



THE BELFRY



Number THIRTY SEVEN

December 2008



From the Manse

What a year it's been! At the church we've seen quite a number of weddings. This summer I was privileged to dedicate a new memorial to McGregor Ghlun Dubh, in the old burying ground beside Glengyle House on Loch Katrine. And in September was elected moderator of the Presbytery of Stirling.

So what lies ahead? Well Christmas is not too far off. What do we expect this Christmas? "Something old, something new, something borrowed, something blue." Though that may be a return to the wedding theme we could adapt it for Christmas!

"Blue", well not for Christmas. The colour we most associate with Christmas is white. At the moment, a white Christmas certainly seems a possibility.

Christmas is not so much about "borrowing" as "giving and receiving" as I am sure the children will tell us. Whatever the economic climate, I'm sure they'll not miss out.

Christmas is also a time when we are reminded of the angels' message of peace. Supremely, peace between our God and His people. In this troubled world we are only too aware that many are far from living in peace. Once again our prayers are for peace and justice and equality for all.

As we come together at this time of year, let us remember the "Old, old story of Jesus and his love", a story told simply to young and old alike. The story which tells how "Love came down at Christmas" will be sung once again during our celebrations of Christmas.

Let us look for new beginnings as we draw near to the Christ child, that he may be "born in us today"

Wherever your home is, may you all experience a peaceful and blessed Christmas.
Nollaig chridheil dhuibh uile agus bliadhna mhath ùr ...

The Rev John Lincoln

Church News Balquhidder

On 11th September, our Minister, Revd. John Lincoln was installed as Moderator for Stirling Presbytery. This formal ceremony took place in Killin Parish Church following a moving Communion Service led by the Revd Stuart Davidson and the retiring Moderator, Miss Dorothy Kinloch. A bit of a hitch meant that the hymns were sung a capella, ie without the help of an organist. With so many Ministers there it sounded almost like a Welsh male voice choir! We wish Mr Lincoln well in this coming year. Luckily for us, the Moderator is elected only for one year!

We have been fortunate in being able to order a new carpet for the Friendship Room, thanks to the generosity of the Friends of Balquhidder Church. Work on a repair to the belfry has been completed to make it safe to ring the bell again. We hope folk will listen out for it on Sundays and respond by coming to the service?? Teas are served after the services and all who come are made most welcome.

Jean Edwards

CHURCH SERVICES
Balquhidder, Lochearnhead & Strathyre
CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
Balquhidder Parish Kirk
Every Sunday at 12 noon
Minister: Rev John Lincoln
The Manse, Killin. Tel: 01567 820 247

Dear Friends

We are starting a series on the geneology of the area starting with Rob Roy MacGregor and then working our way through the less famous (infamous) MacGregors, MacLarens, Fergusons etc. If you have any relatives who have lived in the area, let us know and we'll try to place them within our series.

Also John Nimmo sent me in, a booklet of poems and songs by his grandfather, who came from Balquhidder parish. I have added two of his poems on page 4, and I hope to publish a poem from his collection in each issue. If you have any information regarding Alexander Stewart, I will pass it on to John.

Have a very merry Christmas and please give any donations you can afford to deserving charities, who gain most of their income at this time of year.

Thanks

Mal Dingle

mal@rosebankhouse.co.uk

01877 384208

Mrs Janet Todd June 1925 – August 2008

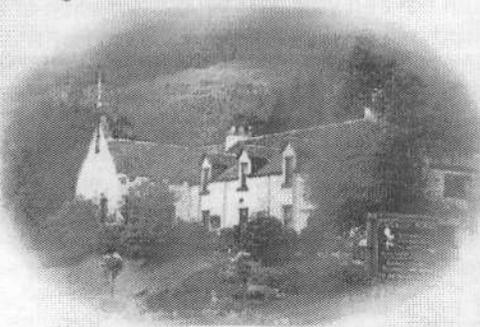
We have been saddened by the death of Mrs Janet Todd. Janet had suffered from motor neurone disease since the early part of this year and died peacefully, at home in Alloa on 6th August. She and her husband, Revd. Dr. Stewart Todd, moved to Alloa from Balquhidder some 6 years ago in order to be nearer their family. They had bought Culearn in Balquhidder, as a holiday home, in 1959 and spent at least every August there until they retired and moved in permanently in 1993.

Janet was a devoted wife, mother and grandmother but also the epitome of a minister's wife. She was always ready to support her husband in his ministry in Symington, Leith and subsequently at St Machar's Cathedral in Aberdeen. She became a member of Balquhidder Parish Church, but was always keen to help at St Angus Episcopalian Church in Lochearnhead and at the Church of Scotland in Killin. Here in Balquhidder, we knew at first hand of her generous hospitality, and she took a full part in local community affairs. She was a very practical lady, and not many folk realise that they have Janet to thank for the cushions that made Balquhidder Church pews considerably more comfortable. They were recycled from the Cathedral in Aberdeen!

Janet was gentle and gracious, but she had an underlying strength and attractive feisty manner, which was still evident despite the rapid progress of her illness. The funeral on 14th August was attended by many friends, who joined Dr. Todd and his family in remembering Janet and giving thanks for her life. She was a very caring person, sustained by a deep faith in God, and it was a pleasure to have known her.

JE

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ALEXANDER STEWART

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Born Cuilt Parish of Balquhidder
To

Alexander Stewart and Margaret Stewart nee
Dewer.

Above is a picture of John Nimmo's Grandfather, who has sent me a collection of songs and poems by Alex Stewart. John would also like to hear of anyone who may be related to him still living in the area.

The Hills o' Hame

Ye may get higher mountains beyond the rolling seas
Amang the snowwhite Himalays or towering Pyranees
But ye canna get the heather in its brawest lammas hue
Unless ye cross the Carstran au' roam Glenample through
Nor can ye trace the burnies that wimple thro' the linns
Where the fairies weave a garland frae the blossom o' the whins
The crystal streams of childhood hoo weel I mind each name
The Ogle an' the Kendrum rise amang the Hills o' Hame
Those hills that look so glorious in a' their summer shean
They're splendid too when autumn tints creep in amang the green
They're noble when their hoary taps defy the winter storm
Or when the snow in spotless white has clad each giant form
They're awesome in the nicht time up rearin in their pride
The troubled ghosts of all the years around them seem to glide
In fairys dreams I view them, but whether rude or tame
Their aspect captivates my heart, those heather Hills o' Hame.

Dead—but still with us

A pleasant stillness filled the air
The Torr in silver radiance shone
The level carse looked very fair
From where I stood on Wallacestone.

A timeful thrush at Polmontside
Sang where the summer birds were new
A lark at Crossgatehead replied
High circling in the aerial blue

There was no cloud in all the sky
The earth was calm without a stain
No sign of sorrow hovered nigh
To mar the wildbird's glad refrain

But like the changes in a dream
A lurid haze came raw and chill
The war god's breath dispelled the gleam
That clad in gold the moor and hill

I saw the manhood of our kin
Go forth to stem oppressions tide
I saw them fight- and fall- and win
I saw the crosses side by side

I heard the stricken widow's call
The mother mourning for her boy
And then a silence seemed to fall
A hush of mingled fear and joy

While through the shadows came a tread
That sounded faintly from afar
It told me that our faithful dead
Were marching homeward from the war

Their presence was not seen— but felt
The ghostly files were hid from view
A muffled voice would murmur "Halt"
As each came to the place he knew

The doors of home were opened wide
The vacant shrine took in its guest
And Polmont holds the boys who died
Forever, sacred, in her breast.

Written on the occasion of the
unveiling of the old Parish of
Polmont War Memorial—1922

His poems were published
in 'Celtic Monthly', 'Peoples
Journal' & 'Harp of Stirlingshire'

Rob Roy MacGregor

Rob Roy MacGregor

Background

In 1558 a deadly feud took place between the Clan MacLaren and the Clan Gregor when the MacGregors were accused of killing 18 MacLaren men along with their whole families and taking possession of their farms. This incident was not investigated until 1604 when the MacGregors were on trial for slaughtering many men of the Clan Colquhoun. However the MacGregors were cleared of doing anything against the Clan MacLaren.

The Battle of Glen Fruin took place in 1603 where the MacGregors were victorious, defeating five hundred Clan Colquhoun men, three hundred of whom were on horseback, by four hundred MacGregor men at Glen Fruin. Over two hundred of the Colquhoun men were lost when the MacGregors, who had split into two parties, attacked from front and rear and forced the horsemen onto the soft ground of the Moss of Auchingaich. It meant the proscription of the Clan Gregor. It wasn't until the eighteenth century that the enmity between the clans was laid to rest when, at Glen Fruin on the site of the massacre, the chiefs of the Clan Gregor and Colquhoun met and shook hands.

The MacGregors were formally banished in 1603 by King James VI who made it a capital offence to bear the MacGregor name. From this period comes the Clan Gregor's most famous historical figure, Rob Roy.

Robert Roy MacGregor, (baptized 7 March 1671 -28 December 1734) usually known simply as Rob Roy or alternately **Red MacGregor**, was a famous Scottish Folk Hero and outlaw of the early 18th century, who is sometimes known as the Scottish Robin Hood. Rob Roy is anglicised from the Scottish Gaelic **Raibeart Ruadh**, or Red Robert. This is because Rob Roy had red hair, though it darkened to auburn in later life. Due to the MacGregor name being proscribed in 1603, he used his mother's maiden name of Campbell.

Rob Roy was born at Glengyle, at the head of Loch Katrine, as proved by an extract from the Register of Baptisms at Buchanan Parish. Glengyle House, on the shore of Loch Katrine, dates back to the early 18th century, with a porch dated to 1707, and is built on the site of the 17th century stone cottage in which Rob Roy is said to have been born.



ROB ROY

He was the third son of clan chief Donald Glas MacGregor of Glengyle. His father was Donald MacGregor, and his mother Margaret Campbell. At the age of 22, he later met his cousin Mary Helen MacGregor of Comar, who was born at Leny Farm, Strathyre, and they were married in Glenarklet in January 1693; later, they had four sons: James (known as Mor or Tall), Ranald, Coll, and Robert (known as Robin Oig or Young Rob). A cousin, Duncan, was later adopted.

Along with many Highland clans, at the age of eighteen Rob Roy together with his father joined the Jacobite rising led by Viscount Dundee to support the Stuart King James who had been deposed by William of Orange. The MacGregors supported the Jacobite cause in the first Jacobite uprising led by Viscount Dundee in July 1689. Both Rob Roy, aged 18, and his father took part in the Battle of Killiecrankie, which the Jacobites won despite the death of their leader. Although victorious in initial battles, "Bonnie Dundee" was killed and their fortunes fell. Rob's father was taken to jail, where he was held on treason charges for two years.



Glengyle House built on the site of the original cottage

Rob's mother Margaret's health faltered and then failed during Donald's time in prison. By the time Donald was finally released, his wife was dead, and his reason for living also gone. The Gregor chief would never return to his former spirit or health.

During the 1715 Jacobite uprising, Rob Roy was used to raise the MacGregors in Aberdeenshire, and he also acted as guide to the Jacobite army as it marched from Perth towards Stirling in November 1715. This culminated in the Battle of Sheriffmuir in which a much smaller Government army under the Duke of Argyll prevented the Jacobites from reaching the Lowlands. Rob Roy's loyalties were split between his Jacobite upbringing and his alliance with the Duke of Argyll and he seems to have been an onlooker at the battle itself, though claims he was secretly working for the Duke of Argyll have never been proved. Nonetheless, for his part in the uprising Rob Roy emerged with a price on his head for treason in addition to the earlier charges of banditry. For safety he set up home close to the Duke of Argyll's base in Inveraray.

Rob Roy was badly wounded at the Battle of Glen Shiel in 1719. The **Battle of Glen Shiel** (Scottish Gaelic: *Bla'r Ghleann Sheile*) was in the West Highlands of Scotland on 10 June 1719 between the British government and an alliance of Jacobites and Spaniards, resulting in a victory for the British forces. Philip V, King of Spain and his Italian Counsellor Giulio Alberoni had decided to meddle in the British throne disputes, supporting the Jacobite claims and its Highland allies both to de-stabilise the Crown and set up a more pliant king (and Parliament) in its place). As part of the Jacobite Army Rob Roy, was there with 40 men (Rob Roy was not the chief of the MacGregor's. The chief was Gregor Ghlun Dubh of GlenGyle). Rob Roy was severely wounded and his MacGregors left the battle to save him.

Prior to this, Rob Roy became a well-known and respected cattleman and used his growing wealth to become the laird of Inversnaid,

on the east side of Loch Lomond. — this was a time when taking someone's cattle and selling protection against theft was a commonplace means of earning a living. In 1711 Rob Roy borrowed a large sum of money, reputedly £1000, from the Duke of Montrose, to increase his own cattle herd. But due to the deception of his chief herder, who was entrusted with the money, to buy and bring cattle back, the money, cattle and herder never returned. Rob Roy searched unsuccessfully for his herder, and whilst away the Duke of Montrose confiscated his lands and evicted his family. Rob Roy lost his money and cattle, and defaulted on his loan. As a result, he was branded an outlaw, and his wife and family were evicted from their house at Inversnaid, which was then burned down. After his principal creditor, James Graham, 1st Duke of Montrose seized his lands, Rob Roy sought revenge on the Duke through a sustained campaign of cattle-rustling, theft and banditry. This included kidnapping Montrose's factor, complete with over £3,000 of rent money he was carrying at the time. Gradually the targets for Rob Roy's banditry grew to include other landowners who were not prepared to pay him to "protect" their stock and property. Meanwhile, his vendetta against the Duke of Montrose gained him a powerful ally in the Duke of Argyll, a long-



standing enemy of Montrose.

Rob Roy warred with the duke until 1722, when Rob Roy was forced to surrender.

(James Graham, 1st Duke and 4th Marquess of Montrose (April 1682–7 January 1742) was a Scottish aristocratic statesman in the early eighteenth century. On 31 March 1702 he married Christian Carnegie, daughter of David Carnegie, 3rd Earl of Northesk. Originally the fourth Marquess of Montrose, James was elevated to a dukedom in 1707, as a reward for his important support of the Act of Union, whilst being Lord President of the Scottish Privy Council. He was also a Lord of the Regency for the United Kingdom in 1714, upon the death of Queen Anne.

Furthermore, he served rather shortly as Secretary of State for Scotland at the time of the Georgian ministry of Lord Townshend. He served as a Governor of London's Foundling Hospital at the time of its foundation in 1739).

Daniel Defoe wrote a fictionalized account of his life in 1723 called Highland Rogue, making Rob Roy a legend in his own lifetime, and influencing George 1 to issue a pardon for his crimes just as he was about to be transported to the colonies. The publication of Rob Roy, by Sir Walter Scott in 1817, further added to his fame and fleshed out his biography. William Wordsworth wrote a poem called "Rob Roy's Grave", during a visit to Scotland (the 1803 tour was documented by his sister Dorothy in Recollections of a Tour made in Scotland). Adaptations of his story have also been told in film, most notably Rob Roy (1995), directed by Michael Caton-Jones.



The Battle of Glen Shiel 1719
The image is in the public domain

Later imprisoned, he was finally pardoned in 1727. He died in his house at Inverlochlarig Beg, Balquhidder, on 28th December 1734.

My conclusion is that in extremely turbulent and warring times, Rob Roy was an individual who has embodied the flavour and nature of the times. A larger-than-life folk hero whose story will live on as long as we have imagination.



MOTTO

'S Rioghal Mo Dhream (Royal is My Race)
E'en Do bait Spair Nocht is also used.



Rob Roy MacGregors grave
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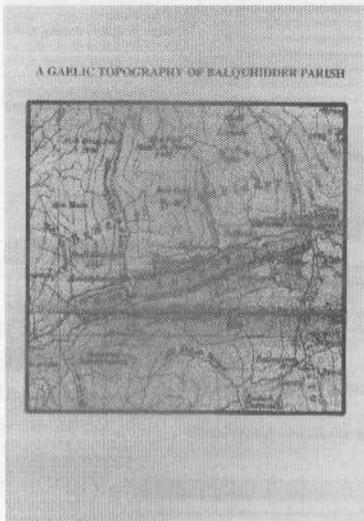
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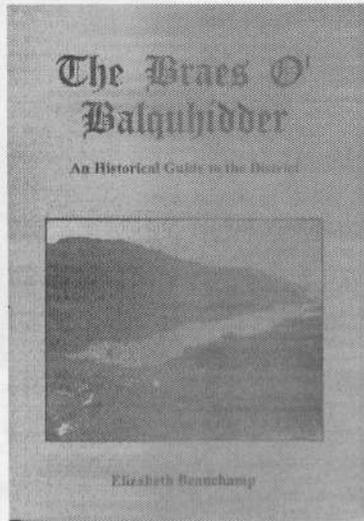


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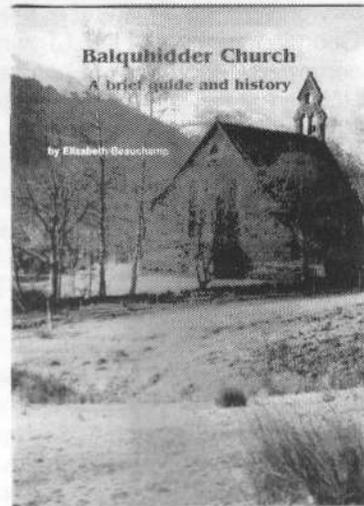
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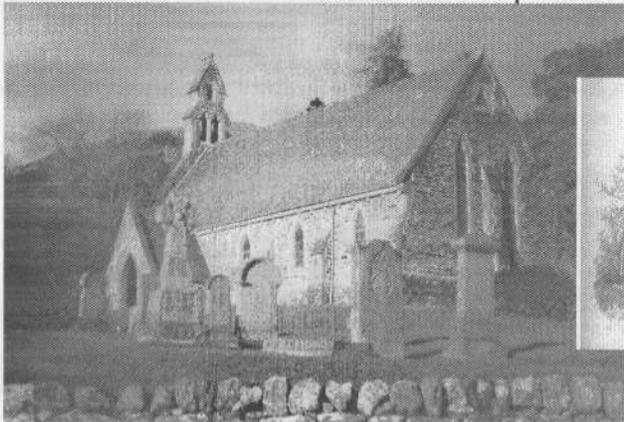
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Membership

Welcome to me first membership letter. I took over as membership secretary at the AGM but if you think the name and address is familiar it is because I also do the marketing for the Friends. A sure sign that we are rather short of committee members so if any one locally would like to join us you would be very welcome. We don't have many meetings a year & they rarely last more than an hour.

All membership subscriptions (apart from life members) are due in January each year & you will find a renewal slip enclosed. In an effort to make it as simple as possible there are now three ways to pay – cheque or postal order, standing order & credit or debit card by Paypal – I am hoping the latter will make it especially easy for overseas members as it deals with the exchange rate but this method can also be used by UK members. I would be grateful if everyone receiving this magazine could complete the form & return it to me even those not wishing to renew so that I can update the records. If you don't want to renew then an email will save time & money.

I am also enclosing new standing order forms for most UK members – if you pay this way now & it comes through in January then you will not be included but if for any reason the payment is coming in later in the year then I will send you a new form with the note to the bank regarding existing standing orders highlighted. I hope more people will use this method as it means your subscription is paid on time every year without any hassle or reminders.

Our membership numbers have been dropping over the last few years for various reasons but I think the Friends of Balquhider Church is a great way to support the church. They help by funding the extras that add to it's comfort & beauty. Most recently contributing towards the cost of a new carpet for the friendship room. It also supports the Summer Music Concerts. So, if you know anyone who would like to join the Friends please give them the membership form below.

Now the business part is over then I would like to invite you to contribute to the magazine – rather than us just including articles we think you would be interested in why not write and tell us what you would like to see. To start the ball rolling, please tell us why you are members of the Friends – do you have a local connection? Researching your ancestors? If you are a member of one of the local clans, why not tell us your clan local history? We have just had an article on the Stewarts, now it is the turn of the other clans – Carnegie, Fergusson, MacGregor, MacLaren to mention a few. I know the Fergusson's have a Balquhider tartan: can anyone tell us the history behind it?

We have a postcard for sale which shows the local history – can anyone tell us about some of the tales it represents? We call it the Fairy postcard as it shows the Rev Robert Kirke & his Fairies – but also mentioned Alan Breck & David Balfour from 'Kidnapped'(fact or fiction?). Queen Victoria's visit in 1869, Visit of James IV 1506, Robin Oig & his brother James Mohr carry off the young widow Jean Key (definitely a story here) MacLaurens & MacGregors fight for precedence (who won?), Ladies of Balquhider present the standard 1745 & of course Saint Angus. Anyone of these would make interesting reading so if anyone knows anything about them please write either to me or Mal Dingle, the Editor. Our addresses are listed on the back page.

We would also be very interested in any old photos you have of the church or Balquhider Glen.
Until next time.

Rosemary Whittemore

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Note: Subscriptions, apart from Life subscriptions, are due for renewal on 1st January each year (except in your first year if you joined in the last six months of the previous year.)

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