

News from the Pews

The Newsletter of Markinch and Thornton Parish Church

November 2017



Remembrance Sunday - 12th November

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church



Ministry Team:

Rev. Carolann Erskine

Mr David Murdoch

Rev Dr Douglas Galbraith

A warm welcome is extended to all visitors and newcomers to the community to share in the worship, work and witness of the congregation.

Church Services

Thornton Church - Sunday 9.45am

Markinch Church - Sunday 11.15am

www.markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk

Scottish Charity Number: SC003417

Christmas Services

at Markinch and Thornton Parish Church

Sunday 17th December

Christmas Music and Carol Services

Thornton Church 9.45am and Markinch Church 11.15am

Sunday 24th December - Christmas Eve

9.45am Morning Service at Thornton

11.15am Morning Service at Markinch

7.00pm Family Service at Markinch **

11.30pm Traditional Watchnight Service at Markinch

Monday 25th December - Christmas Day

No Services

**** Return transport from Thornton will be made available for the 7.00pm Christmas Eve Family Service at Markinch. If required, please contact the Session Clerk, Mr John Wood on 01592 750327 or email him at sessionclerk@markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk**

Workers in God's Field

Our Minister, Rev Carolann Erskine is currently off work and due to the period of absence, Presbytery have followed church law and appointed Rev. Andrew Donald from Pathhead Parish Church in Kirkcaldy as our Interim Moderator. He has welcomed this opportunity to write to you all via the newsletter.



Dear Friends

I write to you as your Interim Moderator but also as a fellow worker in God's field. I am conscious that I am like a labourer who does a temporary stint on a farm, not knowing when that time will end. However, like many agricultural jobs, the work is all the more pleasurable when it is shared. I am very grateful to the elders, office-bearers, preachers and Locum (not to mention others in the pew) who ensure that the work of the Kingdom continues, even in a period of uncertainty. Pulling together is what it is all about in all aspects of ministry and the result is a harvest for which we give thanks to God.

In my late father's charge in rural Aberdeenshire, one of the churches displayed a plaque which bore the text from John's Gospel chapter 4, verse 38, "Others have laboured and you have entered into their labours." Since the plaque was in a prominent position, I saw it every Sunday and, over time, I began to reflect upon its message. It reminds us that the church we have today is the legacy of much faithful endeavour. In the Presbyterian tradition, we stand in a line which stretches back 500 years to the 31st of October 1517, when Martin Luther nailed his 95 theses (statements about the fundamentals of the Church) to the door of the castle church in Wittenberg. The Reformed tradition grew from individuals who had a burning desire for people to read the Bible for themselves, so that they could develop a real and transformative relationship with Christ.

In many ways we have been blessed by that tradition. But just as the harvest needs to be gathered-in each and every year, so too, we need to labour in God's field, following those who have gone before us and served us so well. "Others have laboured and you have entered into their labours." This text sits well with the principles of the Reformation that we cannot rest on our laurels. We are part of a process whereby we receive the faith of our forefathers, but that same faith must be transmitted to the next generation – and the way it is transmitted may take new and exciting forms.

As a National Church, we live in uncertain times. Part of the reason is that the wheel of continual reformation has got stuck as we have clung tenaciously to what worked in the past. Society has moved at lightning pace and the Church has found it hard to adapt its methods to this modern world. Nevertheless, as the Church at the time of the Reformation discovered, it only takes a spark to set a forest on fire. Perhaps future generations will be thankful to faithful Christians, who in these hard and difficult times, nurtured the faith until the fire of the Holy Spirit took hold once more.

I believe that the Christians of Markinch and Thornton can burn brightly in this dark world. Like fireworks illuminating a night sky, they can make people look upwards into the face of God Himself. God bless you in that important role and may You know His encouragement each and every day.

Rev. Andrew Donald, Interim Moderator.

From the Session Clerk

'One Door that is Always Open'

You may be a member who has not attended church for some time. Whether it be a few weeks, months or even years you may feel that coming back to the church may be difficult, or you may feel embarrassed or worried what other members will say about you.

Nothing could be further from the truth!

Everyone is welcome at Markinch and Thornton churches and your church family will welcome you back with open arms

We hope to see you at morning worship some time soon.

John Wood, Session Clerk

Diary Dates

Every Monday	Coffee morning at Thornton, 10.00am-12noon
Every Monday	Prayer meeting at Thornton, 10.15am
Every Thursday	Coffee morning at Markinch, 10.00am-11.30am
11th November 2017	Winter Fayre in Markinch Church Hall

Rev. Alistair McLeod - Our Locum Minister

Alistair has not contributed to this issue of the Newsletter but as this is the Christmas Edition he would like you all to know that he is very glad to be back in the pulpit at Markinch and Thornton again and wants to wish each and every one of you a very Happy Christmas and all the very best for 2018.

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church Christmas Fayre



- ✓ Saturday 11th November
- ✓ Markinch Church Hall
- ✓ 10am-12pm (doors open for set up from 8am)
- ✓ £2 entrance fee including tea, coffee, juice and cake
- ✓ Fantastic choice of different stalls including jewellery, crafts, cake and candy, candles, cards, wrapping papers, tombola and activities

Parish News

Parish Deaths

For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3:16

Anne Braid
Richard Berry
Elizabeth Keddie
Fred Sankey
Helen Aitken
Anne Bruce



Joined by Profession of Faith

Fraser Morrison
Jennifer Morrison

Baptisms

13-08-17	Thomas Robert Sutherland
10-09-17	Danny Morrison
10-09-17	Jennifer Morrison
22-10-17	Daniel Joseph Muldoon

Printed or Digital ?

A significant number of our members and friends now receive *News From The Pews* in an electronic format (PDF) by email, rather than a printed copy.

If you would like to be added to the mailing list and receive the electronic copy instead of having your elder deliver a printed copy please contact Ken Wilkie confirming the email address(es) you wish the newsletter to be sent to. Call 01592 760042 or email ken@kenwilkie.com

Contact Details

Locum Minister	Rev Alistair McLeod	Tel 01592 744558
Session Clerk	John G Wood, 16 Loch Katrine Gardens, Glenrothes, KY6 2NW Tel 01592 750327 Email sessionclerk@markinchandthorntonchurch.org.uk	
Treasurer	Nancy Munro Tel 01592 743822	Email amunro6687@aol.com
Church Officers (Markinch)	Jack Harley Suzi Hamilton	Tel 01592 758356 Tel 01592 611933

Remember - This is **YOUR** newsletter !

If you have any interesting news, stories, poems etc, please hand them to Ken Wilkie or email ken@kenwilkie.com or call 01592 760042
The deadline for the February issue is 21st January 2018

Sunday School

Sunday School

Since Sunday School resumed in September we've enjoyed learning about helping others, Harvest and Baptism. You can see our latest art works on the display boards in the Church hall.

Thanks to those who contributed to our photo display over the summer, the pictures from the 1950s and 1960s were particularly interesting.

The photographs are now in a folder in the hall if anyone missed them - see Helen if you'd like to take a look.

As always, we look forward to welcoming new members or any visiting children during the winter term.

Surafel

We have sent a Christmas card and money for Surafel. The aid worker for his area will buy him a gift which will be distributed at the school party. All letters are on the wall beside the calendar.

Thanks to all who have contributed this year.

Helen Paterson

The following poem can be found in several versions and with differing titles

'Though the Cover Is Worn' / 'This Old Bible' / 'The Precious Old Book'

Though the cover is worn and the pages are torn

And though places bear traces of tears

Yet more precious than gold is this book worn and old

That can shatter and scatter my fears

When I prayerfully look in this precious old book

As my eyes scan the pages I see

Many tokens of love from the Father above

Who is nearest and dearest to me.

This book is my guide, a friend by my side

It lightens and brightens my way

Each promise I find soothes and gladdens my mind

As I read it and heed it each day

To this Book I will cling, of its worth I will sing

Though great losses and crosses be mine

For I cannot despair, though surrounded by care

While possessing this book so divine

Joyce Lindsay / Bernice Peyman / Unknown

Church Hall Bookings

Anyone enquiring about booking the Markinch church hall should contact Suzi Hamilton on 01592 611933 or email hall@markinchchurch.org.uk You can also collect a booking form from the notice board in the church hall.

To book Thornton church hall please contact Margaret Colville on 01592 774295

Treasurer's Report

<u>Income at 30-10-17</u>	<u>£</u>
Weekly Freewill Offering	23258
Open Plate/Donations	5023
Standing Orders	23687
Selkirk Trust	2500
Dividends/Bank Interest	671
Gift Day	5682
Fundraising/Hall Rents	6083
General Trustees for Repairs	2384
Legacy	5000
Tax Rebate	15399
Weddings & Funerals	2180
Misc. Income	180
	92047
<u>Expenditure at 30-10-17</u>	
Salaries	9495
Insurance/Council Tax	6680
Ministry and Mission Allocation	52309
Ministers Travel/Telephone	1588
Gas & Electricity	5010
Postage/Stationery/WFO Envelopes	1855
Church/Hall/Manse/Clock repairs	10107
Organ/Piano Repairs	223
Copyright Licence	470
Pulpit Supply/Locum Minister Expenses	2004
Life & Work	491
Presbytery Dues	2041
Miscellaneous	1063
	93336

Deficit	1289
General Fund Balance	5836
Fabric Fund Balance	8470

We are still due to pay Mission and Ministry £5812.10 and Insurance £1282.50 before the end of the year.

The deficit so far this year is £1289.

In order to pay regular bills £9000.00 has been transferred from the Fabric Fund.

I would ask anyone who pays tax and has not signed up for Gift Aid to please do so as this is an extra boost to our income. We can claim back an additional 25% on top of the money you give at absolutely no cost to you.

If you do sign up for Gift Aid no one in the Church knows what your income is. The only person who knows what you give to the Church is the treasurer.

Each set of Weekly Freewill Envelopes costs us £1.40 therefore if you do receive envelopes please use them to help reduce our costs.

Kirkcaldy Presbytery have increased the Presbytery Dues this year to £3.50 for every member on the roll of Markinch and Thornton Parish Church.

The results from the Stewardship Campaign were extremely disappointing. Over 500 packs were sent out but only 57 forms were returned.

Thanks to everyone who did return the form. 8 people have increased their standing order, and 10 have set up a new standing order.

Nancy Munro, Treasurer

Love Came Down At Christmas

Contributed by our Parish Associate David Murdoch.

As I sat in my study on a lovely morning in early October, I wondered how best to respond to your hard working Editor's invitation to write something for inclusion in the Winter edition of 'News from the Pews'.

Suddenly I realised that I have now been Parish Associate at Markinch and Thornton for nine months, every single one of them most enjoyable and extremely fulfilling.

Last time I wrote for this magazine I did so on the theme of 'Getting to know you' and since then I have tried to do exactly that when I have met with many of you at services, prayer group meetings, coffee mornings and all the other activities that take place in the life of a Church where people work in harmony and togetherness for the glory of God.

In these nine months I have encountered many members who obviously love their church and are proud to support it and work for its purposes and I thank you all very warmly for the welcome, encouragement and kindness which you have extended to me.

At the beginning of February I came among you as a complete stranger and now, nine months on, I have made a host of good friends and I feel very much part of our Church Family here in Markinch and Thornton.

May I also say that during Carolann's absence through illness, it has been a pleasure to work alongside your Locum, Alistair McLeod as we seek to lead you in worship week by week. We too were strangers but now are firm and trusting friends.

We are approaching one of the most joyful times of the Christian Year with the excitement of Advent leading us to the stable door in Bethlehem at Christmas.

Christmas is often referred to as a family time....and that's true, not just for relatives gathered round tables laden with food and drink but for Churches as well.

For all churches are, in reality, made up of Church Families working together, worshipping together and trying very hard to follow the exhortation of Jesus when he urged all Christians everywhere to 'Love one another'.

For as the poet and hymnwriter Christina Rossetti wrote:

' LOVE came down at Christmas
LOVE all lovely, LOVE Divine,
LOVE was born at Christmas,
Star and angel gave the sign'.

May all of us be thrilled again by the story of the Incarnation because it is a story centred around the birth of a little baby who was to become the Saviour of the world and, more than that, who was and still is, The Lord of Love.

May His love be right at the heart of your Festive celebrations in our churches and in our homes and in our hearts.

Happy Christmas to you all.

David

Lynn Cunningham

Chartered Accountant

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On a drizzly, damp day in August, Suzi (Church Officer) and Paul met with Claudia and Paul Embs from Florida (along with four of their friends) who were paying a visit to Markinch Church whilst touring Scotland. Claudia had been tracing back her family history and here is the story in her own words:

'I have researched the connection with the James Bogie buried in Markinch Church graveyard and cannot make the pieces of the puzzle fit, however, I do think there was probably a connection to the Andrew Daniel Bogie who came to America in the late 1700's and settled in what is now Madison County, Kentucky. Andrew Bogie's great-grandfather, grandfather (born about 1680), uncle (christened 11 April 1703), brother (born 17 April 1739) were named James Bogie and he also named one of his sons James (born 14 June 1771). Andrew Bogie also had an uncle, brother (born 9 Feb 1746), and son (born 17 May 1773) named Alexander. Alexander was also the name of the father of James Bogie buried at the church according to Markinch burial records. I know



they were common names at that time but with other records showing the connection of my Bogie ancestors from Markinch, they were surely related, even if cousins (I'll keep looking).

'Andrew Daniel Bogie (my 4x great-grandfather) along with his wife Isobell Russell came to America with three of their sons, Thomas, James and Andrew. They were in Kentucky before it became a state and settled on a creek where they built a mill and several 2-story stone houses, some of the first in Kentucky.

That road is still named Bogie's Mill Road. The area at that time was still occupied by Indians, and Thomas was purportedly killed by them in 1786. Andrew Daniel Bogie died in 1810. This area of Kentucky reminds me a lot of some of the areas we visited in Scotland.'

This was one of several visits to Markinch Church this year from overseas visitors who have an ancestral link to this area. The 1799-1854 Burial Register which is available on the church website has been a source of important information for some of our visitors and in a few cases we have actually been able to show the visitors to the exact location that their ancestor was buried in the church graveyard.

Jigsaw Lending Library

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church has an extensive library of jigsaws which are available to borrow at a cost of £1 per jigsaw. These are available in the hall at Markinch every Thursday and Sunday at coffee time.

If you would like to make use of this service but cannot get to the hall please contact Meg Sankey on 07834 729420 to arrange delivery of your choice of jigsaws.





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Golden Charter 
Later Life Planning

Coin Box Appeal

We would like to update everyone on the success of our ongoing money box appeal. This simple act of filling a coin box between communion services and handing it in at church when it is full helps us greatly with our ongoing fabric fund which pays for the upkeep and improvement of our buildings. The boxes are available in the vestibules of both churches and also in the hall at Markinch.



If you would like a box but are unable to visit one of the churches to collect one or to have it emptied please give Marianne Sankey a ring on 07801 279899 to arrange to have one delivered. Please can we count on your ongoing support with this simple ongoing activity?

Glenrothes and District Food Bank

Thank you to those who have contributed food over the past months. If anyone would like to add some items to the container in the vestibule we would be most grateful.

Tins and non-perishable goods, especially macaroni, dried pasta, UHT milk and fruit are needed, as are washing powder and toiletries for men and women.

You can get information from Joan Grant on 01592 610396 or email info@glenrothes.foodbank.org.uk



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Pilgrims passing through

'Pilgrimage' and 'Presbyterian' have been chalk and cheese for half a millennium. The Reformers discouraged anything that looked as if people were buying their way into favour with God.

This year's General Assembly changed its tune. We badly need, they said, 'spiritual exercises' to complement hearing sermons and singing psalms. They help us examine ourselves and can free up our spirits.

Pilgrim routes are mushrooming all over Scotland. The next one will be the Fife Pilgrim Way, which begins to open up next year. It runs from North Queensferry and Culross to St Andrews and 'passes our front door' – some 70 miles. With its main line station and interesting church Markinch is an official Gateway (there are others) and people might start their journey here.

Pilgrim routes are sometimes initiatives of local churches but sometimes they start life as leisure opportunities, albeit with a heritage dimension, sponsored by local bodies and trusts. In our case, it is the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust, with Lottery help, that is the main sponsoring body. They want to engage with local churches and communities in developing the route, compiling information and making it available, and offering hospitality.

The Scottish Pilgrim Routes Forum was set up to enable local planners to help each other, to develop new routes, and to encourage good practice. The Forum is particularly interested in the Christian aspect of our national heritage, which has played a big part. It meets once a year for a gathering and this year chose Markinch (Friday September 15). (An ACTS (the Scottish ecumenical body) group meets regularly in Glenrothes to work with the churches on the route.)

Thirty people from Orkney to the Borders assembled to walk some of the route and to hear the engaging history of the Markinch building, including its remarkable tower. Guide for both these events was Bruce Manson, local historian and member of the church here. After lunch, speakers from the Fife Coast and Countryside Trust, the Fife Tourism Partnership, and the University of St Andrews gave background to the Fife route.

Members from both ends of the parish shared in the day, both in attending the talks and in providing much appreciated hospitality and welcome.

Douglas Galbraith, ACTS FPW Programme Group



Social Networking with Markinch and Thornton Parish Church

We now have a Facebook page and many of us share church events and world news via the Facebook account.


You can join us to find out what we have planned, view photos of events and make comments on a variety of topics.

Go to **www.facebook.com** and search for **Markinch and Thornton Parish Church**

Pastoral Request Card

The Pastoral Care Committee have recently introduced a new card for anyone wishing to request home and hospital visits for family members or neighbours, or to inform the church of anyone who's day would be brightened by receiving some flowers.

The cards can be found on the pews in both churches, alternatively you could cut out the copy of the card, shown below, complete it and hand it to your elder.

Pastoral Request	
 <i>Welcome to Markinch and Thornton Parish Church</i> 	
where we grow in Christ together, aspiring to be a caring church in the community within a Spirit of Christian love.	
<i>If you would like to nominate anyone for the following, please feel free to tick one or more of the boxes and pass this card to the Rev Carolann Erskine or another member of the Ministry Team as you leave the church.</i>	
Pastoral home visit <input type="checkbox"/>	Pastoral hospital visit <input type="checkbox"/>
Home Communion <input type="checkbox"/>	Hospital Communion <input type="checkbox"/>
A bouquet of flowers :-	
For illness <input type="checkbox"/>	Thinking of you <input type="checkbox"/>
Bereavement <input type="checkbox"/>	Birthday or Anniversary <input type="checkbox"/>
Help with transport <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of the person you are nominating	
Their address	
Requested by	
Scottish Charity Number: SC003417	

Church Flowers

To arrange for flowers to be put into Markinch Church please contact Teresa Henderson on 01592 754892.

To arrange for flowers to be put into Thornton Church please contact Margaret Colville on 01592 774295.

Thornton Prayer Meetings

Our prayer group meets at 10.15am on a Monday morning. If you would like us to pray for you or any of your friends or relatives, we have prayer slips available with a box to put them in. These are available in the quiet room which is just before you enter the worship room .

Markinch and Thornton Parish Church Fundraising

11th November 2017 Winter Fayre (Markinch Hall)

We very much need help to organise and run this event, anyone willing to donate their time, talents or energy with this event should please contact Marianne Sankey (0780 1279899). We will need people to organise teas, run stalls and make donations for craft, home baking, tombola or any other suggestions.

There are a number of other events in the planning, so please keep yourself updated on our Facebook page, Website or the weekly bulletin.

Many thanks to everyone who has volunteered to help with the fundraising effort, if you can spare some time to help at any of the events above or have any other ideas for fundraising activities please get in touch.

Craft Stall – Handcraft items for sale in Markinch hall. Please feel free to make a donation to church funds in the dish provided. We welcome donations of handcrafts, baking, plants, jams, chutney's etc. Please note that the craft stall is now in what was previously the book cupboard near the hall door.

'Cross in my Pocket' – These keepsakes are available in the vestibule at a cost of £1 each.

Rag Bag – The Rag Bag Collection provides a regular income, but we continue to look for textiles, curtains, bed linens, towels, clothes, bags, belts and shoes. Please ensure that donations are placed in a tied plastic bag. Please ask your neighbours, family, colleagues and friends to have a clear out and help this appeal by contributing as well.

If you cannot transport your collection or have a large donation that you need assistance to move, please do not hesitate to contact Marianne Sankey to arrange collection. Tel. 07801 279899

Markinch District Community Choir

Supported by the Tullis Russell Brass Band and guest soloists

CHRISTMAS CONCERT

Markinch Church hall

Saturday 2nd December at 7.15pm (doors open 6.45pm)

**Tickets £8 & £6 concession (including cold refreshments)
available from choir members or phone 01592 755672**

Photocopying and Printing Services

The church has a high specification photocopier in the Session House at Markinch which we use to produce the quarterly newsletter and weekly bulletins. We are able to do colour or black and white printing up to A3 size at fairly competitive prices and we also have A4 folding and binding facilities.

If you or your club, organisation or business require leaflets, posters or programmes printed please give us a chance to quote. Any profits we make will go to offset the rental costs of the photocopier. Contact Ken Wilkie on 01592 760042 or email ken@kenwilkie.com

Football, on the Western Front, 2017, and the Generation Game.

2017 is the Centenary of the Battle of Passchendaele, and the Commemoration Ceremonies for its Centenary do not finish until November 10, when the Canadians hold their Ceremony. This story, however, begins in July, in the Somme area of France.

Our arrival at La Boisselle, for the Service at Lochnagar Crater, on the morning of July 1, coincided with the outbreak of rain in the area, and how it rained. Normally, at Lochnagar, the Friends of Lochnagar distribute Poppies, this year they distributed Ponchos. At 7.28am, when the whistles sounded, and the Ceremony began, exactly at the same time as the whistles had sounded for the troops to go 'over the top' on July 1, 1916, it was very easy to visualise what conditions were like for those brave men over one hundred years ago. The rain was incessant.

After the Service ended, we headed for Contalmaison, passing en route Gordon Dump Cemetery. In the centre of Contalmaison stands the Church, and beside the Church is the Cairn to commemorate McCrae's Battalion. Behind the Cairn is a tableau to describe the actions which took place in the area in July, 1916. On the opposite side of the road from the Church is the Village Hall, behind which the locals were roasting a hog on a spit (in the pouring rain), for the McCrae's Battalion Trust, and the villagers, for the 1.00pm barbecue. The villagers had also erected a Marquee, for the barbecue, and it served as a shelter until the Service began at 9.15am. Most of the wreaths laid at the Cairn came from Scotland, through the Trust, but there were also wreaths from France and Germany. After the Service, there were photographs to be taken, despite the continuing downpour, although there was a distraction for some in the form of a whisky-tasting in the Marquee, for non-drivers only.

Back to Gordon Dump Cemetery we went. After parking the car at the roadside, we walked some three hundred yards along a farm-track, which was by then ankle-deep in mud. In the Cemetery we first located the grave of **Second Lieutenant Donald Bell**, a school-teacher, and professional footballer with Bradford Park Avenue, who served with the 9th Battalion, Green Howards, Yorkshire Regiment. He was the first professional footballer to win the Victoria Cross.



From his graveside, we moved on to the nearby grave of Lance-Corporal Charles Scott, of the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, who was a professional footballer with Cowdenbeath F.C.. Both men were among the thousands of casualties, from both sides of the conflict, killed during the Battle of the Somme.

It was then time to move on to **Thiepval**, for the Ceremony at the Memorial to the Missing of the Somme. The rain still poured down, Ponchos were still being distributed, and worn, and many of the seats remained unoccupied, as people preferred to stand in the rain, rather than sit in the rain on the wet seats. James Scott, of the Royal Scots, and Raith Rovers F.C. is one of the

thousands commemorated here, having lost his life on the first day of the Battle of the Somme, July 1, 1916.

Amazingly, when the Ceremony ended at 12.00 midday, the rain stopped. However, we were now going to head north, via Arras, to Belgium. Arras was celebrating its Summer Music Festival, with acts such as Radiohead, Biffy Clyro, and Rag 'n' Bone Man, appearing at venues ranging from in the Main Square, to at the Citadelle, adjacent to the Arras War Memorial. On the Arras War Memorial is the name of David Philp, of the Northumberland Fusiliers, and a footballer with Raith Rovers F.C. prior to enlisting in the British Army. Also on the Arras Memorial is the name of Peter Johnstone, from Glencaig, who left Glasgow Celtic F.C. to enlist in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders, and was killed in action near Arras in 1917.

Next stop was Cambrin Churchyard Extension British War Cemetery, to see the grave of Private James Haldane, of the Royal Scots. James was from Glencaig, and played for Lochgelly United F.C., a professional football club in Fife in the early twentieth century. Tragically for the family, James' younger brother Alex, who was a Leading Seaman in the Royal Naval Volunteer Reserve, was also killed in World War 1, and he is buried in Mendinghem Military Cemetery, near Ypres. Leaving Cambrin, we headed for Le Touret Memorial to the Missing, between Bethune and Armentieres. At Le Touret, we visited the grave of the other Lochgelly United F.C. footballer killed in action in the First World War, Private John Frail, of the Black Watch, who came from Burntisland.

When we crossed into Belgium, to go to Ypres, we discovered that Flanders was experiencing a drought, with hosepipe bans, fountains turned off, tractors hauling water tankers to towns and villages, and grass burned brown. In Ypres, at the **Menin Gate**, we looked for the name of Adam Miller, of Raith Rovers F.C., who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving with the Australian Imperial Force, the A.I.F., in the Ypres Salient.

An excursion to France next day brought a return to rain, so it was about-turn, and back to the glorious sunshine in Belgium. At Tyne-Cot Cemetery, just outside Passchendaele, we saw the name of George McLay, of Raith Rovers F.C., on one of the many panels which make up the Memorial to the Missing along the rear wall of the Cemetery. Many will have seen on television, in July, the British Service of Commemoration for the Battle of Passchendaele, from Tyne-Cot. The same evening, the Last Post Ceremony at the Menin Gate, which was in turn followed by a Concert from the Main Square in Ypres, was also shown on the BBC. To accommodate the Royalty, dignitaries, and accompanying security measures, the park-and-ride, or park-and-walk, facilities, for ordinary visitors to the British commemorations, were all at least one mile away from the venues.



Poperinge was paying tribute, through an Exhibition, to the role of the Chinese troops and workers in the Great War, but our next stop was at **Dochy Farm New British Cemetery**, to visit the grave of Sergeant James Speirs, Cameron Highlanders. Jimmy was a professional footballer with Glasgow Rangers F.C.,



and a Scottish Internationalist, who then moved to England, and became Captain of Bradford City F.C.. James was Captain, and scorer of the winning, and only goal, in the 1910-1911 F.A. Cup Final Replay, when Bradford City F.C. defeated Newcastle United F.C.. Bradford City fans would tell you that this was the only season in which they have won the F.A. Cup.

The Scottish Weekend of Commemoration Events for the Centenary of the Battle of Passchendaele was in August. By then, the weather in the Flanders area had returned to normal, so that the grass was green, and the fountains were working. However, for the Scots, the sun beat down all weekend.

On the Friday, 18th August, we visited the Tunnels under Passchendaele Church. These Tunnels were used in the Great War, at the Battle of Passchendaele in 1917, and had been closed since then. Now, they were re-opened for 100 days, for the Centenary. The stairways, in and out, were steep, leading down some forty feet to dark, wet, slippery tunnels, with water dripping down onto the duckboard walkways, and pumps in use to prevent flooding. After 100 days, on November 10th, the pumps will be turned off, and the tunnels will once more be flooded and inaccessible. Meanwhile, the new Statues alongside the Scottish Monument at Zonnebeke were covered by their national flags, such as South Africa, Australia, New Zealand, or Scotland.

The Saturday afternoon, August 19th, was to feature a Service at the Scottish Monument. The main road was closed, so it was necessary to park the car, then walk some two hundred yards, past numerous new, still-covered, Statues, to get a seat for the hour-long Service, which lasted almost two and a quarter hours. There were various generations, and nationalities, in attendance. The new Statues, when unveiled, would depict different nationalities, who fought on the British side at Passchendaele. One of the statues is of Jimmy Speirs, and by now the Saltire on his Statue had been replaced by a flag bearing the Glasgow Rangers F.C. badge, and a photograph of Jimmy, along with his name. He had been chosen to represent Scotland on that weekend as he had been killed in action at Passchendaele on August 20th 1917. During the Service, tributes were paid to the various nationalities, all represented by the new Statues. Jimmy received tributes from Willie Henderson, representing Glasgow Rangers F.C., and a representative from Bradford City. Also there, singing tributes to the Soldiers, was Isla St. Clair, evoking memories of another generation. All of the new Statues were duly unveiled, except for the last one, which is Canadian, and will be unveiled on November 10th, as part of the Canadian Commemoration of the Battle.

In the evening there was a Tattoo in the grounds of Passchendaele Chateau, with the entertainment, including Brass and Pipe Bands, some Highland Games

of the heavyweight variety, and singers, again including Isla St. Clair. As the 'Highland Games' were just a display, non-competitive, there was no need for 'the scores on the doors'. However, we could have done with 'the names in the frames' for the Tattoo, as there were no programmes. Being non-competitive games, we also lacked the conveyor belt, and the cuddly toy, but Isla did work well that evening at the Tattoo.

Sunday was the 20th, and off we went to Dochy Farm New British Cemetery, about a mile from the Statues, for the Service at the grave of **Jimmy Speirs**, at 10.00am. During the Service, tributes were paid by Willie Henderson, a Bradford City F.C. representative, and Bradford City F.C. supporters, as well as by the two generations of Jimmy Speirs' family who were in attendance. Again, there had been a Pipe Band and bugler to provide the music, wreaths to be laid, and photographs to be taken; as well as Belgian Police to control the traffic on the adjacent main road owing to the large number of people in attendance at 10.30am.

In October, it was the New Zealand Commemorations of the Battle of Passchendaele which received media coverage, with Prince William in attendance, according to photographs and reports. In November it will be the Canadians, on November 10th, and the last Statue will be unveiled at Zonnebeke. Then, the current generations can pay tribute to an earlier generation who made the 'Ultimate Sacrifice' at the Battle of Passchendaele, 1917.



Harry Gould

A few weeks ago, David Murdoch ended his sermon entitled 'A Four Letter Word' with a poem entitled 'What is Love'?

Several members have requested a copy of this moving poem and, with David's agreement, it is printed below.

WHAT IS LOVE?

Love is silence...when your words would hurt
It is patience....When your neighbour's curt
Love is deafness....when some gossip flows
It is caring....for another's woes
Love is promptness when real duty calls
It is courage....when misfortune falls
Love is gracious....in another's need
It is action.... by some kindly deed
Love is certain....when your journey's o'er
It is peaceful....on that heavenly shore
Love is glorious....and will never end
That's what real love is, my friend.

Origin unknown

Taking care of the detail

There is never a right time to lose someone we love, never a right time to have to make arrangements for their funeral, to say goodbye in a way most suitable to them and those left behind.

In the midst of grief the responsibility of making arrangements can seem overwhelming. Crosbie Matthew Funeral Directors can help you shoulder the burden. We are an independent family-run business with over 70 years experience of supporting bereaved families in Fife and beyond. Arrangements can be made at our purpose built premises in Nicol Street, Kirkcaldy which offers comfortable arrangement rooms and a dedicated service room with lift access. Alternatively we can visit you at a time suited to you in the comfort of your own home.

Professional

Crosbie Matthew's professional team of funeral directors are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, to personally answer your calls and guide you sensitively at your time of loss.

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Practical advice and support can be given on paperwork required for registration, and covers everything from press notices, floral tributes and catering to order of service sheets and attendance cards.

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family member or friend; your options for music, poems, hymns; personalised order of service sheets with photographs if you wish. We are here to discuss any other ideas you may have to make the funeral a more personal tribute.

We pride ourselves in listening to you and helping you to arrange a funeral best suited to your and your loved ones wishes.

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