

# Paisley Abbey



## Abbey Herald

**October 2024**

Each year, the beginning of October brings to the Abbey our annual celebration of Harvest Thanksgiving. Though not many of us have first-hand hands-on experience of commercial farming or growing, most of us are able to willingly give thanks for the earth's fruitfulness and abundance which we so much enjoy and on which we all depend. So much of it, if we are honest, we simply take for granted. But should we ?

As harvesting wraps up across the south of the country, massive combine harvesters can still be seen doing their work in parts of Scotland and the north of England. According to official reports, unsurprisingly this year, yields are proving to be mixed. Incessant rainfall has taken its toll on soils and crops across Britain. Over past months, some areas report having experienced double the average rainfall and so its little wonder that soils have taken a pounding. Moreover, even where the harvest has been successfully completed, rainfall described by one farmer as 'biblical' has washed away freshly planted crops and flooded grain stores proving disastrous for farmers and growers alike.

With a worrying number of farming suicides being reported and farms, large and small, going bankrupt because of lack of sufficient government support, the possibility of a serious dearth of necessary foodstuffs is a reality that should not be easily dismissed as fantasy. Problems faced by our farming communities today are problems for us all.

Some years ago, I read an article written by the Green Movement urging us not to buy vegetables or fruit that had been imported because transportation uses fuel which pollutes the atmosphere. Here is a dilemma not just for our country, but for the world. If we are not to be allowed to purchase foodstuffs from abroad, what about those developing countries whose only source of foreign currency is, say, their banana crops ? Poor countries need to trade in order to buy the machinery, technological expertise and ability to further develop.

There is a desperate need in the so-called developing world for appropriate and sustainable growth in order to allow those who are living at, or below, starvation level that which is necessary for them to enjoy something of the life we take for granted. Meanwhile, within our own society, there is a need for growth in our quality of life. Those two kinds of growth are indelibly linked. The more we can improve our own society's quality of life, the less we will ruin the environment; and the more we will care about those for whom economic growth is literally a matter of life and death.

Jim Gibson  
*Interim Minister at the Abbey*  
*Chaplain to his Majesty The King in Scotland.*

## ABBEY MONDAY OPENING

During September, the Abbey started opening its doors to the public on Mondays. We are now open for business throughout the week. This has proved quite a complex operation involving safeguarding the security of the buildings, and wellbeing of our staff and volunteers. But it has been accomplished successfully. Thanks to the goodwill and support of so many individuals the Abbey is no longer the only cathedral building closed on a Monday in Scotland. To everybody who has made real efforts to ensure this could happen, a very big *'thank you'* is offered.

## ALLOVUS

The opening meeting of our new social group surpassed all expectation in the numbers attending. What a joy it was to see. The group meets fortnightly on a Wednesday afternoon from 1.30pm until 3.30pm. Meetings are held in the Panel Room on the first floor of the Place of Paisley. Access is made by the stone steps on the outside of the building leading up from the car park. For those who may require assistance, the chair-lift may be used at the Shaw entrance. The group is 'open and welcoming' to anyone who may wish to come along. Attendees do not require to be Abbey members. There is no charge. Donations for tea, coffee and biscuits is welcomed.

The next meeting of Allovus will be on **Wednesday, 9<sup>th</sup> October** when our theme is, unsurprisingly, 'Harvest-time'.

## COMMUNICATION

How often have you heard someone say they wished they had known something was happening so that they could have joined in ? Communication is often the key. Rarely is it perfect. However, we never stop trying to perfect our communication activities. We want everyone to know about the wonderful things happening at the Abbey: Saturday recitals, Sunday worship, weekday concerts, visiting tourists, guided tours, congregational social events, welcoming shop and refreshing café to name but a few. To further our communication strategy, we will shortly be sending such information about our congregational worship and life to all our members by email on a weekly basis. There is so much going on in and around the Abbey about which we should be proud and, in which, we just might want to participate.

## ELDER DUTY TEAMS

- October** - John Kitson's Team  
**November** - Michael McGill's Team  
**December** - Marion Sommerville's Team

## PARISH REGISTER SEPTEMBER

### Weddings

- 7 September Iona Stoddart & Taylor Shields  
21 September Lisa Galbraith & James Jones

### Transference from another Church

James Taylor

## RENFREWSHIRE FOODBANK

The congregation of Paisley Abbey generously supports the Foodbank set up to serve our local community in Paisley. By doing so we are trying to assist the most vulnerable people for whom life can prove the most difficult. The Foodbank distributes to those for whom the need is most urgent. If you would like to contribute, please bring along your donations to the Abbey on the last Sunday of the month. Anything you may be able to donate will be much appreciated.

The Foodbank are finding there is more demand for items they provide. Particular items needed in October are toiletries for men & women, biscuits and tinned fruit & vegetables.

Thank you to all who faithfully donate each month and to those who now give support. Your donations show the community that the congregation of the Abbey care for others and actively contribute to the wellbeing of all.

# ALLOVUS

Allovus (All-of-us) Paisley Abbey's  
new club for everyone

Wednesdays - 1.30 pm - 3.30 pm  
Meeting fortnightly

Varied programme of activities, speakers and outings  
Refreshments served

SYLLABUS up to December

9 October	Harvest Time
23 October	All Things Relaxing
6 November	Memories of Times Past
20 November	Film Day
4 December	Scams And Scammers
18 December	Christmas Fun



# PAISLEY ABBEY TOURS

## *SUMMER VISITORS TO THE ABBEY ON GUIDED TOURS*

During June, July and August, we welcomed visitors on Tuesdays and Thursdays for advertised Guided Tours - a total of **106** on **21** separate occasions. Canadian visitors came from Vancouver while those from the US were from Boston, Miami, Jacksonville and Arkansas. Some came from Australia and we had one visitor from Latvia. There were also two ladies from Ukraine, who are currently resident here. English visitors came from London and Kent. Others were more local from Paisley, Glasgow, Kilmarnock, Saltcoats, Aberdeen and Bridge of Weir.



## *TOURS BOOKED IN ADVANCE*

In **June**, we had **94** visitors from all over USA on these booked tours. In the first group, there were 67 members of the Clan Bruce, some of whom are shown in the picture above. Several claimed ancestry to Robert the Bruce. Two days later there was a group of 27 from the Clan Cochrane on a tour of Scotland.

In **July**, we had a total of **45 visitors** from the USA. The first group comprised 24 Students, mainly from California and Washington State, who were attending a Summer School at the University of Glasgow. They were studying Christianity in Scotland. The second was a large family group, some of whom had attended morning worship in the Abbey on the previous Sunday.

In **August** there was a group of 21 from different parts of USA that was finishing a 16 day tour round Scotland before attending a Science Fiction Conference in Glasgow's SECC.

Thus, during the summer months, we have welcomed and given booked tours of the Abbey to a total of **266 visitors**.

These tours have proved to be a useful means of explaining the more than eight centuries of history of the Abbey and the ongoing life of the congregation. The feedback from visitors has been invariably positive, expressing enjoyment of the tours and finding them interesting and informative.

It's heartwarming to discover that people are continuing to find their way to the Abbey not only from nearby but also from all over the world!



## SATURDAY LUNCH HOUR CONCERTS

*Saturdays at 12.30 pm*  
*Admission is £5 payable at the door*

**26 October**  
*Rudsambee*  
*Conductor - Ian James Munro*

**23 November**  
*Paisley Abbey Choral Scholars*

**21 December**  
*Programme of Christmas Music*  
*Abbey Brass*

**25 January**  
*Programme of music in celebration of Robert Burns*  
*Diane Merson-Jones (violin) George McPhee*



## EVENTS AT THE ABBEY

**LONDON CONCERTANTE – *West End Musicals***  
*Music from Hamilton, Les Mis, West Side Story & many more*  
Sunday 6 October at 7.30 pm  
Tickets from £21 available from candlelight concerts.co.uk

**LONDON CONCERTANTE – *Vivaldi Four Seasons***  
*& Vaughan Williams The Lark Ascending*  
Sunday 3 November at 7.30 pm  
Tickets from £21 available from candlelight concerts.co.uk

**NATIONAL CHURCHES TRUST EVENT**  
Friday 1 November 10 am—4 pm  
More information can be found at  
<http://nationalchurchestrust.org/scotlandfutures>

**UNIVERSITY OF THE WEST OF SCOTLAND GRADUATIONS**  
Monday 11 - Saturday 16 November

**RENFREWSHIRE SCHOOLS CONCERT**  
Tuesday 3 & Wednesday 4 December time TBC

**LONDON CONCERTANTE – *Viennese Christmas by Candlelight***  
*Strauss, Tchaikovsky & Brahms*  
Thursday 5 December at 7.30 pm  
Tickets from £21 available from candlelight concerts.co.uk

**RAINBOW VALLEY CHRISTMAS CONCERT**  
Saturday 7 December at 1.30 pm  
Tickets £15 (adult) & £5 (child) available from Rainbow Valley

**CITY MUSIC PRODUCTIONS - *Vivaldi Four Seasons at Christmas***  
Sunday 8 December at 7.30 pm  
Tickets from £20.52 available from [www.citymusicproductions.co.uk](http://www.citymusicproductions.co.uk)

**VARIETY CHILDRENS CHARITY CAROL CONCERT**  
Tuesday 10 December at 10.30 am

**ACCORD CAROL SERVICE**  
Thursday 12 December at 11 am  
Tickets £5 available from Accord

**LONDON CONCERTANTE – *Christmas at the Movies***  
*Home Alone, Elf, White Christmas & many more*  
Sunday 15 December at 6 pm  
Tickets from £21 available from candlelight concerts.co.uk



## ABBEY SHOP

We have a new range of toiletries in the gift shop from *Och Vegan Cosmetics*. The company is a cooperation of two soul mates, Magdalena & Remi based in Glasgow and are committed to everything vegan, natural and zero-waste. Everything is made by hand and the ingredients are of the best quality. We have soaps, bath salts, creams and gift sets with a little bit of everything. The aroma in the shop from the soaps is wonderful!



New season selection of bags from *Earth Squared*, are also in stock.

The Edinburgh based company is a fair trade organisation and is committed to sustainability using recycled materials in some of their ranges.



## THE LORDSHIP OF PAISLEY

### *VIRTUTE ET LABORE*

In a previous article published in the “Abbey Herald” by the present writer, the history of the Hamilton family’s entitlement to the Lordship of Paisley through their ownership of the Place of Paisley was given. Little was said about the interlude in the Hamiltons’ association with Paisley beginning in 1652 when James, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Abercorn, sold the Lordship and its associated property to his friend the Earl of Angus. More than a hundred years and five later Earls of Abercorn had come and gone before, in 1764, James, 8<sup>th</sup> Earl of Abercorn, re-acquired some of the family’s ancestral lands in Scotland - among them, the Place of Paisley.

James Hamilton, 2<sup>nd</sup> Earl of Abercorn (c. 1604 – c. 1670) had succeeded to the title of Lord Paisley in 1621 on the death of his grandfather, Claud Hamilton. Claud had been made Commendator of Paisley Abbey when aged just seven years old, the position having been passed to him by his uncle John Hamilton, the last Abbott of Paisley and latterly Archbishop of St Andrews. James’ father, a staunch Protestant, had been much esteemed by King James VI who conferred several titles on him, culminating in his being advanced to the dignity of Earl of Abercorn, Baron of Paisley in 1606. James’ mother, Marion Boyd, was however a recusant who had determinedly brought him up as a Roman Catholic.

When Charles I on his accession in 1625 married Henrietta Maria, accepting the stipulation that she, her children, and her household should be free to exercise their Roman Catholic religion, many in the country - Marion Boyd and her household among them – took this to be a signal of renewed tolerance and were emboldened to declare their true beliefs. However, the reaction of Presbytery to such brazen defiance was as fierce and vigorous as it had ever been. Following a period of ruthless persecution, Marion Boyd and almost her entire household, including her son the Earl and his Countess, were excommunicated. Finally, in 1649 James, by then heavily in debt, was ordered to leave Scotland by the Commission of the General Assembly, and by 1652 was left with no choice other than to sell the Lordship, along with the related buildings. The purchaser was James’ friend the Earl of Angus who in turn, the following year, sold it to William, Lord Cochrane of Dundonald.

The Cochranes of Dundonald have been described as “a very ancient Renfrewshire family” whose ancestors possessed a house and barony close to modern-day Johnstone, memorialised in the name Cochrane Castle. From the time of its foundation, the Barons of Cochrane appear to have had associations with the Monastery of Paisley. Their names are repeatedly to be found as witnesses to charters, and on the Ragman Roll of 1296. In 1346 “Johnnes de Cochran” was witness to the election of an Abbot of Paisley. During the reign of Robert II, the son of Marjory Bruce and first of the Stewart dynasty, successive Cochranes are to be found witnessing documents, and William Cochrane in 1389 received a charter of the barony of Cochrane, suggesting close favour with the king.

The Cochrane lineage is well documented in too great detail for the purposes of this paper. Suffice to say that from these earlier generations can be traced the descent of William Cochrane of Cowdon, born in 1605, educated at Paisley Grammar School and the University of Glasgow, a man of great ability who acquired lands and wealth during a lengthy career in public office, sitting in Parliament and taking an active part in state affairs. He was knighted by Charles I in 1641 before being raised to the peerage in 1647 with the title of Lord Cochrane of Dundonald, the lands of which he had acquired in 1638. A staunch Royalist, he took a significant part in the Wars of the Three Kingdoms, holding important posts throughout the Civil War. In consequence, on the declaration of Oliver Cromwell as Lord Protector in 1654 and the passing of Cromwell's associated Act of Grace that offered a pardon to most Scots who had taken part in the preceding wars, Lord Cochrane was one of seventy-three men obliged to pay a fine in exchange for their pardons. His levy of £5,000 was the fifth largest on that list, indicative of his status and the degree of his involvement.

These were not easy times through which to navigate, but Lord Cochrane appears to have done so shrewdly and skilfully, emerging after the Restoration to be appointed a Privy Councillor and Commissioner of Treasury and Excise in Scotland. Further honours ensued as he was elevated to the title of Earl of Dundonald, Lord Cochrane of Paisley and Ochiltree. Earlier, as described above, he had in 1653 purchased the Lordship of Paisley from the Earl of Angus and had taken up residence in the Place of Paisley, living there "in great splendour and hospitality for many years."

The writer craves that he will be forgiven for now adjourning his account of the ownership of the Place of Paisley to afford mention of the Cochranes' association with Dundonald, a digression that he feels is mandated by the parallels that exist in the history of the Monastery of Paisley and the castle of Dundonald.

The ruins of a fortified tower house survive as a familiar landmark to those travelling in south Ayrshire between Kilmarnock and Troon. They are all that remains of the Dundonald Castle that was built in 1371 for Robert II on his accession to the throne of Scotland. Anyone familiar with the claim of Paisley Abbey to be the "cradle of the Royal House of Stewart" will recall that Robert II, grandson of Robert the Bruce, was born within the Monastery of Paisley - the son of Bruce's daughter Marjory, and Walter the sixth High Steward of Scotland. His heir, Robert III, whose last resting place was the abbey, also used the castle as one of his royal residences.

The edifice is not the first fortification to have stood on this site. It is thought that an early hill fort existed that in turn had been replaced by a succession of medieval castles, of which this was the third. The first had most likely been built by Walter FitzAlan, the first High Steward of Scotland and founder of the Monastery of Paisley.

When David I tasked him with settling the west lowlands of Scotland under his rule, Walter initially based himself in the area of present-day Renfrew. Following the defeat of Somerled and the men of the Kingdom of the Isles at the Battle of Renfrew in 1164, Walter was able to turn his attention to lands further to the south and west, and accordingly required a centre from which to enforce his authority. He chose Dundonald, and later successors to the hereditary office of High Steward of Scotland not only adopted Stewart as their surname, but also styled themselves "of Dundonald."

It was from there, in 1263, that his great grandson Alexander of Dundonald, the fourth High Steward, sallied forth to command the Scottish army that defeated the attempted invasion of Scotland by King Haakon of Norway at the Battle of Largs. Alexander is also credited with building the second castle – said to be one of the grandest baronial residences of its time but largely destroyed in the following century during the Wars of Scottish Independence.

After the castle was rebuilt in 1371, it served for a time as a royal residence before the Wallaces of Craigie became its custodians in the sixteenth century. Falling into disrepair, it was abandoned by the Wallaces in favour of the modern comforts of neighbouring Auchans House, which they had built in the 1580s. Royalist in their sympathies, the Wallaces accrued huge debts arising from their support of Charles I and II, and were forced to sell both Auchans House and Dundonald Castle, which were then acquired by Sir William Cochrane in 1638.

When Charles I raised him to the peerage in 1647, it must surely have appealed to Sir William's strong sense of history, and to his devotion to royal service, that he took the title of Lord Cochrane of Dundonald - conscious of the style adopted by the High Stewards of Scotland centuries before. He was equally alive to his own family history beginning from his earliest known antecedent, "Waldeve de Coueran" who, in 1262, had witnessed a charter concerning Walter Stewart, a younger son of the third High Steward. He knew that the Abbey Church of Paisley had been the parish church for countless generations of his forebears. It was therefore with an even greater sense of pride perhaps that the same man in 1653 took ownership of the Lordship and Barony of Paisley, content in the belief that he might pass the rest of his days within the same ancient walls where once the Cluniac brethren had provided spiritual comfort to his ancestors.

William Cochrane, 1<sup>st</sup> Earl of Dundonald, died at the Place of Paisley on 25<sup>th</sup> August 1685, aged eighty years, and was buried at Dundonald leaving "plentifull fortunes" to his heir and family. He sought to live his life in the spirit of his family motto – *Virtute et Labore* – virtuously and industriously. It is not in the writer's gift to judge his success in having done so.

## SERVICES & MUSIC FOR OCTOBER

<b>6 October</b> 11 am Te Deum Anthem	<b>Trinity 19</b> <b>Morning Service</b>  I was glad	<i>Britten in C</i> <i>CHH Parry</i>
<b>13 October</b> 11 am Jubilate Deo Anthem	<b>Trinity 20</b> <b>Morning Service</b>  O pray for the peace of Jerusalem	<i>Lassus</i> <i>Howells</i>
4 pm Responses Psalm 127, 128 Canticles Anthem	<b>Choral Evensong</b>  Abendlied	<i>McPhee</i>  <i>McPhee in G</i> <i>Rheinberger</i>
<b>20 October</b> 11 am Benedictus Anthem	<b>Trinity 21</b> <b>Morning Service</b>  And I saw a new heaven	<i>McPhee</i> <i>Bainton</i>
<b>27 October</b> 11 am Communion Setting Anthem	<b>Trinity 22</b> <b>Holy Communion</b>  Jesu, dulcis memoria	<i>Monteverdi (In illo tempore)</i> <i>Vittoria</i>
<b>3 November</b> 11 am Introit Te Deum Anthem	<b>Sunday after All Saints Day</b> <b>Morning Service</b>  O quam gloriosum  Bring us, O Lord God	<i>Vittoria</i> <i>Britten in E</i> <i>Harris</i>



## ABBHEY CONTACTS

<b>Minister:</b>	<b>Revd. Jim Gibson</b>
<b>Director of Music:</b>	<b>Dr. George McPhee</b>
<b>Church Manager:</b>	<b>Linda Barrett</b>
<b>Church Secretary:</b>	<b>Karen Kerr</b>
<b>Session Clerk:</b>	<b>Marion Sommerville</b>
<b>Depute Session Clerk:</b>	<b>Dr David Davidson</b>
<b>Treasurer:</b>	<b>Stewart McDougall</b>
<b>Abbey Herald:</b>	<b>Karen Kerr</b>

The Abbey office can be contacted on 0141 889 7654 or by email at -  
info@paisleyabbey.org.uk

***The Abbey, shop & café are now open***  
***Monday to Saturday from 10 am - 4 pm with last entry at 3.30 pm***  
***Tuesday & Thursday tours are at 2 pm.***

*Abbey website - [www.paisleyabbey.org.uk](http://www.paisleyabbey.org.uk)*  
*Facebook - @paisleyabbey*  
*Instagram - @paisleyabbeyofficial*  
*X (formerly Twitter) - @paisley\_abbey*