



Friends of Gordon Chapel **NEWSLETTER**

www.gordonchapel.org.uk

No. 23

Charity number SC001009

February 2015

Editorial: Happy New Year

We would like to wish all the Friends of Gordon Chapel a very happy New Year and welcome you to this edition of the Newsletter. The year in Fochabers has started on a sombre note with the passing of Ena Baxter, whose obituary can be found in this edition.

Also in this edition, we have a special account of Busega Children's and Development Services Assistance (BCDSA) which is a non-profit Non-Governmental Organisation that operates in the Magu and Ilemela in the Mwanza Region of Tanzania. Busega supports vulnerable children and enables them to develop physically, mentally and spiritually from birth to maturity. It is sustained by volunteer workers, local and international donors and as you will see, from the report, there is a strong Moray connection.

I am grateful to James Forshaw for his report on the Cascade Conversation about Same-Sex Marriage.

Please do keep the stuff coming and, as I've said before, I'd love to hear from our Friends further afield so if you have anything at all you would like to share with fellow Friends of Gordon Chapel please email me on newsletter@gordonchapel.org.uk

Peter H Reid (PHR)

Obituary: Ena Baxter



The death in January 2015, of Ena Baxter was widely reported in the media from the BBC to the local newspapers here in Moray. Ena, like Gordon, was a towering figure in her field but for us she was also a fellow member of Gordon Chapel. We reproduce, with permission, *The Daily Telegraph* obituary of Ena.

Ena Baxter, who has died aged 90, was the driving force and for many years the face behind the phenomenal success of the gourmet soup manufacturers Baxters of Speyside.

She married into the business, which had been founded in the late 19th century by her husband Gordon's grandfather, George Baxter, who borrowed £10 to open a village store at Fochabers on the banks of the river Spey, where his wife Margaret made and sold jam in earthenware jars. Gordon's mother Ethel added Royal Game soup to the range, but when Gordon took over as managing director in 1947, the company was still small, with only 11 employees and a turnover of £44,000.

Ena was an art teacher at the local school when she married Gordon Baxter in 1952. They moved into a small cottage beside the factory where, one night for supper, she adapted a recipe for Louisiana chicken gumbo soup which she had found in a magazine, substituting green beans for okra (which she had never heard of and had to look up in the dictionary). Her husband was so impressed that he persuaded her to swap her paint brushes for a wooden spoon and a Bunsen burner, and installed her in the family factory.

There she began developing new recipes for the firm's tinned soup range, but it was uphill work. When she tried to can her gumbo recipe, it came out "like a load of sludge", and after weeks of failure, she was on the verge of throwing in the towel when she went to see a rerun of the 1943 Greer Garson film about Marie Curie, who had suffered repeated setbacks before discovering radium. Inspired by her example, she determined to have one more try. She got it right and Baxters sold a million cans of gumbo soup in the first year.

She went on to improve the recipe for the Royal Game, developed new jams, chutneys and marmalades, introduced tomato soup and nearly came to blows with her husband over a new leek soup (she wanted cream of leeks, he wanted cock-a-leekie). He won, and cock-a-leekie became Baxter's biggest seller. "I can read a recipe and know what it will taste like," she told an interviewer. "I can eat something and know exactly what is in it. It's a bit like making perfume but instead of a nose, I've got a mouth."

Only one product proved a failure. Canned porridge was launched by Baxters in the early Sixties, then quietly withdrawn a few months later. Ena Baxter did not like talking about it.

The company grew quickly and Ena Baxter proved her mettle as a tough businesswoman: cock-a-leekie soup was exported to Japan and minestrone to the Italians, with haggis for the Korean army. "Made in Scotland by Scotsmen" was the label in Arabic for Middle Eastern customers of Baxter's Scotch broth. Baxters' Cullen Skink, the smoked haddock and potato broth, was said to be a particular favourite of the Duke of Edinburgh and the company won three royal warrants.

The Queen's Award for Export was based on Baxters' work in processing and exporting game and venison; the firm handled a large proportion of the annual cull of Scotland's red deer.

One of the secrets of the Baxters' success was their avoidance of all the gimmicks of 1980s corporate oneupmanship. They borrowed no money from the banks, financing reinvestment in the factory through their own cash-flow. Despite more than 170 take-over bids, Baxters remained strictly a family concern. They

had no appetite for buying other companies or other brand-names. They did not own their own farms, or even their own lorries. They just carried on devising, canning and bottling good quality food products based largely on good quality Scottish ingredients. As Gordon Baxter was fond of saying: “Where’s Mrs Heinz? Collecting French Impressionists. Where’s Mrs Baxter? In the kitchen making soup!”

By the mid-1990s the company was employing 800 staff with an annual turnover of £45 million and exporting to more than 30 countries, while Ena’s name became a fixture on the annual list of Britain’s wealthiest women.

She was so crucial to the company’s success that, from the 1970s, she became a star of television commercials featuring her tending her stockpot in the kitchen of the family home near Fochabers, surrounded by baskets of vegetables, bunches of dried flowers and rows of copper jelly moulds. In 1974 she published the popular Ena Baxter’s Scottish Cookbook, on the cover of which she appeared in a kilt having a picnic in the woods near her home — the symbol of Scottish family wholesomeness.

In the commercials Ena Baxter may have given the appearance of a sweet old dear pottering around her kitchen, but it took rather more than charm to make a fortune out of jam and soup. Gordon Baxter once described their life as “bloody slavery”, adding that he and Ena had “divorced about 10 times” while building the business together.

“I have spent half my life reading recipes and the other half walking from the office to my home and back again in wellington boots,” Ena recalled, and she admitted that there had been days when she would collapse at the kitchen table and weep from sheer frustration, and nights when she would crawl to bed so exhausted that she could not even summon up the energy to get undressed. The daughter of a farmer, she was born on August 12 1924 at Drumblair House, near Forgue, and brought up at Huntly, Aberdeenshire. At first she wanted to be an artist, but her plans

were upset by the outbreak of the Second World War, when she left her studies at Gray's School of Art in Aberdeen to work in the Ministry of Food's Torry Research Station, where she was involved in experimenting with forms of fish processing.

After the war, she got a job as an art teacher at a high school in Fochabers, where she met Gordon Baxter and, over the next four decades, helped him and his brother Ian to build the family company into one of Britain's best known brand names.

Ena and Gordon Baxter had three adopted children, a daughter and two sons, all of whom were groomed to run the family business. After their daughter Audrey stepped in as managing director in 1992, they had more time to devote to outside interests. While her husband enjoyed fishing on the Spey, Ena Baxter returned to her first love, painting. Exhibitions of her work, mainly flowers and still lifes in the Dutch style, were held at Duff House, Banff, of which the Baxters were devoted supporters, raising many thousands of pounds for charity. They were also generous patrons of the National Galleries of Scotland.

Her final years were overshadowed by the deaths, in 2013, of her husband and her son Michael, who had left Baxters to set up his own food consultancy. She is survived by her other two children.

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/obituaries/11357910/Ena-Baxter-soup-entrepreneur-obituary.html>

Footnote

Ena, when studying at Gray's in the 1940s, "stepped out" for a time with my uncle Major John Milne who was also studying at Art School at the time. Their lives took different turns of course and Ena came to teach at Milne's and my uncle went to teach in Ellon. Ena married Gordon and John married my father's sister. Ena became a successful businesswoman and icon for the firm; my uncle ended up as Art Advisor to Grampian Regional Council. On discovering the connection Gordon and Ena ensured that John was invited to the service marking the installation of the Baxter Window. **PHR**

Report on Cascade Conversations

These took place at various venues around the Diocese to allow folk to discuss the issues surrounding the Same Sex marriage legislation which would become law in December 2014. Listening to different opinions and views was essential part of the meeting.

I attended our local meeting at St Margaret's, Lossiemouth, where the evening discussion had an interesting format. We were first addressed by three speakers: one firmly opposed to confirming same sex relationships in church; the second speaker had been opposed but was now in favour due to his son being in a same sex relationship; while the final speaker was in a same sex relationship herself and wished to see this acknowledged by the church she serves.

The honesty and courage of the speakers was both moving and remarkable.

We then divided into three groups to discuss what we had heard and to express our own views. My group was chaired by Revd. Christopher Ketley, the Rector of Holy Trinity, Elgin who ensured we all had a say in the discussion.

This ranged from someone who seemed to confuse homosexuality with paedophilia, but this was important in clarifying what it was we were talking about – adult relationships between loving couples of the same sex wishing to have God's blessing on their union.

I found myself taking an historical perspective, remembering when homosexual acts were illegal, before the law was repealed. I reflected on how the world has moved on in the last fifty years or so since the time when racism was rife, Apartheid existed in South Africa and the bitter struggle for Civil Rights in the United States.

Surely that was not acceptable to God? We now accept everyone as equal in the eyes of God. We realise that women have as much right as men to the calling of Deacon, Priest, or Bishop. We do not tolerate discrimination on the grounds of someone's sexual orientation.

I must admit at the end of the evening, when we could add our voices on a post-it to the wall of contributions, rather than seeing same sex marriage as a bridge too far, I see it as logical step for a church that wants to open its doors to all and celebrate the life of Christ within all of us.

James Forshaw

Mountbatten Cat: update



Mountbatten Cat has now settled in very well and although still prone to “play biting” and scared by sudden movements or noises he has become a really affection companion. He is now brave enough to go out to explore and have stand-offs with Sandy Cat along the street. He has his own Facebook page and has over one hundred devoted followers.

Busega Tanzania

I am sure Valerie and Arnold Barrow are busy preparing for Christmas and I know they are also busy preparing to travel to Tanzania as BCDSA's latest volunteers. They have been able to chat with us and Robin and Debbie Hill to get a sense of the task that awaits them. They are bringing skills and insights which will help shape the organisation. BCDSA is going through a period of change and as we all know change can be difficult but provides a marvellous opportunity to improve the services provided to vulnerable people in Tanzania. Valerie and Arnold are happy to introduce themselves to BCDSA supporters.



“From an early age Valerie has been heavily involved in caring for others, by visiting the elderly and infirm and supporting those facing difficulties. In recent years, having retired from her employment with a local industrial firm, she has worked as a volunteer for Home Start, which provides support for families, with children under 5 years old, who are finding it difficult to cope. Arnold's career has been within the criminal justice system,

initially in the Probation Service and currently within the Parole Board, with a further period as a manager of Victim Support Suffolk.

Valerie and Arnold have had an interest in Africa for many years, having holidayed there but most significantly having in recent years spent time with UK workers serving in Uganda, Kenya, South Africa and Lesotho. As members of the Salvation Army their interest in Mission overseas led them to lead a group from their Church on a visit to South Africa in 2011. In Johannesburg they spent time with children in a number of junior schools and

also visiting two townships (squatter camps), helping local volunteers to care for the elderly and unwell. The group then spent the next week in Pietermaritzburg, supporting and leading services at a small church.

Since then Valerie and Arnold have been exploring opportunities to work abroad, aiming to fit this in alongside family and church responsibilities. It was through the organisation 'Christians Abroad' that they were introduced to BCDSA and John and Christine Carney and since then discussions have taken place about an initial visit and how their skills might be used. A programme of work has now been agreed and they will be travelling with the Carney's to Tanzania at the beginning of February 2015, spending the next month helping but also learning about the challenges faced by the organisation. Arnold and Valerie are excited about the forthcoming visit and hope to make a positive contribution to the aims of BCDSA which include, 'enabling children at Mayega to develop physically, mentally and spiritually from birth to maturity' and 'undertaking a range of other community development schemes to alleviate ignorance, poverty and poor health".

John and I are also in preparation mode and have already acquired a ridiculous amount of luggage to take with us. We are still hoping that Turkish Airlines will allow us extra luggage on the plane. Keep your fingers and toes crossed! Planning to travel with a donated full size keyboard, as well as a TV/DVD player from the 2nd Elgin Scouts brings challenges, but it will be worth the hassle if we manage to pull it off. I have to say it has been fun gathering craft items, construction, sewing and maths sets, recorders etc. and I am sure the items will be much appreciated by the children at Mayega.





Trayport, a London based IT firm have also been helping to fill the suitcases. The staff team have been collecting cross stitch kits, footballs, table tennis equipment and DVD's. Thank you to everyone who has donated items. I am only left wondering how we get our clothes in.....?

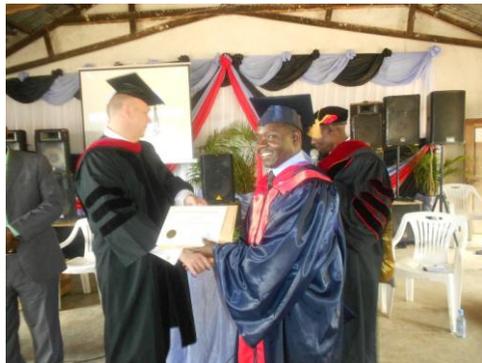
the new community room/kitchen



The Scouts had a fun coffee morning on 29th November and donated £500 to help with the purchase of a solar system for the new community room/kitchen and store at the orphanage. I am sure the Mayega children will like seeing the photographs of youngsters of their own age, connecting with them in this way. Kids are the same the world over, despite the vast differences in their lives. The scouts held a silent auction of their painted piggy banks to raise even more money for a solar panel on the new build at

Mayega. It was a wonderful effort by these young people.

There was a party in Mwanza at the end of November. The Rev Gadlord Deuli, BCDSA's Accountant, graduated, BA Theological Studies from the Miami International Seminary (Mwanza Study Centre).



It was not easy for him to continue with his BCDSA work, church commitments and study at the same time. There was a service of thanksgiving and a large cake, baked by Julieth as a gift. People with so little are very generous. The young people from the Moving-on Project joined the celebrations. I am sure Rev Deui being a (mature) student has helped him connect with and understand the challenges faced by our young ex-Mayega students. I have a plan to get the Moving-on kids together for a meal once a month and an informal support session with support staff. I have not worked out where the cash will come from yet, but I believe it will come from somewhere.



There has been a population explosion in the nutrition project. I have tried asking our Tanzanian colleagues where all the

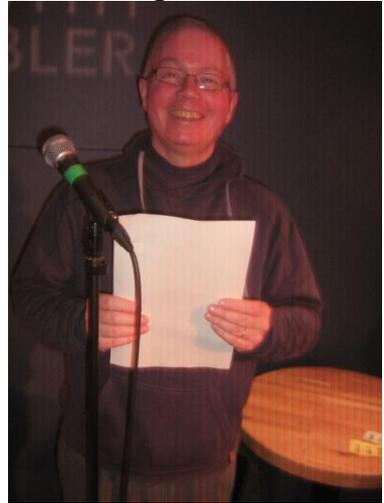
chicks are coming from but they are much too polite to give me a lesson about the birds and the bees! With the patter of tiny feet comes an increased feed and vaccination cost. We have not started selling any eggs yet but the kids are now each eating two eggs per week. I did suggest to Rev Deuli that the cockerel would need to be removed from the hen house but he just laughed.

Thank you to the 50 people who attended the quiz night in the Drouthie Cobbler in Elgin on 12.12.14. Thanks once again to Moray Council staff for all their help in organising and running the event. A competition to name the Mayega Cockerel was won by one of the Cornerstone Teams



(Christine's Cronies!). "Popcorn" or "Bisi" (BEESEE) in Swahili was the winning name. Tanzanian Tansies won the team name competition. The magnificent sum of £547 was raised to support the work in Mayega. The quiz master had to deal with some good natured heckling; however the rules of the night clearly stated that his answers were above challenge!

The quiz rounded off the fundraising events for 2014 but never fear. We will be back early in 2015 with a music night on 17th January. Again the Drouthie Cobbler will be the venue and the Busega Boogie Band will be playing Bluegrass, Blues and 50's Rock and Roll music. Tickets are priced at £5 and are limited to 60 people, so please book your tickets (from us or Moira Duncan at Moray Council) early.



We focus a lot on food when we think of the children's centre at Mayega. It is such a basic need. With your help the situation has been so much brighter in 2014. Recently a staff member reported, "The children are very fine. They are happy. They are on full rations, three meals per day". Thank you for all your fundraising and for the monthly contributions that many of you now make.

We have received a number of "Christmas" donations that will ensure there are "extras" for Christmas Dinner. The £61 proceeds from an African Cricket Mini-Quiz, held at Fochabers Cricket Club Annual Dinner, have also gone into the Christmas pot. The winner on the night was Arnav, a young, knowledgeable and talented cricketer. Thanks go to all club members who took part.

If anyone fancies trying the 6 cricket quiz questions below, John will be delighted to score it for you. No googling the answers!!

1. What animal forms the logo for the Kenyan national cricket team?

2. The disgraced South African cricket captain Hansie Cronje died in a plane crash. In which year did he die?
3. Which test playing nation did Kenya beat by 53 runs in the 2003 Cricket World Cup?
4. What is the nickname of the South African cricket team (named after a small African flowering plant)?
5. Name one of the two Zimbabwean cricketers who, during the 2003 Cricket World Cup, staged a 'black armband protest' at the 'death of democracy' in Zimbabwe?
6. Kingsmead in Durban was the venue, in 1939, for the famous 'timeless test' between South Africa and England. How many days did the match last?

It is the end of the school year in Tanzania and we will soon have the school reports. Let's hope they will be the best they can be. With a lack of teachers in key subjects the children are disadvantaged. In 2015 we will need to find ways to support the kids at school. We will need books and other resources. We will need expertise. The kids have asked for extra tuition during the school Christmas holidays and we are currently exploring possibilities for them.

We have recently received a copy of the new Tanzanian Children's Homes Regulations, thanks to contacts made by Robin and Debbie Hill. We applaud the Tanzanian Government for publishing these regulations and aspire to meet them at Mayega. We are under no illusions about how difficult this will be, as money is simply not available. The important thing for me is that the "rules" attempt to bring good practice into children's homes. We will do our best to comply with them, knowing that we will fall short. It is a journey towards progress.

There has also been a lot in the media recently about the UK Government backed campaign by, Hope for Homes for Children, to eradicate orphanages across the world. Again in principle we support this. It would be a joy to find families for the Mayega kids; however the reality in Tanzania, with an estimated

1.5million to 2 million orphans, is that the loving families able to take them are simply not there. Poor communities are already overwhelmed by the number of children requiring care. There is no one size fits all solution here. BCDSA supports vulnerable families through micro-grants and micro-credit loans, enabling families to stay together. Help with nutrition, school fees and medical expenses prevent children ending up in care. Work needs to be done to stem the flow of kids into orphanages upstream. Fostering and kinship care is the way forward but much planning and investment is needed at a national level to ensure a quality service. Without the Mayega Children's Centre the current residents would have a very uncertain future. Life there is not ideal but the alternatives are much worse. John has already begun exploring "fostering" options and we will be meeting with Mick Pease from the charity "Substitute Families for Abandoned Children" in late January. We hope that we can tap into their expertise, and learn from their experience of working in many different countries, including Uganda our close neighbour.

Christmas is fast approaching and families are on the move travelling home for Christmas. Two of the "Moving On" students travel back to the Mayega Children's Centre today for the Christmas holidays. We spoke to them on Skype last week and they were looking forward to going "home". The other two will be working over Christmas. The hotel business is busy at this time of year and they are still on work placement.

Christine and John Carney

New ventures

Peter Reid has established his own small business, called the history people (www.thehistorypeople.eu). The business will undertake Scottish family history research for clients across the globe as well as doing work like House or Property histories and heritage consultancy. Although still doing the 'day-job', Peter hopes that his new venture might take off enough to enable him to go part-time at the University in due course.

Building News

A significant amount of fabric work will have to be undertaken over the course of this year. In the Rectory, the bedrooms annexe and link corridor have a serious damp and condensation problem. Resolving this has been identified by the Vestry as a priority. Our lighting system in the church has been modified and adjusted and a specialist will be coming to look at the discolouration of the paint above the altar.

Friends' Prize Draw winners

There have been two prize draws since our last edition. The winners of the Friends of Gordon Chapel Prize Draw for **December 2014** were as follows:

£100 **Mrs Jean Grimshaw**

£75 **Mr Angus Gordon Lennox**

£50 **Mrs Janet Watson**

£25 **Mr John Svensson**

Congratulations to the winners.

Friends' Subscriptions

You will find, enclosed with this edition of the Newsletter, the renewal of subscription form. We do hope that you will be able to become a Friend of Gordon Chapel again this year.

The Friends, through their subscriptions and their other support, play an incredibly important part in helping to sustain the chapel and we are immensely grateful to each and every one of you.

The Friends working group will be meeting shortly to plan out our events and activities for the coming year.

Gordon Chapel

Priest	Rev Frances Forshaw	01343 829094
Sacristan	Janet Philpott	01343 820196
Vestry Secretary	Daphne Stevens	01343 821731
Priest's Warden	Margaret Forsyth	
People's Warden	Moira Middleton	

Friends' Team

Fiona Gordon, Co-ordinator 01542 833213
Inchbroom, Cairnfield, Buckie, Banffshire, AB56 5EL

Professor Peter Reid, Newsletter Editor 01542 831586
17 Stewart Street, Port Gordon. Banffshire AB56 5QT

Audrey Abelsmith, Membership Secretary 01343 820680
53 Mossmill Park, Mosstodloch, Fochabers, IV32 7JX

Brian Shepherd 01343 842179
2 Elsher Close, Lhanbryde, Elgin IV30 8FA

James Smart 01343 820074
Whiteleas, Nether Dallachy, Fochabers, IV32 7QX

Marion Bateman 01343 830471
39 Forsyth Street, Hopeman, IV30 5SY

We would appreciate items from Friends for inclusion in the next newsletter. Please send to:- Professor Peter Reid, 17 Stewart Street, Port Gordon AB56 5QT or email: newsletter@gordonchapel.org.uk