100 years of Brownies!

In February, the Scout Fellowship Pipe Band visited the 1st Denholm Boys’ Brigade for a noisy night in the Church Hall, and 1st Denholm Rainbows and Brownies shared in ‘Cafe Church’ in Denholm Village Hall. Our photographs show BB Leaders, Margaret Derham and Maureen King supervising play and Rachel Marshall and Robyn Crawford cutting the Brownies’ 100th Birthday Cake!

Congratulations to Henry!

Everyone was delighted to learn of Henry’s appointment as Chief Guest at the 2014 Hawick Common Riding. We say: ‘Well done, Henry, and best wishes for this special 500th Common Riding’!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOBKIRK & SOUTHDEAN

Funerals
7 January at Hobkirk: Jean Scott
21 March at Southdean: Vivien Anne Ewart

RUBERSLAW

Baptisms
22 December at Minto: Priya Joan Selina Machin
24 December at Denholm: Sanna Marie Macdonald and Inga Alice Gwen Campbell
2 February at Denholm: Finlay William Prowse and Eilidh Catherine Prowse

Funerals
28 November at Bedrule: Jean Reay
9 December at Denholm: Norman John Gobby
13 December at Denholm: Alastair David Allan
21 January at Denholm: Thomas Oswald
20 March at Borders Crematorium: Ian MacGregor

New Communicants by Profession of Faith
1 December at Minto: Lyndsey Ann Armstrong, Kerry Elizabeth Shanks and James William Shanks
15 December at Bedrule: Lindsey Claire Laing
A Message from your Minister.....

Dear Friends,

‘Annual Report’

Since I am not able to attend either of the Annual Stated Meetings of our two congregations this year, I felt that it would be helpful to offer a brief annual report through ‘Parish News’.

There’s an expression: ‘Time and tide wait for no-one’ and we are all deeply aware of the way the years of life slip by. Almost five years have passed since I became Minister of the linked charge of Hobkirk and Southdean with Ruberslaw, and there are times when both Anne and I wonder where they have gone! We enjoy enormously being part of the Scottish Borders communities within the charge, and our growing family – now including four grandsons! – enjoy visits to this special part of Scotland.

Statistically speaking, 2013 saw within the linked charge two regular services most Sundays, as well as 6 baptisms, 5 weddings and 20 funerals. It would be impossible to list all the highlights of the year, but they have included:

- Visit to the Holy Land with a local party from 30 May to 8 June
- Re-slating of Denholm Church – with all the necessary funds raised
- Addressing the Steve Hislop Rally on Denholm Green on 25 August
- 150th Anniversary Celebrations at Hobkirk Church on 27 October

The life and ministry of our two congregations is immeasurably strengthened by those who pray regularly for the church at home and around the world – remembering all that is happening in our communities as well as Christian who are finding life difficult through persecution in other countries. These prayers are valued.

Warm thanks are expressed to all the office bearers of the two congregations, especially the Session Clerks, Treasurers, Fabric Conveners and Guild and youth group leaders. As we reflect now on a special year in the life of our congregations, please ‘Look back with thanks – and look forward in faith’.

Your Minister and friend,

Douglas.

Treasurer’s report to the Ruberslaw Annual Stated Meeting 2014

2013 saw a marvellous display of generosity by the congregation, in part a response to the stewardship programme late in 2012. Not only did regular giving increase by 8%, but there was enthusiasm for fundraising and some exceptional donations to the Denholm Church re-slating project. Meanwhile the congregation received a number of most welcome grants towards the re-slating.

As a result the costs of the re-slating have been covered in full by income, as have general ongoing costs and an unusual level of general fabric costs which included new pew cushions and a new pulpit fall for Denholm Church. There was a small overall surplus which should cover the costs of treating the dry rot discovered in Denholm Church.

Meanwhile the congregation’s investments increased in value. The outlook is clouded by the continuing decline in membership. This has implications for all aspects of church life, not just its financial health.

Michael Braithwaite
March 2014

Palm Sunday, 13 April: Services at 9.30am at Minto, 11am at Hobkirk, and 6pm at Southdean
Good Friday, 18 April: Service at Bedrule at 7pm
Easter Sunday, 20 April: Services at 7am on top of Ruberslaw, 9.30am at Denholm and 11am at Hobkirk
Saturday 26 April: Hobkirk and Southdean ‘Big Breakfast’ from 9am to Noon in the William Laidlaw Memorial Hall, Bonchester Bridge. All welcome.
Sunday 4 May: 3pm Lambing Service at Falside Farm

Denholm May Fair

Denholm May Fair this year is this year on Saturday 24 May, and the Ruberslaw congregation will be providing refreshments and games. Look out for announcements nearer the time!

Ruberslaw Worship Group

An enthusiastic Worship Group is now contributing regularly to services in the Ruberslaw Parish. The group prepared and led a service on a Scot’s theme in Bedrule on Sunday 26 January. The service included the Lord’s Prayer in Scots and reflections on Burns’ To a Louse and Aesop’s fable The North Wind and the Sun.

The group was also involved in arranging the Café Church which focused on the Brownie Thinking Day and 100th birthday celebrations. This format is proving popular and it is intended to make them a regular feature of worship within the parish with another being planned for the end of August to coincide with the start of the new school session. Look out for more information in the next issue of Parish News.
**Border Poetry**

The Laidlaw Hall will be the venue for a ‘Will Ogilvie’ night – poetry of the Cheviot Hills – and a two course supper on 25 April at 7.30pm. Tickets are £10 and are available by calling 01450 860366.

Please note that we must have definite bookings to arrange catering, but you can pay for them on the door. Everyone is welcome!

**Seeing the New Year in!**

**Hadeel - Fair Trade shopping with a difference!**

The Hobkirk and Southdean Guild hosted an Open Evening on 20 March. Some of the people from the local community who went to the Holy Land last year talked briefly about their experiences. Many had taken photographs and these were shown not just to illustrate the talks but also on a perpetual loop.

A delicious supper was provided by members of the Guild, eaten half-way through the evening which allowed people to meet each other and to talk, and also to buy from a sales table at the back of the hall. This had been stocked with a range of traditional and modern hand-crafts and produce from Palestine. The objects had been sent down from Hadeel (at 123 George Street, Edinburgh http://www.hadeel.org/). They are Fair Trade shop owned by the charity Palcrafts (UK), which aims to provide a sustainable source of income for Palestinian artisans and farmers. The beautiful crafts and produce came from places with a biblical ring - such as embroideries, felted wool and carved olive wood from Bethlehem, dates from Jericho, organic olive oil from Galilee and other delights from Gaza.

Palcrafts supports women's co-ops, workshops for special needs, and centres in refugee camps mainly in the West Bank and Gaza, giving both dignity and a sense of their own history to a people living in stressful circumstances for nearly the last seventy years.

A grand total of some £490 was realised on the evening from the sales and £165 from the door. The evening was not only a success financially but everyone agreed it had been most enjoyable.

**Denholm’s Big Walks!**

In September this year, Denholm Village is co-hosting the 2014 Borders Walking Festival with Jedburgh. In its 20th year, this is the longest running festival of its kind in Scotland and the village is proud to be a part of its anniversary!

Walks will vary in length and grade to accommodate all kinds of walker and there will be evening events to entertain participants. With upward of 300 people taking part in past years, the festival promises to be a great boost to both Denholm and Jedburgh’s tourism, this year.

For details of what’s on, visit the Festival web site at www.borderswalking.com. Booking is available on the web site or through VisitScotland. The Festival runs from 31 August to 6 September.

The Walking Festival last visited Denholm in 2011 when participants were treated to a blessing by Rev Nicol on the summit of Ruberslaw with pipers in attendance.
News from Southdean

In early March the winds blew against a background of sun and light showers, but we are now sliding inexorably into spring having enjoyed a relatively mild winter. It reminds us of the continuing debate over the 4 wind farm proposals for Southdean, currently being addressed by the citizens of the parish.

No fewer than 74 turbines would be erected if the developers are successful. Whilst views differ about the implications, local people are having their say during the presentations and meetings taking place throughout the consultation period. A huge number of objections have been lodged with Scottish Borders Council Planning Department, some of which have been from former residents now living elsewhere but still with ties of family and friendship to Southdean.

Whatever the outcome, the proposals have certainly generated lively but civilised debates and it is clearly going to be a case of, “Watch this space!”

Beautiful Southdean Church saw a well-attended communion service on Sunday 23 February. It is gratifying that the church continues to be in use for special services throughout the year and that they are supported by many local people. The sun shining through the stained glass, made a wonderful backdrop to the service.

The varied programme of films continue to be shown at Southdean Hall and lots of other events are taking place. One of these was the “Soup Day” organised by Chesters resident, Hugh Roberts, on Sunday 16 March between 12 noon and 2.30 p.m. Home-made soup and various breads were available. Hugh and helpers from the Hall Committee, ran the event to raise funds for “Maggie’s Bike and Hike” – a challenge he is undertaking in the Great Glen this summer, for ‘Maggie’s Caring Cancer Centres.’ It was an excellent afternoon of community togetherness.

Another great year for the B.B’s!

The Boys’ Brigade ended their session on 27th March with 19 boys ‘on the books’. We all had a great session with lots of fun and games, projects, bible film shows and fund raising. We had two coffee mornings, carried out Christmas post delivery and did ‘Bob a Job’ for Mary’s Meals. We held a painting competition with the theme of ‘Rabbie Burns’. In church services, the boys were supportive of the 130th anniversary of the Boys’ Brigade on 6 October, attended Remembrance at Minto on 10th November and the annual Brigade parade at St Mary’s and Old in Hawick in December. A plaque was erected by the cherry tree that commemorated last year’s Diamond Jubilee.

The boys look forward to a camp this spring and in summer, they will be visiting Mabie Farm Park. Sincere thanks to all who supported us - we hope you have a good summer!

Things you may not know about your Elders…..!

David McFayden shares his hobbies and interests with us!

“Since retiring and relocating to the Borders, after a very rewarding 28 years in the Fire Service, I have been able to indulge in my hobby of woodworking which I have always enjoyed.

I have now given up on the larger items such as sheds, dog kennels and gates etc but am enjoying wood turning, fret work and taking on smaller and more easily handled projects.

I also enjoy attending a stick-making class in Hawick, being a member of the P.S.A. Choir, Citizens Advice Bureau, Interest Link and supporting other community organisations in our area.”

New web site!

We were hoping to bring you more details of our new web site in this issue, but due to an overwhelming amount of news from the parishes, we have had to hold it over for a future issue! But meanwhile, why not have a look for yourself at www.hobkirkwithruberslaw.org? (Please note the new web address and remember to change it if you have saved it in your favourites!)

Thought for the Issue:

Do your little bit of good where you are. It’s those little bits of good put together that overwhelm the world.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Next newsletter

Summer Issue

Copy Deadline: 25th May 2014
Target Issue Date: 1st June 2014