

# Mothers' UNION

Christian care for families

## DIOCESE OF GLASGOW AND GALLOWAY



**NEWSLINK**

**AUTUMN 2010**

**Scottish Charity SC023885**

Dear Friends,

This is my first Newslink contribution to you since the wonderfully uplifting experience on May 15<sup>th</sup> at our Festival/Commissioning Service in Holy Trinity Ayr.

The first task I set myself was to form relationships throughout the Diocese. This has involved responding to invitations I have received from branches either to speak or to enjoy fellowship and visiting churches to meet members where they worship. The church visits also provide opportunities to develop relationships with clergy.

Everywhere I have been I have received warmth and respect. Mothers' Union is held in high regard and it was heartening to read in Families Worldwide the Archbishop of Canterbury's commendation; 'the MU as the most effective deliverer of; education in primary healthcare, post traumatic counselling, micro-finance, education and empowerment of women in the global south'. However, there is much work still to be done, at home and abroad.

As I have travelled around I have been encouraged by the dedication and commitment of members as they respond to needs, both in their local communities and abroad. Many members do so while dealing with their own or their loved ones illness.

I have also been encouraged by the ability of members to support and inspire one another and most of all to enjoy doing what they do together. We have much to celebrate; God's love and the love of those around us. We are a community, with some miles between us, but these miles mean nothing when we are united by the love of God. Together, we pray as Mary Sumner did 'O Lord let us touch as many lives as possible for thee'.

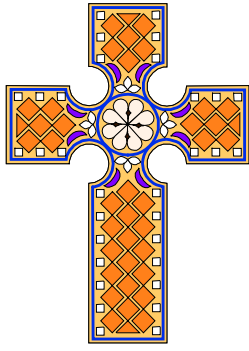
Like all organisation Mothers' Union faces challenges, the biggest is how to generate new energy and a younger membership. I believe in trusting the future to God, but I also believe that we respond to the needs of today using the resources we have and ensuring that we do God's work to the best of our abilities and with gracious hearts. I believe that mission done well is the best motivator to encourage people to join. While we must match mission with resources it has also to be remembered that energy is not dependent on age, but is dependent on motivation.

I thank God for the commitment of members in Mothers' Union Glasgow and Galloway Diocese.

May God continue to bless you, your families and all whom you love and may we all be ever mindful of these blessings and the commandment to love God and our neighbours.

With love in Christ  
Ann

*Relationship not Rules*



## From the Chaplain :

Dear Mothers' Union Reader, Brothers and Sisters in Christ

I was pleased to become Chaplain to the M.U. in the Diocese because of my admiration of the work of the Union worldwide.

Before we become puffed up with pride, I have to admit that my first meeting with the Mothers' Union was when I was a boy and my mother became a member in the North of England. I remember her withdrawing from the local church Union with the retort that it was "just a gossiping shop"! Such a remark can colour your outlook for many years to come. The next remark that coloured my thoughts as a young man was the affectionate, but flippant, reference to "the mother's onion". As St James puts it in his Letter, "Although they (Ships) are so large and are driven by strong winds, they are steered by a very small rudder wherever the pilot wants to go. Likewise the tongue is a small part of the body, but it makes great boasts. Consider what a great forest is set on fire by a small spark. " (James 3.4&5)

However, as John puts in his letter, "Dear children, let us not love with words or tongue but with actions and in truth." It was in 'walking the talk' that I next came upon the Mothers' Union directly. It was in Africa that I came to see the M.U. as a real power in the world. I have a white M.U. head scarf from Zambia, a bespoke clerical shirt made by Emily (a member from the Diocese of Kagera in Tanzania) and have Christmas cards and seen the sewing and other things that the members in Byumba (our sister Diocese in Rwanda) make, and shared their hospitality.

It was the Mothers' Union here, in Kilmarnock, that kept track of the Baptisms of infants that meant it was easy for us to set up our wee Sunday School (and the youngsters want to call it "Sunday School!!). Although the M.U. in Scotland is only small it's in 'walking the talk' that it will show results beyond its numbers. And in

'gossiping' the Gospel and not in personal matters that divulge our prejudices or confidences.

Talking of which I'll just relate one little teaching from Zambia (I'll tell you about another personal incident and longer story next time). When members of the Zambian M. U. are initiated they are given this head scarf that has a large printed MU sign on the front, worn on the forehead. They proudly go about the neighbourhood wearing their uniform of a blue skirt, white T-shirt and head scarf. As there is no welfare state provision in the land, the Mothers' Union members are pleased to act as voluntary social workers and welfare carers showing the love of Christ in action. This, of course, means that they are going into people's homes and being privy to their confidences. The members' head scarves are secured by a knot and then a second knot. At the presentation of their scarves they are told, "you will be going into people's homes and the secrets of those homes must be kept under that knot". It's a wonderful thought that every time a member dons her scarf and ties that second knot she is reminded of that precious confidentiality that she holds and upholds, so that neighbours may have confidence in her !

By the way! If any of you reading this feel that you are unable to get out and about doing Mothers' Union caring and sharing, remember that your tongue can be used to great effect----by PRAYING. In fact we are told by Paul that even if we are not good with words and have only the quiet intention to reach out to God with concerns, "In the same way, the Spirit helps us in our weakness. We do not know what we ought to pray for, but the Spirit himself intercedes for us with groans that words cannot express. " (Romans 8.26)

Let's 'Walk the Talk' and even 'Groan the Talk' !

Love, in Jesus' Name,

Peter



## Festival Service 2010



This year's annual Festival Service was held at Holy Trinity Church in Ayr on 15<sup>th</sup> May. The new Diocesan President, Ann Glenesk, and all the other new officers were commissioned. Those who have served God by their work for the MU for over 40 years were thanked and blessed, and presented with their Long-Service Certificates. Sadly Revd Peter Douglas, the new MU Chaplain for the Diocese, missed the celebrations due to an accident. (His Commissioning took place at a later date when the Bishop visited his own Church in Kilmarnock.)

In his sermon, Bishop Gregor spoke of his very recent move, culminating in a final tidying-up on the previous day. He said that it is not good to be disorientated for more than a short time. We need to be rooted in the way of Jesus, which enables us to cope in a complex church and a yet more complex world. He referred to the Epistle reading from Acts Chapter 18, commending to the new officers the example of Apollos – someone who already knew a lot about Jesus, but was ready to take on board more.

The service was followed by a delicious spread in the hall, laid on by members of the local congregation.

William Walker

(The photograph above shows those members who received their 40+ years certificates)

## Commissioning Service

On Sunday 8<sup>th</sup> August 2010, The Reverend Peter Douglas was commissioned as Chaplain and Susan Groves as Faith and Policy Coordinator in Kilmarnock. Bishop Gregor presided and is pictured here with members of the congregation and Trustees.



## Thanksgiving for Long Service in the Mothers Union Motherwell Branch

Seven members of the branch were presented with certificates for forty or more years' service to The Mothers Union by the Revd. Alan Wylie and our President Ann. Several Trustees joined the congregation at the Wednesday Eucharist in offering thanks for the commitment, encouragement and fellowship these members have shown in the Branch and elsewhere.

Congratulations to Roberta Barnes, Margaret Craig, Letty Currie, Edith Harper, Una Johnson Janet Wolseley and Dorothy Wood.

*This stained glass window is in the Lady Chapel at Holy Trinity Church, Motherwell. Can you spot the the MU brooch?*

## Valdens Fest

The Women in Church of Sweden invited two members of MU Glasgow and Galloway to attend the Valdens Fest in Vaxjo. Susan Groves and I were privileged to attend. We had the opportunity to meet many people, attend church services and local place/sights.

Our hosts Gunilla and Katarina both spoke excellent English, and their kindness and hospitality extended to us was exceptional. Gunilla translated everything we needed to know.



Our itinerary was arranged by Christina (who works at the diocesan office) and our hosts allow us to see and do as much as possible. We spent one whole day touring Gothenburg and the surrounding area before going to Vaxjo.

It had been arranged for us to attend English speaking conferences of interest. The theme of the Valdens Fest was “Another World is Possible” and focused on Mmmm: Mission, Marketing, Migration and Environment. The Transforming power of a cow by Patricia Mwaikenda of Tanzania was of special interest as the MU also has similar projects. One of the key speakers on migration, Ann Morrissey, was an MU member from London. A celebration dinner for 2,600 was held on the Saturday evening. At the closing service there were around 3,000 people in attendance from different countries. The whole event was informative and inspirational. However, it is the people we met and the friendliness encountered that made this trip special.

Great Square was filled several times during the festival with thousands of visitors.

*Wendy Petrie*





## **...from our Faith and Policy Coordinator**

On 30<sup>th</sup> July 2010 Ann Glenesk and I met with Jacci Stoyle who is campaigning against trafficking. As many of you will be aware this is an extreme form of exploitation and an appalling kind of violence committed against people who are vulnerable. For people of faith it is a sin of injustice.

Trafficking is an area of high priority for Mothers' Union throughout the world and in particular the 80 countries in which the MU has members. The MU has been supporting causes to stop trafficking wherever they can. Enid Scobie and Charmain Paterson were involved in a rally some years ago in George Square and have contributed to the ACTS report on trafficking. [ecumenical@acts-scotland.org](mailto:ecumenical@acts-scotland.org)

I believe we should do whatever we can to support Jacci in her campaign to try to stop Trafficking. We can do this by supporting Glasgow City's campaign to **end prostitution now**. It is understood that trafficking is linked to prostitution, the thinking is, that if there was no 'market' for these trafficked people by outlawing prostitution, this terrible crime would cease. Trish Godman MSP put forward a bill in March that was not successful but is to be amended and resubmitted in September, so please note that although the web site indicates the deadline to support this campaign has passed it does not refer to this new amendment which is worth supporting.

Further information about work that Jacci is supporting to end trafficking can be found on the TARA project's web site:

<http://www.saferglasgow.com/services/reducing-violence-against-women/tara>

I would urge you all to read the information on the web site: <http://www.endprostitutionnow.org> and support this bill. I would also urge you to pass on this message to any/all people you believe would be interested in supporting this vital work. And finally and for me most importantly, pray for Jacci as she continues her campaign, and for trafficked peoples, wherever they are, that they may know God is with them in their strife for justice.

Love & prayers  
Susan Groves



## Moments with Members

### Ruth McLellan



1. *Who or what has made a lasting impression on you?*

Bruce Chatwin who wrote travel books and novels, who sadly died young.

2. *Name a poem, song or piece of music that has inspired you.*

Music means a great deal to me and my favourite composer of all time has to be JS Bach.

3. *'Hindsight is a wonderful thing' it is said. What might you have changed with hindsight?*

Not eaten so much! (I'm serious!)

4. *Has political correctness gone too far?*

Yes I think so - when a town won't allow hanging baskets in case on the off chance one fell on a passerby seems too far.

5. *What could you not live without?*

I could not live without BBC Radio 3.

6. *What are you doing to minimise your 'carbon footprint'?*

I compost all my vegetable peelings. I take plastic and glass bottles to the dump. Unfortunately Dumfries and Galloway have stopped collecting waste paper from houses.

This is a strange mixture of answers but a picture of me at the moment.

## NEWS FROM CASTLE DOUGLAS



We have had a most interesting session ending with a garden party in the Rectory following on from a Service of Enrolment for three new members, conducted by David, our Rector. It was a lovely day and we all revelled in the sunshine.

In June we held a Table Top Sale raising £497 which was divided between the newly formed MU Branch in Kirkcudbright and our own fund for Outreach projects in the diocese. We had the usual bric-a-brac, plants, books, toys, raffle, home baking and produce stalls. Three of the ladies from the new Kirkcudbright branch were invited to take a stall and seemed to enjoy the camaraderie.

We continue to attract members of the local Parish Church which gives our meetings a truly ecumenical ambiance. Our "Healing Blankets" are still greatly appreciated by those who receive them and our steady stream of toiletries to the



Women's Refuge in Stranraer find very grateful recipients too. We find that we have to thank our congregation for their generosity in both these projects.

Yours sincerely,

Jessie Lockhart  
(Castle Douglas)

**Barbara Jeffries - Diocesan Prayer Correspondent**

**USING THE PSALMS**

The Psalms have given inspiration and comfort to most of us at various times of our life. Most of them were meant to be sung, are full of references to singing and have inspired hymn and songwriters right up to today.

Sometimes we are told when the psalms were meant to be sung, as in the songs of degrees, sung as crowds made their way up to Jerusalem. Sometimes we are told when they were written – as when David was in a cave (Psalm 142) or after his adultery with Bathsheba (Psalm 51).

The writers are close enough to God to be able to say exactly how they feel, without any pretence: if the psalmist feels God is not hearing him, or seems to be very far away, he will say so – ‘I cry out by day and you do not answer me.’ (Psalm 22), or ‘Has God forgotten to be merciful?’ (Psalm 77), or ‘How long will you hide your face from me?’ (Psalm 13). ‘Why have you rejected me?’ (Psalm 43). A deep sense of abandonment is expressed in ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’ (Psalm 22) words movingly used by Jesus as he hung on the cross and experienced for our sake an anguished dereliction beyond any suffering we shall ever know.

The Psalms reassure us when we are overcome with grief because of sin and failure: we are able to ask for forgiveness – ‘Have mercy on me, O God, according to your unfailing love, according to your great compassion, blot out my transgressions ... against you, and you only, have I sinned ... create in me a pure heart, O God.’ (Psalm 51) Words like these remind us of the love and readiness of God to forgive when we call on him.

The Psalms are full of joy, praise, worship and of wonder at the glory of God, - praise in which his very creation itself joins, as in the words of Psalm 148. The last Psalm of all calls us to unite in praising God for his ‘surpassing greatness’, singing with a joyous heart and the loud ‘resounding cymbals.’!

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**Please remember in your prayers -  
the husbands of Elsie Corney, Doreen Esnol and Susan Garner;  
Trish Robertson and her husband,  
Anne Brown, Lesley McCowatt, Anne Hainey and Doris Smillie.**

**Can we all pray for one another and take inspiration from those living with adversity.**

**All requests for prayer should be sent to our Prayer Leaflet Coordinator, Barbara. Her new address is 62 Seaview, Wigtown. DG8 9EP**



## MIRACLE IN MARYHILL.

Maryhill is an old part of Glasgow, where some of the original tenement buildings are being replaced by their modern equivalents, where there is a lot of unemployment and not a lot of money. There is also Heart for the City, a Christian Charity, with a vision of restoring and transforming cities, for the Glory of God. The Glasgow International Christian Church is the local church arm of Heart for the City, largely composed of relatively recent immigrants from various parts of Africa and India. There are many families, and Mothers' Union members. Hearing that MU offers parenting groups, the members asked if a facilitator could come and help them explore their parenting and discuss their problems.

I was the lucky person chosen to help them set up their group, lucky because this was a group of enthusiastic mums, who approached the meetings eager to explore ideas and techniques, ready to share their experiences and advice. On a couple of the sessions I had the welcome assistance of Enid Scobie and Hilary Moran, the retiring Diocesan President and the new Provincial President for Scotland. We all learned a lot, from the material we used and from each other, and we laughed and occasionally cried as we got to know each other better. We discussed when to allow children to go to the park on their own, how to ensure that the rules your family sets are adhered to and how to persuade boys to eat vegetables, (answer: develop great acting skills, lick your fingers and shriek with delight as you prepare a salad!) There were eight mums from the church, and two from the asylum seeker community whose children had been taken into care, and who were hoping that their attendance at the group would help them to get more contact with their children and eventual custody.





We met for seven Tuesday mornings, the presence of several small children—without exception gorgeous—only adding to the positive atmosphere. There was a final session with the dads (always more nerve-wracking than all the previous sessions put together!) where Hilary and I were met with great courtesy and rapt attention, and some very perspicacious questions. Since most parenting groups are attended by only one parent, a session for partners, briefly covering the main topics discussed, is invaluable, as one of the recurrent themes of all parenting advice is consistency. Overall, it was a very positive experience for me, and I received not only sincere thanks, but also the promise of another group to meet with after Easter.

And the miracle? If you know Glasgow, faced with a walk from St George's Cross underground station to the Chat House halfway up Maryhill Road in the first three months of the year, you would wear a hat and wellies, and carry a wind-proof umbrella. I did this walk eight times between January and March, and only once did I encounter a little light rain. Several times the snow and ice was a challenge to the shoe soles, but who cares? Sunshine and blue skies in the winter are miracle enough.

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### **Mary Archer, 1st Jan 1913-16 Sept 2010**

Sadly, Mary Archer, a very senior member of St Ninian's, Castle Douglas M.U. and a devoted member of MU since her early years, has died. She was advanced in years by the time she came to St Ninian's but her attachment to MU was still as strong as ever. She even baked lovely cakes for our meetings up until her move into a care home and was a very valued member of our branch. She was a wonderful old lady indeed and her story was inspirational.

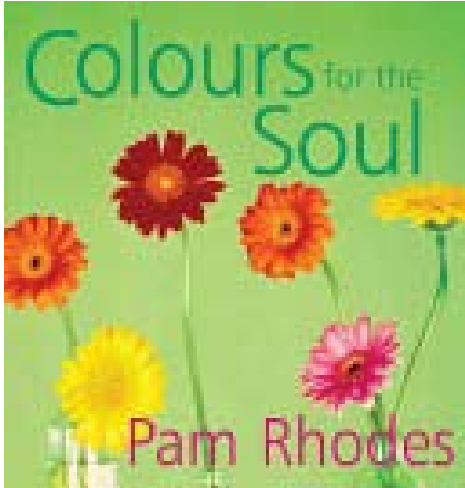


#### ***Mary's story.....***

Mary told us about a visit she had made as a child to the Albert Hall in London in November, 1936 with her mother who was a keen member of MU in Hartlepool. All the mothers from the N.E., 1000 in all attended. She was too young to be a member but was offered a spare seat with her mother's group. She told of the thrill of visiting Mary Sumner House and attending the Pageant in the Albert Hall which was filled with actors representing all the nations of the world, dressed in their national costumes. They were surrounded by a Golden Ring symbolising the marriage ring. The climax of the whole proceeding was a huge white angel that appeared on stage with wings outspread, embracing everyone. In her own words :- " Then back to King's Cross and home after a most wonderful visit that I shall never forget. "I hope that you can understand all my joy at telling you all this as in my eyes it was the most wonderful experience of all my young years."

## Book Review

### “Colours for the Soul”



By Pam Rhodes,  
Publisher: Lion, 2004  
ISBN 0745951104, 9780745951102

Sometimes we are so distracted that we are lost for words, but I have just read a delightful book which seems to have just the right words for all of life's ups and downs. I bought the book from Mothers Union. It is entitled 'Colours for the Soul' and has been put together by Pam Rhodes, well known as a presenter of 'Songs of Praise' among other things. The book is full of various sayings by a great variety of people from Mother Teresa to Sylvester Stallone.

The book is divided into sections, Relationships, Healing, Encouragement, Growth & Change. There is a wealth of wisdom within its pages, profound and funny and lots in between, each giving the opportunity to think and re-think on all aspects of our lives. I found some of them enabled me to look at problems from a perspective I hadn't been able to see before.

There are ones that stir the emotions and bring a tear to the eye, others that make you smile or laugh out loud, ones that help to keep you calm in times of trouble or stress, and ones that just make plain common sense.

Here are some examples from the book –

“Your pain is the breaking of the shell that encloses your understanding” (Kahlil Gibran), or “The will of God will not take you where the grace of God cannot keep you” (by the very famous poet Anon). “Pain is inevitable, suffering is optional” (Anon), and a Scottish proverb “Better bend than break.”

I recently used the book at a service of prayers and readings we had at the start of our new MU session, and it resulted, I'm pleased to say, in several of the books being ordered.

I can thoroughly recommend this little book. Keep a copy in your handbag and you can dip into it while sitting in the dentist's waiting room, or passing time at an airport!

And, with Christmas on the horizon, it would make a delightful gift.  
Patricia Robertson (St Michael and All Angels, Helensburgh).

## **Future Dates 2011**

**Lady Day Services** will be held at Castle Douglas on 22<sup>nd</sup> March 2011 at 12 noon followed by a light lunch and at Ardrossan on 29<sup>th</sup> March 2011 (time to be confirmed).

**Spring Council** will take place in Dumfries on Saturday 5<sup>th</sup> March (Provisional).

**General Meeting will be held in Edinburgh on 8th and 9<sup>th</sup> June 2011.**

## **Congratulations....**



to our Diocesan Vice President Carolynne and her husband Ken on the occasion of their *Golden Wedding*.

Once again the Coach House will open its doors to us on **Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> November**, 1030 – 1700. All profits made on this day will be donated to the MU Overseas Fund, so come along and enjoy Christmas shopping with friends.

The Balmore Coach House sells the highest proportion of Fairtrade products of any local retailer. Two thirds of the stock in the Coach House is fairly traded third world goods, while the other third is made up of Scottish crafts, charity goods and environmental products.

The Coach House, Viewfield, Balmore, Torrance, G64 4AE.

**Thanks to all the contributors.**

**All articles for the Spring 2011 edition of Newslink should be sent to me  
Elsie Murray, 1 Comrie Street, Sandyhills, Glasgow. G32 9TU  
or by email to [elsiebmurray@btinternet.com](mailto:elsiebmurray@btinternet.com)  
by 5<sup>th</sup> February 2011.**





**From top to bottom**  
Festival Service Ayr  
Canon David Bayne and Alison  
The Barbeque at Castle Douglas  
Mothers' Union Brooch (see page 4)

