

Secretary's Scribblings!

As I write this, there is snow on the ground. Winter is very much still with us, but the garden is not so sure! Bulbs are coming up, and many shrubs and bushes are pushing out buds. Spring must be coming!

In the Christian calendar, the season of Lent has started, and we reflect on the future as we head towards Easter. "Make me a clean heart, O God: and renew a right spirit within me" (Ps 51, v10).

The future is also taxing the thoughts of your Vestry, as they continue the search for a Rector for St John's. Again, as I write, the Vestry is preparing to interview two applicants, both strong contenders, but very different. Maybe by the time you read this, there might be news. Or not, of course!

As we move on, and following the Quinquennial Inspections of both the Church buildings, including the Halls, and the Rectory, your Vestry, and ultimately the congregation, will have to consider the state of "our" real estate! Heather and I have spent much time at the Rectory over the last months, attempting to bring the house up to a welcoming standard for any new incumbent. We feel we are now winning, but there is still work to do. The Church building is another matter, and will require much more consideration, especially as regards the tower roof!! Some help with these property matters would be most welcome!

This may sound rather downbeat, but we look forward to Easter and the future with hopeful anticipation.

With good wishes to all readers!

Richard Finch

LENT STUDIES AND LUNCHESES

The Lent Lunches will take place as usual each Friday in Lent from **February 16th until March 23rd**. All proceeds will go to this year's FACT Charity, which again is 'The Inspirational Orchestra'. St John's will host the lunch on **March 16th**. In Margaret Cousins' absence, Fay Slingsby will assist Judy Hill (St John's temporary FACT representative) with the organisation of this event. They will be pleased to receive any offers to make soup and/or assist with serving etc. on the day. Please contact as soon as possible at church or on 01307 818 787. FACT will also be running **Lent Studies** which will be led by Forfar Clergy and will take place each Thursday evening at the East and Old Church, time to be confirmed. The first Lent Study will be on **Thursday, 15th February**.

Lent Appeal

The proceeds of the Lent Appeal this year are to go to CHAS, Children's Hospices Across Scotland. There is plenty of information about this on the table at the back of the church.

It is really self-explanatory in that the charity provides support for families who are struggling with all the problems and emotions experienced when a child has cancer. It is well worth readers' while to look at their booklet.

There are two homes, Rachel House and Robin House, but a great number of patients are visited and entertained in their own homes.

I was shaken to read that in Scotland today 15,400 families are in need of such support. So hopefully our Lent Appeal can make things easier for them all.

ROTAS

Sunday March 4th Third Sunday of Lent

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Exodus 20: 1 – 17, 1 Corinthians 1: 18 – 25, John 2: 13 - 22

Reader Madeline Kingston

Wednesday March 7th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday March 11th Fourth Sunday of Lent (Mothering Sunday)

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Numbers 21: 4 – 9, Ephesians 2: 1 – 10, John 3: 14 - 21

Reader Eryl Rowlands

Wednesday March 14th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday March 18th Passion Sunday

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Jeremiah 31: 31 – 34, Hebrews 5: 5 - 10, John 12: 20 - 33

Reader Lee Winks

Wednesday March 21st

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

HOLY WEEK

Sunday March 25th Palm Sunday

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Readers and readings to be determined

Wednesday March 28th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Friday March 30th Good Friday

2 p.m. One hour's meditation

Sunday April 1st Easter Sunday

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Special readers and readings

Wednesday April 4th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday April 8th Second Sunday of Easter

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 4: 32 – 35, 1 John 1: 1 -2: 2, John 20: 19 - 31

Reader Fay Slingsby

Wednesday April 11th

10.15 a.m. Said Eucharist

Sunday April 15th Third Sunday of Easter

11a.m. Sung Eucharist

Acts 3: 12 – 19, 1 John 3: 1 – 7, Luke 24: 36b - 48

Reader Nora Craig

QUIZ NIGHT: Friday April 20th 2018

The date for the Quiz Night has been slightly postponed this year in order that the reigning Champion Team will be able to defend their Title!! (i.e. Roger & Margaret Cousins will be back from their travels Down Under!). The format will be similar to past years and teams can comprise of 4 to 8 persons. Do not worry if you are on your own or just a pair – teams can be put together on the night.

There will be a glass of wine / soft drink on arrival at 7pm (thereafter available by Suggested Donation) and the Quiz will commence at 7.30pm. Supper will be served during the Interval.

There will be a prize for the team with the **most** marks and the '*prized wooden-spoon*' for the team with the **least** marks! Please reserve your space from FRC members or by phoning Fay – 01307 818787 / 07831708996 or Douglas – 07841457716 Tickets @ £10 will be available soon

Tuesday Club – 9th January 2018

Jarvis Brothers by Charles Jarvis

The first meeting of the New Year for the Tuesday Club was yet another success thanks to our chosen speaker, Mr Charles Jarvis of Forfar's Jarvis Brothers Departmental Store. Little did we know the depth of history associated with the Jarvis family or the development of an establishment which has withstood the test of time these last one hundred and thirty-four years.

The origin of family name is possibly Gervais, dating back to the fifteen hundreds and the Huguenots, but what can be confirmed is that William Jarvis's father was born in 1815 and lived in Kingsmuir. He worked as a hand loom weaver. For a time William pursued the same employment but it was not for him. Working as a packman was then followed by his shop in the town's Castle Street in 1884. Soon the premises were too small and so a move was required. Such was the success of the business by the end of the 1880s, plans for a custom built property began on the present site. The building was occupied in 1892 at a cost of £4,000. Workmanship and services were of the highest quality and as time passed the expanse of ground to the rear of the property was adapted to the needs of the time, which eventually included a croquet lawn. Charles described the interior of the building, the heating system and the subsequent adaptations related to function, fabric and an expanding business.

Obviously staff were crucial to business success, and at its peak, 30 dressmakers and 8 tailors were employed and their efforts did not go unrewarded. Time was given to 'relax the austere rules' as recorded in the *Forfar Review* of 3rd January 1913, when a full paragraph was dedicated to an account of the Christmas

outing. One lady, Miss Mair worked for 50 years in the Ladies Department and David Logan fitted curtains and carpets, cleaned windows and lit fires from the time he left the Army until 1968, when he retired to have more time to enjoy his love of cycling. Miss Guthrie was another stalwart working between 1919 and 1969 and notes indicate staff were not so much employees but friends. Notes state Miss Guthrie baby-sat us and our families. She bathed us, fed us and took us on hikes. Charles' father worked until he was 89.

In business terms much has changed - little is made on the premises. Curtains, pillows, suits and jackets, etc. are made in Scotland, England, France, Germany, Austria and Ireland. Jarvis brothers have been through the end of the Victorian reign, the Boer War, the First and Second World Wars, the Great Depression, the Great Inflation, Edwardian, Georgian and Elizabethan reigns, the General Strike and the Miners' Strike. In conclusion, Charles quoted another long-standing businessman by saying, 'The only reason we stay in business is to see what happens next'. Whatever the answer is, let us hope Jarvis Brothers remains with us for a long time to come.

The evening ended in the usual manner. Evelyn gave the vote of thanks and we all enjoyed the selection of sweet and savoury bites. Thanks to all.

Linda Robbie

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Tuesday Club – 13th February 2018

Forfar & District in the War

Did Commander Jim Smith RN (retired) of Kirriemuir, choose us to be his 'guinea pigs' or were the Tuesday Club members specially selected to hear Jim's new talk? Be it the former or the latter, we certainly were taken on an emotional journey as Jim explored recorded events of the Great War and the input of the people of Forfar and District. Overall, 64 million men took up arms (2,265 from Forfar and District). 1million (514 from Forfar and District) died from injuries, 1,006,000 were injured (physically and mentally) but survived to 'tell the tale' of this 'war to end all wars'.

Of the 132 Military awards to the men of Forfar, 23 were mentioned in dispatches and 12 awards were given by France, Belgium, Italy and Russia. A further 23 Military awards were won throughout the District. In addition 14 Civilian awards were granted to men and woman from Forfar and District (12 to Forfar).

Referring to *Forfar & District in the Great War 1914 – 1919* compiled by D.M. Mackie for the Forfar War Memorial Committee 1921, Jim quoted Andrew Peffers, Captain in the Highland Light Infantry 1914 – 1919 regular army, France and Mesopotamia, ‘*from a Mesopotamian Diary*’ the descriptive and indeed graphic account of war, from the hopes of the young men, to the often torturous and devastating outcomes for so many. The following are just a few of Peffers’ words; ‘.....steel ring closing tightly round Kut’s throat.....’; Peace hung on river and plain. Ping! and bullets sang again.....’; ‘tomorrow there will be no more dreams, only suffering for the home folk....’. Short extracts, yes, but so telling.

During his research, Jim came across Charles Melvin, VC, a Private in the Regular Army who hailed from Kirriemuir and who also served in Mesopotamia. Realising little was known of this heroic man, Jim composed a poem which was published in the Forfar Dispatch in 2017, a century after he was awarded his Victoria Cross. Melvin’s bravery – he died in 1941 - is also recorded along with two other Kirriemarian VC recipients in Cumberland Close, Kirriemuir.

Jim spoke of other local families who welcomed home their loved ones or suffered the despair of loss and concluded his presentation with a heart-felt reading of the poignant poem *The Forfar Bus* written by J.B. Salmond.

In a moving vote of thanks, Richard Finch said how appropriate it was we are reminded of these events, especially since a century on, our world is just as troubled as it was then. This was followed by the always welcome beverages and tasty bites. Thanks to all concerned.

Linda Robbie.

Winter to Spring

Biting winds and shorter days,
Snow & ice but children play;
Wrapped up warm, hats, gloves and boots,
Sliding, sledging, wearing hoods.

Build a snowman, snowball fights,
Scraping windscreens day and night;
Clearing paths so no-one slips,
Then icicles start to drip.

Comes the thaw, the adults cheer,
Snowmen melt, kids shed a tear;
Grass and earth is seen once more,
Winter's leaving us for sure.

Tiny buds show on the trees,
Tops of bulbs peep through with ease;
Shoots of green with a hint of white,
Snowdrops start to make things bright.

Then the crocuses, purple, gold,
Show their heads though it's still cold;
Daffs and tulips follow soon,
Sunshine helps to make them bloom.

Spring is coming, Easter too,
Days are warmer, skies are blue;
Gloves and hats can go away,
Ready for another day.

Heather Finch

RANDOM THOUGHTS FROM DOWN UNDER

March, springtime, new shoots and buds. Time to look forward to what we hope will be a bright future for St. John's. A couple of years ago we were fortunate to have the ministry of Reverend Thomas Brauer on Sunday mornings. Occasionally he was accompanied by his family. He is now Vicar in a Parish in the Diocese of Christchurch, New Zealand. As I am in Christchurch for a few days I went to the 9.00 service at Redcliffs. There was a warm and friendly welcome from the congregation but most especially from Thomas himself, it took a moment or two from him to recognise my face but immediately he commented on how much he had enjoyed his visits to Forfar. After the service ended he had to dash off to his second service of the morning at the main Anglican Church for the Parish, Sumner. The earthquakes that Christchurch suffered in 2010/11 resulted in many buildings being deemed unsafe. Sumner Anglican church is one such building so services take place in a school. Thomas' two congregations are very different, The Redcliff's folk are very like St. John's and number about 30 to 40 each Sunday. The Sumner congregation is between 120 and 150 with a large number of young people. There is also a music group and we understand services are lively.

Over lunch we met Cheryl and the children and it was a real joy to hear how they are settling in and enjoying life in New Zealand. The people that we spoke to after service Redcliffs were fulsome in the appreciation of the ministry that Thomas is providing. We left Redcliffs with happy thoughts. Thomas and his family remember St. John's and all of us well and send their warmest good wishes to us.

Roger Cousins.