

CHURCH NEWS — NOVEMBER, 2020

THE SCOTTISH EPISCOPAL CHURCH

A Member of the Anglican Communion



ELIE:
ST. MICHAEL & ALL ANGELS:
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PITTENWEEM:
ST. JOHN THE EVANGELIST
SCOTTISH CHARITY NO: SC 010982
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COMBINED CHURCH WEBSITE: www.eastneuk-episcopal.co.uk



Sunday Services (Holy Communion):

St Michael's = 9.45am

St John's = 11.30am

On-line resources can be found at:

Sunday Worship from St. John's is currently being live-streamed.

For details please contact St. John's Secretary.

SEC Eucharist each Sunday at 11am www.scotland.anglican.org/broadcast-sunday-worship

Evening Prayer: from Taizé at 7.30pm each day <https://www.facebook.com/taize>



A Reflection for November from Steve

Dear friends,

I write this at the end of a half-term break with family (a rather odd ‘distanced’ gathering – but a delight, none the less). We’ve always observed ‘half-term’ if we can, because of the school holiday, and now it’s because of our grandchildren having the same.

This has caused me to ponder again the concept of ‘terms’. It’s the seasonal language of full-time education, of course, and is a patterning that is certainly deeply rooted in my personal practice. As a child I always rejoiced in the way that ‘start of term’ and ‘end of term’ provided solid, fixed points in the quest to locate myself in time and space. Both were seasons of glee and inspiration in my world – times of renewal, fresh starts, and great anticipation – and then times of closure, celebration, prize-giving and release. Perhaps ‘half-term’ is a time I have under-appreciated. It’s very name downplays its significance – only *half* a season – not the whole hog. Teachers would be quick to disagree, depending as they do on the chance to draw breath after the demands of getting a new year of work under way.

The autumn half-term is quickly cemented by the changing of the clocks, and there’s a part of me that dreads the moment when the falling dark of the year is given a jolt forward. The prospect of winter seems a long haul at this stage. We may not live in the far north, but many of us find winter to be the cruelest of all seasons – and that’s without the shadow of a global pandemic. I was interested to read an article last week about how people in the north of Norway cope with winter darkness surprisingly well. During the darkest periods of the polar night, Tromsø only receives two to three hours of indirect sunlight, shining into the sky from below the horizon. Yet its inhabitants do not show the kind of wintertime depression you might expect of a city cast in darkness. One study by May Trude Johnsen at the University of Tromsø found that the citizens’ wellbeing barely changed across the year. Their sleep was a bit more disturbed without the daily rhythm of the rising and setting sun, but they reported no increase in mental distress during the winter. The answer it seems is (partly) a matter of ‘winter mindset’. According to the research, the stresses of the situation *can* be viewed as an opportunity to learn and adapt – which develops a greater ability to cope, compared with those who focus on the potential threats or possible failure. These differences in mindset not only influence people’s mood, but also their physiological responses, such as changes in blood pressure and heart rate, and how quickly they recover after the event.

Whilst this sounds awfully like ‘looking on the bright side’, the researchers at the University of Tromsø found evidence of positive mindset actually increasing with latitude, in the regions where the winters will be even harsher. In the context of a ‘winter pandemic’, the writer is careful to point out this is not to deny or suppress anxieties about job insecurity or the fear of losing a loved one, but suggests that ‘adopting the positive wintertime mindset could make a second lockdown a little less daunting for those who worry about keeping their mood buoyed in the bad weather’.

Sitting by our splendid new outdoor stove this week, it occurred to me that, in evolutionary terms, the vast majority of human experience, as a species, has been conducted in either darkness or by the light of shadowy flame. Only in this last 150 years (or so) of our human story has our sensory perception of the world been so profoundly transformed by the artificial light that now floods our homes, public spaces and cities. I have heard one evolutionary psychologist talk about how, as a species, it takes us 20,000 years to adapt to significant changes in our world’s ecology. Perhaps I need to work harder at being reconciled with the dark nights that are as much part of the cyclical created order as is the light.

The church is usually at its busiest in the dark winter months – when people and communities like to gather for comfort, inspiration and companionship. It’s an important part of what we offer as a community of faith. The flickers of light that are offered by our ritual observances of All Saints, All Souls, Remembrance and the season of Advent are important reminders that the people who walk in darkness have seen a great light. Our efforts may be truncated this year, but every little offering we make can yet be transformative in this season, in this term, and the next.

For Your Diary

Saturday, 1st November	—	All Saints' Day
Sunday, 2nd November	—	All Souls' Day
Sunday, 8th November	—	Remembrance Sunday
Wednesday, 11th November	—	Remembrance Day
Sunday, 29th November	—	Advent Sunday
Monday, 30th November	—	St. Andrews Day



IN FLANDERS FIELD

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders fields.

— *John McCrae (1872-1918)*

DRIVING ON THE LEFT AND WHY WE DO SO IN THE U.K.

Why didn't all world countries settle on driving on one side of the road? Was it the insistence of the British Empire not to change anything?

About 35% of the world population drives on the left and the countries that do are mostly old British colonies. This strange quirk perplexes the rest of the world but there is a perfectly good reason.

Right-handed knights preferred to keep to the left in order to have their right arm nearer to an opponent.

In the past, almost everybody travelled on the left side of the road because that was the most sensible option for feudal, violent societies. Since most people are right-handed, swordsmen preferred to keep to the left in order to have their right arm nearer to an opponent and their scabbard further from him. Moreover, it reduced the chance of the scabbard (worn on the left) hitting other people.

Furthermore, a right-handed person finds it easier to mount a horse from the left side of the horse, and it would be very difficult to do otherwise if wearing a sword (which would be worn on the left). It is safer to mount and dismount towards the side of the road, rather than in the middle of traffic, so if one mounts on the left, then the horse should be ridden on the left side of the road.

In the late 1700s, however, teamsters in France and the United States began hauling farm products in big wagons pulled by several pairs of horses. These wagons had no driver's seat; instead the driver sat on the left rear horse, so he could keep his right arm free to lash the team. Since he was sitting on the left, he naturally wanted everybody to pass on the left so he could look down and make sure he kept clear of the oncoming wagon's wheels. Therefore he kept to the right side of the road.

In Russia, in 1709, the Danish envoy under Tsar Peter the Great noted the widespread custom for traffic in Russia to pass on the right, but it was only in 1752 that Empress Elizabeth (Elizabeta Petrovna) officially issued an edict for traffic to keep to the right. In addition, the French Revolution of 1789 gave a huge impetus to right-hand travel in Europe. The fact is, before the Revolution, the aristocracy travelled on the left of the road, forcing the peasantry over to the right, but after the storming of the Bastille and the subsequent events, aristocrats preferred to keep a low profile and joined the peasants on the right. An official keep-right rule was introduced in Paris in 1794, more or less parallel to Denmark, where driving on the right had been made compulsory in 1793.

Well who knew there was an explanation involving so many strands for something seemingly so ordinary as driving on one side of the road or the other!

My thanks to Charles Caldwell of East Neuk Probus for permission to use his article (Ed.).

ST. JOHN'S AND THE HORSBURGH CONNECTION

— Janis Irvine



As you enter St. John's, perhaps for the first time, your eye is naturally drawn down the aisle to the brightly-lit window at the other end of the church and which rises above what is now the side altar that sits in what was Bishop David Low's original Chancel. The fine Victorian stained window, a work by Ballantyne of Edinburgh, has at its foot the wording:

"To the memory of deceased members of the family of Horsburgh who for upwards of a century formed part of this congregation. This window is inscribed by surviving relatives 1870"

The year of installation means that it came after Bp Low's death but the length of time referred to in the inscription tells us that the Horsburgh family were connected to the Episcopal Church in Pittenweem even before Low founded St. John's in 1805.

To the right of the window there is a plaque on the wall that gives the following:

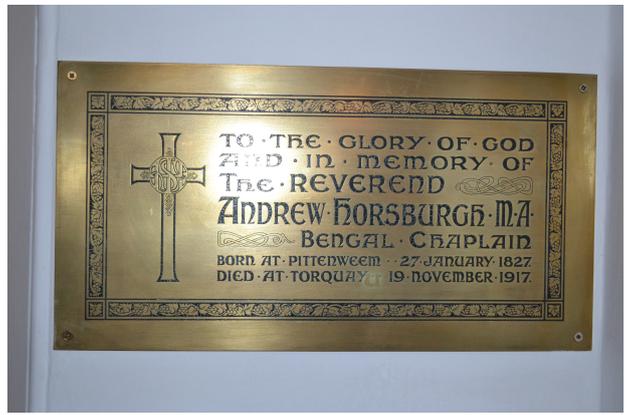
"To the glory of God and in memory of the Reverend Andrew Horsburgh, M.A. Bengal Chaplain. Born at Pittenweem 27th January, 1827. Died at Torquay 19th November, 1917"

From Stuart Hall's book *"Heritage and Hope"* we are also told that an old lectern Bible (*Revised Version 1924 Cambridge Edition*) was presented to

St. John's some time after 1935 in memory of Christian Elizabeth Horsburgh and James Horsburgh and given by Ellice Martin Horsburgh and James Martin Horsburgh.

It would seem that the Horsburgh family had a long and generous association with St. John's but how much do we know about this family?

A little research has provided some answers although this writer knows that these notes are simply a small part of the Horsburgh family's story. Pittenweem churchyard holds a good many of their extended family members and the name Horsburgh is still a familiar one in Pittenweem's life today.



My research starts with James Horsburgh who was born in Pittenweem in 1774 to Andrew Horsburgh (1745-1827), also of Pittenweem and Christian Pollock (1742-1790). This Andrew was born at the time of the 2nd Jacobite Rebellion.

We then move to others in this story, to Harriet Pote or Pate who was born in 1784 in Bihar, India and died in Pittenweem in 1856. She married Alexander Bruce (1786-1810) in Kolkata, West Bengal in 1805, which for context, was the year that St. John's was founded.

Alexander and Harriet Bruce had a son, James Bruce b. 1806 Kolkata, a daughter Eliza Bruce (b. 1807 Bihar, India), a son, Henry Alexander Bruce (Dr) (b. 1808 Bihar, India d. 1894 Burntisland, Fife) and a son Alexander Robert Bruce (b. 1810 In Bengal died 1848 in Kolkata). Alexander Bruce died in 1810 in Bengal, the same year as his son, Alexander Robert Bruce was born, also in Bengal.

Two years after the death of Alexander and with her youngest child now aged two, Harriet married James Horsburgh of Pittenweem.

James and Harriet Horsburgh had a daughter Olivia (b. 1812 Kolkata d. 1893 Hastings, Sussex), a daughter Christiana (b. 1813 at Sea), a daughter Elizabeth Robina (b. 1815 Edinburgh d. 1892 Hampshire), a son Thomas Pote (b. 1819 died 1855 in the Chatham Islands, New Zealand), a daughter Charlotte (b. 1823 Pittenweem) and a son Andrew (b. 27th Jan. 1827 Pittenweem).

It is their last son, Andrew, who is named on the plaque near the Horsburgh window and it is Andrew's date of birth that first caused my Horsburgh interest in that we share a birthday. (We also share this birth date with Mozart!)

Andrew was born at East Shore, Pittenweem on 27th January, 1827, the year his grandfather, also Andrew, died, so perhaps he was named in his grandfather's memory.

Stuart Hall tells us that 'our' Andrew had graduated from St. Andrew's University and that he served as a chaplain in China, Borneo and India.

In 1851 James and Harriet were living in Pittenweem. Also in 1851 their son, Andrew, arrived in Hong Kong from Sarawak, Borneo.

Further research tells us that Andrew married Ellen Vost (b. 1829 Strood, Rochester) in 1859 in Kelso. Ellen had a brother, Henry, who was a surgeon in Kelso in 1851, the year Andrew arrived in Hong Kong.

Andrew and Ellen had a son James Henry (MD) (b. June 1863 in Murree Punjab, India d. 1939 Musselborough), a son William Vost (b. Dec. 1864 in North West Frontier, Pakistan d. 1874 Pittenweem), and a son Ellice Martin Horsburgh, (MS DSc. AMICE), (b. 1870 Kelso, Roxburgh d. 1935 Edinburgh).

During the period just prior to their last son, Ellice, being born in Kelso in 1870, Andrew Horsburgh would seem to have been on furlough from Bengal and occasionally took services at St. John's in 1869-70 during the tenure of the Revd. Phillips Howard Money Penny (1866-1871), but it seems unlikely that Andrew and Ellen were living in Scotland when they lost their son, William, in 1874 aged 10 and there is no trace of them in the Census of 1871.

By 1881 Andrew and Ellen were back in Scotland living in Edinburgh Newington and he is given as 'Bengal Chaplain Retired'. Some time after this date Ellen died.

In 1891 Andrew is living in Dunbar and described once more as 'Bengal Chaplain Retired'

In 1901 Andrew was living in Callander, Perthshire and is described as an 'Episcopalian Clergyman' then in 1904 at the age of 77 he had remarried, to Annie Perry Sutton (b. 1862 in Yeovil and d. 1943 in Newton Abbot). In 1911 they were living in Devon where their address is given as Lynton, St. Mary's Church, Torquay and Andrew is described as a 'Retired Indian Chaplain'.

The Revd Andrew Horsburgh died in Torquay on 19th November, 1917 at the age of 90.

In papers, Andrew is described as a Missionary and Preacher in Bengal, India and that he had written papers on "*The Dyaks*" and the relationship with salt, published 1858 in Anstruther, also *Sketches in Borneo, People of Sarawak* in 1857.

Andrew and Ellen's last-born son, Ellice, is mentioned as one of the benefactors of the Cambridge Edition 1924 Bible gifted to St. John's in 1935.

Like many in the Horsburgh family, Ellice's life is an interesting one. Born in 1870 in Pittenweem, he was educated in Edinburgh and trained for the Indian Civil Service but he seems to have suffered ill health and in 1892 he travelled to Australia. During the journey he became interested in navigational matters and once landed in Australia he seems to have become involved in the Coolgardie Gold Rush of 1892. Two years later, he returned to Scotland to the University of Edinburgh where he graduated MA BSc in engineering in 1897, gaining a further BSc in Mathematics and Natural Philosophy (physics) in 1899.

Shortly after, Ellice began lecturing in electrical engineering at Leith Technical College, moving to his old alma mater in Edinburgh in 1903. In 1904 he was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Edinburgh and was awarded an Honorary Doctorate in 1912. From 1920 - 1935 he was a Reader in Technical Mathematics. Ellice died at his home of 11 Granville Terrace in Edinburgh on 28th December, 1935, the year that the Cambridge Edition Bible was given to St. John's.

Delving into the history of the Horsburgh connection to St. John's, I have been struck by the sheer mobility of this family during the Victorian era. Not only did Andrew Horsburgh travel to far flung places in the world but his father, James, also travelled and was in Bengal where he met his wife, Harriet who was born in India, perhaps also someone connected in some way to the Indian Civil Service? While recognising that Pittenweem has always produced its fair share of sea-faring folk, it would be good to find out exactly what connection James had with Bengal. It has been a fascinating journey for this writer and I begin to wonder if there is a connection between this Horsburgh family and that of the painter of the work "*Winter Herring, Pittenweem*", James More Horsburgh, a print of which hangs on our living room wall. There is obviously a lot more research to be done!

SOME CHURCH NEWS:

From St. Michael's — Many Happy Returns

— Sheila and Amanda Barclay

Michaelmas was a particularly happy occasion this year – marking the feast of St Michaels and All Angels, the reopening of St Michaels Church and the Rev. Steve Butler's first service at Elie.

The church was much missed during the 6 months' enforced Covid closure. Its absence during such a strange, unsettling period was keenly felt. Snatched conversations with fellow members of the congregation during lockdown made clear people were eager to return and meet our new minister — provided it was safe to do so.

Reopening St Michaels required careful consideration, a sturdy tape measure and lots of signs, in addition to risk assessment and the Bishop's approval. The main challenge was fitting in as many seats as the space would allow whilst keeping a 2m gap between people. Various layouts were considered. Steve and Anne

Butler gave helpful advice, gained from St Johns earlier reopening, and assisted with further chair shuffling. Some compromises were required — for now the pulpit and lectern cannot be used as they are too close to the front row of chairs but hopefully this can be reviewed. Our cleaners, Mrs Cook and Angela, also played a key role getting the church ready with additional requests to keep them and the congregation safe

On the big day the congregation were surprised with some lovely autumnal arrangements, courtesy of Anne who had also added ribbons to the blocked off pews, giving the church a celebratory feel. The service was familiar bar no wine and singing. However, Steve deployed the wonders of technology and incorporated piped music into the service with Iona community Taize that greatly enhanced the service which was deemed an all-round success.

Final words go to Fiona and Joan who, when asked what it meant to return to church, replied:

“So nice to come and meet fellow members and so nice to meet and hear Steve for the first time.”

“I always feel right when I got to church and “wrong” when I don’t — the week's all wrong somehow — Church is good therapy!”

Harvest Thanksgiving — There was a wonderful response to St. John's Harvest collection for the East Neuk Food Bank at the beginning of October, with £282 being given in plate donations. This figure may be increased by people making bank transfers direct to the Food Bank. A huge 'thank you' to all who contributed to this worthy cause.

Dear Janet, Please pass on our thanks to your congregation, this is very generous of them, we appreciate your support in these difficult times.

Many thanks again,

Richard

Richard Wemyss, Project Coordinator

Our Combined Church Web Site — Have you seen our new web site? Steve has used his own particular tech. skills to construct an updated web site that combines all the informative content necessary for both the new enquirer and church member alike. The site is well illustrated with photographs of both churches, internal and external, plus others giving a flavour of the two parishes more generally. You will also see some great inserts of Ursula Ditchburn's 200th anniversary porch windows. Do check the site out at www.eastneuk-episcopal.co.uk.

Ecumenical News — We are not the only denomination in the East Neuk with a new incumbent this year as the Church of Scotland has also made two new appointments.

The East Neuk Trinity Group of Churches linked with St. Monans have inducted their new minister after a 3-year vacancy. The Trinity Group consists of the parishes of Elie, Kilconquer and Colinsburgh and they have now come together with St. Monans to be cared for by a former primary school head teacher who has retrained for ministry. The Revd Douglas Creighton was inducted on 16th October via an on-line service and is accompanied by his wife and two young children.

And to the North of us, the Revd John Murray was similarly inducted in August to the parishes of Anstruther & Cellardyke (St. Ayles) with Crail. Married with 3 adult children, John was born in Glasgow but grew up in Peterhead, attended Aberdeen University where he studied law then completed his solicitor training in Glasgow before training for ministry. Ordained in 2002, he comes to the East Neuk from the parish of Kilmuir and Stenscholl on the Isle of Skye.

The next issue will be for December and January. Contributions to the Church Newsletter are always welcome and generally invited for the 15th of the month.

Janis Irvine will again be the Editor for that issue and can be contacted at davidirvine190@btinternet.com

FURTHER NEWS FROM THE PITTENWEEM FISHERMEN'S MEMORIAL ASSOCIATION:



Pittenweem Fishermen's Memorial Association hope to place a curved stainless steel bench on the cobbled area adjacent to the memorial on the Mid Shore and have received a donation of £1,000 towards the proposed project.

It is also proposed to surround the memorial with a low chain threaded through four small bollards at each corner in an attempt to discourage individuals, sometimes several at a time, from climbing on the memorial to have their photograph taken.

The chain and four bollards will be similar to that which some years ago extended along the Mid Shore end of the West Pier.



My thanks to Willie McNaughton and the Pittenweem Fishermen's Memorial Group for the use of this article and for the photos (Ed.)

TOPICAL NEWS:

— *Janis Irvine*

The Environment:

Good news — A ban on plastic straws, stirrers and cotton buds came into force on 1st October. Due to be enacted in April, the ban was delayed due to coronavirus challenges for businesses.

This Christmas will see less glitter as many retailers have promised to cut this plastic litter from their products so now you can open your cards without worrying about all that glitter fall-out!

Something to look out for in the coming years — Shoppers in Stockholm can trade in their old jumpers at an H. & M. store where a recycling machine will clean it, shred it into fibres and then, together with strengthening additional virgin fibres, spin it into new yarn to create a woman's jumper, baby blanket or scarf in around five hours for a modest cost. Still in its pioneering stages, it is hoped to roll this initiative out to its other stores, including the UK.

In a similar vein, and also from Sweden, Ikea are aiming to take back their old furniture via a voucher exchange scheme while the old furniture will be offered for re-sale as part of their commitment to a 'fully circular and climate-positive business by 2030'.

Million Planting Moments — Prince Charles has planted a hydrangea at his Birkhall home in Aberdeenshire as part of the Million Planting Moments initiative which was launched by the Horticultural Trades Association this Autumn. This initiative aims to highlight the huge contribution that plants make to our health and wellbeing, environment and communities. Involving safe sourcing of plants to ensure that the UK's future plants and trees are kept pest and disease-free, the HTA hopes people will engage in this project

to consider the soil, site and space they have available to them while encouraging all of us to take part whether we own a garden, a large plant pot or a window box.

The HTA tells us that one medium-sized shrub can capture 30 diesel cars' worth of pollution each year, that over 3 years a single mature oak tree produces enough oxygen to keep you alive for a year, that digging burns an average of 186 calories per 30 minutes (apparently more than playing badminton!) and that research has shown that every 10% increase in exposure to green spaces translates into an improvement in health equivalent to being 5 years younger.

This is the best time to plant trees and shrubs or to move perennials while it is not too late to plant Spring bulbs, in fact tulips are best planted in late Autumn.

Fraud:

Many of us will remember Pam Ayres and her quirky poetry from a few decades ago. Now 73, she has been engaged by Santander to put across a cautionary message about bank fraud in her own inimitable way. Bank theft is an ongoing problem and Police Scotland have recently spoken about 3 over-sixties having been targeted in the St. Andrews area who collectively lost very many thousands of pounds. Pam herself has been targeted but didn't immediately realise there was a hoax.

These are Pam's cautionary words:

Have you got some money?
Are you getting on, like me?
Are you heading for retirement?
Being wild and free?
Are you looking for investments?
Somewhere canny for your cash?
Be careful. There are fraudsters who
will steal it in a flash.
They are thieving people's savings,
taking everything they've got,
Especially the older folk who've got a
pension pot.
They do not stalk the foolish, no, that
isn't what they do
They target able, well-researched
investors. Just like you.

Covid Advice:

Recent research on the longevity of the Coronavirus has found that it can last on plastic and similar materials for up to 28 days. This has significance in relation to the use of mobiles and other hand-held technology. This research was carried out in a dark atmosphere and the good news is that apart from cleaning these items on a regular basis with a suitable cleaner, exposing the items to ultra-violet light i.e. sunlight, will significantly reduce the time the virus remains active.



The Lord Bless you and keep you,
The Lord make His face to shine upon you
and be gracious unto you
The Lord lift up his countenance upon you
and give you peace.

– Numbers, ch. 6: 24-26