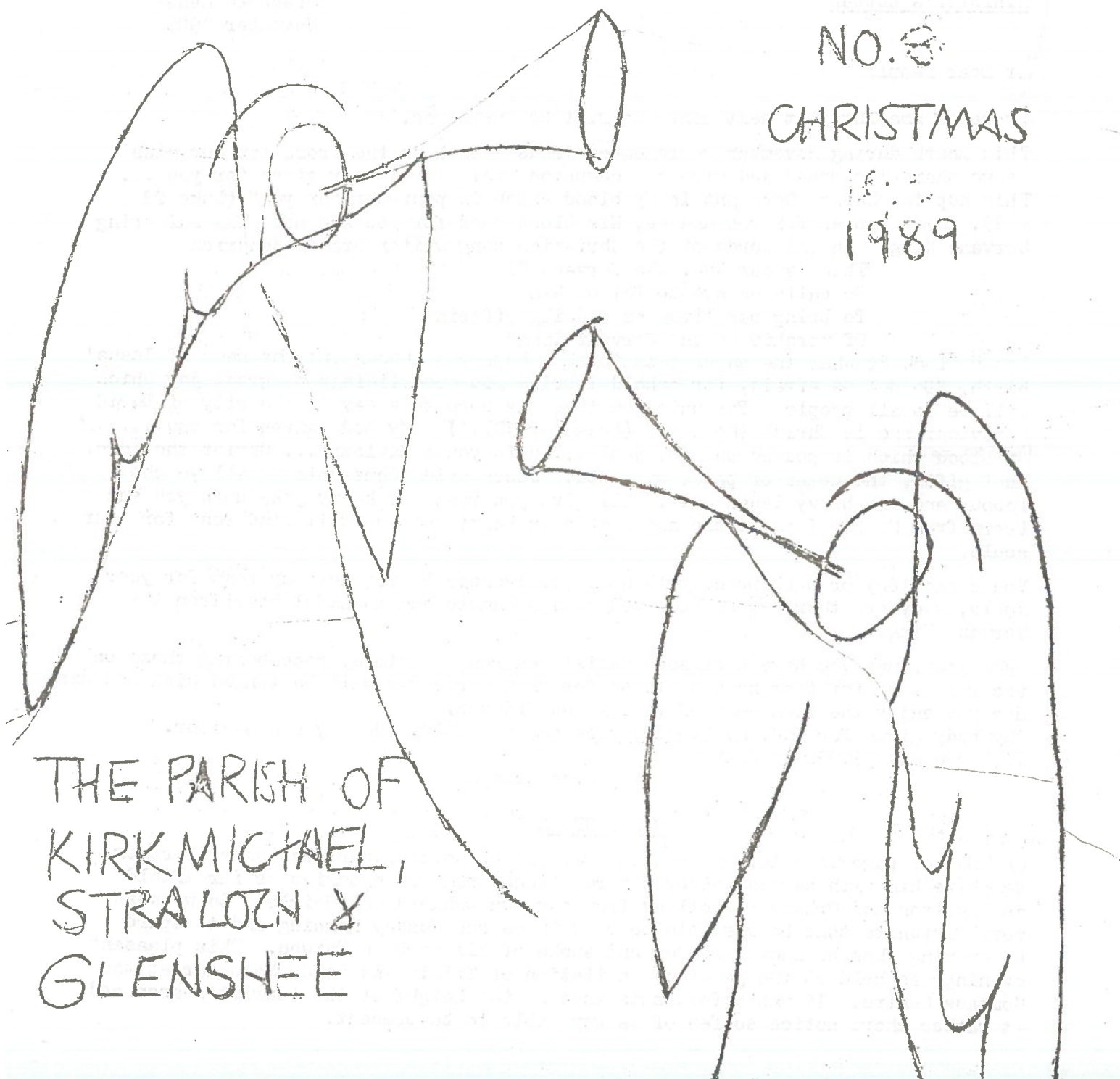


ACROSS THE GLENS

NO. 8
CHRISTMAS
1989

THE PARISH OF
KIRKMICHAEL,
STRALOCH &
GLENSHIE



PARISH REGISTER

Funerals

Mr Sandy Reid, Milton Cottage, Balvarran	3rd August 1989
Mrs Margaret Stewart, late of Bleaton Hallet Lodge	14th September 1989
Mr John Watson, late of Ronival, Kirkmichael	2nd October 1989
Mrs Catherine Bardner, Netherton of Cloquhat	2nd October 1989

The Baptism has been arranged of Nicole Helen, daughter of George and Avril Abbot for November 19th In Kirkmichael Church.

Kirk Session and Congregational Board meet on Monday, 30th October and Monday, 11th November 1989.

Minister's Letter

Glenshee Manse
November 1989

Mr Dear People

It seems amazing that next month it will be Christmas.

This month during November we remember Jesus' death on the Cross for our sins as we share the bread and wine of Communion "this is my body given for you ... This cup is the New Covenant in My blood which is pour-out for you" (Luke 22 v 19, 20). Broken for you and me, His blood shed for you and me. The suffering Servant King. In the words of the Christian song writer Graham Kendrick

"This is our God, the Servant King
He calls us now to follow Him
To bring our lives as a daily offering
Of worship to the Servant King".

Let us look at what the angel said to the shepherds announcing the news of Jesus' birth, "Do not be afraid, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For unto you there is born this day in the city of David a Saviour who is Christ the Lord" (Luke 2 v 10, 11) "My body given for you ... My blood which is poured out for you" ... unto you a Saviour ... Christ the Lord. What gifts, the means of peace with God. Jesus said "Come unto Me all ye who labour and are heavy laden and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you and learn from Me for I am gentle and humble in heart and you will find rest for your souls.

You cannot buy or earn peace with God, forgiveness by God nor buy rest for your souls, they are there to be accepted with a humble and thankful heart from the Servant King.

For you, may you have a blessed Christ centred Christmas, remembering those on their own, or far from home or those for whom Christmas will be tinged with sadness. May you enjoy the closeness of family and friends.

"My body given for YOU, My blood poured out for YOU". Unto you a Saviour. Will you make 1990 for Him?

Alan McKean

OUR PARTNER

On another page is a letter from the Rev Tom Nicholson, our missionary Partner. We share him with several other congregations from Presbyteries as far afield as Hamilton and Orkney as well as from our own Dunkeld and Meigle. So we were very fortunate that he was able to be with us one Sunday morning and to spare an evening when he showed slides and spoke of his work in Taiwan. This pleasant evening was held at the generous invitation of Tricia and Sandy Falconer at the Compass Centre. It was unfortunate that at the height of the tourist season and at rather short notice so few of us were able to be present.

Services for the coming months

November	5th	Kirkmichael (Communion)	10.30	Netherton	12.15
	12th	Remembrance Sunday	Kirkmichael	10.30	
	19th	Kirkmichael (Baptism)	10.30	Netherton (Communion)	12.15
	26th	Kirkmichael	10.30		
December	3rd	Kirkmichael	10.30	Netherton	12.15
	10th	Kirkmichael	10.30		
	17th	Kirkmichael	10.30	Netherton	12.15
	24th	Christmas Eve	Kirkmichael	10.30 am	
	31st	Watchnight	Kirkmichael	11.15 am	
	31st	Kirkmichael	10.30		
	January Services To Be Announced				

There will be a Service on Christmas Day at 11 am in the Episcopal Church at Ballintuim and a Carol Service on an afternoon before Christmas on a date to be decided later.

A VERY GENEROUS GESTURE

The Church is going to benefit from the kindness and generosity of Mr Bobby Brown the well-known accordionist. He has promised to donate all the royalties from his next cassette to us. These cassettes are sent all over the world to lovers of Scottish dance music and bring in goodly sums.. Even after the initial rush to buy, they continue to sell for many years so we will enjoy this donation for many years to come.

This cassette will be issued before Christmas so it will make a good present to friends abroad and at home. The title is not yet decided but ask in the shops and be sure to buy it and show Bobby how much we appreciate his generosity and benefit ourselves at the same time!

KIRKMICHAEL CHURCH

Since prehistoric times there has been a place of worship on the present site. The earliest Christian Church was dedicated to St Michael and in about 1184 William the Lion by Royal Charter conferred the Church of Strathardle to the Abbey of Dunfermline.

The East corner of the churchyard was used for the burial of victims of the Plague and has not since been used. In the 17th Century the Battle of the Churchyard was fought between Cromwell's troops and the worshippers coming out of Church. In 1715 the then minister, the Rev. Francis Pearson, trained his parishioners to aid the Rising and it is said the Standard was raised in the Bannerfield. For his actions at this time the minister was deposed in 1717.

The present Church was built in 1719. It is a typical late 18th Century Scottish church with the usual horseshoe gallery. There are twin Venetian windows and has recently been decorated (1989).

The Session House in a separate building was formerly the Parish School - here the Rev. Alexander Duff the first Free Church of Scotland missionary to India was educated.

Until recently the Manse was just across the road and there the Priest's or Minister's Well still supplies fresh water. In former days it was considered to cure various diseases - perhaps it does.

Many of the furnishings of the Church have been gifts. The Woman's Guild gave the baptismal font, the late Francis K. Balfour the blue carpeting, the Lectern was given by Miss Caroline Macgregor and the chairs by an anonymous donor. When very sadly the Church at Straloch was closed in 1982 the furnishings from there were brought to Kirkmichael. These included the organ which is in use today and the plaque in memory of the Fallen in World War II. This plaque is in the Session House along with the Kirkmichael Roll of Honour.

FROM THE REV. TOM NICHOLSON, OUR MISSIONARY PARTNER

It was a nice visit I had with you all in mid-September, even if it was all too short. But it was good to be back in your lovely part of the country, and to share a time of worship and fellowship together.

But what more can I share with you about Taiwan? Those of you who joined us at the Compass Lodge on the Monday evening will remember seeing slides of Rev. C.M. Kao (pronounced Gow). For the last 18 years he has continually been re-elected as General Secretary of the Presbyterian Church in Taiwan - 4 years 3 months and 21 days of which he spent as a political prisoner! In April of this year he retired.

Dr. Kao is certainly one of the most saintly people I have ever met. He was still in prison when I arrived in Taiwan, seven years ago. But his early release meant I had the chance to meet him and, for the last 4 years, work closely with him in the General Assembly Office of the Church. I can still remember thinking one day "How is it that Dr Kao is so famous when he has no STYLE or CHARISMA?" "How is he such a successful churchman when he is so humble and non-aggressive?"

In fact it is precisely because Dr Kao has no style and is so unpretentious that people are drawn to him. And it is precisely because he does not make displays of power that he can mediate between Church and ruling party or between different factions within the Church itself! Unfortunately, no politician would get very far being so humble and low-key; so far apart are the ways of the world and the ways of God.

Dr Kao is very smart, very intelligent, but the miracle is that someone with such a good mind uses it for God alone, and uses it in such a gracious way. Working close to him, I saw how often he suffered fools gladly (myself included) treating everyone with patience and respect. He always kept calm under great pressure, and where others would have been furious, he simply became firm, but never lost control.

His real strength comes from his daily walk with God, and he frequently admits his dependence on Him. It is a privilege to know Dr. Kao and to have worked alongside him. We all wish that, when rubbing shoulders with a saint, something would just rub off on us, and make us saints too! Unfortunately it is not that easy or mechanical. While we may be inspired by their example, we still have to develop that daily walk with God ourselves. A saint may point us to Christ, but we must still make our own pilgrim's progress - we can't borrow someone else's.

Let me finish with an insight into Dr. Kao's own pilgrim's progress. The following poem was one of many written by him in prison. It reflects how, when he began his imprisonment, he felt great disappointment, but later learned that God was bringing good things - even out of this bad situation.

GOD'S WAY

I asked the Lord for a bunch of fresh flowers
but instead he gave me an ugly cactus
with many thorns
I asked the Lord for some beautiful butterflies
but instead he gave me many ugly
and dreadful worms.
I was threatened,
I was disappointed,
I mourned
But after many days,
Suddenly,
I saw the cactus bloomed with many beautiful flowers,
And those worms
became beautiful butterflies
flying in the Spring wind
God's way is the best.

(Chun-MingKao 27th June 1982)

There is a wee church among the hills, just up the road from Dounie Mill
For many years the time stood still - till the plasterers came to work
When they had finished you may be sure we'd a job to do just finding the floor,
The pews were invisible under the stour till the muckin' of Kirky Church.

There were Isobel, Isla and Olive and Jean,
Petrina and Helen and Betty were seen
With Cathy and Margaret, trying to clean
The plaster from Kirky Church.

There were vacuum cleaners like snakes on the loose,
There were brushes and dusters and polish in use,
There were buckets and floorcloths and no time to lose
At the muckin' of Kirky Church
The pews seemed to have vicious minds of their own,
The bruises we got every time we bent down
And when we stood up? - a crack on the crown!
At the muckin' o' Kirky Church.

We hoped we might find missing treasure as well,
Old coins from an offering that clumsily fell,
But not even a pan-drop without any smell
At the muckin' o' Kirky Church.
Just has ocks and plaster and spiders and nails,
We took all the rubbish away in our pails.
A strong smell of Pledge now our nostrils assails
Since the muckin' o' Kirky Church.

So now it's clean as it ever has been and polished to such an astonishin' sheen
And painted! Such splendour has rarely been seen
Since the muckin' o' Kirky Church.
And though we are still finding things in our hair,
We're glad we were able to help to prepare
A place that's conducive to Worship and Prayer
Our beautiful Kirkmichael Church.

Anon : Apologies to G S Morris

Thanks also to the people who subsequently cleaned up after the painters
had been, of course!

M.B.

Basic Thinking about the Eldership

Course open to Elders and Members of the Congregational Board. Aberfeldy,
Thursdays, 7.30 - 9.30 pm, October 26th and throughout November. Contact
the Session Clerk on Strathardle 375. oOo

Better do one good thing today than dream of ten that might be done tomorrow

from L.H.

oOo

Letter from Jane Baker ...

Bulstrode, Gerrards Cross Oct 89

Here I sit in a foreign land, many miles from Scotland. The WEC HQ is only a 20 minute train journey north-west from London. Never mind - I am delighted to find that my official status is "Scottish candidate"! I seem to have escaped culture shock - we've been studying it a lot and I don't have any of the symptoms. In fact I'm enjoying the time here very much.

To give you some idea of what it's like - Bulstrode is an enormous Victorian mansion, with its own grounds, and it's a rabbit-warren of corridors, stairs and turrets. Seventy people live here full time (staff and their families), and there's room for candidates, groups on missionary orientation courses and visitors - about 150 altogether! Imagine the noise in the dining room! Work that goes on includes the international and British directors' offices, overseas business (visas, travel, etc) finance, a printing press, publications office and, of course, preparing candidates. There are 22 of us, including several families, and we're going to every corner of the world. We spend over half our time having lectures/discussions on such things as how WEC's principles work in practice, different sorts of WEC work, family life and single life overseas, travel, health, culture shock and how it's overcome, different cultures, communication (radio, literature work, etc), how to take good photos to show people when you come home (very important, that!) - all very relevant.

The rest of the time is called 'practical work' - this covers everything from kitchen work to cleaning, from picking beans to polishing floors to painting. There is an obscure loo in the vasement which I have come to feel a great affection for - its walls and ceiling (and bits of its floor) are now a delicate shade of pale blue! What has this got to do with being a missionary? I hear people ask. Well, it's always useful to be able to turn your hand to any job; and usually we work in two's or three's, so we get to know each other better, and have the chance to talk through things we're learning in a more informal way.

One of the big benefits of being here is that most of the staff have worked overseas, and there are missionaries passing through all the time, so that's a great opportunity to hear what it's really like out there from people who've had a lot of experience and new workers too. The overwhelming impression is that for many people it's not easy to live in another culture, but they find that God is always faithful, helping them through each day, and the end result is that they know more certainly that they really can trust Him. The old missionaries are not out-of-touch eccentrics, but very down to earth and immensely sane, and always ready to give time to helping the beginners - that applies to everyone from the domestic supervisor to the international director!

I am very happy to know now where God is leading me. I've been talking about teaching through written materials for a while now, and it's Bible correspondence course work that I'm to be involved in. The big surprise is that it will be in Portugal! But the courses go out to Christians and to people enquiring about Christianity not only in Portugal itself but also into Portuguese-speaking Africa. So I am going to Africa too, in a way! It's an exciting work, with many opportunities for reaching places that the present numbers of missionaries just cannot get to. I've been involved, as a marker, in the 'easy English' equivalent, and have seen 3 people in African countries coming to know Jesus for themselves - one of them a prisoner in Zimbabwe! I would never get to place like that in a million years, but the courses get there and are effective in teaching about God, and in leading people to realise that they need Him in their lives. The next big step for me will be going to Portugal at the end of next summer to learn the language.

To end on a down to earth note - some of you will have seen the church prayer letter in which were suggested ways of praying for me at Bulstrode. One thing mentioned was the food, which is quite basic, and I was getting really hungry, and even losing weight. But a few days after that letter was given out, we started having muesli for breakfast, and it makes a difference to start the day with a filling meal. Within a week, I had put back on the weight I had lost, and have had no problem since. So thank you to all who contributed to that! - prayer really does make a difference. I am told the food in Portugal is very good and very cheap!

THE EDENSDAY CLUB

Mrs Walker welcomed members at the start of the new session which was on 20th September with a special welcome for four new members.

Mrs Walker then said how very much the club was saddened with the loss of Mr Sandy Reid who died in August. She said that everyone liked Sandy, he was a happy and regular member and will be very much missed.

On behalf of the members Mr Douglas Clark, Vice-President presented Mr and Mrs Arthur Walker with a gift of flowers, fruit and a card making their 55th wedding anniversary.

J. Morrison

BRIDGE OF CALLY LUNCH CLUB

The Club meets in Strone of Cally School Hall on Thursday during the school term and thereafter members adjourn to one of the classrooms for convivial discussion and general conversation followed by a cup of tea and biscuits. Currently the Club membership stands at 20.

When possible, each month between October and March arrangements are made to have a talk/slide presentation by a visiting speaker or by one of our members. Our first talk this month (October) is to be given by one of the Rangers from the Perth and Kinross Countryside Ranger Service.

During the year members attended a matinee performance at Pitlochry Festival Theatre and had an outing to the House of Dun near Montrose. Arrangements are in hand to hold our Annual pre-Christmas Dinner and Social evening at a local hotel.

The Club has a close relationship with the school children, lunching with them in the school dining-room and supporting their Christmas Concert and end of session presentation prior to the summer holidays. When relevant to their school work the children occasionally join the members to listen to our visiting speaker.

The Club members are grateful for the co-operation and assistance given by Miss Yvonne Mackenzie and greatly appreciate the excellent fare provided every Thursday by Mrs Nan Sangster and Mrs Jean Brown.

J.M.

NEWS OF THE RURALS

Glenshee

The first meeting of the session was the annual outing which took the form of a round trip to the Guide Dogs for the Blind at Forfar then via Stonehaven to Cocker's Rose Nurseries at Aberdeen and so home.

The second meeting was the Whist Drive held on Friday, 6th October which adjourned to the Dalrulzion Hotel when the lights failed in the Hall. £25 was raised for the Guide Dogs and the 16 tables of Whist and Beetle Drive helped Branch Funds.

Bridge of Cally

The first meeting of this session was directed towards Colour Co-ordination and the 2nd introduced Yoga. The next meeting on Tuesday, 7th November is an Ideal Home Road Show open to all the Glen Rurals. On Saturday, 7th October the Branch hosted a very successful Group meeting.

Kirkcubrecht

One of the big events of our year is the WHIST DRIVE. This will be held on November 17th in the Hall starting at 7.30 pm. Please come and help to make this the happy occasion which it always has been.

Our chief office-bearers are:

President Mrs E Duncan Vice-President Mrs MacLachlan

Secretary Mrs Ellin Treasurer Mrs MacLellan and we have been

delighted to welcome some new members this year from whom we will no doubt get some fresh ideas, but the rest of the session promises to be very interesting.

9th November - Mrs Courts on Felt; 14th December - Burns Supper Dishes, Mrs.

Huston; 11th January Rev. William Macartney on Burns; 8th February - an

Open Night when Sue McKenzie will speak on the Glen Derby Settlement.

WOMAN'S GUILD SALE AND COFFEE EVENING

Proceeds to the COMPASS CHRISTIAN CENTRE and Church Funds.
Entertainment by the staff of the Centre.

KIRKMICHAEL HALL

THURSDAY, 26TH OCTOBER

7.30 pm

BOOKS

BRIC-A-BRAC AND PLANTS

CAKE & CANDY

Write a verse of the Bible in aid of Bibles for China (see below) 50p

Entrance: Adults 50p

Children: 20p

HANDWRITTEN BIBLE PROJECT

The National Bible Society of Scotland hopes to raise more than £15,000 towards the cost of printing Bibles in Chinese on the newly-built printing, binding and typesetting machinery in Nanjing. To do this you are asked to write out the Bible by hand - as so many people still have to do even now - and PAY FOR THE EXPERIENCE!

Please come to the Woman's Guild Coffee Evening prepared to copy out at least one verse from the passage in Isaiah which we have been allocated (about 100 verses) and contribute 50p for each verse you write.

You may not be the Venerable Bede but you can do this.

If for any reason you do not manage to write your verse on October 26th, then contact Margaret Brookes (Strathardle 375) and your verse will come to you at your convenience. PLEASE DO IT!

WOMAN'S GUILD

The session opened with a fascinating talk with slides of the Holy Land from our own member Mrs Ringer. On November 2nd there will be news of the Leprosy Mission and on 7th December we will hold a party for the Senior Citizens in the Hall from 2.30 - 5.00 pm. We are very glad that Mr & Mrs Weaver are coming back to entertain us once again. On the 1st February Mr Derek Everett will speak on the National Bible Society. We meet in the Session House of Kirkmichael Church and would be delighted to welcome any new members.

Our President is Mrs Tricia Falconer so this PROVES that you don't have to be an old age pensioner to join. Membership of the Guild is really the best way to keep informed of all the various activities and varied work of the Church as a whole.

CANCER RESEARCH CAMPAIGN

The Kirkmichael and district box contained the splendid sum of £97.78 and grateful thanks are given to everyone who contributed.

SONG AND DANCE

Singers and dancers are reminded that the Choir meets in the Kirkmichael School on Monday evenings at 7.30 pm and the Scottish Country Dance Class in the Hall on Tuesday evenings at 8 pm. New members are very warmly welcomed. Although the Choir is basically composed of women, men are needed during the run-up to Christmas when the carols for the Services are being practised.

Editorial Committee

Mrs E Dutton Mrs J Lindsay Miss C Macgregor Mrs M Stewart
with help from Mrs Y Clark

Copy for next issue to Mrs Stewart, 10 Glen Derby or any of the Committee for January 15th 1990.