

Session Clerk:
Mr. W. H. CHALMERS, C.A.,
"Lynton," 18 Dovecot Park.

Clerk to the Congregational Board:
Miss I. C. H. SIMMERS, M.A.,
"Killravock."

Treasurer:
Mr. J. DAWSON MACFARLANE, C.A.,
"Braefoot," 99 Main Street.

Proclamations Officer:
"Park View," Park Lane.

St. Fillan's Church News

OUR 850th ANNIVERSARY

1973 will be a very special year in the history of our congregation as we shall be commemorating the 850th anniversary of the monastery on the Island of Inchcolm, and also the earliest known date for the existence of St. Fillan's Church.

"The foundation-charter of the monastery has not been preserved, and the earliest complete record of its endowments is the bull of Pope Alexander III of the year 1178. Its foundation, however, is unanimously ascribed by medieval writers to King Alexander I. (1106-1124), and the date of its foundation is given in the Scotchchronicon as c.1123. The story of its foundation told in the Scotchchronicon and repeated elsewhere, may be thus translated:-

'In the year of the Lord 1114 was founded the monastery of the canons of Scone. And about the year of the Lord 1123, in a way no less strange than marvellous, was founded the monastery of St. Columba off the island of Aemonia near Inverkeithing. For when the noble and most Christian King, the lord Alexander, the first of that name, by reason of state affairs, was crossing at Queensferry, there suddenly arose a violent gale from the south-west, which, almost with a comet's speed, compelled the boat with its crew to put in at the island of Aemonia, where dwelt at that time a certain island hermit, who, dedicated to the service of St. Columba, and supported by a slender diet, consisting of the milk of a single cow and mussels and small fish taken from the sea, zealously devoted himself to a tiny chapel there. On such food the king and his considerable retinue thankfully subsisted for three days while storm-bound. But when, on the previous day, in the greatest peril of the sea and tossed by the fury of the gale, he despaired of his life, he made a vow to the Saint that if he (St. Columba) brought him with his retainers in safety to the island, he would leave in the isle to his (St. Columba's) praise such a memorial as

would afford shelter and comfort to sailors and the ship-wrecked. And so from this chance it came about that he founded there a monastery of canons, as is seen at the present day; not only because from his youth he ever held St. Columba in special honour; but also because his parents, being childless for several years, had been deprived of the solace of offspring, until, after praying with humble devotion to St. Columba, they proudly obtained what they had long so fervently desired

There is no reason to doubt that King Alexander was the founder of the monastery, towards the end of his reign. As early as 1180 an Inchcolm charter records that, according to the evidence of religious men, clerks and laymen of the kingdom of Scotland, the church of Aberdour pertained to Inchcolm in the times of Kings Alexander, David and Malcolm."*

This shows that the Church was in existence at the time the monastery was being built, and indeed, is older than it. For all we know we might be entitled to be commemorating the 900th anniversary, but that is not certain. Some have suggested that it must have been another church which is referred to, but Dr. Ross, the historian, has pointed out that in medieval times it was a most unusual thing to shift the site of a church, and that where this was done, the old churchyard infallibly told where the earlier church had stood. Of such a churchyard there is no sign, so we can be quite sure that St. Fillan's is the church which is referred to. Besides, the architecture of the chancel and the North wall date the building somewhere in the 11th and 12th centuries.

Eight hundred and fifty years is a long time for any church to remain standing. As I have indicated in recent news letters it has been altered on a number of occasions. The remarkable thing about it is that it should still be in use, and should have retained such a wonderful beauty and atmosphere. It has been well named in a national guide book as 'The Miniature Cathedral.' We who worship in it Sunday

by Sunday are deeply conscious of the precious heritage into which we have entered. Few worshippers have such a privilege.

The committee of the Congregational Board which has been charged with the preparation of the celebrations for both events, feels that first and foremost our celebration should take the form of an act of thanksgiving to God, not just with our lips, but by a gift to Him. At a later date the members and friends of St. Fillan's Church will hear more of what is planned.

*Charters of the Abbey of Inchcolm. Edited by Easson and MacDonald.

THOUGHT FOR TO-MORROW

"There is work which God requires to be done by each one of us, and which no one else can do."

Evelyn Underhill



The ladies of the
WOMAN'S GUILD
will hold a Coffee Morning
at the Manse on
SAT., 23rd SEPTEMBER,
10.30 a.m. till 12 noon
BRING AND BUY
Tickets 15p

Christianity even when watered down is hot enough to boil all modern society to rags.

G. K. Chesterton

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

Sunday School recommences on 17th September. The Senior Department for children between 8 and 13 years of age meets in the main hall. Mr. A. P. Elder is the Superintendent. The Primary Department for those between five and eight years of age meets in St. Colme's Hall (upstairs.) Miss I. C. Simmers is the leader. The Nursery Group under Miss J. Bald meets in the small hall on the right. All departments meet at 10 a.m.

The Bible Class also commences on Sunday 24th September at 12.30 p.m. in St. Colme's Hall. It caters for young people from 13 to 18 years of age. After common worship it divides into two sections. Teen-agers under fifteen are led by Mr. J. Anderson; those from fifteen to eighteen by the Minister.

Young people of all denominations are welcomed.

A Games Night is run on Wednesdays in conjunction with the Bible Class.

OUR CHURCH

In a previous issue of the St. Fillan's Church News I mentioned that it was about 1790 that it was decided to leave St. Fillan's Church to fall into ruin and to build a new church in the Wester Village. This Church was of course what is now our Church Hall. It was built at the mutual expense of the heritors, the Earls of Morton and Moray. It was built on ground belonging to Lord Moray at the junction of the two estates. From papers dated some years earlier one can guess that the proposed new church was the talking point of the whole district — who was to do this and who was to do that, and not least who was to pay, and how much? One of the Commissioners for Annexation forecast that

"It will be a much more difficult and tedious affair than was suspected."

The Building and Seating, Kirkyard and Dykes were to cost £500, while Lord Morton was to pay £50 to Lord Moray for his share of the ground.

The Church when it was built had the pulpit facing North, i.e. the minister's back was to the High Street. There were three galleries around the minister and the precenter had his place below the high pulpit. A plan of the layout and the seating arrangements still exists. Each heritor and land-owner had his own group of pews for himself and his retainers. The important folk like the Mortons and the Morays provided their own comfortable and elegant chairs. We still possess one of the eight Morton chairs. It is beautiful Mahogany Chinese Chippendale.

The Session House and Vestry were what is now the small hall.

Originally the ground sloped up to the Church from the High Street, not as it is at present. The Wall in front, of which a little remains, was castellated. A trace of it can be seen between the main building and the storehouse to the East. In those days there were two gates instead of one as at present. It was really a rather plain building, as most churches of the period were, but it gained greatly in appearance when the War Memorial was placed in the centre between the main windows. Originally this handsome memorial had a recumbant figure of 'Peace' on the plinth at eye level, but I understand that she had to be removed as she suffered greatly from drips of water and dive bombing by the birds.

The hawthorn trees were planted on the occasion of the present Queen's Coronation. The westward tree was planted by the Rev. Dr. George Lawrence, minister of First Congregational Church, Burlington, Vermont, who was our assistant at that time; the eastward, by myself. There are small copper plaques commemorating the occasion below both trees.

After the congregation returned to the restored Church of St. Fillan's in 1926 two of the galleries were taken down and the church turned into the spacious hall it is. In 1963 extensive repairs and redecoration were required to the building and the opportunity was taken to close in the remaining gallery, and convert it into an additional hall. Mr. William Archer, architect, was our Property Convener at that time, and it was due to his planning that we have such a fine suite of halls. The upstairs hall got the name of St. Colme's Hall, since the memorials of the old St. Colme's Church were housed in it: and the main hall the name of St. Fillan's Hall. I often thought, that the small hall ought to have been called St. Martha's Hall as that is where much of the work is done, being adjacent to the kitchen, which was extended about the same time as the construction of St. Colme's Hall. We had of course a hospice in Easter Aberdour, which was dedicated to St. Martha, and which was founded to give shelter to the pilgrims who came for healing to St. Fillan's Well, and the travellers who were waiting to be ferried across to the Abbey on Inchcolm.

D. W. R.

CAR SERVICE

Are there elderly members living near you who would welcome 'a lift' to and from Church particularly during the winter months?

Resume of Reports submitted to the Annual General Meeting of the Congregation held on 22nd March, 1972:

FINANCE

Increases were reported in both cash collections and Free Will Offerings compared with the previous year, thus enabling increased sums to be sent to the Mission and Service Fund and other causes. Dalgety Church received £200 as in the previous year, to reduce the amount of loan on their Manse. Repairs to fabric costing £793 had been carried out during the year, but with the donation of £600 from the Woman's Guild the balance of the Fabric Fund had been maintained at £2,682.

ELECTION TO CONGREGATIONAL BOARD

The following members were elected to the Congregational Board for a period of three years—

Mr. D. Gunn
Mr. A. D. Lowe
Mr. G. M. Pollock
Mr. A. Smith
Mrs. A. L. Drummond
Mrs. J. C. Ford

STEWARDSHIP COMMITTEE

For the Mission and Service Fund of the Church, 1971 was the most encouraging year yet. Direct givings by Congregations amounted to £1,146,000 as against £1,030,000 for 1972; an increase of 11%.

Total receipts of the Fund amounted to £1,228,000 and although the target of £1,350,000 was not reached, the leap towards it appears to have gained vigour during 1971.

For 1972 the target is again £1,350,000 and if we can maintain our efforts this gives us a good chance not only to reach it, but to do even better.

Important as finance is, the Stewardship and Budget Committee in Edinburgh have devoted a great deal of time during the past year to the problem of membership.

They are shortly to produce a worksheet containing guidance for the training of visitors, whether they be Elders in their regular visits, or specially recruited men and women willing to be trained to visit their fellow members. Your own Committee will study this worksheet and submit their conclusions thereon to the Session in due course.

It is now generally recognised that there is a limit to what one man, such as a Minister, can do, but no limit to what people can accomplish when they are

united in a common cause and recognise they all have a part to play.

SUNDAY SCHOOL

One hears so much about falling numbers these days it is gratifying to note that in Aberdour the numbers have increased – despite the falling birthrate and fewer baptisms – to a total of 153 children attending Beginners, Primary and Junior/Senior classes, superintended by Mr. Elder, aided by his faithful staff of teachers.

Offerings also increased: £130 was an all-time record and donations were sent to various societies, namely Lifeboats, U.N.I.C.E.F., Quarriers Homes, Shelter, R.S.P.C.C., as well as to the usual Church of Scotland missions. Children of the Junior/Senior Department brought £15 to their party which was forwarded to three Homes for old people in Fife.

The picnics and parties were a huge success and enjoyed by one and all.

BIBLE CLASS

The Bible Class had met regularly in the hall after morning service, the 13/15 year group under Mr. Anderson, and the 16/17 year group under Mr. Rutherford. There were 40 members on the roll and attendances had been good.

WOMAN'S GUILD

At the opening meeting in October the President, Vice-President, Treasurer and Secretary were re-elected. In the interests of the work of the Church at home and overseas, three of the committee members were elected delegates to the Presbyterial Council.

The syllabus for the regular meetings was issued, the theme for the year being "Towards Tomorrow." The Branch is indebted to Mrs. Rutherford for the careful preparation of what proved to be a very successful syllabus, providing the Branch with a variety of interesting speakers, and covering all aspects of the Church's work.

In December Miss Inglis, General Secretary of the Woman's Guild, spoke at a joint meeting with Dalgety Bay and North Queensferry Guilds on the year's Guild Project, namely the Kambui School for deaf children in Kenya, and at a later date £10 was allocated from Guild funds in support of this cause.

Collections for the Blind Asylum amounted to £64, and for the Bible Society, £44. These sums were record-breaking, but none more so than the Church Sale of Work which raised £809. Out of this total £780 was transferred to Church funds, and £60.25 was allocated to various deserving causes.

R. S. A.

THE WOMAN'S GUILD

The theme for the new session of the Woman's Guild is "Freedom and Responsibility." This will be Mr. Rutherford's subject at the opening meeting on Tuesday, 3rd October. This evening meeting commences at 7.30 p.m.

The first of the afternoon meetings is on 10th October at 2.30 p.m. when Mrs. Tom Paterson, Kirkcaldy, will speak on "Forty Years Experience as a Minister's Wife."

Mrs. G. M. McIntyre of Hawkcraig Road will speak a fortnight later at the afternoon meeting on her "Holiday Memories of a Baltic Cruise."

The Congregational Sale of Work has been arranged to take place on Saturday, 25th November.

All the ladies of the parish are welcome to come to any of the Guild meetings.

OUR MISSIONARIES

News has just been received that Miss Helen Thom, who was our missionary in the Yemen is to take up other work in the near future and will therefore cease to be our partnerplan missionary. On her return she wrote to us telling of the difficulties which had been encountered and thanking us for the help and support which we had given. Here is part of her letter:—

Dear Friends,

No doubt you will be surprised to learn that all of the Church of Scotland Missionaries were compelled to leave Aden by the end of March owing to the non-renewal of our Special Residence Passes as and when they expired, and that the Church of Scotland Mission in Aden is no more. The Keith Falconer Hospital and all of the Mission premises in Sheikh Othman and Beihan were required to be handed over to the Ministry of Health. The past four years, since we returned in 1968, have been years of uncertainty as to how long we would be allowed to remain, but we give thanks to God for allowing us to return even for that short period.

The Danish missionaries of Danish nationality have been allowed to remain meantime, and plans are under way for an additional extension to enlarge the D.M.S. school for girls ... As yet there is still freedom to distribute Christian literature in the Republic of Yemen.

We were all relieved to know that all of our local staff employees were to be absorbed into the employment of the Ministry of Health, and that our departure caused no loss of employment for them.

Even though Islam is being shaken and challenged by revolutionary thinking and other ideologies it still means ostracism from family and community for the

Muslim who becomes a Christian, and the bonds of family and community life are much stronger in their culture and society than they are in ours.

There is great medical need in the Yemen Arab Republic to the north of the People's Democratic Republic where we were. This could be a new opportunity to serve the Arab peoples.

Yours sincerely,

Helen Thom.

SUMMER OUTINGS

The younger children of the Sunday School once again visited the Public Park at Cowdenbeath. Though the weather was poor it was possible to carry out the usual programme of games and to have tea. By that time the rain had come, and we were glad to get back to the 'buses and make an early return to Aberdour.

The senior scholars and their teachers enjoyed an evening visit to Dollar Glen, and a scramble on the hillside above Castle Campbell. There, too, the rain came on, and we made a speedy descent to enjoy the ordered 'fish and chips.'

The Bible Class asked for a mystery tour. It took them over half of Fife, zig-zagging by way of Cupar and St. Andrews to Anstruther. There they visited the 'shows' and had something to eat.

The Woman's Guild visited Quarrier's Homes at Bridge of Weir. The ladies had an interesting time there, and later had tea in Gourrock.

CHRISTIAN AID WEEK

The Coffee Morning organised by Mrs. G. M. McIntyre of Hawkcraig Road on Saturday, 20th May realised the sum of £75.65. In addition the Christian Aid Stall brought in £45.25, of which £14.75 is credited to the local committee. It was a most successful effort, and our thanks is due to the ladies for their planning and preparation.

THE EVENING SERVICES

After discussion with those who attend the services on Sunday evenings, it was clear that a majority preferred that the services should be held in the Church each Sunday, and not as has been our custom recently, sometimes in the Church and on other occasions in the Hall. Evening Services therefore this winter will all be held in the Church except when there is some special occasion. It is hoped that this will prevent the confusion which sometimes existed as to where the service was being held.

The Evening Services resume on Sunday, 17th September at 6.30 p.m.

MONDAY EVENINGS

On Monday Evenings our church halls are open for our members. An opportunity is given to play Badminton, Table Tennis, Billiards etc. in a friendly atmosphere.

Sponsored films are screened on the third Mondays of the month, commencing in October. The following films have been booked:

16th October,

Son et Lumiere

Algerian Pipeline

Old Sherry

20th November,

Lure of Florence

Achievement in Africa

The Story of Spode

There is no film show in December.

GROWING UP

At the closing service of the Sunday School which took place in the Church on 25th June these young people who were going on to the Bible Class were presented by the Kirk Session with a Book Token to mark the occasion. They were:—

Janette Jackson, Livingstone Lane

Kerry Nisbet, 28 Humble Terrace

Linda Sinclair, 24 Humble Terrace

Alison Brown, 75 Main Street

Angela Meiklejohn, 66 High Street

Susan Conell, 11 Morayvale

Sandy Cunningham, 13 Dovecot Park

David Hanlon, 24 Inch Avenue

Peter Bradley, 36 Humble Terrace

Philip Cole, 14 Inch Avenue

Alan Hempseed, 2 Morayvale

Michael Doidge, Earn Villa, Park Lane

Alan Alexander, 14 Cullalo Crescent

Willie Lyon, 14 Park Lane

WHAT DOES CHRISTIANITY MEAN?

In the home — kindness

In Business — honesty

In society — courtesy

In work — thoroughness

In play — fairness

To the unfortunate — pity

To sin — resistance

To the strong — trust and good will

To the weak — help

To the penitent — forgiveness

To all men — reverence and love

To God — worship and service

C. F. Banning

Accessions (by Certificate)

Mr. and Mrs. A. H. B. Ferguson,
"Glenelg," Inverkeithing Road

Mr. K. F. Gibb, "Seaways,"

St. Colme Road, Dalgety Bay

Mr. and Mrs. D. Kerr, 31 Hawkraig Rd.

Mr. and Mrs. A. Wark, 1 Bellhouse Rd.

Mrs. D. Dunse, 1 Bellhouse Road

Mr. and Mrs. T. Brown, "Belmount,"

41 Main Street

THREE GATES

If you are tempted to reveal
A tale to you someone has told
About another, make it pass,
Before you speak, three gates of gold.
These narrow gates: First, "Is it true?"
Then, "Is it needful?" In your mind
Give truthful answer. And the next
Is last and narrowest, "Is it kind?"
And if to reach your lips at last
It passes through these gateways three,
Then you may tell the tale, nor fear
What the result may be.

From the Arabian.

TWENTY YEARS AGO

"Foreign Mission is a soulless title until it takes shape in actual individuals in far-off lands. From now on we are to be linked with the work in Kenya. We have undertaken to be responsible for part of the salary of Dr. Wilkinson of Tumutumu. We shall hear from him from time to time, and when he returns on furlough he will come and pay us a visit. As the years pass we shall get to know him as our own missionary."

"The Young People's Fellowship Concert raised the sum of £40 for their adopted niece, Morag Laird, of Hawthornbrae, Church of Scotland Children's Home."

"The winter activities of the choir were brought to an end on Easter Sunday, when under Mr. Gillespie, it rendered the cantata "From Cross to Crown." It was a memorable evening of praise and thanksgiving and a fitting climax to the conscientious work of the choir. They are a happy band, and it was natural that, though some rain did fall, their outing to Glen Lyon was a great success. Singing began and ended in Aberdour; and an excellent meal was had at Coshievill Hotel, and the scenery surpassed expectation."

Disjunctions

Mrs. K. Miller, Bellhouse Road to Ceres
Mrs. A. Page, Otterston Grove, Dalgety Bay to Dalgety

Mrs. D. Aikman, 8 Morayvale to Dunfermline

Mrs. M. Cuthbertson, Murrell Terrace to Craill

Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Loughlin, Cowdenbeath to Hartford

Miss M. E. Malcolm, Main Street to Australia

Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Coltart, The Murrell to South Queensferry

Mrs. D. C. Yellowley, Mill Farm to Howgate.

Baptisms

9th April

Elaine Lawson, Ruislip, Middlesex

9th April

Lisa Magdalene Thomson, 34 Humble Terrace

16th March

Shona Catherine Page, 26 Otterston Grove, Dalgety Bay

23rd July

Ann Sarah Walls, Tadworth, Surrey

Marriages

27th May John V. Cressey and Agnes S. Jack

1st June David B. L. Aikman and Barbara Drummond

10th June George R. Watt and Sandra J. Fox

8th July William McC. Coltart and Diane M. Burniston

14th July Ian S. Ireland and Alexandrina F. Wilkie

29th July Graham R. Milne and Vivien K. Hunt

Deaths

25th March

Mr. John Inglis,
Craighall

6th April

Mrs. E. McLaren,
Margate Villa

16th April

Mr. R. Robertson,
17 Morayvale

9th May

Mrs. P. G. Edie,
9 Humble Terrace

11th May

Mr. R. G. Lyon,
Park Lane

10th July

Mr. A. M. McKenzie,
14 St. Colmes Crescent

12th July

Mr. John Sinclair,
12 Morayvale