

# The *Lych Gate*

The Newsletter of St Machar's Ranfurly Church



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## MINISTER'S LETTER

### Winds of change

As I write (29<sup>th</sup> of March – what is now non-Brexit day) a couple of weeks before you will receive this Lych Gate magazine, there is much exasperation and perhaps even despair in the air. There are demands for change in how things are done and run, but no one seems exactly clear what kind of change is required and how it will come out in the wash. Change will undoubtedly lead to resistance and the question is if it will get sufficient support to pass. Some will worry the proposed changes go too far, others that they don't go far enough...

And I wasn't talking about Brexit! Last year a Strategic Plan was presented to the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland and unceremoniously thrown out by the gathered commissioners. They felt that the 10 year Strategic Plan lacked the degree of urgency and concreteness required to address the current 'crisis' in the Church (such as record levels of vacancies, dwindling congregations, too many historic buildings to be looked after by too few people, lack of growth and mission etc). Instead it was agreed that a special commission be tasked with writing a Radical Action Plan, to be presented to the General Assembly of 2019.

The main content of this Radical

Action Plan are now starting to become clear. The overall direction of travel seems to be to devolve power and money from the national centre in order to better resource the regional (i.e. presbyteries), so as to free up and support the local (i.e. congregations) for mission and worship. However, the presbyteries are set to become much larger (numbers to be reduced over time to around 12). The other things which are being considered (but for which there are no firm proposals yet) is how the Mission and Ministries contributions that congregations pay, should be worked out going forward. There is a sense that the present system discourages congregations to increase their giving as any increase will lead to a greater M and M contribution. Overall the intention is that more resources should be freed up locally and regionally to engage in new mission experiments, as well as support those smaller congregations that still have a key role to missional role to play (for example in rural areas).

This year I will be a commissioner to the General Assembly and I'm much looking forward to this week (18<sup>th</sup> to 24<sup>th</sup> of May). I believe much structural change is needed in order to facilitate a revitalisation of the Church. However, no amount of planning or restructuring will by

itself bring about new spiritual growth in the Church. This can only come from God, through the gospel of Jesus Christ taking hold in people's lives. Unless each one of us -who consider ourselves 'church members'- is prepared to be a true follower of and witness to Jesus Christ, any Radical Action Plan is like to be merely an exercise in rearranging the deckchairs on the Titanic. True followers of Christ are continually changed and challenged by the Holy Spirit to go out of our comfort zones to speak more openly about the hope that is in us, whilst demonstrating God's love for the world.

Whereas I don't hold out much hope for a timely or satisfactory Brexit resolution, I do hold out hope that the winds of change will effect new life and growth in the Church of Scotland. Because the winds of change that come from the life giving Spirit can and will resurrect dry bones (Ezekiel 37). As we prepare ourselves for Holy Week and Easter, we should remember that resurrection and new life comes after suffering and death. Some ways and forms of doing church might have to die, but God is faithful and will bring new and transformed life to his Church.

Yours,

*Hanneke*

## CONFIRMATION SERVICE OF NEW MEMBERS ON PALM SUNDAY



The Kirk Session and I are looking forward to welcome 4 new members into the membership of the church on Palm Sunday (14<sup>th</sup> April). **David and Lyndsay Falla** and **Ian and Victoria Ferguson** have during the past few months

taken part in membership classes, where we have worked our way through a book called 'Exploring Faith'. We've had many interesting and inspiring conversations about the Christian faith and life, the church and our own place within it. Both couples have little ones (Cora and Finlay; and Victoria respectively) who have been baptised in our church and who have been in our midst regularly – drawing much fond attention during coffee time. We have recently as an experiment created a quiet play area at the front of the church to accommodate the wee ones and this seems to go down well with the tots concerned!

It is our hope that these four new members will be warmly taken up into the family of our church by you all and that they will be able to make their own unique contribution to the life of the church.

I encourage all of you to be present at this special service on the 14<sup>th</sup>. We have recently also welcomed (back) into membership John and Pamela MacKenzie, who originally joined the church many moons ago, but have started to worship with us once more. We hope they will soon feel part of the fellowship of our congregation.

Hanneke

# THE HISTORY OF ST MACHAR'S RANFURLY CHURCH.

## **Rev A M Shand**

### **Aberdeen Press and Journal 14 September 1898.**

Many friends and well-wishers in Woodlands will be pleased to learn that the Rev Alex M Shand, MA has been appointed assistant to Rev Dr Duncan of the Parish Church, Bridge of Weir. For the past three months Mr Shand has been assisting during the illness of the minister and he has won the respect of the congregation for his acceptable ministrations.

### **Paisley & Renfrewshire Gazette 15 April 1899**

Presentation of Colours to the Boys' Brigade. – An interesting ceremony took place at the parade of the 1<sup>st</sup> Houston and Bridge of Weir Company of the Boys' Brigade in the Parish Church Hall on Tuesday evening. There was a full muster of the Company, under the command of Captain J Hanna Watson, Houston and the other officers on parade were Captain G M Crawford, Bridge of Weir; Lieutenants, Grieve, Galloway and Barr and the Rev A M Shand, M.A., Chaplain. After a few preliminary movements, the boys were drawn up in review order and the ceremony of "trooping the colours" was gone through, the old Union Jack being received with the general salute while the band played the National Anthem. Miss Elma Armstrong, Drybryne, gracefully presented the new flag to Lieutenant Galloway and expressed her wishes for the continued prosperity of the Brigade.

### **Aberdeen Press and Journal 10 July 1899**

The committee of nineteen appointed in connection with the vacancy in Bridge of Weir Parish Church, caused by the death of Rev Dr Duncan, minister of the charge, has unanimously recommended to the congregation for election the Rev Alex M Shand, B.D., the assistant to Dr Duncan. Voting for or against this gentleman will take place tomorrow. Mr Shand, who is a son of the late Mr Shand, Woodside Paper Works, graduated in arts at Aberdeen and in divinity at Glasgow.

### **The Scotsman 28 July 1899**

At Bridge of Weir on Wednesday the Presbytery met in The Parish Church Bridge of Weir in connection with the call to **Rev A M Shand** to fill the vacancy in the parish caused by the death of Rev Dr Duncan in May last. Rev Mr Dalgetty, Paisley was Moderator. Mr Shand was present and formally accepted the call which was about 400 signatures. The Ordination and Induction was fixed by September 8<sup>th</sup>. Mr Shand was the late Dr Duncan's Assistant for over a year and when the members voted a few weeks ago for or against him. He received 169 votes and only 5 against his election of a membership of over 300.

### **Aberdeen Press and Journal 11 September 1899**

#### **Rev A. M Shand.**

On Friday afternoon, the Rev. Alexander Mason Shand, M.A., was formally ordained to the ministry and inducted to the charge of Bridge of Weir Parish Church, rendered vacant by the death of the Rev. Thomas Duncan, D.D. Mr Shand, who is a native of Woodside, acted as assistant in the Church for a year, and was unanimously elected to the vacancy without a contest. The ceremony took place in the church and was witnessed by a large turnout of the congregation. A Dinner afterwards took place in the Ranfurly Hotel and was largely attended. The Chair was occupied by Mr A S Mories and among others present were the Rev. John Fairlie, Woodside; Mr G F Duthie, Woodside; and Mr A R Wilson, Aberdeen.

The Chairman, after dinner proposed the toast of "The Queen" and then gave that of "Our New Minister." During the twelve months Mr Shand was assisting Dr Duncan they had found him in the true discharge of his duties and recognised in him the faculty of individuality. (Applause) In the name of those present he welcomed Mr Shand as their minister and promised him every support in the work that lay before him. (Applause)

Rev A M Shand, who was enthusiastically received, cordially

thanked the company for the hearty welcome they had accorded him. It was an honour for any young minister might be proud of. While he appreciated the honour highly, he still more highly appreciated the honour the Congregational Committee had conferred on him in unanimously appointing him their minister. He regarded that as the greatest compliment he had ever received and he trusted he might prove himself worthy of the confidence the people of Bridge of Weir had placed in him. (Applause) While assistant in the church he did not expect to become parish minister of Bridge of Weir, but it would be a stimulus to him to think he had come amongst them at their own request.

He hoped that he would remain there for a long time and that he might prove a worthy successor to Dr Duncan. Whether he met with the approbation of every man or not was of little importance to him. He should not be worthy of the church which John Knox and Andrew Melville were connected if he were to fear the face of any man. (Applause) While he tried to win the hearts of the congregation, he would preach what he believed to be the truth. He hoped the friendships that had begun that day would long continue, that he would be their friend as well as minister and that the friendship would be of that kind which time would only serve to mellow. (Applause) Several other toasts followed. In the evening a conversazione was held in the church. Rev A Abernethy presided over an audience that filled the building. The chief item on the programme was the presentation of robes and books to the new minister. Mr Shand, who was very enthusiastically received, cordially thanked the congregation for the welcome they had given him. He had heard a good deal about himself that day and he hoped he might live to deserve one half of what had been said in his praise. He valued the gifts that had been presented to him and trusted he would make good use of them. He

## EASTER WITHOUT THE CRUCIFIXION?

I recently heard of a church minister being asked to speak about Easter to a primary school assembly, but without mentioning the crucifixion. Now I don't know how they got themselves out of that particular conundrum, but it can't have been easy. It doesn't make much sense to celebrate and speak of new life and resurrection, if we've wiped out all traces of death and suffering. The joyful news that Christians celebrate at Easter comes as a surprising reality following the indisputable death of Jesus on the cross three days earlier. That horrible, unjust and excruciating death he suffered on what is referred to as Good Friday. Of course, it does not make obvious sense to call and remember such a day as 'Good Friday'. And it *does* make sense to not want children to dwell on

the ins and outs of Roman torture and execution methods. And yet, we can't have a true Easter without Good Friday. There is no resurrection without the death of Jesus.

The reason Christians call Good Friday 'good', is because paradoxically on this most horrible of days, Jesus has taken on our last enemy; 'death itself'. The one 'who must not be named'. Our culture does not like to talk about death or our own mortality. We try to avoid facing up to the reality of aging, suffering and death.

Jesus didn't – he was clear that his chosen mission in life would result in death. But he also trusted that God the Father would bring him -through death- victorious into new life. Proving that God's new creation is unstoppable. This is what makes

Easter arguably the most joyous and hope giving festival of the Christian year. Death is overcome, sins forgiven, hope – with Jesus- alive.

Why not join a Good Friday **and** an Easter service somewhere near you this year?

**Holy Week services** jointly with Freeland Church:  
15-17<sup>th</sup> April 7:30 pm - Freeland Church  
18<sup>th</sup> April 7:30 pm Maundy Thursday services - St Machar's Ranfurly church hall  
19<sup>th</sup> April 7:30 pm Good Friday Passion readings and hymns - St Machar's Ranfurly Church  
21<sup>st</sup> April 10:30 am Easter Day All Age Service with communion - St Machar's Ranfurly Church

Hanneke

## 1<sup>ST</sup> BRIDGE OF WEIR GUIDES

For our first night back in January we had a games evening with all the games based on Smarties. All the girls took a Smartie tube home and collected loose change for the rest of the month. We celebrated Burns night in January with games and, of course, haggis and shortbread. We also started working on our 'Feel Good' Skill builder, which is part of the brand new programme of activities which has been introduced to all Sections in Girlguiding.



In February we collected the money in our Smartie tubes and spent it in our local Co-op. We donated the items bought to the Renfrewshire Food Bank.

The Unit collected an amazing £140 and the girls had to work out with the money they had, what items they could buy. Thankfully we didn't cause too much chaos in the Co-op that evening! For Thinking Day celebrations this year we spent the evening learning about Vietnam and Mexico through games, crafts and, of course, food. Vietnamese spring rolls were definitely the hit of the evening!

We also travelled to Edinburgh for the day and took part in Girlguiding Scotland's Thinking Day event - 'Wonder the World'. A brilliant day was had enjoying activities such as Bollywood dancing, yoga and African drumming. Four girls also got enrolled when they made their Guide promise in the grandeur of the McEwan Hall at the end of the event.

In March, we had the usual Pancake fun. As well as making and, of course, eating pancakes, we had pancake

flipping relay races and had a competition to see who could decorate some of the pancakes as animal faces. Some were much better than others!



We finished off the month with an outing to SOAR @ Braehead to enjoy an evening of ten-pin bowling,

Christine Haddock  
Guide Guider

## THE HISTORY OF ST MACHAR'S RANFURLY CHURCH (CONT'D)

was strongly convinced that beneath all the enthusiasm there was a deep reserve of loyalty to the Church of Scotland. He hoped that a feeling would long continue. (applause).

During the evening there were addresses delivered by Rev J Fairlie and Mr Duthie.

### **Paisley & Renfrewshire Gazette** **20 October 1900.**

The Annual General Meeting of Bridge of Weir Curling Club was held on 11th instant. The President, Mr R A Cowan, in the chair. Mr A M Brown, Gryffe Castle, was re-elected patron; The Rev A M Shand, MA., chaplain; and the following officials were appointed:- Messrs William Holmes, Harelaw, President; Andrew Reid, Vice-President; James S Barr, Secretary and Treasurer; James A Muirhead and R A Cowan, representative members; Matthew Barr, John Docherty, George Summers, John Kerr and D B Kirk (convener) committee. The following are the skips for the ensuing season: Messrs. James Purdie, Matthew Barr, Andrew McKie and William Brooks.

### **Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette** **17 March 1906.**

School Board: The two representatives from Bridge of Weir on the Kilbarchan School Board will give an account of their stewardship on Thursday next, 22 March. Little or no interest is shown in the matter probably because the ratepayers were satisfied with their representatives. The Rev A M Shand, M.A., and Mr J.G. Frew have efficiently discharged three years and as they are eligible for re-election are worthy of being returned for another term of office.

### **Presentation to Parish Church:**

At the close of Sheriff Lyell's Lecture on Monday night, the Rev A M. Shand took the opportunity, on behalf of the subscribers, to present Mr Robert Houston with a purse of sovereigns. Mr Houston had filled the office of beadle for a number of years and was now leaving the district to become a farmer. His duties as church officer brought him in close contact with the minister and Mr Shand could therefore speak of him with more

intimate knowledge than most people. Mr Houston's faithful and devoted service gained his personal appreciation and also the respect and esteem of everyone with whom he came in contact.

### **Paisley & Renfrewshire Gazette** **24 March 1906.**

School Board: The Bridge of Weir representatives on the Kilbarchan School Board – the Rev A.M. Shand and Mr J.G. Frew – will address a meeting of the ratepayers on Thursday 29 March in the Public School at 8pm, when Major R S Milne will take the chair. It is expected that they will speak on educational affairs generally, with perhaps special reference to the new draft regulations for the training of teachers and probably the proposed socialistic schemes for providing free dinners, etc., for school children will come under review. Questions will be invited, and a lively and interesting meeting is anticipated.

### **Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette** **30 November 1907.**

**Presentation to Rev A M Shand**  
On Friday evening 22<sup>nd</sup> instant, the Parish Church Hall was filled to overflowing by members of the congregation and friends to do honour to their minister and to present him with pulpit robes, a gold watch and chain, and a roll-top desk. Major R S Milne presided and was accompanied on the platform by the kirk session and managers, along with Rev. John Crouch and Rev Adam Wilson. The opening Psalm having been sung, the Rev John Crouch asked blessing, after which tea was served.

The Chairman said this was an extremely interesting occasion, designed for the encouragement of their minister and to show that he was beloved and appreciated by his people. Mr Shand was an Aberdonian and he (the Chairman) might claim kinship. It was said that Aberdonians had their head screwed on the right way, (Laughter). He expressed, on behalf of the congregation, the high esteem which Mr Shand has earned during his term of ministry extending over the past eight years and he was sure the good feeling which had supported him in the

past would continue to assist him to carry on his labours in our midst in the years to come. (applause) He called upon Mr Pollock to introduce Mrs Milner, who would present the robes.

Mr R Pollock said he had great honour in introducing the lady who was the mainspring in the movement- though some of them might think it strange that a lady should be asked to robe Mr Shand. (laughter)

Mrs Milne of Royston, gracefully performed the ceremony, expressing the good wishes of the congregation, hoping he would have good health to wear it out. They would be glad to present him with many more. (Applause) Mr James Purdie, in presenting a gold watch, suitably inscribed and a handsome oak roll-top desk, said it had fallen to his lot to make this presentation as the oldest member of the congregation. There were very few left of the original congregation now.

There were very few Established Church people in Bridge of Weir before the railway was made. They met at that time in a hall which was situated behind Rankin's Land, but when the railway came the hall was removed. Subsequently they met in the Freeland School and were ministered to in those days by Dr Graham of Kilbarchan and Dr McLaren of Houston, who officiated every alternative Sabbath day. The late Dr Turner and Mr W Harvey (Ravenswood) were active members then, and when people became numerous enough, they decided to form a congregation and as a result the present church was built. Their first minister was Rev Robert Turnbull, now minister of Barrowfield Parish Church, Glasgow. Then followed Dr Duncan whom many remember lovingly and he in turn was followed by their present minister, Mr Shand. He (Mr Purdie) was convener of the committee on that occasion and a pleasant task it was. There was only one name submitted and the committee meetings were cordial

## CONGRATULATIONS

We congratulate Rona McGill on her marriage to Dan Barfod on Wednesday 27<sup>th</sup> March. The minister had the privilege of conducting the wedding ceremony at the house of Ann McGill – Rona's aunt – in Lintwhite Crescent. As Rona and Dan are both geologists, they are currently (at the time of writing) enjoying a honeymoon in Utah, USA, where there are many interesting landscapes and rocks to admire. We wish Rona and Dan much joy and blessing in their marriage.



## BRIDGE OF WEIR BOYS BRIGADE

Thirty boys and five officers travelled from Bridge of Weir to PGL Dalguise in Perthshire after school on Friday 15 March and returned two days later on Sunday afternoon. The time in between was action-packed, entertaining, well-fed with three good meals a day and a few sweets to keep up the energy levels.

Despite two or three inches of snow on the ground and falling snow or sleet all day, Saturday's outdoor activities were all completed successfully with nothing worse than cold hands and wet clothes. In fact, nothing that a warm shower, a hot drink and a change of clothes could not put right. In between the boys had an enjoyable walk in the forest, archery, canoeing and abseiling. The forest walk was in substitution for the burn walk which we ruled

out as a certainty for starting the day cold and wet.

Everyone took to canoeing and with little need for coaching the boys went on to ball games on the water and five star balance. No-one fell-in or capsized and the instructor said that they were the best group this year. Archery was a bit testing with cold fingers but everyone had a go. Abseiling from the top of the tower was another problem for cold hands but a number of boys braved it and did the run from top to bottom. We even managed to fit in most of the second half of the Calcutta Cup with thirty-four supporting Scotland and one (the Company Captain) behind England.

On Sunday morning even more boys managed to ring the bell at the top of the tallest tree climb in Britain and everyone made an

attempt.

Finally the challenge course was less hard than the one the SAS do but probably more muddy with climbing, crawling and balancing in abundance. When the sun went down on Friday and Saturday we did not stop we just moved into the dome to play indoor football and rugby until bed around ten o'clock. On Saturday night we even managed to fit in a quiz between dinner and football.

If parents thought anyone looked tired getting off the coach (especially the officers) now you know why.

Paul Birch  
Company Captain.

## THE HISTORY OF ST MACHAR'S RANFURLY CHURCH (CONT'D)

and unanimous in giving him the call. After eight years' ministry, (Applause) In the pulpit Mr Shand was increasing in power and his love of the work. His sermons always conveyed a message to his hearers. (Applause) Of course no one was perfect. (Laughter) Mr Shand had his faults and, he might say, misfortunes. (Laughter) All these fine things were for Mr Shand. Some of the presents might have gone to Mrs Shand but there was no such person. (Laughter) They had been told he came from Aberdeen. Mr Shand could say – Though I was born in Aberdeen, Yet I am stationed here; Although I love my native town I'm fond of Bridge of Weir (laughter and applause) Mr William Campbell was the next speaker. He said he had been asked to take the place of Mr W G Reid. They all knew the sad circumstances which rendered Mr Reid's presence tonight a trying ordeal. The late amicable and devoted Mrs Reid had been president of the Women's Guild and was active in the congregation. Her loss every one of them deplored. He had therefore consented to act as Mr Reid's substitute in introducing the president of the Women's Guild. He was told of this two days ago and he fancied it would have been merely a word or two that was required. He got a great shock when he came to the meeting and discovered his name on the programme. Of course, he had to make a speech when his name was in print. (laughter). They should not have selected such an insignificant-looking individual as himself. (Great Laughter) They should have got a "pillar of the Church" to do it. Probably he looked much like the "pillar." (Laughter) Well he was a "pillar" and had a good "post" in another church. (Laughter) A friend had asked him today if he was going to tell them any of his funny stories. He denied that he ever told "stories." He was a strict disciple of George Washington and couldn't though he tried. (laughter) he might tell them he occasionally related an anecdote. He did not come from Aberdeen, as some of them were boasting

tonight. He came from one of the Western Isles; but, still, he was not very far out of relationship. His father came from Aberdeen. (Applause) When he was last on the Island of Islay, he had visited an aged couple – husband, 79 years of age, whose silver wedding had been held last year. At that presentation the old gentleman said very little. He thanked them for their silver presents very much. He supposed they would be doing the same next year. (Laughter) That was all. Continuing, Mr Campbell said it did not seem right that he should introduce the president of the Women's Guild, for when he came to Bridge of Weir, she was then a church worker, her husband was an elder and her two charming daughters were also engaged in the work. If Mrs Milne was called the mainspring, he thought the lady he was introducing was one of the jewels. (Applause) Mrs Armstrong, on behalf of the Women's Guild, presented a handsome gold chain and pendant, with a few complimentary remarks. Mr Shand, speaking with considerable emotion, said it was seldom he found himself short of words, but he felt now that his poor words could not adequately convey his feelings. He thanked them for all their valuable gifts and for the many kind expressions of their love, esteem, and appreciation. He had always received the utmost kindness at their hands. Such an occasion as this was a great encouragement and he would do all that in him lay to recognise and respond to it. He felt he did not deserve it. Like others, he had his failings, but relying on the all-upholding grace of God he would go forward with increased confidence in the work assigned to him and with prayerful interpretation of the message entrusted to him. It was difficult, indeed, to follow in the steps of his saintly predecessor, Dr Duncan. He recounted many of the cheering things he had heard and encountered during his eight years' ministry in Bridge of Weir. He had been assisted in every way by the elders and managers and all others engaged in the work of the agencies and institutions of the

church. Down to the beadle who had recently left and the present one, all had shown him every kindness possible and he had been greatly assisted. He thanked them one and all. (Applause) The minister of the Ranfurly U.F. Church, Rev. Adam Wilson, was present and gave a humorous address. He said these presentations gave him great pleasure. Probably it would be his turn next. (laughter) He did not know when they would come further up the hill. He had not yet decided what he would take, whether a gold watch, a trip to Palestine, or perhaps to the Isle of Man. (laughter) he then referred to the cordial relations existing between Mr Shand and himself. An excellent concert was given during the course of the evening.

### **Paisley & Renfrewshire Gazette 7 December 1907.**

Even at the Auld Kirk Presbytery the Rev. Mr Shand of Bridge of Weir, brings off his humorous stories and Kilbarchan's bachelor minister was a victim at Wednesday's meeting. Reporting on Mr Mackenzie's behalf in connection with the Widows' Fund, Mr Shand assured the Presbytery that Mr Mackenzie's two widows residing within Kilbarchan Parish were still alive. Mr Shand also managed to be relieved from being a member of a certain committee on smilingly declaring that he could not reach Paisley before half-past twelve because of the withdrawal of Bridge of Weir Trains.

### **Paisley and Renfrewshire Gazette 1 February 1908.**

On Friday 26 January the first annual Burns Dinner was held in the Ranfurly Hotel- Major R S Milne in the chair. Covers were laid for 50. (There is quite a long report on the proceedings prior to) The Chairman called upon the Rev A.M. Shand, M.A. to propose the toast of the evening. "The Immortal Memory of Burn's" Mr Shand said – I thank you very cordially for the honour the club has done me in inviting me to present at their annual gathering, and for the still greater distinction of being entrusted with the duty of

## 2ND BRIDGE OF WEIR GUIDES

We have had an enthusiastic and very busy month working on our new Guiding programme. The girls have made pencil cases, we had a DIY evening learning how to change and rewiring plugs, testing smoke alarms, and filling cracks in plaster and holes in wood. There should be no excuse if you need something fixed.



We had a very busy and extra special Thinking Day themed evening which coincided with a celebration for the Unit's 50<sup>th</sup> Birthday. Our guest of honour was Freda Barclay who started the company 50 years ago in St Machars Ranfurly because there was nowhere for the Brownies to move on to. The hall was set up

with four different activities in different countries. Everyone had their own passport, boarding and landing cards the girls flew Chels Air to their selected destination. A little bit manic but lots of fun celebrating with Freda who with Katelyn our youngest Guide cut our Birthday Cake complete with candles.



We celebrated Shrove Tuesday with the girls making pancakes to moderate success. We tried making them on foil plates cooked over tea lights flavoured with lemon and sugar. I think the best ones were in fry pans on the stove. There was a selection of

chocolate spread or maple syrup and more sugar and lemon. Extremely sticky but quickly consumed by all. As the Hall is being refurbished for our final evening of the term, we had planned to have an evening outside for a scavenger hunt. This would have been fine, but we forgot that the clocks hadn't changed! So instead we had an interesting evening organised by our two older Guides - an Easter Challenge seemed appropriate. I'm not sure about the mess but the girls had a huge amount of fun with cardboard shapes, shaving foam and acrylic paints! The results were super. I just hope everyone managed to remove the excess from sleeves etc. I was quite relieved that it wasn't too difficult to remove from car doors!  
*Moira Johnston*

## A THOUGHT FOR EASTER

One day a man went to visit a church He arrived early, parked his car, and got out. Another car pulled up near him, and the driver told him, "I always park there. *You took my place!*"

The visitor went inside for Sunday School, found an empty seat, and sat down. A young lady from the church approached him and stated "That's my seat! *You took my place!*"

The visitor was somewhat distressed by this rude welcome but said nothing. After Sunday School, the visitor went into the church sanctuary and sat down. Another member walked up to him and said "That's where I always sit. *You took my place!*"

The visitor was even more troubled by this treatment, but still said nothing.

Later, the congregation was praying for Christ to dwell among them. The visitor stood, and his appearance began to change. Horrible scars became visible on his hands and on his sandaled feet. Someone from the congregation noticed him and called out, "What happened to you?"

The visitor replied, "*I took your place*".

*Helen Bullen*

## CHOIR DINNER





## THE HISTORY OF ST MACHAR'S RANFURLY CHURCH (CONT'D)

submitting the time-honoured toast. I should not have ventured to undertake that duty had I not been well assured that the Bridge of Weir Burns Club were so enthusiastic in their admiration of the National Bard that his immortal memory would certainly be most heartily pledged, however feebly it were proposed. I trust I may be pardoned if I assume that you want no lengthy oration on the genius of the poet, and still less any bombastic rhetoric regarding the character of the man. I cannot attempt at present to give a carefully critical analysis of his works. Opinions might well differ were I to take this opportunity of discussing his place in Literature, or the mighty influence he has exerted on the world. I take it to be my duty on such an occasion as this simply to express, in as few words as possible, the sentiments that fill our hearts and unite us in one accord as we gather year by year. In common with many thousands of our countrymen at home and abroad, to honour the undying memory of Robert Burns (Cheers). As when a Highland chief was laid to rest when his warfare was accomplished, and his devoted clansmen placed each a stone on his memorial cairn, so we come tonight, as thousands have done before us, to add our humble tribute to the memory of the chief of Scottish song. To cherish the memory of Scotland's most illustrious son.

(Despite thorough "research" very little else has come to light in newspapers)

It culminates with the undernoted reports.

### **British Army: Roll of Service 1914-18.**

Shand, Alexander Mason, M.A. son of John Shand, born Aberdeen, 9 April 1864. War work, Superintendent, Scottish Churches' Hut, Calais 1917-18.

### **The Scotsman Thursday 4 February 1926.**

#### **Holiday Closing of Churches: Criticism at Paisley.**

At the meeting of the Presbytery of Paisley yesterday, the report of the Business Committee in the question of the closing of churches during the holidays in summer was

submitted and met with criticism from Rev A.M. Shand of Bridge of Weir. The Rev John Muir presented the report, in which it was said that Kirk Sessions were acting within their rights in closing on one or more Sundays during the session. The Rev A.M. Shand described the closing of churches as deplorable laxity. He felt that it was very much against the prestige of the Church of Scotland and they ought to take steps to put and end to that state of matters. They never heard of the Roman catholic Churches or the Anglican Churches being closed on the Lord's Day. He moved that they enjoin ministers to see that there is at least one service in every parish church on the Lord's Day. On a vote being taken 21 voted for the Business Committee's recommendation and 11 for Mr Shand's amendment.

### **The Scotsman: 10 April 1929.**

#### **Fewer Bible classes.**

Reporting on the work of the Instruction of Youth Committee, the Rev A.M. Shand, Bridge of Weir, stated that the decrease in the number of scholars on the roll of Sunday schools which had been recorded during the past two years still continued. There were approximately 75,000 scholars, which was 1,576 fewer than in the previous year. The decreasing figures in recent years was also evident in public schools, where enrolment was compulsory, and he believed that the reason was due to the curve in the birth-rate in 1921 and it was not likely that the former attendances would be attained until 1930-31. It was gratifying to report that there were more workers, the figures being 6,600 women and 3,000 men. With regard to Bible classes, there was an overall decrease of 22 classes. In the Presbytery of Glasgow alone there were 24 fewer Bible classes and he thought the reason might be due to the abnormal number of vacant churches, resulting in classes being dropped. The total offerings in Sunday schools and Bible classes amounted to £10,123, half of which was devoted to maintenance, a quarter went to schemes of the Church and the remaining quarter had gone to various

philanthropic bodies not directly connected with the Church.

### **Daily Record & Mail 12 December 1939.**

Rev A M Shand minister of St Machar's Church, Bridge of Weir who has now retired after 40 years' service received a cheque for £200 (£12,980 in 2019) as a presentation from parishioners.

### **The Scotsman 26 January 1949.**

#### **Death Notice.**

At a nursing home in Aberdeen on 24 January 1949 the Rev Alexander Mason Shand M.A. of Ranfurly, 59 Countess Wells Road, minister-emeritus of St Machars Church, Bridge of Weir. Service at Aberdeen Crematorium on Friday 28 January at 2.30pm.

### **Aberdeen Evening Express 11 November 1959**

"Another St Machar"

The news that the Rev William M Macartney, Minister of St Giles, Elgin is the sole nominee for the vacancy at St Machar's Cathedral, Old Aberdeen recalls the interesting fact that Mr McCartney's previous charge at Bridge of Weir, Renfrewshire was designated "St Machar"

This one may surmise was a tribute to a great Aberdonian, the late Rev Alexander M Shand who had Woodside connections and who exercised a long ministry in Bridge of Weir and was loved and respected far beyond the bounds of his parish.

### **Aberdeen Evening Express 18 November 1959.**

The "other" St Machar's.

The Church of Bridge of Weir and its connection with the late Rev Alex M Shand brings an interesting letter from Mr Andrew Kessock, 23 Church Street, Woodside, a Past Master of Lodge St Machar's (No 319)

Writes Mr Kessock. Mr Shand himself told me that he was responsible for giving his Church at Bridge of Weir the name of St Machar's after his mother lodge which he held in high esteem. He was a made a Freemason in his lodge in 1894 and was elected its chaplain in 1904, an office he held until his death in 1949.

(Researched by Emma Christie)

# NOTICES

## MASQUERADERS



**SATURDAY 27th April 2019**

**7.00pm**

**St Machar's Ranfurly Church Hall  
Bridge of Weir**

**An evening of song and short  
comic plays.**

**Lucky programme prize**



**Ticket £5**

**Phone 614943**

**Tea/coffee and  
home baking**



*All proceeds to Glasgow Children's  
Hospital Charity*

## Junior Church



Sunday 14th April

Sunday 28th April

Sunday 12th May

Sunday 19th May

Sunday 9th June

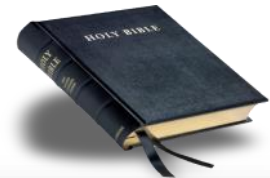
Sunday 16th June

## Funeral



Jesus said "I am the  
Resurrection and the  
Life...."

Jean Watson Baird  
March 5th 2019



## Stated Annual Meeting

Notice is hereby given that the Stated Annual Meeting will be held in the Church Hall on Sunday 9th June immediately after the Morning Service. This will also incorporate the re-dedication of the Hall. Refreshments will be served. Further details to come.

## The Terrace

Homemade Soups,  
Sandwiches, Tea/Coffee,  
Biscuits £4.00

**Friday 26th April  
Friday 31st May**

12 Noon - 1.30pm

Come along and enjoy good  
food, good company

**St. Machar's Ranfurly  
Church Hall**

## Holiday Chalet

Wester Ross  
(Achiltibuie / Summer Isles area)



Self-catering; sleeps up to six, but ideal for two to four.  
£200 pw.

**All proceeds to church fund-raising.**

For further info & dates, contact:  
Dave Macdonald 612472  
(dave.sonas@outlook.com)

**Airport Runs:** Please note that you can now book a run to the airport or to Johnstone Station by phoning: Morven McLeod - 07887 771522, or Jane Stirling - 07580 040186  
A donation to Church funds is requested for this service.

# CONTACTS

**Minister: Rev. Hanneke Marshall**  
The Manse,  
9 St Andrews Drive,  
Bridge of Weir,  
PA11 3HS



Anyone wishing to consult the Minister may telephone for an appointment. She will be happy to arrange a meeting to discuss any matters at a mutually convenient time.

Tel: 01505 **612975**

<b>SESSION CLERK</b>	Dennis Taylor	33 St Andrews Drive, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HT	01505 612417
<b>DEPUTE SESSION CLERK</b>	Marion Reid	Roquaine, 61 Hazelwood Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3DX	01505 612408
<b>TREASURER</b>	Francis Hancock	18 Glendentan Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HE	01505 614943
<b>CHURCH OFFICER</b>	Stewart Yeaman	58 Ranfurly Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3EP	01505 612886
<b>PRESBYTERY ELDER</b>	Mary Taylor	33 St Andrews Drive, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HT	01505 612417
<b>BUILDINGS</b>	Bill Robb	18 Kilgraston Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3EN	01505 612313
<b>STEWARDSHIP &amp; FINANCE</b>	Ian Hales	Ranfurly House, Ranfurly Place, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3DE	01505 613447
<b>WORSHIP</b>	Rev Hanneke Marshall	9 St Andrews Drive Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HS	01505 612975
<b>COMMUNICATION &amp; ADMINISTRATION</b>	Dennis Taylor	33 St Andrews Drive, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HT	01505 612417
<b>LEARNING</b>	Rev Hanneke Marshall	9 St Andrews Drive Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HS	01505 612975
<b>OUTREACH &amp; MISSION</b>	Mary Taylor	33 St Andrews Drive, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HT	01505 612417
<b>SAFEGUARDING CO-ORDINATOR</b>	Dick Hughes	Dunelm, 33 Donaldfield Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3JG	01505 690889
<b>HALL LETTING</b>	Anne Yeaman	58 Ranfurly Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3EP	01505 612886
<b>INTIMATIONS EDITOR</b>	Marion Reid	Roquaine, 61 Hazelwood Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3DX	01505 612408
<b>ROTAS</b>	Norma Hancock	18 Glendentan Road, Bridge of Weir	PA11 3HE	01505 614943

## ORGANISATION LEADERS

<b>JUNIOR CHURCH</b>		Evelyn Watson Jill Crombie	ofoe63@hotmail.co.uk jill.50@live.com	01505 610277 07904 210234
<b>THE GUILD</b>	President	Margaret Mills	margaret.fram@btinternet.com	01505 612625
<b>BOYS' BRIGADE</b>	Company Captain	Paul Birch	gorselandsb@aol.com	01505 613506
	Officer in Charge: Junior Section	Susan Wyllie	susanm.sw@talktalk.net	07960 791967
	Officer in Charge: Anchor Boys	Gerry Miller	geraldineemiller@gmail.com	01505 612173
<b>GUIDES</b>	Leader: 1st B.o.W (Wed)	Christine Haddock	christineh_2@hotmail.com	01505 610655
	Leader: 2nd B.o.W (Tues)	Moira Johnston	aquarotor@btconnect.com	07721 399164
<b>RAINBOWS</b>	Leader: 1st B.o.W (Tues)	Brenda Carson	brenda.carson@talk21.com	07799 451150
	Leader: 2nd B.o.W (Wed)	Kirstie MacPherson		07903 822596

### *Tailpiece*

Ten little Christians singing in a line  
One disliked modern hymns, then  
there were nine:  
Nine little Christians, staying up  
very late,  
One slept in on Sundays, then  
there were eight:  
Eight little Christians, on their way  
to heaven,  
one took a different path, then  
there were seven.  
Seven little Christians chirping like  
chicks

One disliked the preacher's  
message, then there were six.  
Six little Christians very much alive,  
But one lost interest, then there  
were five.  
Five little Christians rowing for  
heaven's shore,  
One stopped, then there were four.  
Four little Christians, each busy as  
a bee,  
One got their feelings hurt, then  
there were three.

Three little Christians knew not  
what to do,  
one joined the golf club, then there  
were two.  
Two little Christians, our rhyme is  
nearly done,  
differed from each other, then there  
was none.  
There were none left to fulfil what  
Jesus called them to do.

Liz Curran

**Editorial Team**  
Dennis Taylor

Contributions for the next issue of *The Lych Gate* should be with the Editor by **Tuesday 21st May**. Please E-mail to: [dennis1taylor@msn.com](mailto:dennis1taylor@msn.com) or pass memory sticks or paper copies to Dennis Taylor. Colour copies of this issue are available at the website or by e-mailing Dennis Taylor.

# DIARY

## WORSHIP

## EVENTS

<p><b>April</b></p> <p>Sunday 7th 10.30 am Morning Service</p> <p>Friday 12th 2.00 pm Seated Service - Friday Link in Session Room</p> <p>Sunday 14th 10.30 am Palm Sunday - Morning Service - Junior Church - Confirmation of New Members</p> <p>Monday 15th 7.30 pm Holy Week Joint Service - Freeland Church</p> <p>Tuesday 16th 7.30 pm Holy Week Joint Service - Freeland Church</p> <p>Wednesday 17th 7.30 pm Holy Week Joint Service - Freeland Church</p> <p>Thursday 18th 7.30 pm Maundy Service in Hall</p> <p>Friday 19th 7.30 pm Holy Week Joint Service</p> <p>Sunday 21st 10.30 am Easter Day - All Age Service</p> <p>Sunday 28th 10.30 am Morning Service - Junior Church</p> <p><b>May</b></p> <p>Sunday 5th 10.30 am Morning Service</p> <p>Friday 10th 2.00 pm Seated Service - Friday Link in Session Room</p> <p>Sunday 12th 10.30 am Morning Service - Communion - Junior Church</p> <p>Sunday 19th 10.30 am Morning Service - Junior Church</p> <p>Sunday 26th 10.30 am Morning Service</p> <p><b>June</b></p> <p>Sunday 2nd 10.30 am Morning Service - Junior Church</p> <p>Sunday 9th 10.30 am Morning Service - All Age Service</p> <p>Sunday 9th 7.00 pm Gala Week Joint Ecumenical Service</p>	<p><b>April</b></p> <p>Friday 26th 12.00 The Terrace Church Hall</p> <p>Saturday 27th 7.00 pm The Masqueraders Church Hall</p> <p><b>May</b></p> <p>Saturday 18th General Assembly Edinburgh</p> <p>Sunday 19th 1.00 pm Heart &amp; Soul Princes St Edinburgh</p> <p>Tuesday 28th 7.30 pm Kirk Session Meeting Session Room</p> <p>Friday 31st 12.00 The Terrace Church Hall</p> <p><b>June</b></p> <p>Sunday 9th 11.30am Stated Annual Meeting Church Hall</p> <p>Friday 28th 09.00 - Summer Drop-in Church Hall</p>
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## REGULAR ACTIVITIES

<p><b>Monday</b></p> <p>7.30pm Guild 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> weeks (October – May)</p> <p><b>Tuesday</b></p> <p>6-7pm 1<sup>st</sup> B.o.W. Rainbows</p> <p>7.30pm 2<sup>nd</sup> B.o.W. Guides</p> <p><b>Wednesday</b></p> <p>6-7pm 2<sup>nd</sup> B.o.W. Rainbows</p> <p>7.30pm 1<sup>st</sup> B.o.W. Guides</p>	<p><b>Thursday</b></p> <p>6.30 pm Anchor Boys (<i>Freeland Hall</i>)</p> <p><b>Friday</b></p> <p>6.30 –8pm Boys Brigade Junior Section (St Machar's Ranfally Hall)</p> <p>7.30-10pm Boys Brigade Company Section (<i>Freeland Hall</i>)</p> <p><b>Sunday</b></p> <p>10.25am Junior Church (all sections in Hall)</p> <p>8-10pm Gryffe Youth Fellowship (<i>Freeland Church</i>)</p>
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### BEADLE

### SOUND

### WELCOME

	<b>Apr 7th</b>	Jennie Durward	Ian Abernethy	Philip McCulloch (T)	Agnes McKechan	Morven McLeod
	14th	Norma Hancock	Dave Macdonald	Bill Robb (T)	Margaret Richardson	Naomi Butterworth
	21st	Dennis Taylor	Donna Bryson	Alan Durward(T)	Jennie Durward	Lorraine Russell
	28th	Philip McCulloch	Drew Richardson	Jim Downie (T)	Barrie Shepherd	Tricia Telfer
	<b>May 5th</b>	Marion Reid	Jim Downie	Dave Macdonald (T)	Anne Allen	Jane Stirling
	12th	Dick Hughes	Ian Abernethy	Marion Reid (T)	Jamie Spiers	Shirley Spiers
	19th	Helen Bullen	Dave Macdonald	Dennis Taylor (T)	Mary Taylor	Sarah McNaught
	26th	Jennie Durward	Drew Richardson	Bill Christie (T)	Coral McLaughlin	Scott McLaughlin
	<b>June 2nd</b>	Norma Hancock	Donna Bryson	Bobby Hart (T)	Ann Hart	Elizabeth Lyle

### FLOWERS

### TRANSPORT

	DONATION	DELIVERY	CAR 1	CAR 2
<b>Apr 7th</b>	Moira Johnston	Moira Johnston	Norma Hancock	Coral McLaughlin
14th	Morven McLeod	Morven McLeod	Stewart Yeaman	Scott McLaughlin
21st	Easter Sunday	Easter Sunday	Francis Hancock	Morven McLeod
28th	Cherie Guthrie	Cherie Guthrie	Mary Taylor	Drew Richardson
<b>May 5th</b>	Anne Yeaman	Anne Yeaman	Ann Hart	Bobby Hart
12th	Stewart Little	Stewart Little	Norma Hancock	Coral McLaughlin
19th	Norma Hancock	Norma Hancock	Stewart Yeaman	Scott McLaughlin
26th	Chris Gourley	Chris Gourley	Francis Hancock	Morven McLeod
<b>June 2nd</b>	Evelyn Watson	Evelyn Watson	Mary Taylor	Drew Richardson

