

Issue 3- Autumn 2014

Dee-Light

A newsletter for the Catholic Communities on Deeside



Features: Deeside Church History
St Vincent de Paul Society
Latest News from Ikelenge
and...
'a pistol under a pillow!!'



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Editorial

Welcome to the third edition of Deelight, the quarterly newsletter for the catholic communities on Deeside - St Andrew's (Braemar), St Nathalan's (Ballater), St Margaret's (Aboyne) and St Columba's (Banchory).

The biographical piece makes a return in this edition. Most people are publicity shy but knowing about people helps improve community spirit. If you would like to feature or know of someone who might but is too shy to come forward then please contact the Editor, Lawrence Ross at hhl.ross@btinternet.com A feature will only be published with the consent of the individual concerned.

The Editorial Team wishes all readers a thoughtful Advent and a joyful Christmas.

Deeside Church History

St Margaret's, Aboyne

The year 1874 was a busy and exciting one for the Rev. James Shaw of Ballogie with the coming and going to the new chapel and house (presbytery) being built in the village of Aboyne, some ten miles distant. It was the culmination of several years of planning on his part. He spared no effort to achieve his aim and had approached the Marquis of Huntly for land on which to build his church. Other benefactors, Catholic and Protestant, soon came forward. W. Cunliffe Brooks M.P. of Glentanar, the father-in-law of the Marquis, gave encouragement and headed the list of subscribers which included C.S. Leslie of Fetternear (later to be the primary source of finance for the building of St Columba's in Banchory) and Mrs Leslie, Miss Gordon, Aberdeen, Mrs Kay, Edinburgh and Mrs E.G. Morrice, Bath!

Mr Ogilvie, Aboyne, architect to the Marquis, drew up plans for the Church and house and now, Thursday, 26th November, 1874, the day of the official opening had arrived. The congregation crowded into the church along with twelve visiting priests, friends and some of the benefactors. The choir of St Mary of the Assumption, Aberdeen, was assembled and the service commenced.

The church was blessed and dedicated to St. Margaret, Queen and Patroness of Scotland. Pontifical High Mass was celebrated by the Rt. Rev. Dr. Macdonald, Vicar Apostolic of the Northern District. The Rev. James Glenie of Inverurie preached the sermon at the end of Mass as was the custom.



Unfortunately for Fr. Shaw, he was not destined to take up residence in Aboyne. In 1875 he was removed to Ballachin in Perthshire. His successor was Rev. James Paul, Professor of Blairs, who had been the deacon at the ceremony in 1874. In its early days, St Margaret's was not a canonical parish (that happened in July 1939) but a mission and an extensive one at that since it covered Aboyne, Tarland, Dinnet, Kincardine O'Neil, Torphins and Banchory Ternan, with all districts lying between. It would be 1962 before 'the seat of power' moved to Banchory. In 1967 disaster struck – a fire that completely destroyed the interior of the church and one room in the presbytery. The Bishop of Aberdeen, the Rt. Rev. Michael Foylan, who used St Margaret's Presbytery as his summer residence, went into the burning church to save the Blessed Sacrament and the altar vestments. The church was restored in 1970 in the style that you see it today.

(Dee-Light is indebted to Rosaleen Woodhouse whose 'History of St Margaret's Church, Aboyne, is the source material for much of this article.)

From the heart of Texas – Rick Hoskins

Banchory parishioner Rick Hoskins was born in Fort Worth, Texas in 1938. This army fort, established in 1849, went from a sleepy outpost to a bustling town when it became a stop along the legendary Chisholm Trail, the dusty path on which millions of head of cattle were driven north to market. This earned it the nickname of 'Cowtown'. Rick's paternal ancestors arrived in Fort Worth from Tennessee. His great grandfather was a Methodist preacher – a circuit rider in Wise County. His mother's family had origins in England (Newcastle) and Germany. They arrived in the USA in the 1890s. Rick's German great great grandfather spoke eight languages, a skill which got him the job as the port interpreter in New Orleans before moving to Texas where life was tough and dangerous. Rick's grand mother slept with a pistol under her pillow. Rick was brought up in Fort Worth. He attended technical high school where he trained to be an aircraft mechanic.



Rick Hoskins

He passed all of the tests with flying colours (pardon the pun) getting the highest scores ever seen but was refused his professional licence because he was only 17 years old – you had to be 18! He then went to Arlington State College to study mechanical engineering but left early. He kept failing exams because he couldn't spell and was useless at English – nowadays, people with dyslexia are treated more kindly. Undeterred, Rick went to work in research where he quickly gained respect when he invented a highly simple piece of equipment that became and still is in standard use in the navies around the world. In 1961, Rick moved into the oilfield service industry in the area of cement which is used to seal the space between the pipe and the bore hole in a producing oil or gas well. Rick learnt everything from how to make the various types of cement through to its application in the well. After 14 years gaining vast technical and practical experience in the USA he was asked to go abroad. He was offered a post in Iran or Norway and took the former as it had a warmer climate. The move was a culture shock. This was 1975. The Shah was still on the throne but insurrection was all around and foreigners, particularly Americans, were threatened. When a mob set fire to a cinema with people inside watching a film, Rick decided that this was not the place for him. In 1976 he got a transfer to Aberdeen – another culture shock! An unmarried man speaking with a true Texas drawl trying to make polite conversation with girls from Aberdeen (maybe) and Peterhead – nae chunce.....However, salvation was at hand when the secretary at Rick's office advised that her daughter, who had gone to London to train as a nurse and then, having qualified, emigrated to Australia, was coming home. Would Rick like to meet her? Enter Sylvia who became Mrs Hoskins in 1977. Rick & Sylvia lived in Morayshire. Despite Rick's Methodist upbringing, neither he nor Sylvia was particularly religious. One day they visited Pluscarden Abbey. They were rather taken with it and its ambience and decided to give Catholicism a go. They were converted. Rick & Sylvia moved to Deeside and St Columba's parish in 1988. Rick retired in 2006 but still makes himself available for advice. There is unlikely to be any oilfield cementing engineer alive that has as much experience as he has and thus it should be no surprise that he was called as an 'expert witness' in the trial concerning the horrendous blow-out on the Macondo well in the Gulf of Mexico. Ever the mechanic, Rick likes repairing old cars and ever the Texan he keeps his US Passport but not a pistol under his pillow.



Society of Saint Vincent de Paul

The expression 'SVP' is quite well recognised but do we really know what it does and why it exists? Vincent de Paul (24th April, 1581 – 27th September, 1660), was born to a French peasant farming family. As a child he was as the herder of the family livestock but he showed a talent for reading and writing. At age 15, his father sold the family's oxen to pay for Vincent to go to a seminary. In 1600 he was ordained as a priest but continued to study Theology. When travelling in 1605, Vincent was captured by Barbary pirates and auctioned as a slave. He spent two years in bondage.

Vincent was renowned for his compassion, humility and generosity. His real charitable work started in 1617 in Paris where he founded the 'Ladies of Charity' from a group of women in his parish. He organised these wealthy women to collect funds for missionary projects, the founding of hospitals and the gathering of relief funds for the victims of war. Today, the society formed in Vincent's name continues to help people facing difficult circumstances.

There is no SVP Society as such on Deeside but the churches have been lending support to the one at the Cathedral in Aberdeen which will celebrate its centenary in June 2015. Many years ago, the routine was to give alms, clothes and bedding to the needy as well as some household goods but safety regulations put an end to the latter. Money was also distributed but as this was sometimes 'misappropriated' the focus shifted to the provision of food parcels – currently around a hundred a week. There are now a number of 'public' food banks so you might think that this work would be redundant but that would be to forget a critical element of the society's work – the human touch. Society members undertake visits to homes and hospitals and in general give assistance wherever and whenever it is needed. This is the practical side of the society, reflecting the virtues of its patron – Saint Vincent de Paul.

If readers wish to make a donation of food then pop it into the 'Big Green Box' at the back of St Columba's Church. Those up the valley can give parcels to Fr Chris.

Update from Ikelenge

Dear Mr. John,

Greetings to you all at home.

We are all fine and we wish you the same.

Thank you so much for the money which you sent for our children through your church. The children are doing fine and they are learning very well by your powerful prayers.

This year our children are leaning carpentry, carving and arts in special way as skills. So we are spending some money for purchasing some materials to use and to pay teaching salaries who are teaching them. Some money we are using for the school maintenance.. So thank you so much for your continuous finance support towards our children in Ikelenge.

Once again thank you for your finance support and for considering our children and us. Please continue to help our children. Without your support its very difficult to run the school. I shall remember you all in my special prayers.

Thank you.

With Love and Prayers,
Sr. Rajamani

Alpha

In the New Year we shall be running Alpha in both Braemar and Banchory.

Anne Mason, a member of St Columba's parish, writes:

Have you heard about Alpha? Over 23 million people have experienced Alpha. 66,000 courses are running in 112 languages in 169 countries worldwide. It is a tool for evangelisation that is being used by thousands of Catholic parishes in over 70 countries around the world.

Now we will have the chance to experience an Alpha Course here in our own Parish! Cardinal Marc Quillet writes:

'Alpha brings people closer and helps them to find the power which unites. The Alpha experience is not only a means through which one finds true life, but also a way to share the good news of the Living Christ'

Having experienced the great spiritual benefits of taking part in an Alpha Course, I am excited that we now will have the opportunity to take part in the course in St Columba's and St Andrew's. In Banchory, on January 19th those interested in finding out more are invited to supper in the Parish Centre and to have the chance to 'take a peak' at Alpha and decide if you would like to take part in the course.

In St Andrew's, Braemar, there will be a similar introductory evening on Tuesday, 20th January.

This invitation extends to anyone in Aboyne and Ballter who might be interested. More information to follow in the Bulletin over the next few weeks!

The Individually Guided Retreat by Sr. Helen Bamber

On returning to his parish after an individually guided retreat in St Beuno's, North Wales last year Fr Chris Brannan had the idea that some of the parishioners might like to have the experience of a guided retreat. He invited me to come to Banchory in February and offered the opportunity of a week of guided prayer to anyone who would like it.

During a retreat of this kind a person sets aside some time each day to listen to God, to pay attention to how God is with them on their life's journey and to be strengthened in their faith. Each day they meet with the retreat guide who is like a companion helping them to reflect on their experience and suggesting prayers or passages from the Bible which may be appropriate for them. Each person has their own unique way of experiencing the presence of God in their life.

About ten people in St Columba's parish and one person from Aboyne took part in this guided retreat and I was privileged to accompany them. I was given wonderful hospitality during my stay by a couple in the parish and by Fr Chris who made a room in his house available for the individual meetings.

Some months later Fr Chris contacted me again asking if I would come back to Royal Deeside to guide some of the parishioners in Braemar, Ballater and Aboyne in another week of guided prayer. This time, he said, I would need a car.

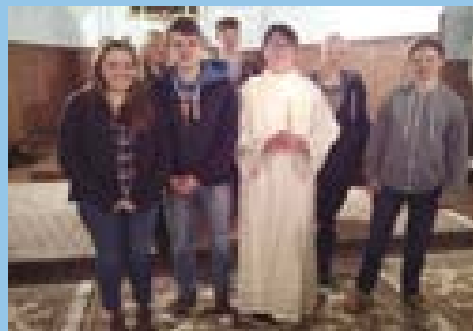
So in October I stayed in Ballater for a week (again provided with generous hospitality by parishioners). Four people from St Margaret's Aboyne met with me individually each morning in the house of one of them, and in the afternoon I travelled to Braemar where I met with five individually from St Andrews.

Mel Lamont of Banchory who attended the retreat relates her experience. *'The retreat with Sr Helen was so lovely. She encouraged me and guided my thoughts to connect with God through setting aside a little while each day for prayer. The retreat was a small time of spirituality in my busy life and was so worthwhile.'*

PARISH NEWS



Congratulations to Isabelle, daughter of Banchory parishioners Brian & Joan McLoughlin, on her marriage to Steve Mortonson at Fasque in October.



Sam Yule and friends, after his recent baptism in St Nathalan's, clothed in a white garment 'the outward sign of Christian dignity' and holding the baptismal candle - 'the Light of Christ'.

Advent Penitential Services
Ballater: Dec 9th at 7:30pm
Banchory: Dec 16th at 7pm
Aboyne: Dec 22nd at 7pm

Christmas Mass Times:

Christmas Eve:
5pm Braemar; 7.30pm in Ballater;
and in Banchory: Carols at 10pm and
Mass 10.30pm

Christmas Day:
Banchory at 10am.

Taize Night Prayer

Thursday 18th December at 9pm, in St Columba's along with other Banchory Churches.

Aid to the Church in Need

10am Mass on the 7th December. Clare Fulton will speak about work of ACN in Syria and Iraq. Afterwards there will be a fundraising Coffee Morning. Please bring your favourite bakes!! Stall with bibles and rosaries etc.

Come and See

There will be Introductory meetings for the Alpha Course on the evening of Monday the 19th of January in St Columba's and Tuesday, the 20th of January in St Andrew's Braemar. The course will start the following week.