



*Friends of Gordon Chapel*  
**NEWSLETTER**

[www.gordonchapel.org.uk](http://www.gordonchapel.org.uk)

No. 25

Charity number SC001009

January 2016

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**2016**

## A special day for Moray Riding for the Disabled

One of the charities to which Gordon Chapel has contributed in the past is the Moray Riding for the Disabled Group. It first offered riding at Drumbain Farm, Rothes, in 1971. In 1973 the group moved to Garmouth, then to Lossiemouth in 1992. Seven years later it was established in Cranloch where today, October 9<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated our tenth anniversary. Riders come in three days a week and use RDA's ponies, Tim, Blair and Corrie as well as ponies from the Cranloch Riding School. For this our anniversary display 30 of our riders took part some of whom are otherwise wheelchair bound.

It involved an incredible amount of organisation from some very dedicated people to put on "A year in the life of Moray R.D.A" display for friends, carers, family and a very special guest Princess Anne, our patron and guest of honour, arrived promptly at 2.30pm and we began with six riders for January wearing tartan sashes and riding to the music "A guid New Year to Ane and All" then playing pass the parcel.

The activities for each appropriate music. We session on grooming tools countryside challenge for jumping for June and There were Halloween when teams of riders in collect rats, skeletons, and Christmas had the RDA



month were done to had a training for March, the April. Show dressage for July. games for October costume raced to eyeballs for a spell! ponies as the Three

Kings and everyone sang "We three ponies of RDA"

The whole thing lasted only 30 minutes but what a lot of organising and getting pony stirrups and reins ready for each rider, assembling them in order ready to go in, mounting and dismounting and getting riders back to parents or carers.

Princess Anne then spent an hour chatting to all the riders and giving them medals and was so friendly and interested, (we were all remembering she had been an Olympic show jumper!), one rider, Catherine, has been riding with the RDA for 40

Royal on a There were as an come out, disabled son that are



years and had already met the Princess

previous RDA visit. about 170 people in the indoor school audience. I saw one mother who had to moved to tears after watching her participating. It's not just the riders helped!

Meeting on three days a week round the year, with a winter break, we hope for good weather so we can use the outdoor school, the fields and woods. On pouring wet days it's quite a constraint to have maybe 15 horses at a time in the indoor school. Some riders only need a leader, some also need one or even two side-helpers. We get to know the riders and the horses too. They all have their foibles! Some respond to firmness and some to sweet-talking, just like the volunteers!

One thing for sure all the riders who met the Princess Royal and received their medals from her are going to remember the day and the kudos it gave them for a very long time.

*Margaret Forsyth*

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## **Reflections on Remembrance Sunday**



I doubt whether those who signed the Armistice in 1918, in a railway carriage in a French forest, could possibly have imagined the development of such a significant annual and global act of remembrance.

After all, the colossal loss of life led many to believe that the Great War would be the war to end them all. But sadly we didn't listen. Tragically history has kept repeating itself. So today we tend to remember not just those who died in that war but in all other conflicts since. In my experience, these occasions go beyond remembering the generous sacrifice of armed forces. Our own mortality is captured by them, those we have loved and let go are recognised, the dashed hopes and shattered dreams we once entertained are recalled.

So the two minute silence is about more than the horrors of war and the ultimate price for freedom. This pause in a hectic world is a symbol of our spiritual need to be still; the formal silence, a prompt to the memory which helps us mourn our losses; and the poppy we wear, among other things, an acknowledgement of the limitations of human existence. and there is more to us than remembrancers. We are creatures of hope who long to hear the music of the future. We understand that simply to recall the past is not necessarily to deal with it. Things need to change. The world is still not free of tyrants and despots, our lives are still broken. There's a museum on the island of Anglesey which contains something called the Memory Wall. I was there not long ago.

Tourists and locals place hand written Post-it notes on the wall to reflect their memories of the island. One lady recalled how the same week every year she arranged to meet up for a holiday with the same person from a different part of the world. A trainee pilot wrote of the island bringing him into contact with the girl he eventually married. I asked the curator of the gallery how long these particular messages would remain on the wall and he told me that they were taken down every month to be replaced by new memories. God has a memory wall as we discover in Psalm 103:12-14. Reassuringly, He remembers our human limitations. But even more remarkably He removes our sins from the wall and forgets them. How is it that God can remove our transgressions from his memory wall? Perhaps this may help to make sense of it.

In Arlington National Cemetery in Virginia, there's a gravestone with a simple inscription on it. "I want to stand where you are standing." Underneath is the story of an incident that occurred in the American Civil War. A Yankee soldier, only 19 years of age, was part of a firing squad, assigned to execute a man for treason. As he closed one eye and took aim down the barrel of his gun, he was horrified to see that he knew the man he was about to shoot. He lowered his gun, walked over to his captain and said "I can't do it. That man has a wife and children at home. If I shoot him I not only end his life, but I end theirs too. I will make his wife a widow and I'll be robbing the children of a father. I can't do it." So after a discussion they came up with a plan. The young soldier could take the condemned man's place. The 19 year old Yankee marched up to the Confederate captive and said simply, "I want to stand where you are standing." The captive took off his blindfold and walked away, back to his wife, his family, his life. But his freedom came at great cost to another: the young man who had willingly chosen to die in his place.

That's how through the death of His Son on the cross, God deals with our sin. Jesus takes our place. He is our substitute. So as we remember the fallen and with them our own mortality, we remember that in Christ, the self-giving God has remembered us but not our sin.

"May I never lose the wonder, the wonder of the cross. May I see it like the first time, standing as a sinner lost."

*Peter Baker*

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## An outing to Glasgow

Following a trip to Glasgow during the summer, I was talking to my mother and saying how fantastic the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum is. She commented that she would like to go there one day. This set in motion our pre-Christmas Glasgow outing!

Catching an early morning train from her nearest train station at Stonehaven, we enjoyed a comfortable trip, arriving however to quite usual Glasgow weather of pouring rain and wind! We battled with our umbrellas and went to the very reasonably priced hotel I had booked for a night. The staff were friendly and let us book in early which gave us a chance to dry off a bit before venturing out again. The sun came out and we went to have a cuppa in “The Willow Tearooms” in Sauchiehall Street. Owned and run from 1903 by a Mrs Cranston, it was designed by Charles Rennie MacKintosh and retains almost all the original fittings. In addition to the main tearoom there is another “Room de Luxe” which originally was for women only and because it was so special, the tea was a penny dearer than in the other tearoom! Above this was a small and interesting museum named the “billiard room” charting the history of the building.

Re-fortified, we caught a bus out to the Kelvingrove Art Gallery and Museum. Opened in 1901, the building has a magnificent exterior and the interior is equally impressive. The Museum contains something for everyone.

In the main atrium there is a wonderful organ, built by Lewis and Co. Each day at 1pm there is a concert and the day we were there it was given by Bill Hutcheson. The programme was very varied with pieces by Bidgood, J.S. Bach, Messier, Reger, Gershwin, Handel and Halsey. The acoustics are tremendous and two large screens on either side of the organ filming the organists feet and hands add to the enjoyment. It certainly has given some inspiration for my organ playing in Gordon Chapel!

We viewed the magnificent painting of “Christ of St John of the Cross” by Dali, an exhibition of the “Glasgow Boys” artists, a Spitfire plane flown by one of my mother’s friends, a “Cultural Survival” exhibition and much more.

Emerging into the darkness we caught a bus back into the city. Not being entirely sure where to leave the bus, other passengers were very helpful with advice. When our stop was indicated and we stood up to get off, I managed to tip the entire contents of my handbag all over the floor and whilst scrabbling about retrieving my belongings, one of the other passengers bellowed, “hold the bus, driver” and much to my amazement he did, with a smile!

We just had time to freshen up before having a meal and going to the Theatre Royal for a performance of Oscar Wilde’s “The Importance of being Earnest”: yes this is the one with Lady Bracknell saying the immortal phrase “A Handbag!”

A wonderful day was followed by a good night’s sleep.

The next day, we walked to Glasgow Cathedral; the Cathedral of Saint Mungo, the patron saint of Glasgow, Saint Kentigern. We were given informative tour by a volunteer the site of a chapel constructed in the 5<sup>th</sup> century and the built in the Scottish Gothic style dates from the late 12<sup>th</sup> only mediaeval cathedral on the mainland to survive the Reformation. Apparently the Glasgow gathered together and bent on destruction.



also known as a very guide. It sits on by Saint Mungo current Cathedral architectural century. It is the Scottish destruction of the merchants of repelled a mob

There are many signs of where opulent altars and other lavish artefacts were torn away and in the large wooden door into the Sacristy, you can still see bullet marks.

damage however

The choir or rood screen is unusually constructed of stone rather than the usual wood which is why it has remained intact.

We viewed impressive stained glass windows dating from early examples including “The Creation” by Francis Spear to the contemporary “Millenium Window” by John Clark.

We had hoped to visit the Saint Mungo museum which is adjacent to the Cathedral, but that will have to be on our next trip as we just had time to scamper back into town to Queen Street station to catch a train home.

We voted the trip a resounding success and Glasgow folk the friendliest in Scotland, apart from those at Gordon Chapel of course!

*Fiona Gordon*

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## Facts we may need to know (or not!)

It is too late now, but did you see the lovely full moon on Christmas Day?

If you missed it you will have to wait until the year 2034 for it to shine beautifully down again on that Holy Day. A full moon always reminds me of the lovely aria from the opera 'Rusalka' composed by Antonin Dvorak.....Rusalka daughter of the water goblin sings her 'Song to the moon' asking it to tell a prince of her love for him.

Now thinking forward to Easter Sunday this year - 27 March, early? But the earliest for us was 23 March 2008 and prior to that date was 1818 when Easter Sunday was on March 22. The next early date for March 22 will be the year 2285 and that will not be a problem for any of us, although slightly closer, for March 23 it will occur in the year 2160.

*Brian Shepherd*

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Friends of Gordon Chapel draw results.

£100.00 Brian and Jean Stewart. £75.00 Janet McKay.

£50.00 Ted Best. £25.00 Helen Gray.

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## The meanings of colours in Religious Stained Glass

Looking at the beautiful stained glass windows in Gordon Chapel, I have found myself wondering about the significance of the varying colours portrayed. In past years, according to some research, many people may have been illiterate but would have understood what the colours represented, unlike today when many of us have little knowledge of their meanings.

### RED

Represents the blood of Christ; a reminder of the suffering and sacrifice of the son of man. Strong emotions of love and hate. Charity and martyrdom for faith.

### BLUE

Associated with the Virgin Mary. Hope, sincerity, piety, love of Divine works.

## PALE BLUE

Peace, serene conscience, prudence, love of good works.

## GREEN

Spring, growth, rebirth, immortality, faith and contemplation.

## PALE GREEN

Baptism

## VIOLET

Love, truth, passion, suffering.

## WHITE

Chastity, innocence, purity, the colour of God.

## BLACK

Death and regeneration. The black rose was a symbol of silence among Christian initiates.

## YELLOW

Divinity, power, glory, the halo of saints., Gates of Heaven. Can be used to symbolise treachery as in depictions of Judas.

## PURPLE

Royalty, God the Father, suffering & endurance. Christ may have worn purple before His crucifixion.

## GRAY

The risen Christ, a mixture of the Divine Light of Creation and the darkness of sin and death.

## BROWN

Spiritual death and renunciation of worldly items.

## RAINBOW

Union and God's covenant with humanity.

*Fiona Gordon*

Little Johnny was in church, getting restless as the preacher's sermon dragged on and on. Not able to take it anymore, he leaned over to his father and whispered, "Hey, Dad, if we give him the money now, will he let us go?"



After the christening of his baby brother in church, little Johnny sobbed all the way home in the back seat of the car. His father asked him three times what was wrong. Finally, the boy replied, "That priest said he wanted us brought up in a Christian home, and I want to stay with you guys!"



Attending a wedding for the first time, a little girl whispered to her mother, "Why is the bride dressed in white?" "Because white is the colour of happiness, and today is the happiest day of her life." The child thought about this for a moment, then said "So why is the groom wearing black?"



After a church service on Sunday morning, a young boy suddenly announced to his mother, “Mom, I’ve decided to become a minister when I grow up.” “That’s okay with us, but what made you decide that?” “Well,” said the little boy, “I have to go to church on Sunday anyway, and I figure it will be more fun to stand up and yell, than to sit and listen.”



A little girl was sitting on her grandfather’s lap as he read her a bedtime story. From time to time, she would take her eyes off the book and reach up to touch his wrinkled cheek. She was alternately stroking her own cheek, then his again. Finally she spoke up, “Grandpa, did God make you?” “Yes, sweetheart,” he answered, “God made me a long time ago.” “Oh,” she paused, “grandpa, did God make me too?” “Yes, indeed, honey,” he said, “God made you just a little while ago.” Feeling their respective faces again, she observed, “God’s getting better at it, isn’t he?”



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*At the sound of the tolling midnight bell  
a brand new year will begin.*

*Let's raise our hopes in a confident toast,  
to the promise it ushers in.*

*May your battles be few, your pleasures many,  
your wishes and dreams fulfilled.*

*May your confidence stand in the face of loss  
and give you the strength to rebuild.*

*May peace of heart fill all your days  
may serenity grace your soul.*

*May tranquil moments bless your life  
and keep your spirit whole.*

*unknown*

# Gordon Chapel

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