

Haggs 1990

One Hundred and Fifty Years of Haggs Parish Church

Research:

- Deed of Constitution 1840
- Deed of Disjunction and Erection 1875
- Minute Books of Kirk Session and Congregational Board
- 125th Anniversary Publications
- Additional information from the members of the congregation - my thanks to all contributors

In 1988 the Kirk Session of Haggs formed a sub-committee to be known as the 1990 Committee with the following remit: "To plan and organise a series of events which would be suitable to celebrate the 150th anniversary of Haggs Parish Church". The 1990 Committee, with the approval of the Kirk Session decided that 1) a series of District Social Evenings would be held during month of March 1990 in the Church Hall and 2) the week of 3rd to 10th June (which is the closest to the anniversary date) would be the period in which the main celebratory events would occur.

The 1990 Committee members are:-

- Rev. R.A.F. Dean
- Mr. R.M. McCheyne
- Mr. A. Campbell
- Mr. J. Dunn
- Mr. J.R. Goble (co-opted to replace Mr. Dunn, 1989)
- Miss F.A. Anderson
- Mrs. L. Meek
- Mrs. N. Ure

The District Socials were a great success, each being planned and organised by groups of elders including a 1990 Committee member in each. The four groups catered for between 70-85 members of the congregation (inclusive of children) from various districts around

Gray, John Cousland, and David Shaw. Mr. Alexander Ure, a teacher at Haggs School was appointed Session Clerk. In 1875 the Act of Disjunction altered the position and Haggs became a fully independent Parish, severing the attachment to the Parish of Denny.

The Ministers of Haggs 1841 to 1990:-

- Colin McCulloch 1841
- John Young 1841
- John Anderson 1857
- Thomas Logan 1860
- Alexander McGregor 1865
- William Hunter 1866
- Alexander Guthrie 1872
- William Gall 1875
- Alexander Robertson 1877
- Robert Drew McKenzie 1919
- John Sneddon 1922
- John Jackson 1925
- William M Mechie 1950
- Jack Robertson 1962
- Richard M Findlay 1967
- John Holland 1976
- Roger A F Dean 1983

Our Church is a corner of Our Lord's vineyard where we seek communion and spiritual nourishment, a place of peace and sanctuary where we can enjoy fellowship with our Brothers and Sisters of the Congregation. We all have a part to play whether it be as Minister, Elder, Board Member, Parishioner, or a child at Sunday School. Inter-woven are the aspects of worship and service, management and financial upkeep of the Church and Manse. Initially an annual income of £100 paid the Stipend and Feu Duty. The revenue for the five years 1870-74 averaged out as follows; Seat Rent £48.90 per annum; Door Collection £36.90 per annum - a total of £85.75 per annum. A year later Mr. John Paul, a builder of Denny surveyed the Church and Manse and valued the property at £1972. He stated that the original workmanship was sound and estimated that an outlay of £4.50 per annum would maintain the

fabric in good condition. A Bequest from Mr. David Logan, a Glasgow fruit merchant, of £300 for the repair and rebuilding provided "Capital and Interest" which the Trustees could use at their discretion. They deemed it necessary to obtain joint signatures from the Home Mission Committee before distributing monies from this "fund" establishing sound management that prevails today.

Moving into the 1900s we learn of the Minister reporting to the Session his meeting with the local Electricity Company concerning the supply of electricity to the Church, a quote for £48 for installing lighting "inclusive of globes, shades and 2 radiators" from a Glasgow firm was accepted, a local Contractor being unsuccessful having quoted £73.

Similarly when making enquiries about the acquisition of a pipe organ, the Minister was instructed to obtain the "best price", - he must have done so for a quote of £13.50 in 1930 from Mr. Watt (Glasgow) for a case for the new organ was accepted and Messrs Davidson and Blyth were commended for their work of installation.

Shortly after 1930 the congregation was urged to adopt the Freewill Offering system.

Since then the Session has adopted modern management techniques, designed to make the best use of the time available at meetings and has introduced conferences and training courses for Ministers, Elders, Sunday School teachers and our young members who have attended courses locally and at Carberry Tower.

The Elders in the early days observed strictly seniority based on length of service - the "Senior Elder" being known as the "Father of the Session" and playing a leading role at the Holy Communion. Today we are more flexible, even the "newest" of the Elders may act as Senior Elder, carrying the token elements and setting the timing of events during this part of the service. However, the serving of the elements to Session and Congregation is essentially the same.

In the years gone by it was the practice for an Elder to enter the Church and "call" for objections from the congregation against any person nominated for the Eldership. He would then return to the Session House and advise accordingly. We now intimate nominations from the pulpit but still invite objectors to meet the Kirk Session.

In 1945 the question of women being eligible for Eldership was first raised - unsuccessfully - a further 33 years were to elapse before our first Lady Elders were ordained (Miss J. Leishman, Miss E. Shearer, Mrs S. Swan).

Many Elders have served the Church over periods of 30-50 years, for example A. Dennistoun, R.G. Miller, D. McLachlan and H. Carson. Our longest serving Elders in 1990 are Mr. G. Kirk and Mr. T. Connell.

1978 was also the year in which the beginning of the linkage with Dennyloanhead commenced. Meetings between both Sessions were held to establish the timings of services, Session and Congregational Board meetings. Arrangements were also considered which would eventually lead to joint meetings and visiting Elders at each Church's Communion Services. We also had to seek permission from the Church of Scotland to dispose of the Manse at Hags.

In 1980 permission was sought to elect a Chairman, other than the Minister, to the Congregational Board and also to hold the meeting of the Congregational Board on a separate night from Session meetings - both requests were granted.

In 1982 the Session set up the Vacancy Committee that lead to the selection and induction of our present Minister.

Throughout the life of our Church we have received gifts of many kinds, many of which are still in use and can be seen anytime; others emerge rarely and may only be seen on special occasions such as the 150th

anniversary, for example the original Minute Book of 1840 together with the deeds of Constitution. Some records were lost for many years before being "rediscovered" and sent to Edinburgh for safe-keeping. There are gifts of a more "physical" kind, each in its own way reflecting part of the rich heritage which we hold in trust for future generations. We have Communion cups and plates dating from the early years.

In 1881 the request from the congregation for "instrumental music" was refused due to lack of funds which led to an offer from a Mr. A.H. Boyle of Banknock House to install, at his own expense, an American Organ. This did not meet with full approval. However, as some of the congregation objected, the matter was referred to Presbytery and finally (in 1899) the gift was accepted.

The Communion Table was dedicated in 1928 and the Minister's and Elders' chairs in the following year. The Baptismal Font was gifted by Dr. and Mrs. MacLean in 1962. In 1967 the Minister (Rev. J. Robertson) and his wife donated a wrought iron flower stand as their farewell gift. Additionally we received a clock from Dr. Rankine, a colleague of the late Dr. MacLean and dedicated to his memory. The lectern was also a gift from Mrs. MacLean. Offering plates and hymnbooks were given and dedicated to the memory of Mr. R.G. Miller, a long serving Elder. A bible was given in memory of Mr. H. Carson. Pulpit falls were also dedicated to the memory of Mr. M. Shearer. Anonymous donors have also given a "runner" for the Communion Table and recently the Scripture and Collection Boards were dedicated.

Going back to people and events, in 1930 Mr. D Anderson resigned his position as Organist. Miss Cowan was appointed on a temporary basis a year later. She was offered the position permanently - the terms of her employment were as follows:-

"Duties of Organist and Choir Conductor - 1) Responsible for leading the praise at all services (and Sunday

School); 2) the weekly training of junior and senior choirs - the junior choir to work for the common good of the church and the senior choir's main duty was "the practice of the praise given in public worship". Additionally an annual organ recital was requested but was optional. The salary was £25 per annum paid half-yearly."

In 1943 we learn of a soldier on active service in North Africa applying for membership at Hags. He was accepted after the Session's approval of a covering letter from his Padre confirming his attendance at Communication classes. Around this period new members were required to serve 6 months probation and failure to maintain standards of Christian life could have serious consequences.

About 1945 the sum of £2.30 was levied as "tax" for street lighting in the area of the Church and Manse. The Managers took a "dim view" of this as due to the deterioration of the street lighting fittings during the "blackout", imposed for the period of the war years, no lighting was operable near the Church therefore the Managers declined to pay this amount.

1950 was the first consideration given to forming a Woman's Guild - 2 years later the Guild was formed.

In 1963 we acquired yet another "new organ" - the previous one succumbing to the ravages of time and woodworm (it was installed in 1929).

Five years later the "new hall" was dedicated and the Young Mother's Group began.

In 1970 the Session House became the MacLean Hall being dedicated to the memory of Dr. Ian MacLean, an Elder in Hags and for 20 years in practice in our community. His father was Headmaster of Longcroft school.

Also in 1970 Wm. Anderson (Jnr) was appointed Session Clerk keeping up a family tradition. Following

in her father's footsteps we have his daughter as our present Session Clerk.

The same year there were proposals to start a Men's Fellowship. In May of that year a unique situation arose and the Church was closed - for redecoration. The services of 16th, 23th and 30th being held in Banknock Community Centre.

Shortly afterwards we began to experience difficulty with the choir regarding numbers and practices - a problem that is still with us. Permission was requested to hold a Coffee Afternoon and Bring and Buy Sale to raise funds. The Bell and Tower were inspected and a further survey proposed.

In 1979 we saw the first edition of Two-in-One. Bruce Swan won a Gold Award under the Duke Of Edinburgh scheme - this was the first of many such awards to come to Hagsgs and the first in the Church of Scotland. The Session awarded a Bible to Bruce to mark his achievement.

1981 was the year in which yet another organ (the present one) was installed. Also a group of 6 people commenced the formation of the House Group, in conjunction with a TV series on the subject. This led to the House Group as we know it in 1990.

In 1983 Mr. Dean our present Minister was inducted. The Boys' Brigade celebrated their centenary. Alan Dean, the Minister's son, received the Queen's Badge.

1984 saw the completion of the work on the Church roof and was the 50th anniversary of the 1st Hagsgs Boys' Brigade Company. Also the Coffee Club opened its doors for the first time.

The year of 1985 was the start of the 37 Club (the men's fellowship group). It may not be common knowledge but the "37" is actually the street number of the Church! (and has nothing to do with the age of the members!)

The next year was when the Family Communion Services were started as was the Summer Sunday School. The Church was also rededicated after redecoration and rewiring.

In 1988 F.A. Anderson was appointed as Session Clerk - our first lady to hold the post.

Our most recent improvement has been the loop system which assists the hard of hearing.

In conclusion it is hoped that all who read this account will enjoy so doing, and learn a little more about our Church.

Hagsgs 1990 was made and printed in Wallace Hall School by Paul Sexton and Alan Candlish.

Programme for main celebrations:

Sunday 3rd June

11.00am Morning Worship - Hagsgs Parish Church
Guest Preacher: Rev. Prof. R. Davidson, Moderator of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland 1990

Sunday 3rd June

6.00pm Youth Service - Hagsgs Parish Church
Guest Preacher: Rev. Albert Bogle, St. Andrew's Church, Bo'ness

Monday 4th June

7.30pm Regular meeting of the Kirk Session - MacLean Hall (Session members only)

Wednesday and Thursday 6th and 7th June

2.00pm to 4.30pm and 6.30pm to 9.00pm Flower Festival - Hagsgs Parish Church
Floral Displays by all the Church Organisations.
Records and other Church memorabilia on view.
Commemorative mugs, dish towels and pens on sale.
Admission 50p inclusive of tea, coffee and light refreshments.

Friday 8th June

7.30pm Youth Concert - Hagsgs Church Hall
For Senior Citizens - invitation only

Saturday 9th June

2.00pm to 4.00pm Childrens' Fun Day - Hagsgs Church Hall, or surrounding area dependent on weather.

Sunday 10th June

11.00am Morning Worship - Hagsgs Parish Church
Guest Preacher: Rev. Douglas Paterson, Moderator of Falkirk Presbytery 1990

Sunday 10th June

6.00pm Holy Communion and Thanksgiving Service
Guest Preacher: Rev. J. Gordon Grant, Dean Church, Edinburgh assisted by: Rev. William M. Mechie, Rev. John Holland, Rev. Roger A.F. Dean

Elders in Haggs Parish Church 1990

Mr. George Kirk	Ordained 21st Sept. 1958
Mr. Thomas Connel	Ordained 7th April 1960
Mr. William Ferguson	Ordained 17th November 1968
Mr. David Bateman	Ordained 17th November 1968
Mr. John Yule	Ordained 7th March 1971
Mr. Ian Hamilton	Ordained 17th October 1976
Mr. R. M. McCheyne	Ordained 17th October 1976
Miss Jean Leishman	Ordained 28th May 1978
Miss Elizabeth Shearer	Ordained 28th May 1978
Mrs. Susan Swan	Ordained 28th May 1978
Mr. A. McKechnie	Ordained 26th November 1978
Mr. Bernard Strain	Ordained 26th November 1978
Mr. Jack Dunn	Admitted 26th November 1978
Mrs. Maisie Mortimer	Ordained 18th May 1980
Mrs. Betsy Stewart	Ordained 18th May 1980
Mr. John Stephen	Admitted 1st November 1981
Mrs. Josephine Stephen	Admitted 1st November 1981
Miss F. A. Anderson	Ordained 20th June 1982
Mrs. Nan Ure	Ordained 18th March 1984
Mrs. Moira Clark	Ordained 18th March 1984
Mrs. Lesley Meek	Ordained 18th March 1984
Mrs. Jan Crerar	Ordained 12th May 1985
Mr. Jack Wilson	Ordained 12th May 1985
Mr. Archibald Campbell	Admitted 12th May 1985
Mrs. Elizabeth Dunn	Ordained 8th March 1987
Mrs. Moira Walls	Ordained 8th March 1987
Mr. Thomas Mortimer	Ordained 8th March 1987
Mr. Alfred Ross	Ordained 8th March 1987
Mr. James R. Goble	Ordained 8th March 1987
Mr. Ernest Firth	Admitted 8th May 1988

Congregational Board Members in Haggs Parish Church 1990

The Elders and:

Mrs. Sadie Barron	Mr. Colin Meek
Mrs. Marion Campbell	Miss Margaret Miller
Dr. Catherine Dyer	Mrs. Marion Millar
Mrs. Jean Harkins	Mrs. Catherine Nimmo
Mr. William Harvey	Mrs. Morag Wales
Mrs. Catherine Kirk	