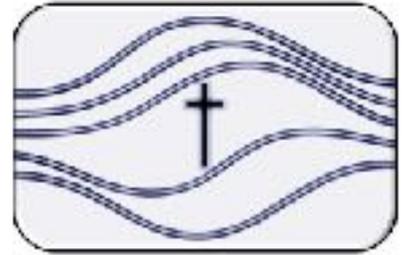




Wick St Fergus Church of Scotland



February 2018

Welcome, everyone, to February. It is a very special month, and not only because it is my birthday this month (honestly, I am not dropping hints!!) But seriously, it seems like ages since I last dropped you all a note and such a lot has happened since our last, shorter, newsletter. There has been a lot of flu on the go and I hope that you are all feeling better. The nights are becoming shorter, slightly, and I would like to say that the weather is improving, but as I write this it is blowing a gale outside the manse.

I have scrapped what I was going to write about this month because of recent events. On Friday the 19th of January our own John Houston passed away suddenly while he was out walking his dog. I know that it is customary to say nice things about the recently deceased and that occasionally poetic license is taken at moments like this, but in John's case, all the nice things are true. Without a word of exaggeration, John Houston was, and will remain in my mind anyway, as one of the finest people I have ever met. He was not only a gentleman, but he was also a gentle-man. His integrity was beyond reproach and he was hard-working and frankly more concerned about others than about himself.

One of our longest standing members of the Kirk Session, he followed his late father in the same position. The facts of John's life are a matter of public repute. His chip shop, restaurant and B&B businesses were renowned for the quality of service, and his fish suppers were the stuff of legends. John's reputation for hospitality was also well deserved. Together with his beloved Rhona, they hosted many folks around the dinner table for evenings of good food and conversation. Attention, not only to detail but also to the needs of his guests was marked and his enquiries after one's health were genuine and heartfelt.

I will always remember his words and deeds after the passing of my own beloved Mam back in 2014. He and Rhona had me up at the house and were a great source of comfort, and I am sure many people could tell you the same story. I, for one, will always think upon his mischievous smile and Sundays are not going to be the same again without seeing him popping his head around my office door with the words, "How's things mate?"

His sense of humour could light up a dark room. I will always remember my first trip on the Isabella Fortuna with John and others. When I got to the boat the late Adam Miller and Malcolm Bremner stopped me boarding. I was asked where I thought that I was going and then told that I couldn't come on board unless I took off my ministerial collar as ministers on boats were apparently bad luck. Malcom gave me my new nickname, the Skypilot! and the crew were instructed not to refer to me with the M-word. Well we had just cleared Wick Bay when up came Mr Houston saying, "I'm just making sure that the Minister is wearing his floatation device. John was immediately told off for using the m-word but he kept coming back to check if the "M" was wearing the floatation device. When the engine developed a fault a few days later I got the blame but I then passed the buck to John because he used the M-word.

First and foremost John was a man of a profound faith. He didn't blindly accept everything. He had a keen mind and always probed the deeper meaning of things in our conversations, but the reality of John's faith was made evident in his devotion to Christ as seen in his sense of service to others. Faithful in attending the Kirk Session and always ready to help with the Buildings Committee, or whenever a volunteer was needed, John was a man to be relied on. He never sought praise or attention. He simply did what had to be done.

One of his favourite jobs about the Kirk was his duties as bus elder. He was a friend to many and a support to anyone who needed it.

John was not only one of my elders, he was my very good friend and I am proud to be able to refer to him as a friend. The world is a bit darker today for his passing, but our lives have been enriched through having him with us and for this we are grateful to God. Our thoughts and prayers are with Rhona and his wee Yorkie, Jake. Go well into the West, John. See you in Glory. Well done thou good and faithful servant.

Revd John Nugent

BD(Honours)

Church Register

DEATHS:

We are sorry to report the passing of the following people:

18.12.17 - Jamesina “Minnie” Bruce (nee Sinclair), wife of the late David Bruce and mother to David.

19.12.17 - Janet “Jenny” Durrand nee Macdonald, beloved husband of the late Jim and mother to Jim, Jeanette, Mary, John, Alec and Archie (both deceased).

19.12.17 - Peter “Pedro” McPhee.

22.12.17 - Margaret Wares nee Miller, wife of Alistair “Tosh Wares and mother to John.

26.01.18 - John Houston, husband of Rhona, elder of the Kirk.

BAPTSIMS:

17.12.17 - Poppy Elma MacKenzie, sister to Alesha, daughter of Gregor and Lorraine Mackenzie.

21.01.18 - Daniel Robert Sinclair, brother to Nathan, son of William and Chankow (Lek) Sinclair.

Flowers for Sunday



DATE	KINDLY DONATED BY	ARRANGER
4 th Feb	Mrs Julie Steven	Donor
11 th Feb	The Moore Family	Mrs Simpson
18 th Feb	Mrs Jacqui Budge	Donor
25 th Feb	vacant	
4 th Mar	Mrs K Harper	Donor

If you would like to fill an empty date on the rota please contact Mrs Harper on 602612
THE LARGE HALL IS IN USE EVERY SATURDAY UNTIL 11.30 - FLOWERS CANNOT BE ARRANGED THEN

Church Duty Rota



Date	BUS	STAIRS	DOOR	DOOR	USHER
4th Feb	J Coghill	E Henderson	A Duffy	*****	J Mclennan
11th Feb	M Thomson	B Campbell	G MacDonald	M Foubister	J Mackay
18th Feb	W Robertson	A Sinclair	*****	G Ramsay	G Watt
25th Feb	J Cormack	M Duffy	R Mappin	H Gray	I Banks
4th Mar	J Mclennan	*****	E Henderson	J Coghill	A Duffy

*If you are unable to attend on your duty day please arrange a swap. Dates with **** require cover. Please assist if you are in attendance on the day. With thanks, The Minister*

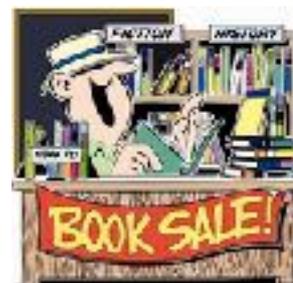
FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Book Sale - Friday 16th & Saturday 17th

February

The St Fergus book sale will take place in the hall on Friday 16th and Saturday 17th February from 10.30am - 3.30pm both days.

There is always a huge selection of books on offer, most priced around 50p, both fiction and non-fiction. Come along and grab a bargain. We look forward to seeing you all there.



ADVANCE NOTICE

SPRING THRIFT SHOP: 10th - 12th April 2018

RECENT EVENTS

CHRISTMAS TREE FESTIVAL

Our annual Christmas tree festival was held at the end of last year, and we had a huge number of trees, in fact the most yet, an amazing 28 trees were on show from various charities and organisations around town. We had a couple of “new” trees this year, and all our exhibitors really enjoyed the day in church speaking to all our visitors about their organisation and their tree.

The visitors that we spoke to seemed to really enjoy viewing the selection of trees we had on display, and of course, the teas, coffees and excellent home baking were a hit with everyone; both exhibitors and visitors.

We raised an amazing £585 on the day. This amount was added to with proceeds from the Carol Concert in Bilbster Hall, where an amazing £57 was raised, taking the total to a super £642 which has been donated to Befriending Caithness.

Thank you once again to all the organisations who attended and displayed a tree, to those who manned the trees, chatting with the visitors, the church committee members who helped set up and clear up, and the ladies who baked, made tea and served tea on the day. Without the help of everyone involved, we could not run this special day, so thank you all for your continuing help. We are already thinking about the 2018 event.....and how to make it bigger and better!



Actual GCSE Answers (English Curriculum)

‘The bible is full of interesting caricatures. In the first book of the Bible, Guinnesses, Adam and Eve were created from an apple tree.

‘Moses led the Hebrew slaves to the Red Sea, where they made unleavened bread, which is bread made without any ingredients. Moses went up on Mount Cyanide to get the Ten Commandments. He died before he ever reached Canada.’

‘The Greeks were a highly sculptures people, and without them we wouldn’t have history. The Greeks also had myths. A myth is a female moth.’

‘Eventually the Romans conquered the Greeks. History calls people Romans because they never stayed in one place for very long.’

‘Ancient Egypt was inhabited by mummies and they all wrote in hydraulics. They lived in the Sarah Dessert and travelled by Camelot.’

‘Julius Caesar extinguished himself on the battlefields of Gaul. The Ides of March murdered him because they thought he was going to be made King.’

