

Parish Church New Hall

by Rev. Gillian Weighton

What better day could there have been than Easter Sunday for the first turf to be cut at the site of the new church hall at Bridge of Allan Parish Church.

Easter, with its message of new life and new beginnings, seemed such an appropriate day to officially herald the start of work on the site where the new hall is to be erected. This is an exciting new beginning and one which has been long anticipated and for which there has been much planning.

a parish church seriously, wanting to serve the community in which it is situated.

The building of a new hall is for the benefit of Church and community alike and the sincere desire of the congregation is that this new hall will be a place where all can come and meet and enjoy the excellent facilities which will be provided within the new building.

Mindful also of the need to conserve energy, the new hall will be heated by a ground source heat pump, which will extract heat from four boreholes, each 90



An impression of the finished building

The cutting of the first turf was by no means the beginning of the work. For months now, careful and thoughtful deliberations and discussions have taken place as architects, James F. Stephen of Glamis and Stirling, and the New Hall Committee have met to plan this new hall which it is hoped will serve both congregation and community for generations to come.

The Parish Church dates from 1858 and was extended twice within 20 years because of the need for more "sittings" resulting from the rapid development of Bridge of Allan, a prosperous spa town which attracted new residents and visitors. The halls were designed by John Honeyman and added in 1895.

So much time and effort went into the design and planning: all with the intention of ensuring that this new hall would be of a design which was sympathetic to the surrounding community and the existing Church buildings.

Bridge of Allan Parish Church enjoys an excellent location at the heart of the village and takes its responsibility of being

metres deep, and provide energy to heat the new hall and the existing Honeyman Hall and Session Room. Hot water will be provided from solar receptors.

The drilling operations nearest the Allan Centre revealed sandstone rock 11 metres down, water at 60 metres, and strong resistance, possibly metal, was encountered at 80 metres.

To enable this technology to be used, grant funding has been obtained through the Community Stream of the Scottish Community and Household Initiative, administered by the Energy Savings Trust and from S.U.S.T. (Sustainable Architecture and Energy) based at the "Lighthouse" in Glasgow.

In the coming months, as building progresses, one can look forward with anticipation to the day when it is finally complete and the new hall is accepted as an asset for the congregation and the community.

Designed by James F. Stephen the Architects, the hall accommodation will again expand to fulfil the needs of the congregation and community today and in the future.

NEW COMMUNITY POLICEMAN: PC Paul Colquhoun takes up post

"Very busy - still finding my feet!" was how new Community Policeman, Paul Colquhoun, described his reaction to his new role in Bridge of Allan. He has just taken over from the popular, kenspeckle figure of Colin Muirhead who is now working in Stirling HQ. We wish both men well in their new posts.



Stirling born and bred in Braehead, Paul is a family man with two children. He was initially a police civilian worker before signing up for the force proper some eight years ago. Having worked as community officer in Bannockburn two years ago, Paul volunteered for the Bridge of Allan post because he sees it as a more immediate way to help a local community.

He enjoys the greater personal involvement, as opposed to being a "street cop" being switched from job to

job. Paul stressed that he would be out and about on his bike like his predecessor, and he is keen that people speak to him to discuss any concerns they might have.

He arrived to something of a controversy over the felling of the huge copper beech tree, which was such a local landmark on Henderson St, beside the police office. Unfortunately, he has been told, it was in a dangerous state, with falling branches presenting a danger to passing traffic.

On an unpleasant note, he asked for community help to trace the youngster of 12 to 14 years of age who had made brief but indecent assaults on two young women, one in the Lyon Crescent area in April. The attacker wore a full-face black helmet of the mountain-bike type, rode a black bike and had a back-pack with a Fred Perry logo on it. PC Colquhoun would welcome any information which could help to identify this offender.

With summer approaching, his first piece of advice to locals is to ensure that garden furniture and equipment - especially power hoses - should be safely put away each night as they present an easy target for opportunistic thieves.

The concept of a community policeman is a worthy one, and we welcome PC Colquhoun to Bridge of Allan, and wish him success in his new post.

MADAGASCAR BOUND

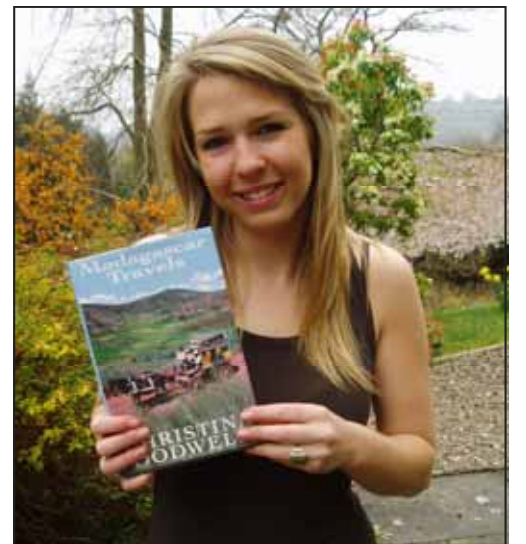
Local girl Kathryn Pettit (20) is heading off to Madagascar this summer as a volunteer on a conservation and humanitarian project to provide sustainable livelihoods for some of the most impoverished people in the world.

She will be part of an international team working with UK-based NGO (non governmental agency) Azafady, an award-winning organisation which works with villagers in remote rural areas. Their aim is to conserve Madagascar's unique and rich biodiversity, which is increasingly under threat from extreme poverty and destructive "slash and burn" agricultural practices. Child mortality rates are high and more than 80 per cent of the population do not have access to clean water.

Living and working alongside villagers, Kathryn will be digging wells, participating in health education programmes, helping to build schools and pharmacies, teaching English, planting trees and market gardens, and monitoring endangered wildlife species.

Kathryn would like to say a big "thank you" to all those locally who responded so

generously to her fund-raising campaign. Donations have come from local businesses both in Bridge of Allan and Dunblane, family and friends, and individuals too numerous to mention, many of them very generous indeed. Contributions ranged from significant major sponsorship to people leaving their small change in collection boxes at the Spar and the Allanwater Cafe.



Further afield, Kathryn has received grants from trust funds and from the alumni fund at the University of Newcastle, where she is a second-year student. "At the outset, I had no idea that people would be so generous," said Kathryn, "and I am extremely touched - and very grateful."

Risk Reduction and Healthy Living with Alzheimer Scotland

To mark Dementia Awareness Week 2007 (3rd-10th June 2007), the Stirling and Clackmannanshire Service is organising a 'Risk Reduction and Healthy Living' conference on Wednesday 6th June 2007 at The Golden Lion Hotel, Stirling between 9.30am and 2.30pm.

Included in the day will be speakers on the latest research findings; on managing your memory; some ideas for activities for people with dementia; and information about living with dementia in the community. In addition, there will be plenty of information available and a chance to have your blood pressure checked, to test for diabetes or to speak to someone from the Carers Centre.

The day costs £40, including refreshments and lunch, with concessions for people with dementia and carers.

Dementia is one of the most devastating conditions that can affect us. It progressively destroys the brain cells, affecting every aspect of daily life and can last for many years. Approximately 58,000 people in Scotland have dementia and this number will continue to rise with our ageing population.

Alzheimer Scotland, Scotland's leading specialist dementia charity, provides practical help, support and information to people with dementia, their families and carers.

To find out more about our conference or to book a place, please call us on 01786 831171 or e-mail us at stirlingservices@alzscot.org.

The Freephone 24hr Dementia Helpline telephone number is 0808 808 3000

Safe Paws
pet carers
www.safepaws.co.uk
01259 743558

PROFESSIONAL DOG WALKING AND CAT VISITING SERVICE
NOW AVAILABLE IN DUNBLANE AND BRIDGE OF ALLAN

ALL SAFE PAWS STAFF ARE FULLY VETTED, INSURED, REGISTERED & LICENSED

OSPREY
HOME CARE SERVICES

Specialist carpet & upholstery cleaners

Call the professional company for all your cleaning requirements.

Stripping and Re-sealing of Amtico/Karndean and Marmoleum Flooring

Refurbishment of Victorian Minton Floor Tiles

PLEASE PHONE FOR FREE ESTIMATES
01786 824483
www.ospreyhomecare.co.uk