. Another group wanted to sell it as soon as possible and use the money to repair our church tower. A third group insisted the fortune it would raise be given to African missionaries. Meanwhile, the tenth Duke was consulting his solicitors to see how he might get the canvas back to his castle.

We compromised by getting the thing X-rayed, to see what work of art lay underneath. It turned out to be by a local artist who had painted an advert for the village pharmacist to sell his own brand of gripe water.

Shrines, towers and good deeds were quietly forgotten and the last we heard of the tenth Duke was that he was consulting a second set of solicitors to see if he can get out of paying the first set for the work they had done to retrieve the painting.

I was sorry to hear that your church was broken into last week. Since your sound system rivals that of any concert hall and your projection equipment would put most cinemas to shame, it is not surprising that is what they had their sights on. Your bemusement that they never touched your library of recordings is less understandable. I would have thought that few thieves would have been much interested in thirteen alternative renditions of "Shine Jesus, shine" and other such artistic gems.

It may have been an act of Christian charity to put a sign outside saying "Thieves will be forgiven", although since they took this as an invitation to burgle your house the following evening, I hope your forgiveness still operates.

You must have been greatly relieved to find that your collection of numbers from train spotting were untouched. They must have been so overjoyed to discover your tins of night-time cocoa that they overlooked them in their excitement.

Last year, we also had unwelcome visitors. The thieves must have spent several hours breaking down the 400 year-old oak door to get in. Had they bothered to try the handle, they would have discovered that we never lock the church anyway.

Since we have yet to leap forward into the nineteenth century, there was little to attract them. Had they removed the marble sarcophagi of the Lairds of Abertay, the money they may have made wouldn't even have paid for the subsequent hernia operations. Inevitably, there was general outrage that the poor box had been broken into – although as far as I can remember, for many years it had contained nothing more than an old three-penny piece and a button.

For many of our congregation, this represented the End of Civilisation as we Know It. Calls were made to have a permanent armed guard on the premises and a few even speculated about the possibility of having tactical nuclear weapons and strategically placed land mines about the place. Colonel McGumphery generously offered us his collection of man traps.

Perhaps our thieves may be forgiven their crime, but until that three-penny piece and button are returned, it will not be forgotten.

*Your loving uncle,*

*Eustace*

# Minutes of the AGM of The Friends of St. Augustine's

Held in the Community Hall on Friday, 18th May, 2012

1. **Welcome:** Janette Barnes welcomed everyone who was in attendance at the meeting and assured them of a good evening of Spanish food, drink and entertainment after the business of the AGM was completed. There was a good attendance of 30 people.
2. **Apologies:** 8 apologies were received.
3. **The minutes** of the 2011 AGM were distributed and accepted.
4. **Matters arising:** There were no matters arising.
5. **Chairman's Report:** The chairman had sent in a report before the meeting which was read by Janette Barnes, Vice Chairperson.

*I send sincere apologies that I cannot be with you for this year's AGM. However, I know everything will be just fine without me, and there's lots of sangria to ensure that the meeting is either short or lively!  
Once again I have to record my utmost wonder that the Executive continue to provide bold and imaginative events through the year, and always leaves people feeling that they can't wait for the next one. I thank every one of them for their commitment and dedication, as well as their ability of enabling everyone to feel they are part of the wider St Augustine's family. This is one of our aims, and we hit that target year after year. It also has to be said that this year the church has depended on Friends' and their fundraising on more than one occasion, and I am heartened that we have such a committed group who seem to be able to make money out of nothing! Thank you for that financial support. It is a serious business, bringing new people into the fringes of our church family, and it's serious too that St Augustine's has funds to fall back on, but there is little that's serious in the way we go about it.*

*We have had so much fun since last year, and my personal favourite was Augadoon. I have never seen a bishop laugh so much! We went to the River City set in July, had a Lebanese supper in September (Simon cooked and Sandra found some Belly dancers from Balloch), and in October we had 'Sing for your Fish Supper' where Gavin managed to conjure up the Codfather Fish and Chip van and the All Sorts Choir sang. January was the Glasge Cafe (was it the Clatty cafe or something?) and Janette's game of Loast. Some fairly forward waitresses appeared from nowhere and vanished into the night as ladies do! February we went to see the Pandas, and March saw the long-awaited ghost walk! I'm proud to be a part of a parish which has so much fun and brings so much joy to others. May our work continue to expand, and the fresh ideas continue to amaze us! Thanks to everyone who makes this happen.*

6. **Treasurer's Report:** The accounts were distributed and Janette talked the meeting through the important points. The current bank balance is £1,610.47. We have had a successful year with many of the events making a good profit and even those which were not really run for profit brought in some funds. Thanks were given to Connie Elder for her work on the accounts.
7. **Membership & Financial Controller's Report:** Margaret Hardie reported that memberships have remained fairly static. We had lost some members but gained new members, so we currently have 74 members made up of: 56 individual memberships, 13 family memberships, 5 business memberships. Margaret will now send out renewal letters for 2012/2013. It was agreed to keep the membership fees and conditions as current. i.e. £15 standard membership. £25 family membership, £50 business membership.
8. **Future plans and events:**

June 9<sup>th</sup> there will be a Murder Mystery Evening

June 22<sup>nd</sup> the Allsorts choir will perform a concert in St. Augs for the Veterans Association.

August 12<sup>th</sup> we are holding the Olympaugs picnic in Levensgrove Park.

September 14<sup>th</sup> the return of the popular Fish Supper Bingo

October 1<sup>st</sup> we are running a bus to the King's Theatre Glasgow to see 'I Dreamed a Dream' – the story of Susan Boyle.

November 16<sup>th</sup> will be the big event, which we are planning around a Thanksgiving theme.

December 23<sup>rd</sup> will be the annual Christmas Party followed by Carol Singing.

Fran asked if anyone knew of any musician etc who would like to do a concert in the church, please speak to her and we can make arrangements.

9. **Election of Office Bearers:** Two members of the Exec resigned this year, Morag O'Neill and Moira McGown. The chair thanked them in their absence for their years of service and intimated that they would be welcome to help at future events.  
Chrissie Ashman and Annette Potts were elected unopposed as new Exec members and the rest of the Exec were all re-elected to their positions according to the rules of the constitution.  
The Exec members for 2012/2013 are:  
Chairperson: Revd. Kenny Macaulay  
Vice Chairs: Janette Barnes  
Linda Macaulay  
Treasurer: Connie Elder  
Membership and Financial Coordinator: Margaret Hardie



Exec: Roberta Mailley  
Sandra O'Neill  
Sharon Rowatt  
Margaret Swan  
Fran Walker  
Chrissie Ashman  
Annette Potts

10. **AOCB:** There was no other business for discussion.

Thanks were given to the chair for a competent meeting and to all the Exec (once again) for their work over the year and their continued support of the church in this way. There being no other business the meeting was closed and the Evening of Spanish food and music began. Aidan Barnes played Spanish guitar for our much appreciated entertainment, Ricky Kennedy supported him, and both were brilliant! Well what do you expect from Friends'?

## COUNTRY TRIP

This year, we are going on country trips, instead of parish walks, in order to suit people who are not able to walk far. For our first trip, we drive to the Lake of Menteith, where fourteen of us gather at the pier to wait for the ferry to the island of Inchmahome. It is a glorious day with sunshine, blue sky and the hills sheltering us from the cool north wind, which has affected us over recent days.

There are two ferries, both manned by young ladies but the number of passengers is limited to twelve so we cross in two parties. We are surprised that only the crew wear life-jackets, which we are told is a Health and Safety requirement. Rosemary with her two sticks and new hip has little trouble climbing aboard. The sail across the lake, which is dotted with small fishing boats, takes seven minutes. The island is a beautiful and tranquil place with large trees with fresh leaves and many wild flowers. After purchasing our Historic Scotland tickets at the wee shop, most of us head for the ruined abbey, one of whose earlier visitors was Mary Queen of Scots, who stayed here for three weeks at the age of four. The ruins contain the grave of Robert Cunninghame Graham, who spent his last years at Ardoch near Dumbarton.

Some of the more adventurous ones walk round the island, which takes about twenty minutes, passing the Nun's Hill and Queen Mary's Bower. There are some ancient trees, including three Sweet Chestnuts, which are included in the top fifty trees in Scotland. There is a party of children on the island who are playing cricket on a grassy area amongst the trees.

Linda has brought some cup-cakes to celebrate Rosemary's birthday, so we gather by the abbey for a snack. After an hour or so, the first party sets out back to the mainland. En route, Vernon and Tim see a great crested grebe, then the boatwoman points out one of the local ospreys, which circles overhead before

flying off. Once ashore, Linda, Josephine and Irene set off for the Bucklyvie Coffee House, where we plan to stop for what will be an essential element of the country trips. Soon the rest of the party disembark from the ferry, and we all drive along the quiet country road to Bucklyvie, where we find Linda and her pals already tucking into cakes. *(No surprise there-Ed)*

The proprietor is pleased to see us as we are the only customers. The fourteen members and friends of St Augs soon make inroads into the stock of cakes and scones. This has been a very enjoyable first country trip, helped by the good weather and beautiful venue. More people are welcome on future outings which will be held approximately monthly.



## General Synod 2012

General Synod had much more than the discussion and rejection of the Anglican Covenant. Important as this was, there was a vast array of subjects discussed at length. You will no doubt have the opportunity to hear more about it all as the weeks go on. Here, I reflect on some of *my* highlights!

Edinburgh is a lot more acceptable when you have a nice hotel, wonderful company, and good food. I was glad to have all three, and rekindling old friendships was the cherry on the cake.

Bishop David Chillingworth gave his Primus' charge to Synod, referring to the Exodus reading of journeying in the wilderness and of our need to journey through the wilderness and meet God in the breaking of the bread which can sustain us on the journey. We also heard briefly that the SEC had been represented by the Primus at the Queen's Jubilee service in St Paul's Cathedral.

We welcomed two new bishops, (Bishop Nigel Peyton and Bishop John Armes) +Nigel was at Theological College with Kenny and has Dumbarton family contacts.

Session two of General Synod closed with the Information and Communication Board, and our own Provost, Kelvin Holdsworth. Synod was informed that both *Inspires* and *inspires on-line* have an uptake of around 10% of SEC membership. Due to rising postage costs *Inspires* might have to be reviewed in the future. This figure was in line with take-up in other denominations for printed material.

The *Emerging Vocations Strategy* promises such things as resourcing incumbents and chaplains in identifying and encouraging possible vocations; a vocations website including a blog to connect people with one another; provincial vocations events; and clear pathways for those training for ordination even including placements overseas. We certainly need to encourage vocations among our younger folk. As the Primus pointed out, "where else will future bishops come from?"

Elaine Cameron explained the importance of concentrating on issues that affect the rural women of the world and how these impact directly upon the Millennium Development goals regarding primary education and gender equality. Elaine reminded Synod that if the world's rural women are empowered then potentially there will be 100 to 150 million less hungry mouths in our world.

The Very Rev Ian Barcroft, our Dean, Convener of the Church in Society committee, presented to Synod Motion 29 with regards to Anti-Human Trafficking. Ian shared with Synod the Committee's

continued efforts to campaign for social justice and to promote economic justice throughout Scotland, reflecting on how the Church must focus upon the 'least, the last and the lost'.

Ian invited Ann Glenesk from the Mothers' Union and our own Diocese, to the floor, in order to explain in greater detail the work of the Anti-Human Trafficking Ecumenical Group of Action of Churches Together in Scotland. Ann showed Synod a very powerful and emotive video explaining the effects that human trafficking has upon those whose lives are devastated by being trapped within this 'trade'. Ann reminded Synod that Churches do have a part to play and a voice to use to help protect the innocent children and women affected by the Sex industry.

Again this year the report of the College of Bishops took the form of a lively and interesting dialogue between two of our bishops, Argyll & the Isles and Moray. Their starting point was a set of challenging question posed by/to each in turn as they reflected on life, mission and ministry in their neighbouring dioceses. It tended to be a rather deep discussion, but was hilarious at points! Who said bishops don't have a sense of humour?

"Are we feeling isolated"? The centre of Scotland is marked by a stone in Newtonmore. Argyll and the Isles is the only Diocese to stretch the length of Scotland. Why should we feel on the edge?

"Where are we going"? Our Whole Church Mission and Ministry policy has helped us both look at and celebrate who we are, and to see ourselves as part of the SEC's mission throughout Scotland. The sharing of resources throughout the Province has brought the various Dioceses together as part of a shared journey into the future.

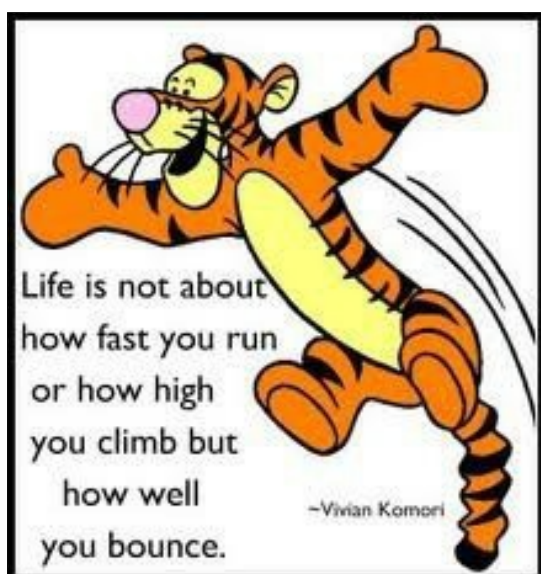
"Is it ultimately just about survival"? We have moved on from saying "We are old and few in number..." to understand that we have gifts to enable our people to be mission agents in their communities. We seek to help those we meet catch a glimpse of the God who, as we have discovered, is all around us. Twenty years ago we worried we would disappear – now there is a tangible confidence about us. There is nothing desperate about the ministries we have established – they are the same ones you can see in any corner of the SEC.

Listening to Bishops Kevin and Mark and their animated discussion, it was impossible not to feel caught up in their optimism for the future. David Palmer who was in the chair for this session thanked them warmly on behalf of Synod for giving us such an encouraging session. In fact it was an encouraging Synod, and I came away tired, but in high spirits!









Two wonderful photos of our Girls' Group flogging their wares at coffee time; a beautiful quilt from this year's Quilters Exhibition; Kenny gets jazzed away by the Metro Band, visiting from the States; Ricky backs young Aidan at the Spanish Affair; eight folk from St Augustine's who took part in the recent Cur-sillo Weekend in Perth, five "on team", where Kenny likened St Peter to Tigger!; and the seagulls line up to bombard the cars in the car park during the 11am service. Recently they had a go at Kenny's office window instead!

# Smile-Lines for June/July

**Holiday:** an all-expense tour

**Holiday:** something you take when you can't take what you've been taking any longer.

The older you get, the tougher it is to lose weight before you appear in a swimsuit, because by then your body and your fat are really good friends.

Why is it called tourist season if we can't shoot at them?

*Editor: For those about to fly away to foreign parts...*

If flying is so safe, why do they call the airport the 'terminal'?

Why do you need a driving license to buy alcohol in America, when you can't drink and drive?

Why didn't Noah swat those two mosquitoes when he had the chance?

I wonder how much deeper the ocean would be without sponges.

## Bowls

A small boy stunned his parents when he began to empty his pockets of coins. Finally his mother asked him where he had got all that money. "At church," the boy replied nonchalantly. "They have bowls of it."

## Cry baby

A woman took her 4-month-old baby to visit her neighbour. The baby began to fuss soon after they arrived. Callum, the 5-year-old son of the neighbour she visited said, "Where did you get this little baby from?"

"He was sent from Heaven," the mother replied. As the baby continued to cry and yell, the little boy said, "I bet I know why he was sent from Heaven. God wanted it quiet up there!"

## Ten fun things to do during boring sermons

- 1 Pass a note to the organist asking whether she plays requests.
- 2 See if a yawn really is contagious.
- 3 Slap your neighbour. See if they turn the other cheek. If not, raise your hand and tell the preacher.
- 4 Listen for your preacher to use a word beginning with 'A' then 'B' and so on through the alphabet.
- 5 Sit in the back row and try to take the handbag of the lady in front of you by putting your toe through the handle.
- 6 Using your pewsheets to make a paper plane. Test-fly it.
- 7 By unobtrusively drawing your arms up into your sleeves, turn your shirt around backwards.

8 Twiddle your thumbs.

9 Twiddle your neighbour's thumbs.

10 If all else fails, look up at the ceiling, point, and scream.

## Obvious

A Sunday School teacher asked her class why Joseph and Mary took Jesus with them to Jerusalem. A small child replied: "They couldn't get a baby sitter."

## Some basic laws of economics

Socialism: You have 2 cows and you give one to your neighbour.

Communism: You have 2 cows; the Government takes both and gives you some milk.

Nazism: You have two cows; the Government takes both and shoots you.

Bureaucratism: You have two cows; the Government takes both, shoots one, milks the other and throws the milk away.

Capitalism: You have two cows. You sell one and buy a bull. Your herd multiplies, and the economy grows. You sell them and retire on the income.

An American Corporation: You have two cows. You sell one, and force the other to produce the milk of four cows. Later, you hire a consultant to analyse why the cow dropped dead.

A French Corporation: You have two cows. You go on strike because you want three cows.

Japanese Corporation: You have two cows. You redesign them so they are one-tenth the size of an ordinary cow and produce twenty times the milk. You then create a clever cow cartoon image called Cowkimon and market them Worldwide.

An Italian Corporation: You have two cows, but you don't know where they are. You break for lunch.

A Swiss Corporation: You have 5000 cows. None of which belong to you. You charge others for storing them.

Chinese Corporation: You have two cows. You have 300 people milking them. You claim full employment, high bovine productivity, and arrest the newsman who reported the numbers.

An Iraqi Corporation: Everyone thinks you have lots of cows. You tell them that you have none. No one believes you and they bomb you. You still have no cows, but at least now you are part of a democracy.

Surrealism: You have two giraffes. The government requires you to take harmonica lessons...

## *‘Wait Till I Tell You.....’*

*Janette looks back at life in and around St. Augustine's in the merry month of May  
and onwards to a summer with no sign yet of a heat wave!*

### **OUR IBERIAN INTERLUDE.**

While Spain is hitting the headlines for all the wrong reasons, its culture brought a sparkle to the Friends' AGM on 18th May. The meeting was labelled 'A Spanish Affair' - that in itself ensured that we would achieve not only an interested quorum but a fair number of folks who couldn't wait for their annual Costa Brava holiday. The 'senoritas', Roberta and Margaret Swan, made sure that we had the sangria suitably chilled while Margaret Hardie worried over whether we had sufficient tapas.

All this promised festivity smoothed the way towards an early and amiable conclusion to the business affairs which included a report from Kenny, our Chairman, who was spiritually advising at a Cursillo Weekend at Kinnoull. Soon it was party time! Aidan Barnes backed by Ricky entertained on the Spanish guitar and transported us all to the sunshine - or was that the sangria?

It was during the musical interlude that we learned that Y Viva Espana -the Benidorm national anthem -is not really a classical guitar piece. However, with the help of Margaret Sakulina of the Allsorts Choir, we managed to include it in our programme. We resisted the temptation to run a Friends' Coffee Morning for the bankrupt Spanish banks - after all, they are getting 100billion euros to help them survive! In all, this was perhaps our happiest AGM with all who attended endorsing enthusiastically the executive's plans for the new season.

### **ALLSORTS ARE EVERYWHERE!**

*'From the Banks of Loch Lomond to the Shores of the Clyde'* is used by our Council to promote our little corner of Scotland. But it could also be used to describe the exploits of the indomitable Allsorts Choir. This crowd will sing anywhere to anyone who will listen! Even the plants at Morrison's supermarket blossomed more profusely after hearing them! But they are prone to the odd mishap - at the prestigious Lomond Shores venue they forgot their collection buckets and on their venture to Maryhill they were left stranded when their coach encountered a certain torch procession. However, all obstacles were successfully overcome and they are now looking forward to a memorable evening in St. Aug's on 22<sup>nd</sup> June when they will sing for the Erskine Hospital War veterans. Everyone is welcome to come along. *Gaun yersel, Ghislaine!*

### **NOTHING TO DO IN DUMBARTON? WHO ARE YOU KIDDING?**

On Saturday 19<sup>th</sup> May you could easily have ended up at the wrong event. At St. Aug's and other local Churches, beautiful displays of quilts attracted visitors from all over the world and the Friends' coffee morning had to be relocated in the sanctuary area. In the community hall, a group from the diocese were holding a Prayer Workshop while the hall's resident groups enjoyed their usual activities in the smaller rooms. Out in the High Street, the Pipe Bands were proceeding to their Championships at Levensgrove and a Murder Mystery was taking place at the Denny Tank. *The Polis must have been busy!* Oh yes, and there was double parking at St. Aug's adding to the usual parking chaos in our High Street!

### **TIM'S COUNTRY TRIPS.**

After the initial successful outing to the Lake of Menteith, plans were made for a more distant adventure to Loch Fyne area to walk in the woodlands of Ardkinglas famed for magnificent rhododendrons and the tallest tree in Britain. There was also a mention of real ale drinking. Our rendezvous point was the picturesque village of Cairndow. Margaret H and I were last to leave the hall since we were on duty at Saturday coffee and also had been requested to throw a few flowers at the altar for the Sunday service. Consequently we didn't leave Dumbarton till 1pm heading quickly for the Vale Bypass. The traffic started slowing down after the Barloan roundabout and crawled all the way to the Balloch roundabout. But it was not an uninteresting traffic jam.

We quickly noticed a private coach moving slowly about two cars in front of us. From time to time gentlemen alighted from this coach to relieve themselves in the bordering bushes. But these males were in splendid fancy dress costumes. There were primates, potentates, mandarins, African chiefs, even Her Majesty the Queen and His Holiness the Pope. How they struggled trying to answer the call of nature in their unaccustomed regalia! I called Linda to explain our delay and she thought we had finally lost the plot! The remainder of the St Aug's Group were safely in the Stagecoach Inn at Cairndow.

Eventually we made contact with a few of the Philipines (get it? - the guys on the coach!). They explained that they were on a stag outing to Fort William and that their theme to mark the Jubilee



was Royalty and Rulers. Unfortunately, their bon voyage imbibing at Glasgow had seriously affected their bladders! Perhaps if His Royal Highness, Prince Phillip, had done likewise on the recent River Pageant, he would not have ended up in the hospital. Glad he's out now and making good progress. Yes, on St. Aug's Country Trips you never know what you will see!

### THE JUBILEE MURDER MYSTERY.

The scene was post Eucharist coffee time the morning after the murder.

Friends' Exec Member: *'Oh, yes it was a great night! We started off with a glass of Pimms.....'*

Interested Peninsula Dweller: *'Pimms? That's awfully posh for Dumbarton!'*

Dumbarton Wumman : *'Listen, hen. We knew Pimm when he was a wee boy in Bellsmyre!'*

Yes, the celebratory glass of Pimms, garnished with fruit and elegantly served from Chrissie's two punch bowls - (why does Chrissie need two punch bowls?)- set the tone for our Jubilee Murder Mystery on 9<sup>th</sup> June. And there was a very interesting substitute for those not partaking of alcohol. Fran had concocted a cocktail of creamy, frothy liquid punctuated with maraschino cherries on a large stick, that looked delicious.

As soon as the top table guests or prime suspects arrived the enactment of *'Mrs Arbuthnot's Last Jubilee'* began. Having just been released from General Synod, Bishop Gregor explained that he needed a laugh and took his place amongst the actors as Mr Miles Better from the Glasgow and Clyde Health Board. He was word perfect and even augmented his content for dramatic effect.

Then the Dumbarton Jubilee Cake was wheeled in on an ASDA trolley draped with the union flag by Chrissie, as waitress Philippa Plate, and her assistants from St. Augustine's Young Girls' Group. But.....was it? Oh, no! When the flag was removed the body of Mrs Arbuthnot had replaced the cake. Screams all around till Inspector Bertha Bampot of Alexandria CSI took control *'Keep calm and listen to the Polis!'*. The audience were asked to assist in solving the crime.

The suspects were the top table guests assembled in St. Aug's Community Hall for a pre River Pageant 'do'. The pageant of course was planned for the Leven. The suspects introduced themselves. First up was Roberta as Sadie Stirrat, a Silverton *wumman* who traditionally made the town's Jubilee cakes. She was followed by Provost Wally Peelie, Dumbarton's first citizen and avid Rangers supporter, played by Kenny. (*It was dreadful-Ed*) His long

suffering wife, Bridie, was Ghislaine. Then Maggie shuffled in on a patriotic zimmer to be Granny Minodge while Charlie Brown made an excellent Rector appropriately known as the Rev'd Noah Badsowell. TBag O'Neill burst into the action as Mrs Benny Fitz while Linda painted a different picture as Mrs Hilda Horsebox from Helensburgh. The Jubilee Queen, Destiny McSpurtle was Gillian and Commander Quay Street or Mary Smith, a jumped-up dinner *wumman* from Haldane, was Fran.

Great hilarity greeted the first act then it was time for a few clues before the audience went off to the buffet rooms to select their starters. The talk at the tables was 'who dunnit?' Any one of the suspects could have been responsible. The second act confirmed that all had reason to murder the unfortunate Mrs Arbuthnot. Wine was served and it was time to head for the buffet again for a delicious selection of main courses - fresh salmon, ham and pineapple, turkey and all the accompaniments. The waitresses under the guidance of Natasha, their minder, worked tirelessly to ensure that elegant dining was maintained. Young Rachel and Jackie were in splendid costumes and spent most of the evening impatiently supervising the puddings! By the time we had progressed to the third act and struggled with a selection of clues and red herrings it was 'make your mind up time'. The answer sheet called for the murderer, the method and the motive.

Throughout the action, Margaret Hardie, Margaret Swan and our newest exec member, Annette Potts kept their cool (in spite of the temperature) in the kitchen.

Then Inspector Bampot announced that the winning team was the Risk Street Girls - Jessie Reid, Betty Gordon, Cathy McKechnie and Anna Porterfield. Well done, Girls!. You got the murderer and were the only team to suss out that Mrs Arbuthnot was drowned in the Leven. They had read the clue that listed the contents of her pockets and a dead salmon had been found! Some of the answers from the losing teams were hilarious and not without imagination. Well done to everyone for participating so willingly. Kenny, in the penultimate speech, thanked all who had worked so hard and + Gregor ended the evening by paying a memorable tribute to St. Augustine's particularly for their work in the community.

The good news was revealed by Margaret Hardie as we cleared the debris and dismantled the bunting - we had made a profit of £564! A very enjoyable evening and a great start to the new season of Friends'.

### COMPETE IN THE OLYMPAUGS!

If you are suffering from inspiration with watching too many torches and want to go higher, faster and

stronger than Levensgrove Park on 12<sup>th</sup> August is not the place to be. This will be a Friends' Un-Olympic Day where anyone can be a winner and be presented with a Gold Medal. The Risk Street Girls will be there with their sticks keen to emulate their success at the Murder Mystery. Usain Bolt will not be there and, despite the venue being framed by two rivers, there will be no aquatic events. This has nothing to do with the quality of the Clyde and Leven water - it has everything to do with the reluctance of the potential participants to appear in public in their 'bathies'! Watch out for details on our notice boards soon, scrutinise the weather forecasts and we'll plan the barbecue or picnic!

### A RED FACE FOR THE PM?

If ever a headline made a drama out of a crisis it was 'Distraught Camerons leave their daughter, 8 in the 'pub'. No wonder the world of journalism gets slated and needs the Leveson enquiry! You'd think the wean had been abandoned outside a dodgy howf in Maryhill Road! This was near Chequers - posh upper middle England and she was only at large for 15 minutes! And if she has inherited the confidence of her parents she would have had no trouble talking her way back to Downing Street, never mind the country retreat! So chillax, David, you've more to worry about! All the same, I'm glad that Linda hasn't included 'Chez Cameron' on Pea-

nut's holiday itinerary! The dog will be much safer with Maggie, Margaret and Barbara!

### AND NOW FOR THE HOLIDAYS....

Remember the olden days? Dumbarton Fair Friday, the Yard closing, the school prize giving, and then freedom for weeks to go by train in your good frock to some friendly Auntie with enough beds to accommodate everybody. And the sun was always shining! Now it's choose your bankrupt country, carefully weigh the cases, and recharge the Kindle before leaving for the airport to worry about the state of the euro for the duration of your stay.

Have a good holiday everyone - and tell us all about it on your return!

*Janette*

### Study Group

The Study Group on prayer, run by Peter Cairns finishes at the end of June, and has proved to be very popular and helpful for those involved. Our thanks to Peter for the time and energy he put into this group. Look out for something new in the autumn!

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## A MOVEABLE FEAST

You get three Painted Churches for 30 dollars,' said the taxi driver, 'or all seven for 120'. Pro rata this was a rotten offer & I wasn't made of money. 'I'll tell you what,' he came up behind me as I leafed glumly through the brochures, '-we call it three for 30, you give me an extra 30 cash and we do all seven'. (The roads were terrible, we only did six.)

The Painted Churches of the Bucovina were a defiance to the Turks. Romania came together only in 1920; before that parts were independent or belonged to, well, just about every nearby state, & all the time the Turks kept raiding. Monasteries were landlords & gave refuge within stout walls. Their churches had a nave, a rounded apse, a tower & a small window, much like ours in Viking times. But in the 16<sup>th</sup> century when Reformation Churches were stripping all decorations, they burst out in huge, bright murals on the outside (& inside, only it's mostly too dark to see). Saints, martyrs, angels, heroes soar about like the opening of some heavenly railway, & sinners are cast down. Also illustrated, what to do with your halo (a) if executed upside down – just keep your eye on it, & (b) if decapitated – sling it over your shoulder, put it on a plate like John the Baptist, or hand it to a passer-by. And more, much more.

After the collapse of communism so much of Romania was derelict, but I saw some beautiful, neglected places, poked round everywhere, met everyone. As often, modern churches in towns were not very interesting, but in one or two older ones I noticed little black hankies with golden crosses hanging from chandeliers & small icons hung with black crepe – lazy caretaking, or none, after Easter, I thought. It was two weeks before the penny dropped: Easter was behind me but Orthodox churches still use the old Julian calendar – it was still Lent. Festivals occur 13 days later than ours & they count different moons. With a long anti-semitic history they also insist that Easter shall never coincide with Passover, which is odd when you think of the Gospel story & must need further juggling with dates. I formed the idea of visiting the most famous nunnery & its church – Agapia, 'the loving community'.

A mile or two from the main road you see it on a hill & a small town of wooden bungalows, one room up, one down, with vegetable gardens. Families build them for their daughters & a later generation will dismantle them if no longer needed. They are painted a nunly grey (or a rare roguish sky blue), 400 or so. Anyhow, if faith & a loving community had sheltered 400 women in peace & safety through centuries of trouble (what else in Romania?), I thought it was a thoroughly good idea.

There as an inn but I went on, explaining myself to several hooded black figures bending over courtyard chores. At every meeting, V: 'Bless me, sister' – R: 'Not I but the Virgin bless you'. The almoner was a

little thrown but agreed a stay was possible. 'But our food is vegan in Lent, you understand, not even vegetarian'. Well, alright. I had a huge room looking out from the walls, with plenty of furniture & an antique boiler. Also a large mosquito bite half down my back, like purple bubblegum, but medicated it myself rather than confront the infirmarian with my bare body.

Retreat guests were arriving but I had the posher dining room to myself – all lace doilies & photographs of bewhiskered benefactors- supervised by a nun & served by Sister Viorica (Violet, & as shy as one, all of 16 & overwhelmed when I spoke to her). There is a certain sameness about green vegetables after a time but various things can be stuffed into unshortened pastry, & there was plenty of coffee & wine (the communion kind, unblessed)

Service times were not tolled but clonked – a nun walked round with a balk on her shoulder, like the upright of a Cross, & hit it with a mallet. What with nuns' spreading skirts & guests & the dark inside, I made little of the many Lent services, all said kneeling, not sung. I spent my time admiring the murals, viewing the courtyard from the long balconies & exploring the village.

Through smoking at the great gate I met Florin & Valeria (she was a scary driver, I found out later). They were new to pilgrimages & fairly hard-up. They wanted my advice on paying their stay: a donation, not a fee, seemed the answer, like some hall lets at St Augustine's.

All sorts were gathering for Easter, including the regional police chief (the same one as before the revolution & no questions asked, I guessed; still, a sign of grace). Sister Constaca, very intense, wanted my views on John Steinbeck for her class of 14-15 year old girls; & would I send 'suitable books', as there was no money? (I did later, but had no clue as to 'suitable', heard nothing & eventually stopped.)

It rained stupendously on the Thursday evening, the corrugated iron on every roof & turret plinging & plunging like a runaway orchestra, & in the morning I had to remind the almoner how I got there before I could donate and leave.

At the crossroads again, I was invited for a brandy by a young man trying to support a wife & child far away & would I be interested in his scheme to make a pilgrims' camp site out of his field?...&c. I'll say this for nunneries – you do meet people,

*David Williams*

*David is a good friend of Kenny's and has been an intrepid traveller in his time!*



## ON THE ROAD WITH 55 ANGELS

Our friend and vicar in Suffolk challenged me once by asking: Have you given anybody a blessing today? I didn't think that I should have, but he meant that you do not have to be a priest to give a blessing. You can read of grandfathers blessing their grandsons, or parents their children. Blessings can take many forms.

One of our friends, an archaeologist, used to say good bye to his grandmother before going on a foreign dig, and she routinely said: 'George, have you got a handkerchief? Do stay on the right path (meaning the straight and narrow)'. Everybody needs good wishes and a touch- this is a basic human need and part of the concept of a blessing. Those asking for a blessing are seeking to be filled with a power handed down by the other, and the source of the power, according to the Bible, is God. The Bible tells us that God spoke to Abraham: "I will bless you; I will make your name great, and you will be a blessing." (Gen 12)

This blessing is handed down from generation to generation like a present. It is also a prayer for protection and a comfort. The most famous blessing is possibly the 'Aaron Blessing' (Numbers 6): "The Lord bless you and keep you, the Lord make his face shine upon you and be gracious to you. The Lord turn his face towards you and give you peace." A blessing is thought particularly in times of transition: at a Christening, at Confirmation, at a wedding. A priest usually lifts up his hands, draws a cross on the forehead of the person to be blessed or lays his hands on the heads of the couple. But every believer can speak a blessing to another, being certain that God will be with him and protect him.

A journey is always somehow a step into uncertainty, that is not different today from a thousand years ago. There could be accidents or missed trains or even robberies, especially pilgrims in the olden days faced more dangers than now, but still you wish people going away a safe journey and ask them to give you a ring when they have arrived. But there is now noticeably a demand for blessings on journeys, according to the pastor of St Jacob's Church in Hamburg.. He holds special services for pilgrim groups, but also for single travellers. During the holiday season the blessing for travellers is also part of the Sunday service at the church. Not everyone present comes to the rail for the blessing, but he says that everybody finds it comforting. Similarly in other churches a blessing for the

road is given, for the setting out and as a protection on the road. This blessing on the road has a long tradition. There was a blessing written down 700 years ago at the monastery of Weingarten in Germany, which states: "I am looking after you, I am sending after you, with my five fingers, 55 Angels"

The Middle Ages was the time of major pilgrimages, but also of soldiers or travelling tradesmen on the road who wanted a blessing. Sometimes you can still find Crosses at the roadside of old pilgrim routes in Europe, where those going past stopped and prayed. In the Bible the theme of a journey and a path is mentioned frequently, most notably in the Book of Tobias, when Tobias is seeking a travelling companion for his journey, and later learns that he had chosen an angel.

On the onset the father blesses his son: "Go in peace, God be with you on the road and his holy angel protect you" - Psalm 91 also is a suitable blessing for the road: "For he will command his angels concerning you to guard you in all your ways, they will lift you up in their hands so that you will not strike your foot against a stone".

Quite widely known are now also the Irish Blessings for the Road, which you can even find on the Internet. The most famous being: "*May the Road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face. May the rain fall soft upon your field. And until we meet again, may God hold you in the palm of his hand.*" Yet a blessing is a very personal form of expressing a relationship, it means a 'letting go' of the other person, and those seeking it might want a more personal form of blessing. You may have to ask your parish priest especially for that blessing on the road..

But if you should want a blessing for your journey and don't get that service in your church, the Catholic Church offers one which you can download on your mobile and say it in the car at the start of your journey. This service is – like all blessings – free of charge.

Keep us, Lord and protect us  
Be with us on all our ways  
Be the spring and the bread in the desert  
Surround us with your blessing.

BW (Andere Zeiten 2/2011)

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## "Big Bairdy" Eventually Weds!



Well, it has been suggested that the day would never come, but our great friend and valued musician, Paul Baird, from the Rock Community, was eventually married to Allison on May 11th in Greenock.

It is with great joy that we pass on our congratulations. Both Paul and Allison are popular regular visitors to St Augustine's, and Allison is obviously the best thing that's ever happened to him!

The reception was awash with Augies, including the "brushed up for the day, David and Sharon! We look forward to their first post-marital visit! It's hard to express how happy we are to both bride and groom!

