

## Bush Fires in Australia

Robbie and Colin McNally received this firsthand account of the fires in Casterton, Victoria, Australia.

*The situation within our State was horrific, a total of 181 have lost their lives. Over 700 homes have been destroyed to say nothing about sheds and outbuildings, public halls, golf clubs etc and other public utilities. The miles and miles of fencing, hundreds of motor vehicles, railway lines and really everything imaginable have been destroyed. The loss of sheep, cattle and wild life is colossal. These fires travel at between 35 and 50 miles per hour (particularly up hill) with a strong wind behind them. They create their own wind which swirls and creates "fire balls" which travel in front of the fire front and are projected up to four k.m ahead. Wherever they again touch ground another fire is immediately burning increasing rapidly in size. Dozens of people trying to escape in vehicles have been incinerated as the smoke is intense and the speed of the fire and change of wind direction can't be anticipated. Houses some distance well ahead of the "fire front" have been exploding into fire due to the radiant heat. The temperatures we have had over the last few weeks have to be experienced to understand. Hot northerly winds of about 90/100 k.m. per hour and the temperatures have ranged daily between the high 30's to as much as 47 degrees Celsius. Two small towns have just disappeared -- one by the name of Kinglake and the other Marysville. Some people escaped from them but as for the shops, homes, halls etc, there is nothing left.*

Our thoughts and prayers are with those in Australia.

## Kids Are Quick



**TEACHER:** Maria, go to the map and find North America

MARIA: Here it is.

**TEACHER:** Correct. Now class, who discovered America ?

CLASS: Maria

**TEACHER:** John, why are you doing your math multiplication on the floor?

JOHN: You told me to do it without using tables.

**TEACHER:** Glenn, how do you spell 'crocodile'?

GLENN: K-R-O-K-O-D-I-A-L'

**TEACHER:** No, that's wrong

GLENN: Maybe it is wrong, but you asked me how I spell it.

**TEACHER:** Donald, what is the chemical formula for water?

DONALD: H I J K L M N O.

**TEACHER:** What are you talking about?

DONALD: Yesterday you said it's H to O

**TEACHER:** Winnie, name one important thing we have today that we didn't have ten years ago.

WINNIE: Me!

**TEACHER:** Glen, why do you always get so dirty?

GLEN: Well, I'm a lot closer to the ground than you are.

## Malawi



Dear Friends,

The Presbytery Partnership goes from strength to strength and we are now receiving hand written letters from Congregations in Malawi, these letters are a joy to read, full of hope and messages of thanks. I have taken photocopies of the letters and they are available in the "Tea Sunday" corner of the church. The Wish List remains pretty much the same with the continuing need for clothing, flat shoes, wellingtons, stationery and electric irons. The wedding dress appeal was a great success and is mentioned in one of the letters. Another piece of good news is that one of the two containers that left Dundonald in October arrived in Bandawi on the 24th. December in perfect time for Christmas. The distribution of boxes is undertaken by members of the Women's Guild who ensure fair allocations. The Malawi Open Evening is still in hand with a date yet to be decided.

Sincere thanks to all who continue to support the Presbytery Link with our Malawi family.

Tea Sunday Contributions:- December £ 30.00, January £ 16.00  
February £ 22.25, Two Donations - £35.00 and £15.00

Many thanks

Meg Peacock

### St. John's Episcopal Church Girvan

Tuesday Morning worship & Bible study during Lent

**10.30am—12.00pm**

**3rd. March**—"A way in the wilderness". **10th March**—Taize worship for Lent

**17th March**—Holy Communion for St. Patrick's Day.

**24th March**—The Monastic Office of Sext.

**31st March**—Taize worship for Passiontide. **7th April**—Morning Prayer



### The Thistle Friendship Group



Will meet on Thursday 5th March then the 19th and every second Thursday from then on.

### Thanks

Pat & Peter Thackray would like to thank everyone for their kindness, phone calls, visits and offers of help during the time Peter was ill. It was very much appreciated.

Thank you so much

Before Christmas Mr Guthrie told us “God is real”, and just after New Year, Margaret Bean asked us what /who had been a great influence on our lives.



My personal answer to both of these came to me 20yrs ago. I had convinced myself I needed a new car. When I was half a mile down the road to the motor dealer, it was as though a sign was in the middle of the road saying “Road Closed” of course there wasn’t but something made me turn round and go home. After a short time I persuaded myself I was just “footering” and told myself to get on with it. After I had bought the new car , I found it to be a disappointment and to make things worse it was stolen two months later. So I rued the day when I had ignored that “sign” in the middle of the road.

I had often wondered how I would explain to others the realness of God and the incident provided me with an excellent and brief answer— “God Is in the signposts of life” whether we heed or ignore them is up to us. As far as my meteorological career was concerned, the first “signpost” was my brother’s interest in aircraft spotting. I too became quite good at this, but I also noticed other things — clouds! Many other people set me in the right direction and in October 1958 joined the Met Office at Silloth in Cumberland where the officer in charge was Frank Walker who used to live in Girvan after his retirement.

After many other signposts I ended up in Ballantrae in December 1996. As a fitting reward for all my “weather” efforts, on the 4th of February 2009 I was told I could use F.R.Mets after my name (Fellow of the Royal Meteorological Society).

George Watt F.R.Mets.

### SIGNPOSTS SEEN OUTSIDE CHURCHES

**WE ARE THE SOUL Agents**  
in this area!

**GOD is PERFECT...**  
Only man makes **MISTEAKS**

**ALMOST 2000YEARS OLD**  
**AND STILL UNDER**  
**THE MAKER’S GUARANTEE**

As you pass this little church,  
**be sure to plan a visit,**  
so when at last **You’re** carried in,  
**GOD** won’t ask “Who is it?”



### Creche

This will commence on **8th March** during morning service. The children (under 3years) will stay with their parents during first half of the service and will leave church along with the Sunday school to go to the manse.

Anybody wishing their child to attend or if they can help out in any way please see

Barbara Ogston (831352)

\*\*\*\*\*



### KIRK SESSION & CONGREGATIONAL BOARD

Meetings for 2009 will be held in the vestry at 7.30pm on the following dates

18th March, 15th April,

13th May, 17th June,

9th September, 14th October,

11th November &

9th December

\*\*\*\*\*

### Newsletter



Items for April should be in by 31st March.

### From our prayer Correspondent



### For reading and meditation

### John chapter 4, v 7-15

Over the past few weeks out tap water at home has been dirty, even though I was thirsty I had to wait until the water ran clear before it was fit to drink. There is one who can supply all the spiritual water we need, it is never dirty or contaminated. We can have this life giving water and never be thirsty again if we believe that Jesus is the Messiah.

Dear Lord we give thanks for the gift of water. The physical water that provides for our need. The spiritual water that refreshes our soul. Thank you for the seas that surround our land. Bless all those who earn their living in and on the water. All those who supply us with food from that same source. Help each of us to be mindful of this life giving gift. We need to be reminded of you Lord, our faithful giver, that you are He who came to serve and save.

Amen

In Jesus precious name

Pat Thackray



## CHURCH FAMILY Baptism

Chelsea Louise Joy Ogston

### Deaths

Mr John Boyd

*"I am the resurrection and the Life"*



### World Day of Prayer

The World Day of Prayer service will be held in church on **Friday 6th. March at 7pm.** This year the service has been prepared in Papua New Guinea, The title is "In Christ There Are Many Members, Yet One Body".



### Young Women's Group

AGM will be held in the manse on Wed. **11th March 2009 at 8pm.** In February, the group enjoyed a fun Safari Night and we were pleased to welcome a couple of new faces. Then we had a very interesting meeting with Keith Brown giving us lots of facts and trivia about Ballantrae's history.



## CHURCH OF SCOTLAND GUILD



At the Guild's February meeting we were delighted to welcome our minister.

Arrangements were made for the Lenten Lunch on **22nd March**, in the

Community Centre, at 1pm. The cost is £3.50 for adults & £1.50 for children.

The Ayr Presbyterial rally of the Guild will be in Prestwick Kingcase Church on

Thursday **12th March.** A good number of our members will be going to hear our

National Convenor, Esme Duncan, speaking.

Project partner Mrs May Cunningham gave a report. Over the last three years the sum of £611,646 has been raised in Scotland, to be shared among six charities.

The speaker for the evening was our own Penny Savage. Her talk on "Penny's Norwegian Adventure" was greatly enjoyed.

Our next meeting on Monday **16th March** is the A.G.M., when the Rev Stephen Ogston will give a talk, and conduct the election.

\*\*\*\*\*



### SWRI



Next meeting on  
**March 2nd**

79th Birthday Party

New members welcome to attend our monthly meetings.

## The Flower Calendar



Just to remind everybody the flower calendar for 2009 is at the church entrance, and there are several blank spaces, anyone wishing to donate flowers should add their name against the appropriate Sunday's.

We are grateful to those who donate the church flowers, which are sent to those who are sick or elderly. There is also a flower fund which donations of any amount can be given, these should be placed in the offering plate in a suitably marked envelope, or given to the minister or any office bearer. If you wish to donate the flowers but are unable to arrange them this can be done for you.

\*\*\*\*\*



### South Carrick Churches Together

United Meeting in Lent on **Sunday 15th March** 7pm – 8:30pm. in the Sacred Hearts Church Hall. The title of the evening is: Making Sense of Lent and will be led by Rev Ian McLachlan.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Ballantrae Primary School

are having their Easter Service on 2<sup>nd</sup> April at 11am in the church

## LISTS AND ROTAS

### Flower Calendar



#### Mar.

**1st.** R Stirling  
**8th.** G. McKinley  
**15th** M. Neil  
**22nd.**  
**29th.** O. Tinsley



### Tea Duty

5th April

Fiona Carle, Diane Buchanan  
Jean Davidson, Janice  
McIlwraith & Irene Stewart

### Church Cleaning Teams

#### 8th march.

Bill & Pearl McKnight

#### 22th March.

Georgina McKinley & Irene Stewart

If unable to fulfil your given date, please swap with another team. If you can help with the Church cleaning rota, contact **Liz Gregg, tel. 841686.**

### Sunday Duty Rota

Mar.	April.
<b>1st B</b>	<b>5th B</b>
<b>8th C</b>	<b>12th C</b>
<b>15th D</b>	<b>19th D</b>
<b>22nd E</b>	<b>26th E</b>
<b>29th A</b>	

## Message from the Manse



Dear friends,

We are now in the season of Lent, which you will probably know if you enjoyed your pancakes on Tuesday, and if you have given up something for Lent, I wish you all the best. I am never good at giving up something, though there have had spells during my life when I have gone without chocolate, one such period being the four months before Barbara and I got married, when we both had no chocolate until the profiteroles at the wedding.

I once heard someone say that instead of giving up something; what we should do is start something new, such as praying for one person all the way through Lent. Hopefully if we get into the habit of praying for that person, then we will just keep going once we get past Easter.

There are good habits that are important to build into our lives, and as children of God, prayer for our brothers and sisters is one of these. It helps build a church which is filled with God's love.

God's love is for everyone in this church, and so it is important that we spend time as one large family of all ages. Therefore starting this month, the first Sunday of every month will be an all age service, when we will join together as a church family to worship and learn together, followed by a time of fellowship. First Sunday, as it will be called, will hopefully help to reinforce the view that I know is held by all of you - that everyone, of all ages, is welcome in our church.

I am deeply grateful that you have accepted me and my family into your church family so quickly, and let us always remember to be as welcoming to any new person who comes to our church.

God bless,

Stephen



# CHURCH OF SCOTLAND BALLANTRAE PARISH CHURCH

LINKED WITH

**ST. COLMON**

[www.ballantraeparishchurch.org.uk](http://www.ballantraeparishchurch.org.uk)

**Minister: Revd. Stephen Ogston**

**Tel. 01465831252 E-mail: [ogston@macfish.com](mailto:ogston@macfish.com)**

**Registered Scottish Charity: SC008536**

*Printed by Century21 Computing*

**Newsletter March 2009**