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FOREWORD

'Lord you have been our dwelling place throughout all generations ...' (Psalm 90:1)

Whenever we come to mark any centenary, it is perhaps almost inevitable that we find ourselves at something of a crossroads, looking both backward and forward. Poised as we are at this milestone in time, it is maybe easier for most of us to look backward, given that this is where our memories and experiences lie. As we consider where we are today, so much of our life here and now can only be presented by referring to what has gone before.

This booklet aims to recollect the life and times of our church here in our community; however, not only to look at how these recollections have shaped who and what we are today, but also how they might enable us to shape the life of our church here in the future.

It takes us through the history of the church in terms of its buildings, its ministers, its worship and its place within the community, and ends with all that is happening within the life of our church today. An appropriate way perhaps to end such a booklet, leaving scope and opportunity to look to the future as we seek to build on what we already have in place.

This is only the first chapter in the life of Ferintosh Parish Church. By the grace of God and through the inspiration and guidance of His Holy Spirit there will be many more to follow. We invite you now to become part of the next chapter of the life of our church as we look to the future, giving thanks for all that has gone before, and looking forward with eager anticipation to all that is yet to come.

With Every Blessing,

Andy Graham

INTRODUCTION

Attempting to compile a history of Ferintosh Church has proved to be enjoyable and frustrating. Enjoyable because of the co-operation of so many people but frustrating in that access to certain records has not been achieved, thus leading to a history that is not as comprehensive as it should be. It is particularly exasperating not to have a photograph of the opening of the Church in 1909.

I have endeavoured to be as accurate as possible in this account and apologise if there are errors.

Of acknowledgments there are many and those who are named know how they helped:

The family of the late Charles W Muirden for permission to use extracts from his book Maryburgh Church: A History of 150 years.

Rev Douglas MacKeddie

Gail Priddice of the Reference Section and Alex du Toit of the Archive Section, Inverness Library

Rev Roddie Mackinnon

Mrs Kitty Bennett, niece of Rev Malcolm Maclean

Mr Calum Maclean, nephew of Rev Malcolm Maclean

Mrs Marion Macdonald, sister of Rev D R Macleod

Donald Macleod, son of Rev D R Macleod

Rev T C Kelly

Rev D J M Carmichael

Rev A F Graham

The Ross-shire Journal and The North Star for reporting so faithfully on the work of the Church over many years.

Ross and Cromarty Heritage Society for the use of superior computer equipment which made the task so much easier.

Mhairi Mackenzie

September 2009

Chapter 1 - "In the beginning" (Genesis 1:1)

The birth of Ferintosh Church occurred on 30 October 1900 when a majority of the members of the General Assembly of the Free Church, meeting in Edinburgh, united with members of the Synod of the United Presbyterian Church to form a new association known as the United Free Church of Scotland.

Following this Union, the new UF Church felt it had a right to take over all possessions and funds of the Free Church. Not surprisingly, the Free Church thought differently and raised an action in the Law Courts, culminating in an appeal to the House of Lords in August 1904 which found in favour of the Free Church minority. This decision was unacceptable to the UF Church and support was sought from the Government to overturn the decision of the House of Lords, resulting in The Churches (Scotland) Act 1905 which took possession of all Free Church property, with power to a Royal Commission to allocate the property between both churches.

In the first four years of the life of the new UF Church, the Rev Roderick Mackenzie, who had been Free Church minister in Maryburgh until 1900 when he was reported in the Ross-shire Journal as having "the support of practically the entire congregation in his attitude to entering the UF Church", had remained in occupation of the Maryburgh manse and conducted services in the Maryburgh (now styled UF) Church. However, the chairman of the Royal Commission granted joint temporary occupancy of the Maryburgh Church to both congregations. The UF Church held Gaelic services at 11.00 am and English at 3.00 pm, and on each alternate Sunday at 6.30 pm, while the Free Church congregation worshipped at 12.00 noon for Gaelic and at 1.15 pm for English, alternating with the UF Church on Sundays at 6.30 pm. Prior to this arrangement, those who elected to remain within the Free Church worshipped with the Dingwall Free Church congregation in the Masonic Hall, Dingwall (in future to become 'the Picture House'), and sometimes in Maryburgh School.

Returning for a moment to 1900, a report in November of that year on the first meeting of the United Free Presbytery in Dingwall finds a deputation from the Ferintosh congregation "favourable to the Union" asking Presbytery "to arrange to have services", but Presbytery did not wish to interfere until they knew the position adopted by Rev Donald Munro, minister of Ferintosh Free Church. Later it transpired that Rev Donald Munro wished to remain within the Free Church, and so the Ferintosh UF section had no church building in which to worship, using instead the Kinkell School in the following years.

In March, 1905, the Free Church decided to withdraw from the Commission and on 31st March interdict proceedings were introduced in the Court of Session on behalf of the Maryburgh congregation in order to gain sole possession of the church property, since they felt that joint occupancy had been found to be unsuitable and unworkable.

A meeting of the Church Commission took place in Maryburgh School in May 1906 to take evidence on the subject. It is reported that about 20 witnesses were called and that at times "the Commissioner had to sternly repress undue exuberance of feelings". The outcome was that, in October of that year, the Commission allocated the Maryburgh property to the Free Church congregation.

In view of the decision in favour of the Free Church, on 25 January 1907 the Rev Roderick Mackenzie vacated the manse at 1.30 pm. Standing on the doorstep, and surrounded by the United

Free Church elders, Mr Mackenzie read a psalm, offered a prayer, and then read a protest. The elders who signed the protest were: William Mackenzie, Session Clerk; D Mackenzie; William Macintosh; John M Mackenzie; John Murray; Donald Mackay; Duncan Logan.



Rev Roderick Mackenzie and elders vacating Maryburgh Manse on 25 January 1907.

Rev Roderick Mackenzie continued to live in a house in Maryburgh, having obtained temporary tenancy.

On 10 January 1908 the Ross-shire Journal reported: "The Maryburgh United Free Church congregation met in Maryburgh public school on Tuesday evening. Rev R Mackenzie presided and two important points came before the meeting: first, the question of amalgamating with the Ferintosh section of the United Free Church, the new name to be Maryburgh and Ferintosh United Free Church congregation. The second item was the question of a site for the new church and manse."

The meeting agreed unanimously to the amalgamation of the congregations of Maryburgh and Ferintosh and to acceptance of the site in Conon Bridge offered by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie, Bart. of Gairloch.

And so the way was opened to establish what we now call Ferintosh Parish Church.

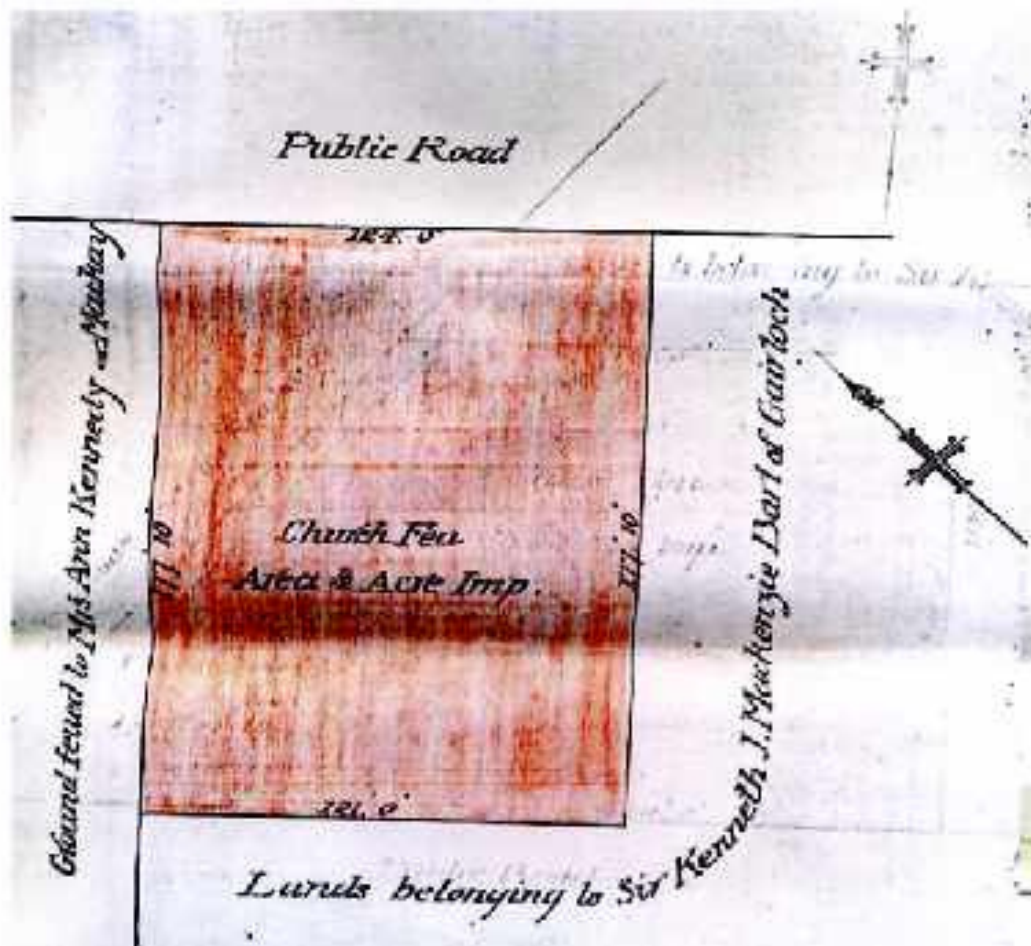
Chapter 2 - The Building

"They will rebuild the ancient ruins and restore the places long devastated." (Isaiah 61:4)

After the amalgamation the joint congregation was faced with the question of securing a suitable place in which to worship and, being promised liberal support by the Central Fund Committee of the Church in Edinburgh, they looked for a site.

The Seaforth family, Brahan, offered a site on land on the Maryburgh side of the former road bridge* but the congregation accepted the offer of Sir Kenneth Mackenzie of Gairloch, the laird of Conon, to build church and manse on sites he owned in Conon Bridge.

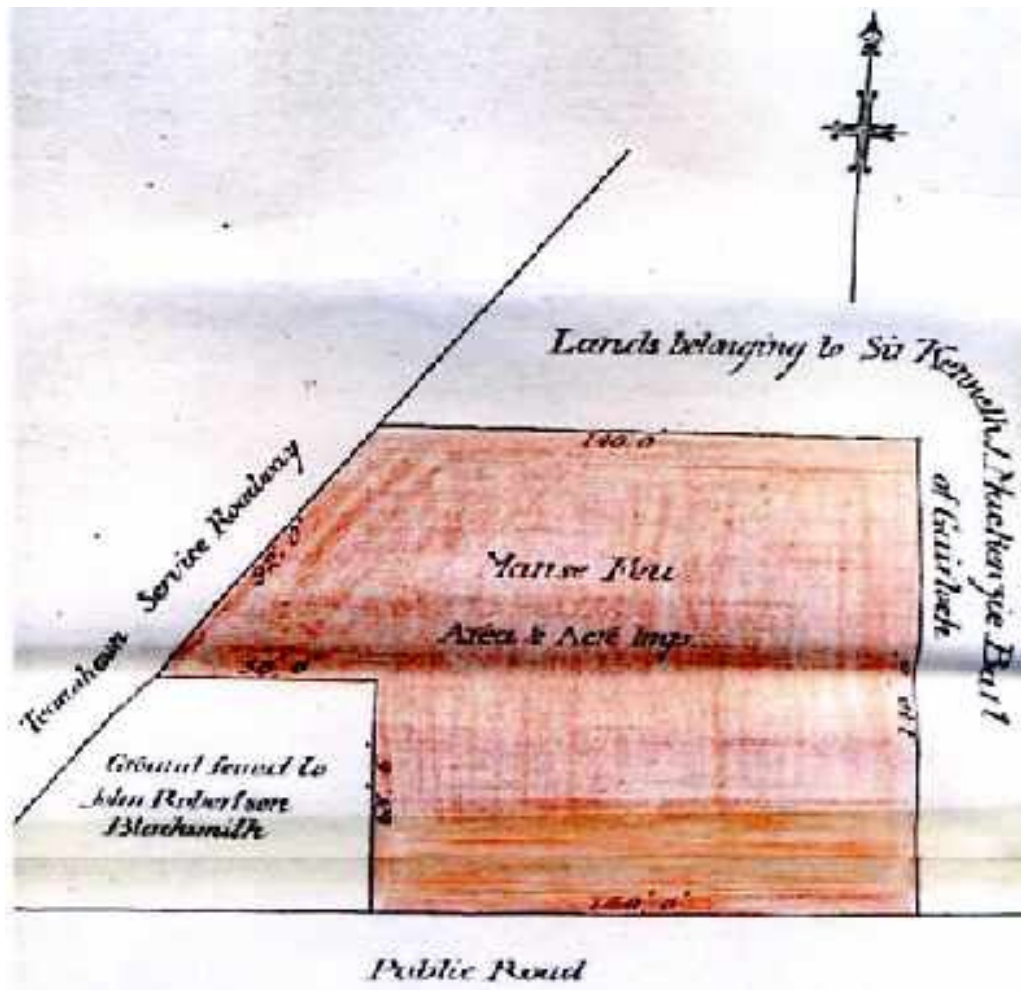
*[The site offered in Maryburgh may have been that which contained a small wooden building in the garden area adjacent to Albert Place, described as "Maryburgh UF Church" in a photograph appearing in a local newspaper some years ago (possibly The North Star). The newspaper cutting has long since been lost but perhaps "somebody" out there has the original?]



Again quoting the Ross-shire Journal, "the site is one upon which some old ruinous property was standing, and which was considered a great eyesore". A study of the valuation rolls prior to 1909 reveal the church site in name of "Reps. of John M Ferguson, blacksmith" and, later, "house

(ruinous) Sir K J Mackenzie of Gairloch", while the site for the manse was adjacent to the smithy owned by John Robertson, blacksmith.

The feu charter which was granted by Sir Kenneth Mackenzie in 1910, dwells mainly on the type of buildings to be erected as church and manse and their subsequent maintenance but banned the Trustees from carrying on any trade or business within either building! Another unusual requirement was: "... the said Trustees shall be bound not to place a bell in or in connection with the said Church" and "... it shall be in the power of (Sir Kenneth) to prohibit the ringing of such bell if any feuar or leaseholder in the said village shall object to the noise which such bell ringing may occasion". For how many years have we broken this stipulation?



In the months prior to the commencement of building, the congregation appears to have instituted a Building Fund, which benefited from the sum of £400 raised by special collection at a service in April 1908 during worship at their regular venue in Conon Public Hall. To this was added a grant of £1,800 from the Buildings Committee in Edinburgh, leaving the congregation to find £100 towards the cost of £2,300 for both church and manse.

By December 1908 the architect, William Mackenzie of Dingwall, had prepared plans for both properties and the successful contractors were announced:

Church:

Mason - Logan & Macdonald, Muir of Ord

Carpenter - William Macdonald, Dingwall

Slaters - Macswayde & Fraser, Dingwall

Plasterers - G Mackay & Son, Dingwall

Plumber - D Mackenzie, Dingwall

Painter - James Mackenzie, Dingwall

Manse:

Mason - Logan & Macdonald, Muir of Ord

Carpenter - J & J Gair, Conon

Slaters - James Gray & Sons, Inverness

Plasterer - H Macdonald, Fortrose

Plumber - D Mackenzie, Dingwall

Painter - Hugh A Ross & Sons, Dingwall

Although it has not been possible to secure a photograph of the Church at the time of its formal opening on 21 October 1909, the description in the Ross-shire Journal is worth quoting:

"The church is built in the early Gothic, pointed style of architecture, all of Conon freestone, and has a handsome belfry on the front gable and an entrance porch. The building comprises a church proper and a side transit which forms a hall (in 2009 the annexe) which is so arranged by means of a folding screen (in 2009 remaining folded into the connecting wall) that it can be added to the church when it may be required. It also contains a vestry and a small end gallery. It is built to accommodate 325 people, and the hall 60 additional. There is a handsome platform pulpit at the opposite end from the gallery with ornamental pointed canopy behind. The church is heated with hot water and lit with handsome belge lamps.



Photograph courtesy of Tony Innes (date late 1920s/early 1930s?)

"Internally the church is finished with principal couples forming a close roof. The walls are plastered and harmoniously tinted in warm pink, and are lined all round the lower portion with dado lining. The whole woodwork is stained and varnished walnut colour. Throughout the building the colours blend harmoniously together. The church is complete with inlet and extract ventilation, and

the entrance is enclosed with a neat stone wall and iron railing. The glazing has been carried out in small squares of tinted cathedral glass and leaded frames."



Photograph courtesy of Donald Macleod. Estimated taken in the 1920s and the minister would therefore be Rev J Izzat Johnstone.

The manse is described as: "... situated at the top of the village facing south and commands a magnificent view of the whole surrounding country, which at that particular point is one of the best bits of landscape in the county. The building is well finished and has had the necessary accommodation suitable for its purpose."

So Ferintosh and Maryburgh UF congregation now had buildings suitable for their needs, but in September 1910, barely six months after his induction, we find the Rev Alexander Macinnes submitting plans to the Dingwall UF Presbytery for an extension to the church and improvements to the manse! Once more it is easier to quote the Ross-shire Journal:

"For some time it had been felt there was not enough accommodation and so people were going to other congregations. The congregation desired Presbytery to give a letter of recommendation to the Building Fund Committee. The amount required, following plans drawn by William Mackenzie, architect, Dingwall, was probably about £558 which, with present debt of about £32, would require about £600. Maryburgh and Ferintosh proposed to hold a bazaar in 1911 and, with a grant from Building Fund Committee, hoped to clear the debt. Presbytery instructed the clerk to send a recommendation."

Subsequent reports from the UF Presbytery make no mention of an extension to the Church and comparison of the description of the building in 1909 with that of 2009 would suggest that the proposal fell by the wayside.



Note: no bell !

Chapter 3 - The Ministry

"..... anointed ... to preach good news .." (Isaiah 61:1)

Rev Roderick Mackenzie, MA - 1900-1909



Rev Roderick Mackenzie, MA. Photograph courtesy of Rev Douglas MacKeddie, Maryburgh Free Church.

Roderick Mackenzie was ordained a minister of the Free Church of Scotland in 1868 and his first charge was in Tarbert, Harris, where he remained until 1884 when he became minister of Maryburgh Free Church. Earlier in his life he was a teacher.

Following the Union of 1900 Mr Mackenzie left the Free Church to become minister of the new UF congregation in Maryburgh and continued to serve until early 1909 when he retired to Perthshire at the age of 72 to go into farming with his son.



Photograph of the Rev Roderick Mackenzie in his later years, contributed by his great-great-granddaughter, Margaret Bull of Melbourne, Australia, who is descended from Roderick's son Hugh.

Prior to his retirement he had the satisfaction of seeing the congregations of Maryburgh and Ferintosh agree to amalgamate, and would have been involved in the planning of church and manse in Conon Bridge.

Newspaper reports of the time reveal Roderick Mackenzie's part in community activities and his care and compassion for those in need. His congregational responsibilities appear to have accelerated because, in May 1908, he made application to the UF Assembly for a grant from the Aged and Infirm Ministers' Fund for an assistant. Although a grant of £40 was allowed, there is no further report of an assistant being appointed.

Mr Mackenzie came north to participate in the services and functions connected with the opening of the new church. He was described as being not in his usual health and rather depressed. He became a patient in the Ross Memorial Hospital "in a grave condition from which he never rallied" and died on 23 October, two days after the formal opening of his final charge.

His obituary reveals him to be a man who "devoted himself largely to his congregational duties, taking a constant interest in Presbyterian and other Church work, and particularly in Church politics". He had "a particular and intelligent interest in educational administration and served on Fodderty School Board". In manner he was "at times somewhat brusque" but was "kindly-hearted and sympathetic". As a preacher "his pulpit ministrations were not only forceful and vigorous but well reasoned and logical, although (he) was never perhaps a popular preacher in the wider sense of the term". Finally, "Those who were in closest touch with him, and knew best the man behind the manner, loved him best many who could not agree with his views were ever willing to admire his consistence and his conscientiousness."

Roderick Mackenzie's funeral did not take place in the Church he had served so well but went from the Ross Memorial Hospital to Fodderty Cemetery "and was largely attended".

Rev Alexander M F Macinnes, MA. BD, PhD - 1910-1918

Alexander Macinnes, who had been minister at North Knapdale, Inveraray, was inducted to the joint charge of Ferintosh and Maryburgh United Free Church in March 1910. The fact that approaches to two other ministers had proved unsuccessful may account for a report in the Ross-shire Journal that "the call to Mr Macinnes was pursued with singular enthusiasm and the desire of the congregation was unanimous". He was no 'second best' and came to the parish "having a highly creditable university and divinity career".

The induction took place in the Church and was followed by "an excellent luncheon" in Conon Public Hall for the new minister and members of Presbytery, with the same venue hosting a social meeting in the evening for members of the congregation and their friends.

Having barely had time to draw breath in his new charge, Alex Macinnes was elected Moderator of Dingwall UF Presbytery in less than three months! In subsequent years he appears to have devoted himself to serious matters within the parish rather than more worldly affairs, as he is found to be a member of Urquhart and Logie Wester School Board, the Urquhart Horticultural Society and lectured regularly at meetings of Conon Literary and Debating Society, of which he became honorary president.

In December 1918 Alex Macinnes decided to seek pastures new and left for Kirkliston (Edinburgh) but not before he had reported the Church "... with ecclesiastical debts cleared off, and buildings so complete and flourishing numerically and financially." And in even more flattering terms, "The organisation is perfect, and a more intelligent and capable body of office-bearers I am sure cannot be found in any congregation of its size in the country."

By 1924, while still minister at Kirkliston, Alex Macinnes had become a Doctor of Philosophy and in that year published a book, *The Kingdom of God in the Apostolic Writings*, which was dedicated to his congregation and to his former congregation at Ferintosh and Maryburgh - "in grateful recognition of pleasant and profitable associations". In May 1928 he declined "the harmonious call" from Lochranza UF Church.

One final connection with Dr Macinnes is a report, in January 1927, of his son, a minister at Larbert, accepting an invitation to go for one year to St Andrews Scotch Kirk, Buenos Aires, which "has over 1,000 members and several suburban churches".

Rev James Izzat Johnstone - 1920-1927

Rev J Izzat Johnstone (not to be confused with Rev J Johnstone, Strathpeffer, of the same era) came to Ferintosh and Maryburgh UF Church in February 1920, from Olig, Caithness, where he had ministered since October 1914. Born on 19 March 1870 at Townhill, Dunfermline, he was educated in Dunfermline High School, Glasgow University and the United Presbyterian College prior to being licensed by the Presbytery of Edinburgh in 1900. He was inducted to Point Road Church, Durban, South Africa, in 1903, and to Clifton Church, Johannesburg, in 1908.

As with Rev Dr Macinnes, the same sense of celebration occurred following Izzat Johnstone's induction, there being a luncheon in Conon Hotel "when over forty ladies and gentlemen were the guests of the congregation" with "the menu ... substantial yet choice, while the service was perfect". Speeches followed the meal while toasts were proposed to the King, the Imperial Forces and, finally, the new minister!

In the evening a social meeting was held in Conon Public Hall, which was crowded "to its utmost capacity", when the new minister was presented with "a well-filled wallet of banknotes" and the interim moderator with a "wallet of bank notes". The evening had also included praise, prayer, "an excellent tea" and several hymns and anthems "rendered most creditably by the choir".

During his time in the parish Izzat Johnstone became president of Conon and Maryburgh Literary Society, was Moderator of the United Free Church Synod of Moray and Ross, a Commissioner to the General Assembly of the UF Church, and an active supporter of the British Women's Temperance Association. He appears to have had an interest in music (Mrs Johnstone was church organist and leader of the choir and junior choir) and either entertained the choir to "a delightful evening spent in music, games, recitations, (and) good things in the way of eatables" or joined them each year on their annual outing, or chaired social events - for example one in Conon School when there was a "pleasing and varied programme" - or supported Mrs Johnstone's production of "a service of song by the junior choir of the Church".

In his leisure time he was an active member of Maryburgh and Conon Lawn Tennis Club, gaining success in singles and mixed doubles matches and even winning a challenge cup for gents' singles!

In December 1927, much to the regret of a congregation which acknowledged "his spiritual growth and the value of his visitation of the sick", Izzat Johnstone left to become minister of Calder UF Church, Lochwinnoch. By 1929 he found himself without a charge, as Calder Church had declined to enter the 1929 Union with the Church of Scotland, but in November 1929 he received a call from London Road East Church of Scotland, Glasgow, where he was inducted the following month.

Rev Malcolm Maclean - 1928-1961



A young Malcolm Maclean in 1914.



Malcolm Maclean in the 1940s.

(Both photographs courtesy of Mrs C Bennett, niece of Malcolm Maclean.)

Malcolm Maclean was born on the Island of Scarp, Harris, on 11 November 1896. He was the eldest of a family of six born to Donald John Maclean and his wife Margaret.

Malcolm first attended Scarp Primary School and then, on reaching the age for secondary education, moved to Orkney to stay with an uncle, Rev Allan Maclean, who was minister on the Island of Sanday. He first attended Sanday School and then Kirkwall Grammar School. At the age of 18 he enlisted in the Queen's Own Cameron Highlanders, attaining the rank of Officer. Badly injured at Passchendaele in 1917, he was hospitalised to Leicester where he was nursed by his future wife, Winifred Marsden. After the war he went to Edinburgh University and graduated in 1924, gaining prizes for Celtic and Scottish Studies and for Church History. He then went to New College, Edinburgh. In 1924 he married and in that year was inducted to Applecross

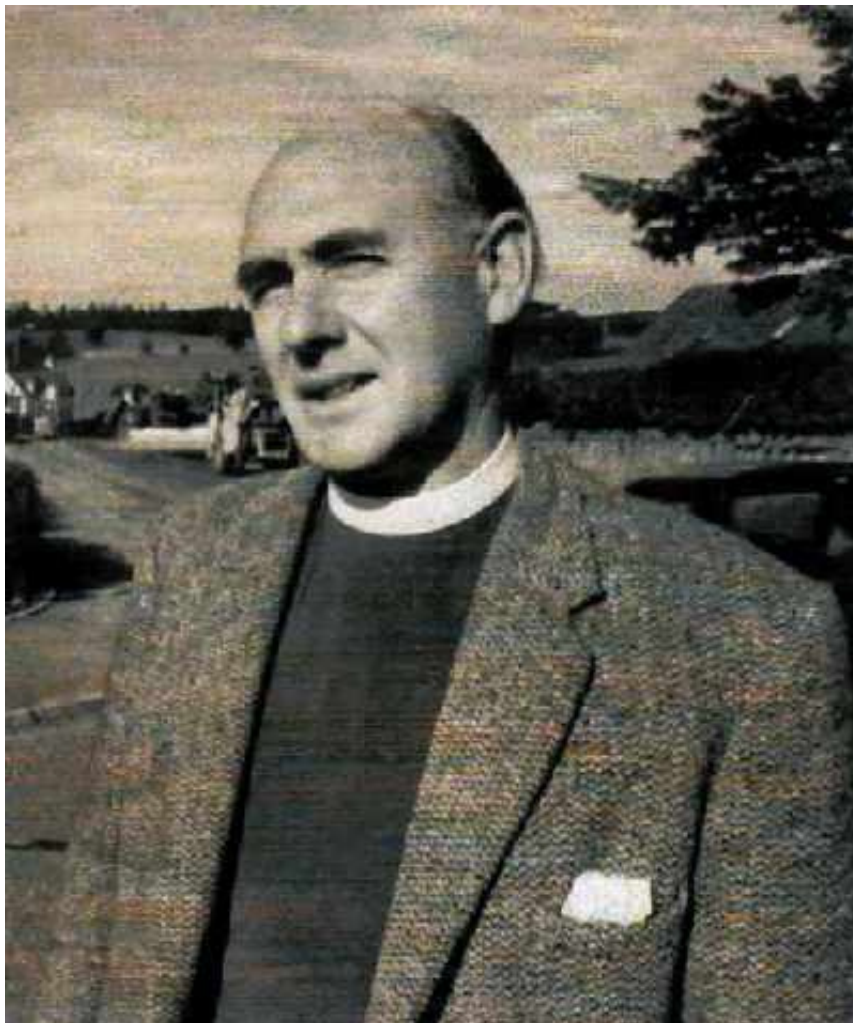
In 1928 he was inducted to Ferintosh and Maryburgh where he remained until he died of leukaemia in 1961. Malcolm and Winifred had three children: Una, born in Applecross in 1925; Stuart born in 1928 (died at the age of 9 months); and Sheila, in 1931.

When WW2 broke out he volunteered for service and was a chaplain attached to the 33rd British General Hospital in Africa, Iraq, Malta and Sicily. Due to ill health he left the Army in 1943.

Malcolm Maclean was also a noted Gaelic scholar, fluent in both Scottish and Irish Gaelic. He was much sought after as an adjudicator at Mods and music festivals in Scotland and Ireland. He had been Moderator of the Presbytery of Chanonry and Dingwall, and also of the Synod of Ross, Sutherland and Caithness. Like his predecessor, Alex Macinnes, he was a member and one-time president of Conon and Maryburgh Literary Society.

In his early years in Conon Bridge Malcolm Maclean went to Lowestoft during the English herring fishing season in order to minister to the many Gaelic speakers who worked there.

Older members of this congregation recall Malcolm Maclean as a man who had great rapport with children, devoted to the needs of his congregation, and an enthusiastic participant in all aspects of parish life. He died at the age of 65 and is buried in Urquhart Old Churchyard.



Photograph taken outside Ferintosh Manse in 1971 and courtesy of his sister, Mrs Marion Macdonald.

Rev D R Macleod, MA - 1961-1986

Donald Roderick Macleod was born in Carloway on the Isle of Lewis on 29 September, 1919, as one of a family of six. He was educated at the primary school at Carloway and then at the secondary school at Kingussie.

During the Second World War he served as a staff sergeant in the Royal Engineers at home and overseas. He was also involved with the Church of Scotland Huts and Canteens mission while in Germany.

Following war service 'DR', as he was affectionately known, became a student at Edinburgh University, graduating MA in 1950 and completing the Divinity course at New College in 1953. His university education was one of the things he prized most and he remained well-read throughout his ministry.

From 1953 to 1960 he was minister at Kilmallie, near Fort William, and then from 1960 to 1961 he was minister at Hope Memorial, Wamphrey and Johnstone Bridge, in Dumfries-shire.

Inducted as minister of Ferintosh Parish in 1961, he remained there for 25 years until his retirement in 1986. While minister at Ferintosh 'DR' was much involved with the setting up of the Children's Panel, started the first Scout and Guide groups in the village, and was chaplain to the ATC.

'DR' was never afraid to speak his mind and he could certainly be controversial. Conversations with him were never dull, and once you got used to it, his slightly impish sense of humour was wonderful. But underneath the sometimes wry exterior was a genuine compassion that was as warm as it was large. One of his mottoes was to 'leave things better than you found them' and those who were touched by that compassion know that he left us better people than he found us.

His ministry at Ferintosh will be remembered with affection and gratitude by a great many within the congregation and community. No record would be complete without mention of his practical skills with wood and stone, and any visitor to Ferintosh Manse will pass through the gateway he created.

Donald R Macleod died on 29 August 2000, a month short of his 81st birthday.

[Above extract courtesy of tribute paid at the September 2000 meeting of Ross Presbytery by Rev D J M Carmichael.]

Donald Macleod was a man of vision, and at the beginning of his ministry recognised the need to add a hall to the Church. With the "Mission Church" in School Road becoming redundant owing to the retiral of the Rev John Sellar, the newly-formed Congregational Board (previously known as the Board of Managers) decided that this property would be suitable and so it was developed.

Not many years later, 'DR' suggested that thought be given to building an extension to the hall to form a mini community centre for villagers to gather socially. Also, he was eager that a small retirement home be built in the village to allow the elderly and infirm to remain within their community.

In 1963 he recommended that the pulpit be removed and a smaller one installed in the left corner in order that the new communion table should be central and the focal part of the Church, with a suitable setting for the baptismal font. This was resisted owing to the strong views of one traditionalist !

However, 'DR' had success in 1977 when the School Road hall was sold and, coupled with a proportion of the sale of the East Church (Urquhart) manse, a healthy building fund allowed the building of the present hall to commence - his original dream realised.

He did not just dream, he acted! Villagers who can recall the severe flooding of 1967, when the banks of the river Conon were breached, will also recall how 'DR' marshalled practical support and worked tirelessly alongside those involved in the evacuation of people trapped in their properties.

During the first fifteen years of his ministry in this parish Donald Macleod was required to conduct services each Sunday in both Ferintosh Church and the Urquhart Church, with an evening service in Culbokie School once per month. It was only in 1977 that the Union and Readjustments Committee finalised transferring to Resolis Parish (renamed 'Resolis and Urquhart') "... that part of the parish of Urquhart lying from the east side leading from Alcaig crossroads to Mossend."

During his ministry he was supported by his wife, Priscilla, who contributed to the work of the parish in several roles, being President of the Guild for some years and, latterly, as organist - a task to which she devoted many hours of preparation. When their sons, William and Donald, were older, Mrs Macleod returned to teaching and became the very successful head teacher of Mulbuie Primary School.

Although his parish may have decreased in size, there was no diminution in Donald Macleod's energy in attending to the needs of its inhabitants in the intervening years until his retirement on the last day of 1986.

Unusually for a retired minister, he purchased a house only yards from his former manse and, while supporting the ministry of his successors (and, with their permission, continuing to visit 'old' parishioners), he maintained his rigid determination not to interfere in the work of the parish in any way.

It is a strange coincidence that, in the November 2000 edition of Life and Work, the death of Rev D R Macleod is recorded on the same page as the intimation of the licensing of student Andrew F Graham

Rev T Clifford Kelly - 1988-1993

Thomas Clifford Kelly was born in Ballynahinch, County Down, Northern Ireland in 1930 and completed both primary and secondary education in a school under the auspices of the Presbyterian Church of Ireland. He gained entrance to the Scottish Congregational and United Free Church College in Edinburgh in 1953, with associated studies at Edinburgh University, and, after completing a five-year course in Divinity Studies, was ordained in May 1958.



Photograph courtesy of Rev T C Kelly

At the University he met Johan, a daughter of the Free Church Manse in Aultbea, and they were married in Delny Free Church in August 1958. Called to serve in the Congregational Church, he ministered in Airdrie, Avoch, and Easterhouse, Glasgow. Having been received into the Church of Scotland in 1972 he became minister in North Bute from 1973-81; at Cargill-Burrelton with Collace from 1981-88; and completed 35 years in full-time ministry at Ferintosh from 1988-1993.

During his ministry Clifford Kelly was Moderator of both the Presbytery of Dunoon and the Presbytery of Ross and served on different Assembly Committees and the Bible Society of Scotland.

Now retired and living in Kinross he carries out occasional locum work and he and Johan say they enjoy being doting grandparents to seven grandchildren.

Clifford Kelly was inducted to Ferintosh in 1988 and began the work of building up a parish which had endured more than two years of vacancy. In addition to pastoral and preaching duties he saw the need to revive the somewhat tired fabric of the Church and in 1988-89 the chancel, aisles, entrance hall and stairs were carpeted, the interior was painted and voluntary labour embarked on the varnishing of pulpit and pews. It is thanks to Clifford Kelly - but in practical terms Johan Kelly and a team - that the congregation can sit on comfortable cushions each Sunday instead of hard, wooden pew seats!

With an ever-increasing Sunday School (part of which had to be accommodated in a caravan adjacent to the Hall) and the needs of organisations within and outwith the Church, it was obvious that the Hall required to be extended and this project was embarked on and was completed in 1990.

In 1990 both minister and kirk session gave support to Fred McCreadie in his embarking on training which eventually led to his becoming a Reader of the Church of Scotland. The following year,

Clifford Kelly had practical support through the six-month attachment of Alexander (Sandy) Glass, the newly-retired rector of Dingwall Academy, as part of his training for auxiliary ministry.

In common with his predecessor Clifford Kelly recognised the importance of ministering to the young people in the parish and established a youth group - Meeting Point - which grew and flourished in his time and that of his successor. Then, in 1990, a creche was opened in a small room in the Hall in order that parents might be free to join in Sunday morning worship in the knowledge that their child was in safe hands of a group of capable volunteers.

Clifford Kelly retired at the end of November 1993 but, ever conscious of the desirability of continuity in the parish (and mindful of the long vacancy prior to his induction), he gave the Kirk Session advance notice of his intention, which permitted arrangements to be made in advance of his waygoing and the hiatus to be merely four months.

Rev Daniel J M Carmichael, MA, BD - 1994-2003



Photograph by Alasdair Cameron

Daniel John McLeish Carmichael came to Ferintosh Parish as a young bachelor, fresh from his probationary assistant period at Mannofield Parish Church in Aberdeen.

Born in Glasgow in July 1968, and after primary and secondary education in the city, he graduated from Glasgow University with an MA (Hons) in History and Politics, following which he studied at Aberdeen University and obtained a BD (Hons) in Church History.

Inducted to Ferintosh Parish in February 1994, Dan settled down to getting to know the area and his parishioners, but as a young man living on his own in the manse it could not have been easy coping with the demands of a parish while maintaining his domestic needs. However, it was not long before the congregation was delighted to learn of his engagement to Joanne and their subsequent marriage in 1995. There was even greater delight when Matthew arrived in 1999, followed by Anna in 2001.

Like all his predecessors, he instituted changes in church life gradually and tactfully, one of the first being to hold a Bible study group and a singing practice group on alternate Wednesday evenings. The need to communicate the work of the Church throughout the parish was undertaken by means of a bi-monthly newsletter. The youth group, Meeting Point, established by Clifford Kelly, continued to flourish and had a programme as varied as drama in worship, quiz night, and occasional weekends away to Christian outdoor centres. Later years saw the introduction of a young women's Bible group, the Wednesday morning prayer group, a prayer requests box in the vestibule, and a Friday Club for young people from P.7 to S.2.

In 1995 Dan decided to introduce a Good Friday service and have informal Communion on Easter Sunday. Pew Bibles were introduced the same year, as were Christmas cards to all homes in the parish. In 1996 the first Holiday Club took place, the newly-formed Social Committee held a barbecue (the first of many) for the congregation and continued to broaden its scope in following years through harvest suppers, countryside walks, and a series of fetes at Alcaig courtesy of fondly-remembered Muriel Macduff-Duncan.



Alcaig Fete

With the benefit of a legacy the Kirk Session had replaced the sound system in the church and this allowed the taping of services for members of the congregation unable to attend Church.

The Millennium of 2000 presented a challenge to do something "special" and it was decided to aim to raise £2,000 for each of - the world, the community, the church - and the congregation responded to this magnificently, as history has shown that Ferintosh folk always do. During the year, for the world, £2,000 provided a sum towards Ross Presbytery's establishment of a bursary to enable a divinity or medical student from abroad to study in this country and the sinking of a well in Ekwendene. For the community, £2,000 enabled a copy of Luke's gospel to be purchased for each primary school child in the parish, along with a commemorative mug; and financial support was given to a project at Cameron House, Inverness. The final £2,000 benefited the church by providing a new pulpit fall, bible markers, lectern fall and communion table runner, while the surplus remaining from this amount was shared among Ekwendene, Ludihana and Cameron House.

In common with most churches in Scotland, Ferintosh embarked on creating a Millennium banner by means of the needlework skills of members of the congregation led by Sheila Munro. The banner depicts the Cross and the fruits of the Spirit set against the background of Ben Wyvis and in centenary year provides a pleasing backdrop in the Church Hall having been located there when the Easter Story, crafted by Sunday Club, took its place in 2007. A mosaic, created by Meeting Point, and the Millennium emblem of the Church of Scotland, crafted in cross-stitch by Brenda MacCulloch, face worshippers as they enter Church each Sunday.



Millennium Banner

Music played an important part in Dan Carmichael's life and he saw it as significant in worship. Gone are the days of the same organist turning out faithfully, morning and evening, for years on end, but Dan was fortunate, latterly, to have the support of Priscilla Macleod and Margaret Buchanan, with Ken Cumming and Angus Bethune giving generously of their services in the evening, although it was not unknown "when times were hard" for Dan to play the organ for morning worship.

In September 2003 Dan left to become minister of Lenzie Union Church of Scotland, the first minister to leave Ferintosh for another charge since Izzat Johnstone's departure in 1927 !

Rev Andrew F Graham - 2006 -

Andrew Fraser Graham was inducted into Ferintosh Parish on 13 January 2006.



Born in Motherwell in 1960, he attended Dalziel High School prior to joining the Merchant Navy as an Engineering Officer Cadet working with Canadian Pacific Steamships. After a few years he entered the Royal Air Force as an Air Electronics Operator, based mainly at RAF Kinloss., and served in this capacity for over twenty years until a new career opened in providing training for RAF aircrew on Nimrod flight simulators, again at RAF Kinloss.

Having been licensed as an auxiliary minister with the Church of Scotland he was ordained in Hopeman Church in 2001. However, he felt called to full-time ministry and enrolled in Aberdeen University where he graduated with a BTh degree in 2003, following this with a post-graduate diploma in Pastoral Studies and Practical Theology in 2004. His probationary period was served in Nairn Old Parish Church prior to coming to Ferintosh with Margaret and family, Hazel being at university in Edinburgh and Kenneth in his final year at school.

A vacancy of over two years required some stock-taking by the new minister and Andy could see areas requiring development and improvement.

The importance of Easter in the Christian calendar was highlighted by Andy beginning what has become a tradition of Bible reflections on the first three evenings of Holy Week, with a Maundy Thursday communion service as well as the customary Good Friday service, plus the introduction of Easter Sunday worship at 8.30 am, followed by breakfast in the Hall, prior to a Family Service at 11.00 am. He has also revived the practice of holding a service at Conon Bridge war memorial on Remembrance Sunday.

Prayer and Bible study are seen by Andy as vital in a congregation and these are met through groups gathering for the former, weekly on Wednesday mornings from 10.00-10.30, and for the latter fortnightly on Wednesday evenings from September to Easter, 7.30-8.30 - or longer, when discussion becomes animated!

In appreciation of the use of the Church Hall for their meetings, the ladies of Ross-shire Flower Club held a Flower Festival in the Church in August 2007 using the verses of the hymn All Things Bright and Beautiful as their theme. The Festival was so successful and enjoyable that Andy encouraged and actively pursued the compilation of a calendar for 2008, using photographs taken over the weekend. It was a sell-out!



.... and some of their beautiful arrangements. [Photographs courtesy of Rev A F Graham]

Work among the young people in the parish has continued through the annual Holiday Club and has been expanded by the introduction of a youth club - X-tra Time - for those in P.6 and P.7, meeting on a Friday evening (September to Easter) for games, crafts, Bible teaching and (for them) the all-important snack-time! A youth fellowship - FYF - was established and meets in term-time after Sunday evening worship for Bible discussion, questions, prayer time and (naturally!) a snack. 'Fun Days' have been held on several occasions as a 'taster' for the annual Holiday Club.

Ever eager to promote the work of the Church in the community and beyond, Andy has encouraged and supported the various groups within the Church - some of which are Pastoral Care, Social Committee, Mission and Outreach - in their endeavours to offer practical assistance, social interaction, and humanitarian aid at home and abroad.

Andy continues to devote considerable time and effort to meeting the needs of the inhabitants of the Parish through the preaching of the Gospel and pastoral care, and we give thanks to God for Andy's ministry and seek God's blessing on all that is done in His name.

At Dan Carmichael's waygoing social the Rev Douglas Mackeddie quoted from 1st Thessalonians 1:2-3 :

"We give thanks to God always for you all, making mention of you in our prayers; remembering without ceasing your work of faith, and

labour of love, and patience of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ, in the sight of God and our Father."

This text applies not just to a single minister but to each one who has laboured in Ferintosh Parish in the past 100 years and continues to do so, preaching the Gospel and giving help, support and spiritual comfort to all in need.

Chapter 4 - The Church Buildings

".... the house to be built for the Lord should be of great magnificence ... and splendour ..." (1 Chronicles 22:5)

If the Ferintosh parishioner of 1909 were to return in centenary year, how many changes would he/she observe in the church and its grounds?



A view of the Church taken prior to the car park formed in 1969, courtesy of Alasdair Cameron.



Postcard view courtesy of W J MacCulloch.

The Grounds

This postcard view of Conon Bridge, although probably from the 1930s, would present a more familiar view to our 'visitor' of a century ago. Subsequent improvements have led to the wall on the

left vanishing in 1969 when the County Council created a car park adjacent to what became a football pitch. In 1968 the open drain to convey rainwater had been replaced by a pavement and this required the dwarf wall and railings in front of the Church to be re-positioned. The fleur-de-lis on top of the railings suffered from ongoing vandalism and were removed finally in 1997. The ornamental trees remain.

The Church



Photos courtesy of J W Bremner.

The interior of the church offers some surprises with perhaps the main one being the lack of symmetry in the area of the pulpit. In 1962 the pews on either side, which stood at right angles to

those in the main body of the church, were removed and a carpet was gifted anonymously for the newly-created area. The organ was re-sited to the extreme right, remaining there until 1977 when a larger organ was secured from a redundant church in Fife, causing a need to remove the set of steps on the right of the pulpit. This left part of the floor area looking somewhat unfinished and so new carpeting was laid, but renewed in 1988 and extended to the aisles at a cost of £860. The 1909 wainscots were free of the fold-down bench seats which would have been attached at a time when there was a necessity to extend the capacity of the church and/or to double as guards over the electric heaters underneath.



Baptismal font (RCHS)

The church of 1909 is described as having a hall which we now call the annexe. This was separated from the main body by a shutter-type wall which could ascend into the roof space (and is rumoured to be there still). In 1981, Derek McLay replaced this structure with a beautiful wood-and-glass partition at a very modest cost of £200 for materials and this remained for some years until an expanding congregation outgrew the main body of the church and, sadly, it had to be dismantled.

The Halls

A year after the arrival of the Rev D R Macleod in the parish, he saw a need for a hall and proposed that one be built at the rear of the Church, but his newly-formed Congregational Board (until April 1962 known as the Board of Managers) felt that the redundant Parish Church in School Road could be adapted for this purpose.

Following protracted correspondence between Church Headquarters and the 'Superiors' (Conon Estate which held the Title to church and site) agreement was reached in 1964 that the building could be used as a hall, on the strict understanding that the original terms adhering to the property were upheld, including, for example, no dances, no alcohol, no gambling! A Constitution was drawn up with Minister and Session Clerk as Trustees.

Preliminary thoughts as to alterations required were: removal of pews, pulpit, provision of two toilets and a small kitchen, plus the formation of a new doorway at the opposite end of the existing one. It was decided to advertise the pews and pulpit for sale and this resulted in -

8 pews to Resolis Church for £108 (later discounted to £95)

9 pews to Fearn Free Presbyterian Church for £35

Pulpit to Erchless Church, Beauly, for £5.5/-

Heating pipes and boiler sold for scrap, £15.6/-

The estimated cost of alterations to form a hall was £1,760 but, as ever, the total rose to £1,883.

From 1964 onwards the hall was the venue for various organisations - Guild, Scouts, Guides, Cubs, Brownies, Youth Club, child welfare clinic, playgroup, chiropract - and for Church functions such as the stated annual meeting.



Photograph courtesy of Mhairi Mackenzie



Conon and Maryburgh Brownies. Photo courtesy of Nettie Roy.



Conon and Maryburgh Guides 1965-66. Photograph courtesy of Margaret Olsen.

Ever-increasing costs of maintenance (although, in 1972, the Youth Club had painted the interior of the hall and paid for the materials) plus lighting and heating did not meet expected income and so, in 1976, it was agreed to approach Conon Estate for permission to sell the hall as a house since by this time serious thought had been given to building a hall at the rear of Ferintosh Church.

By 1977 the School Road hall had been sold for £6,800 and, coupled with the sale of the Urquhart Manse for £17,000 and its steading for £3,250, Ferintosh had a healthy sum vested in the General

Trustees of the Church of Scotland. The General Trustees requested Presbytery that they approve releasing the entire sum towards the building of a new hall - for which the architect's plan suggested a cost of £30,000 - but in view of the allocation of part of the parish to Resolis and Urquhart in 1976, Presbytery determined that one-third of the Urquhart property sale should go to Resolis.

In August 1978 Ferintosh established a hall fund and set about fund-raising. By October of that year the fund had reached £22,126 and by March 1979 building was set to begin when weather conditions improved. In February of the following year the hall was at the stage of internal painting and was opened by W J Macdonald, a former Session Clerk. In March 1981 it was reported that there was "no debt on the new hall".



Rev D R Macleod at the opening of the new hall with John Lyall (?) and Donald Fraser. The entrance was on the gable side of the hall, facing the car park.

[This photograph has been reproduced from a slide, which has resulted in the image being reversed.]

The sound of rain on the corrugated roof caused problems during hall occupancy and so a false ceiling was added in 1985 at a cost of £1,400. By 1989 the Sunday School was outgrowing the hall and a caravan was purchased (£1,325) as additional space, functioning as such until 1990 when it was damaged by fire, owing to unauthorised occupancy by a 'rough sleeper'. It was sold for scrap for £20.

During these years it had become apparent that an extension was required and the necessary building work was completed in 1990 at a cost of £23,221. Planning permission had been granted on condition that the beech tree at the rear of the hall must not be cut down - and the same tree continues to be a source of annoyance to those who annually remove its leaves from the gutters!

Two anonymous donations consisted of curtains and a carpet for the entrance hallway, while the Guild contributed fifty new chairs. In 2001 a carpet and comfortable chairs were provided in what is

known, colloquially, as 'the posh room' for the benefit of baptismal groups, and baby changing facilities were included in the female toilets. The bird population found the roof most accommodating for nesting purposes and while the occupants were not evicted during the breeding season, their homes were cleared, entrances blocked and new rhones installed at a cost of £1,930 + VAT !

By 2002 it had become apparent that an expanding congregation required an extended hall and so the Congregational Board embarked on the familiar exercise of obtaining plans and raising funds. The end result - at a cost of £54,694 - is a bright, large, main hall, adequate storage space and a modern kitchen capable of coping with all sizes of functions, from coffee mornings to congregational meals.

There was no formal opening ceremony of the extension (perhaps the congregation is becoming quite blasé about hall extensions!) but there were many complimentary remarks about its attractive appearance, and it continues to benefit from various upgradings, such as new heating (£900 in 2005), shelving of cupboards, further storage in the kitchen, painting of toilets and hall surround, the latter having been carried out by volunteers known as "The FOGS" (Fred's Old Geezers !)



Before (stage, emergency exit, etc.) and after

Chapter 5 - Church Life

"Whatever your hand finds to do, do it with all your might." (Ecclesiastes 9:9)

THE GUILD

It may be supposed that Ferintosh Guild (formerly known as The Woman's Guild) dates at least from 1930 since an account in the Ross-shire Journal of 22 November 1929 reads:

"Woman's Guild conference in Dingwall: The first meeting of the Presbyterial Council now includes the Woman's Guild of the old Established Church and the Ladies' Work Parties of the old United Free Church. Mrs Sellar elected to the chair."

With her enthusiasm for the Guild, there is no doubt that Mrs Sellar would have encouraged ladies from Ferintosh Church to join with the members of the Parish Church to form what became known as Urquhart and Ferintosh Woman's Guild.

We move on some 30 years and to a description of the Guild by the late Mrs Priscilla Macleod:

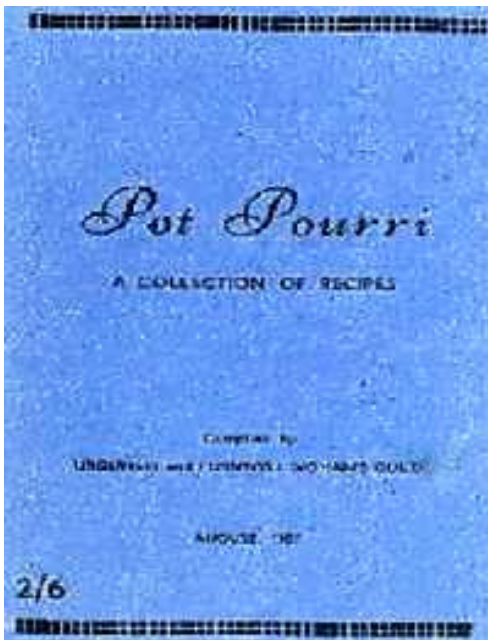
"We were a very happy group (about 30, I think) meeting very cosily in what is now the annexe to the church. The roasting heat from the glorious open coal fire scorched our legs, and rosied our cheeks, but the draughts from the windows persisted to keep us cool."

Throughout the years the Guild has proved to be a "Mary and Martha" in service to their Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, and to the practical needs of the Church at home and abroad. Each meeting begins with an act of worship and is followed by a speaker from organisations within and outwith the sphere of the Church. Meetings may sound prosaic but a great deal of laughter abounds. In past years the annual outing was something of an event but in recent times this has been supplanted by a fellowship meal at Christmas and at the end of each session.



Guild outing to Rosemarkie, 1983

On the practical side, over many years the Guild has given considerable financial support to Ferintosh Church through the many and varied fund-raising events undertaken - sales of work and coffee mornings being what most folk associate with the organisation. However, members are not lacking in imagination and, in 1957, produced a recipe book, featuring recipes gathered from within the parish and further afield, for the princely sum of 2/6d. (12½p) which proved to be a great success in financial terms and benefited Church Extension in Scotland. It is perhaps appropriate that this account should include the recipe for "Urquhart Chutney" :



- 3 lbs cooking apples
- 1 lb onions
- ½ lb sultanas
- ¾ lbs brown sugar
- 1 teaspoonful mustard
- 1 teaspoonful ginger
- 1 teaspoonful pepper
- 1 teaspoonful salt
- 1 teaspoonful pickling spices (if desired)

Peel apples and onions; clean sultanas. Chop up and mix all ingredients thoroughly. Cover with brown vinegar and boil for one hour.

In this day and age when "inclusive" and "equality" are keywords, the Guild has marched with the times and is no longer exclusive to women - but, so far, no man has attended regular meetings, although one or two have braved the occasional semi-social event!

SUNDAY SCHOOL/SUNDAY CLUB

Currently, after attending the first part of morning worship in the Church, the children of Sunday Club have the luxury of going to a hall which has the benefit of modern technology in the proclamation of the Gospel message. Not so the "120 quite regularly attending Sunday School" in 1970 who were dispersed in groups around the Church after it had emptied of the adult congregation!

Things improved with the opening of the new hall in 1980 but a need emerged for additional accommodation and a caravan was purchased as a temporary classroom in 1980. Subsequent extensions to the hall have allowed Sunday Club leaders the space to use drama and music in Bible teaching.

Through the latter the children have brought the Gospel to life in many memorable nativity plays over the years, using modern praise and fresh outlook on the Christmas Story, and led always by men and women dedicated to bringing the love of Jesus Christ into young lives.

As with the Guild, THE event of the Sunday School year was the annual outing, which took the form of a picnic, games and sports in many and varied locations - Strathconon, Dornoch, Rosemarkie, etc - transport being provided by whichever bus operator could provide the most reasonable quotation. The Christmas party came a close second in popularity and, in the absence of a hall, was held for many years in Conon Village Hall, which is now a house. There the young folk were treated to the baking skills of the ladies of the congregation (no requirement for a safe food handling course!).

An earlier example of an annual outing comes from the Ross-shire Journal of July 1922 when it reported on a picnic held on Peterkin's island at Dunglass. First of all the children were given "milk, cakes and buns" and, prior to two fires being lit, they had games. Water boiled on the fires allowed the serving of tea (and, presumably, more cakes and buns), after which there were additional races, with a prize to each of the winners and 6d (2½p) to all the less successful. Pupils and friends were conveyed home by Mr Peterkin (local farmer) and Mr Tuach (Conon grocer) after giving thanks to Messrs W & J Peterkin "for a splendid treat".

Nowadays, children are used to more sophisticated entertainment and so the barbecues and trips to places such as Roller Bowl have become the norm. But children remain children and their cheerfulness and enthusiasm in all they do in Ferintosh Church give us great hope for their, and the Church's, future.

XTRA-TIME

Xtra Time is the Church's youth group open to P6/7 pupils in the area and began in September 2006. The last three years have been very successful and a new youth group for S1/S2 pupils is to be introduced this year (2009). The programme includes pool, table tennis, air hockey and football tables, along with different board games, crafts and, of course, a tuck shop. There is A Thought For The Week based around a Bible passage or story, and youngsters have been encouraged to participate in these. Over the last two years donations have been given by different community groups towards expenditure and the Church is extremely grateful for this financial support.

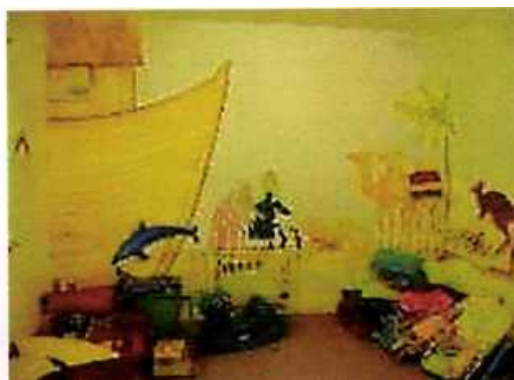
FYF

Ferintosh Youth Fellowship is the Bible-based youth group open to young people in S1-S4. Meeting in the Church Hall on Sunday evenings between 7.30 pm - 8.30 pm, the atmosphere is informal and very relaxed as the group looks at the Bible together and discusses about how it affects their everyday lives. Games, music, DVDs and, of course, a snack also feature.

THE CRECHE

The Creche was established in 1990 by Rev Clifford Kelly and continues to provide a secure environment for babies, toddlers and the pre-5s whose parents wish to attend worship having the confidence that their children are in a safe location and in the care of competent adults.

Annette McKee lent her artistic skills to the original decoration of the room and the Creche has always been supplied with toys, furniture and heating to comply with health and safety requirements.



RIVER CAFE

Since it opened in April 2003 in the Church Hall, the River Café has proved to be a popular "drop-in" for home baking and a chat for residents of the Parish, not necessarily attached to Ferintosh Church - and quite often attracting passing tourists! Taking place from 2.00 to 3.30 pm on the second Wednesday of each month during term-time, the event has enjoyed the baking skills of Janet Murray and Nettie Roy since its inception. No charge is made but donations are gratefully received for local charities and since 2003 a total of £1,865.45 has been disbursed to the following:

Blythswood; Cale House, Inverness; Child Survival in Malawi; Christian Aid; CrossReach; Crossroads Care; Hearing Impaired Unit of Dingwall Primary School; Highland Hospice; Highland Society for the Blind; Highlands & Islands Support Group for Grieving Families; MacMillan Nurses; Maggie's Highland; Oxfam 'Recycle a Goat Programme'; Sunflower Project (Board of Social Responsibility). For Ferintosh Church - Friday Youth Club; Holiday Club; Meeting Point (trip to Teen Ranch); Sunday Club; play equipment; equipment for hall and kitchen; two barbecues.

PRAYER GROUP

Aware of the power of prayer, a group has met in the church hall each Wednesday morning from 10.00 to 10.30, beginning in November 2000, to give thanks to God for all blessings received and to bring to Him the needs of the Church at home and in the wider world. Aware that not everyone has the confidence to participate in open prayer, but nevertheless wishes intercession on their behalf, there is a prayer requests box in the vestibule of the Church to meet this need. In addition, a prayer page is included in each Sunday's intimation sheet.



BIBLE STUDY

From the time of D R Macleod Bible study has been part of Ferintosh congregation and continues to be held fortnightly on Wednesday evenings during winter months, from 7.30 to 8.30 pm - or longer, if participants get carried away by discussion! Each minister has given much time and thought to explaining chapters from the Bible and encouraging debate, and Andy Graham is no exception.

SOCIAL COMMITTEE

Formed in 1996 with the aim of encouraging and expanding the social life of the congregation, the Social Committee has gone from strength to strength with original and imaginative functions that have appealed to all ages within the community.

Such as



Annual Barbecue



Alcaig Fete Entertainment



Harvest Suppers (and Stovies Suppers)



Helping at Coffee Mornings



Outings (Biblical Garden, Elgin)



Walks (this one to Achnashellach)

HOLIDAY CLUBS

From 1996 onwards several hundred children of primary school age have participated in holiday clubs which have been held during the last week of summer holidays. A team of volunteers has led the children in crafts, aerobics, music, drama, games and the all-important Bible teaching, mainly through programmes devised by Scripture Union.



Drama and Games



Bible Story

Prior planning being vital, over the years the congregation has responded magnificently to requests for all types of resources, costumes, snack food, etc, and many have devoted time and effort to laborious cutting-out and pasting in the preparation of craft materials, while others have given of their artistic skills in the preparation of the Hall.



Part of decoration for 'Going Bananas'



.... and Fred McCreadie doing his death-defying act when positioning a banner.

The holiday club themes have been many and varied -

1996 - Bodybuilders	1997 - Chattabox	1998 - Going Bananas	1999 - The Big Top
2000 - Go for Gold	2001 - Shipshapes	2002 - Desert Detectives	2003 - Seaside Rock
2004 - Expedition Force	2005 - nil	2006 - Pyramid Rock	2007 - Junior Heroes
2008 - Champion's Challenge			

In the Spring of 2006 and in subsequent years a 'Fun Day' was held for the same age group, with a programme similar to the following holiday club, and aimed as an introduction to that event.

From the highpoint of 80 children per day in the early days of the holiday club, numbers have dwindled to 20-30 per day, mainly in the 5-8 age range, and from this it may appear that the format has less appeal to those in Upper Primary. Has the holiday club had its day?

PASTORAL CARE

The Pastoral Care Team was formed in 2001 when a group within the Church saw the need for a service of practical help to meet certain needs in the community. Volunteers give freely and willingly of their time to those who require transporting to doctor, dentist or hospital appointments; visit the housebound and those in residential homes; and have a range of small tasks they can undertake in the realms of domestic practical assistance.

MUSIC

During the past century praise has resounded within the walls of Ferintosh Church with people of all ages contributing through vocal or instrumental talents.

As early as 1908 Mr William Mackenzie, of Ben View, Conon, was precentor in Ferintosh and Maryburgh UF Church and was still carrying out that function in 1910. He was aided by a choir. Choral singing featured prominently in the life of the Church and the local press contains many reports of the choir's participation in church services and in more secular functions. Perhaps the thought of the annual outing contributed to their enthusiasm? Beginning in 1928, this consisted of a coach trip and high tea, financed entirely through a bequest from the ever-generous John Peterkin, and ceased only early in the 1960s when income did not meet costs.

By 1920 a Mrs Mackenzie, Somerby, was organist, as was a Miss Macrae, so perhaps the Church had acquired the harmonium which languished in the hall (annexe) for many years and required strong calf muscles to propel air through its reeds. Mrs Johnstone, wife of the minister, was organist and leader of the choir from 1920 to 1927, and was succeeded by Miss Muriel Mackenzie, Dingwall, although a Mr T Mackenzie was "leader of praise".

The intervening years have proved difficult to research, so we must move to the late 1950s/early 1960s when Robert S Weir, principal teacher of music at Dingwall Academy was organist. Robert Weir having left the area, James Curr, approaching retirement as county music organiser, was

appointed in 1962 at a salary of £50 per annum (mornings only), with a Mrs Munro playing each evening for 75p ! James Curr retired in 1985, at the age of 85 and with seventy years' service as organist in various parishes, and was honoured with a long service certificate from the Church of Scotland.



James Curr with Long Service Certificate

Mrs Priscilla Macleod helped out until Mr Paul Raymond was appointed in 1986 and on his retirement in 1995 became "temporary organist" - a post which she held for five years until her own retirement when Miss Margaret Buchanan took over until her untimely death in 2002.

The shortage of organists led the Kirk Session to purchase a digital organ (or karaoke machine as some irreverently called it!) for use at morning services, although the Church enjoyed the musicianship of Angus Bethune and the late Ken Cumming each Sunday evening. This was not an ideal solution but at least there was musical accompaniment in the absence of securing the services of a permanent organist.

In 2003 Doreen Suckling came as organist on a once-per-month basis but was adopted quickly by Ferintosh and now plays not only for morning worship but for weddings and funerals. About the same time, Miranda Neall, then a fourth year pupil in Dingwall Academy, came to play at some evening services and has grown in confidence and ability to the extent that she is to study music at Aberdeen University, with the organ as her preferred instrument, beginning in September 2009. Miranda has composed a Centenary Hymn for Ferintosh Church.

VOLUNTEERS

Where would the Church be without the volunteers who, over the past century, have given of their time and talents, freely and often anonymously, to all areas of church life?

It would be difficult to attempt to list individuals and circumstances where work has been done and continues to be carried out - in many cases unobtrusively - but Ferintosh Church has been greatly blessed in having men and women of faith who adhere to the words of 1 Corinthians 9:31:

"..... whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God."

And as long as we have these men and women of faith with a commitment to uphold the Christian way of life, the Church in Ferintosh can move with confidence into a second century.

Chapter 6 - CENTENARY CELEBRATIONS

Our Centenary Prayer Day was held on 3 June when the Church was open to everyone who wished to have a time of private prayer and reflection. The tranquil setting inside the Church was enhanced by beautiful floral arrangements created by Isabel Macdonald, Pat Gillanders and Margaret Cameron.



On Saturday 6 June there was an `afternoon gathering` in the Church grounds with a Victorian/Edwardian theme to reflect the era when the Church was first opened. Participants were encouraged to come in period dress. There was a free barbecue for everyone; a flower and plant stall for the gardeners; a baking and preserves stall for those who like something tasty; afternoon teas in the Hall; games for the children; and prizes for children wearing fancy dress.



Won't you buy my pretty flowers? (Pat Gillanders)



Saffron and Ruby dressed up



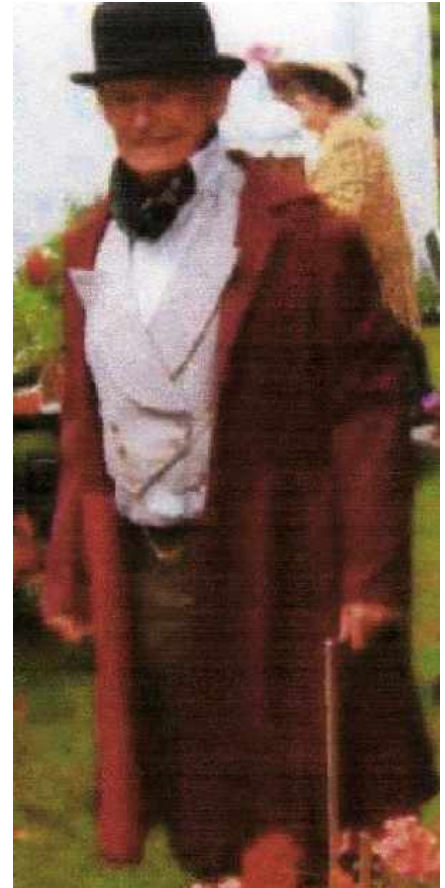
. and so did we (JM).



The Tea Ladies - Nettie Roy, Annette McKee, Pam Yuill, Dorothy Howie, Isabel Macdonald (J.M.)



Joan and Bill Mackenzie (J.M.)



Fred McCreadie, a very impressive Session Clerk (J.M.)



Roderick, and Katie Urquhart with Tom Thomas (J.M.)



The 'orra loon' Jim Yuill waiting to prepare the barbecue.



Our customers (J.M.) [‘JM’ indicates that the photographs are by Joan Mackenzie.]



Margaret and Roddie Mackinnon



Two ecclesiastical gentlemen



Our very own ecclesiastical gentleman !

Another very welcome gift to the Church is the Centenary Hymn, named Ferintosh Parish, the words and music of which have been composed by our young organist Miranda Neall.

1. Let's celebrate, let's all sing
One hundred years worshipping.
Our Church has been standing tall,
With open doors to praise.
Our Church has stood the test of time,
Let's sing God's praises once more.
Our love for you grows my Lord,
Forever, we thank you Lord.

2. For all events, small and large,
Lord you are there guiding us.
Deaths and births, weddings too,
Your presence Lord we feel.
We enter this Church each Sunday
To praise your holy name.
We all unite as one here,
Forever, we thank you Lord.

3. Leave the past in the past,
All sins have been forgiven.
The present time we serve you,
Our future's with you Lord.
Today is our Centenary,
We will rejoice in your name.
Jesus our Lord and Saviour,
We thank you for all, Amen.

(Miranda Neall b.1989)



Chapter 7 - POSTSCRIPT

On Wednesday 21 October 2009, on the 100th anniversary of the opening of the church building, a special service was held in Ferintosh Parish Church, attended by former ministers and relatives of former ministers.



Welcome

Hymn: The Church's One Foundation

Dedication of Lectern and Banner

Hymn: For I'm Building A People of Power

Prayer: Rev.T. Clifford Kelly

Centenary Hymn: Let's Celebrate, Let's All Sing

(written by Miss Miranda Neall)

Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-14 - Mr Fred McCreadie (Session Clerk)

Hymn: O Happy Day - Mrs Doreen Suckling (organist) and the Choir

Prayer: Rev Andrew Graham

Hymn: The Church is Wherever God's People are Praising

Address: Rev. Andrew Graham

Hymn: Look Forward in Faith

Benediction

Following the Service a commemorative photograph was taken by Alasdair Cameron. As it was the October school holiday break, many of the congregation were absent from the photograph due to being away on vacation. Also absent was the former minister, Rev Dan Carmichael, because of family illness.



Back row, l-r: Brian Robertson, Jeanette Robertson, (hidden), Neil Drummond, Margaret Drummond, Jessie Green, Doreen Ritchie, Joan Robertson, Hamish Robertson
 Next row, l-r: Campbell Mackenzie, Daphne Fraser, Florence Wilkerson, Mary-Anne Fothergill, (hidden), Andy Fothergill, Ann Mackay
 Next row, l-r: (hidden), Robert McKee, Annette McKee, (hidden), (hidden)
 Next row, l-r: Isobel Mackenzie, Catherine Kelman, (hidden), Anne Mackay, ?, Sylvia Chalmers, Ann ?, Catherine Mackintosh, David Mackintosh, Alistair Mackenzie, Pat Kilgore
 Next row, l-r: Roderick MacLennan, Catherine MacLennan, Thomas Gray, Kenneth Macpherson, George Hogg, Margaret Hogg, John Fraser, John Smith, Alison Smith, Eilidh Smith, Margaret Macdonald
 Next row, l-r: Margaret Wilson, William Mackenzie, (hidden), ?, Esma Neilson, ?, Arlene Maclean, Munro Stewart, Inez Nisbet, (hidden), Eric Munro, Angela Macpherson
 Next row, l-r: ?, Robert Maclean, Rosie Neale, David Neale, Tommy Macgregor, Elizabeth Glashan, Isabel Mackenzie
 Next row, l-r: Sadie Mackenzie, Elizabeth Blackburn, Connie Parry
 Next row, l-r: Fred McCreadie (Session Clerk), Peter ?, Leslie Currie, Win Currie, Tom Thomas, Jean Thomas, David Shearer, Morag Shearer, Marie Macrae, Victoria Macrae, Rachael Macrae
 Next row, l-r: James Yuill, Doreen Suckling (organist), Janet Winchester, Mhairi Mackenzie, Pat Gillanders, Georgie Jack, Lorna Cruickshank, Isabel Macdonald, Pamela Yuill (clerk to the Board), Jeannette Cameron
 Next row, l-r: Rev Douglas MacKeddie (Maryburgh Free Church), Katie MacKeddie, ?, Una Maclean (daughter of Rev Malcolm Maclean), Callum Maclean (nephew of Rev Malcolm

Maclean), Norma Maclean, Kitty Bennett (niece of Rev Malcolm Maclean), Margaret Mackinnon, Rev Roddie Mackinnon, Janet Murray
Front row, l-r: John O Sutherland, Rev Robert Jones, Jo Jones, Marion Macdonald (sister of Rev D R Macleod, Donald Macleod (son of Rev D R Macleod), Marion Macleod, Johan Kelly, Rev T Clifford Kelly (former minister), Miranda Neale (composer of centenary hymn), Margaret Graham, Rev Andrew Graham (current minister)

[Apologies that some names are not known.]

During the Service the Rev Andrew Graham dedicated the new Lectern, which was crafted by David Rose of Wood Worz, and the Centenary Banner, created by Isabel Macdonald and Annette McKee.



Photograph by Mhairi Mackenzie



Photograph courtesy of Alasdair Cameron

The congregation and guests then adjourned to the Church Hall for tea and home baking, and the centenary cakes (made by Deas of Dingwall), one of which was cut by Rev Andrew Graham and Rev T. Clifford Kelly.



Photographs by Mhairi Mackenzie



Photographs by Mhairi Mackenzie



Photographs by Mhairi Mackenzie

During the evening the Rev Andrew Graham and Mrs Margaret Graham were presented with a crystal bowl to mark the Church's centenary.

Earlier in the month, on Sunday 11 October 2009, the congregation had a visit from the Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Rt Rev William Hewitt, who preached the sermon at morning worship, after which a soup lunch was held in the Hall. During the Service Moderator Hewitt presented Long Service Certificates to Guild members:

Catherine Maclennan - 60 years

Catherine Aitken - 60 years

Olive Macpherson - 55 years

Linda Holroyd - 50 years

Mabel Macleod - 45 years

Margaret Olsen - 45 years

Margaret Mackinnon - 40 years

Esma Neilson - 40 years

Barbara Cumming - 40 years

Janet Roy - 40 years

Isabel Mackenzie - 40 years

Janette Steele - 35 years

In addition, Long Service Certificates for Elders were presented to Tom Gray (50-plus years), Isabel Mackenzie (32 years), Janette Steele (32 years), Jim Bremner (32 years) and Eric Munro (32 years).

The Rev Gordon Holroyd received a Long Service Certificate for Ministers for 50 years in the Ministry.



Back row l-r: Tom Gray, Eric Munro, Moderator, Gordon Holroyd, Jim Bremner, Linda Holroyd
 Front row l-r: Isabel Mackenzie, Esma Neilson, Catherine Maclellan, Nettie Roy, Andrew Graham





All photos of Moderator's visit courtesy of Martin McLauchlan

On 10 November 2009 a centenary meal was held in the hall, the catering being provided by the Riverside Tavern, Conon Bridge. On this occasion the congregation was joined by Rev Dan Carmichael, Joanne, Matthew and Anna. There was no charge for the meal but members of the congregation were invited to donate to the Feeding the Elderly programme in Malawi, and responded generously by giving £612.



Some of those who attended. Photos courtesy of Hugh Steele.

So ended the celebration of 100 years of the presence of the Church of Scotland in the parish of Ferintosh.

Or so we thought

In October 2010 the Rev Andy Graham received an email from Margaret Bull, of Melbourne, Australia, who is a great-granddaughter of the Rev Roderick Mackenzie and descended from his son Hugh, who came to Australia. Margaret had paid a brief visit to Maryburgh in 1989 but it was only when she found our church history on the internet that a few questions were answered.

Margaret tells us that Roderick Mackenzie lost a daughter in 1905 and a son, Macintosh, in 1899. Three of Roderick's other sons migrated to USA and a grandson, Donald, has done some research into the family history.

With her email Margaret sent a photograph of Roderick in his later years.



Chapter 8 - The Asbestos Saga

In the Spring of 2013 some electrical work was required in Ferintosh Church and, when the electrician investigated the possibility of putting wiring underfloor, he found there the pipes associated with the long-redundant hot water heating system. Alarmingly, they were coated in asbestos!



If you find asbestos, be prepared for disruption!

The Congregational Board debated two options: (a) leave the asbestos undisturbed, or (b) remove it. Option (a) would require little or no financial burden, but option (b) would stretch the congregation's finances considerably. In the event, it was agreed that leaving the situation to future generations was not a responsible action, and so a specialist was engaged to tackle the immediate problem.

Although the annexe was not affected by asbestos, it emerged that the entire Church would have to be cleared completely of pews, seats, electrical heating, carpeting, etc. before the specialists could begin.

That raised the question of how to save the pews in their entirety? Due to their length it would be impossible to remove them and, if sawed in half, or sections, how could they be re-connected successfully? It appeared that the days of the pews were over and they must be replaced with seating.

Similarly, the 40 year old heating system would have to be replaced, and as the original floorboards could be contaminated by the asbestos, the area of the Church from chancel to rear wall would require a new floor of some modern material rather than expensive wood. In turn, this area would require to be carpeted and a certain amount of redecoration would be required. Costs were mounting alarmingly!

Church of Scotland HQ gave a grant to cover the removal of the asbestos; the congregation responded magnificently to an appeal; various fund-raising schemes were put in place; the pews were sold; and the Treasurer plundered reserves!

As part of fund-raising a Flower Festival was organised by members of Ross-shire Flower Club, the theme being Flowers in Praise. The displays were spectacular, and here are only a few.





Photos by Mhairi Mackenzie

While fund-raising proceeded, various contractors were engaged for post-asbestos work.



*The church before removal of the asbestos.
(J W Bremner)*



Asbestos-covered pipes removed. The joists are



Area awaiting new joists.



Very few joists requiring attention on this side.

60s

ge 61 of 6



*Kenneth B
place bet
Floor complete.*



Main area with new floor and new heating.



Interior as it was.



October 2013. Last minute touches before first Sunday worship in refurbished Church.

Winter of 2013 - 2014

The winter of 2013-2014 brought more expense when a large limb of the "squinty tree" was brought down in a storm and the services of a tree surgeon had to be secured. A member of the congregation with a fascination for such work had time to record only the first stages of the procedure!

