



St Margaret's Chapel Guild

June 2024 Issue:46

www.stmargaretschapel.com

Edinburgh 900 Celebrations and St Margaret's Day

In addition to commissioning the building of the Chapel at the Castle to honour his mother, another legacy of King David I was that he granted Royal burgh status to Edinburgh 900 years ago. While the exact date for the latter is not known, Edinburgh Council have arranged a programme of activities to mark the event. These will run from 2024 to 2025.

A reception was held at the City Chambers in May to launch the celebrations. The Guild was invited to attend the event and their Royal Highnesses the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh were the guests of honour. Organisations and businesses representing diverse aspects of Edinburgh were present, including the military, faith groups, voluntary organisations and schools. I represented the Guild, and also present was a delegate from the National Guild of St Margaret of Scotland. This genealogy group, who are based in America, are long-standing members of the Guild and it was good to meet one of their number in person, David Medeiros.

The committee discussed how we could participate more in the city-wide commemorations and made the decision that this year we will open our St Margaret's Day service to members of the public. This would not be practical at the Chapel, so we intend to host the event at our 'second home', the Canongate Kirk. This will enable us to invite representatives from schools, churches and other organisations that are not members of the Guild, as well as local people who would not be eligible to join the Guild on account of not having Margaret in their name. Due to the change of venue for the service, the AGM will also be held at the Canongate this year, and there will be no lunch. Further details of the day will be circulated with the AGM notice in October and on the Guild website www.stmargaretschapel.com

Hazel Dunn, Guild Convenor



Our Convenor, Hazel Dunn with the afore mentioned David Medeiros

Photo credit: D Medeiros

Makeup of Executive Committee from November 2024

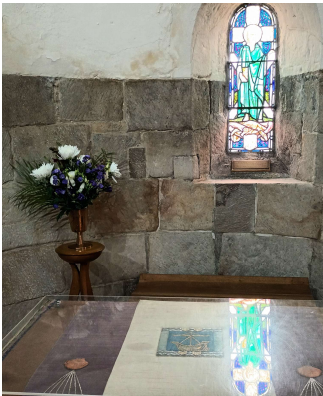
We are delighted to report that Holly Williams (formerly Gilfether) has been co-opted on to the Executive Committee and is developing a Social Media strategy for the Guild. Holly's day job is in communications and engagement and she brings a wealth of experience and ideas which will benefit the Guild enormously. Holly has been a member of the Guild for over 35 years and some members may remember her grandmother Margaret Gilfether, also a member. Holly is currently the March supervisor. We are also very pleased to announce that Holly has indicated she wishes to stand for election as Guild Secretary at the AGM in November.

Executive Committee member and current newsletter editor, Margaret Williamson will become interim Treasurer on 1st July for the Guild, following Yvonne McAulay's resignation. We are also very pleased to say that Margaret has indicated she will stand for election as Treasurer at the AGM.

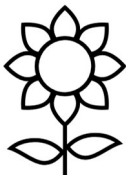
Both these roles are, as you know, key to the functioning of the Guild and we are very aware that they are voluntary. We are all very grateful to those of you who step up to give your time for the Guild. It is much appreciated.

Sarah James, Guild Secretary

St Margaret`s Chapel Flowers



Photos credit: SMCG



Flower Demonstration

A very wet and miserable April evening was brightened up by the Guild's first flower demonstration of 2024 in Currie. We had a good turnout, both in person and on Zoom.

There's been much discussion about using oasis for floral displays so Margaret Hunter very kindly offered to create some displays using alternatives to oasis and even one display using biodegradable oasis.

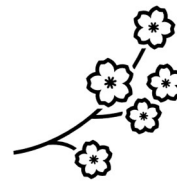
Margaret created four beautiful arrangements, advising about the pros and cons of chicken wire and green florist tape whilst doing so! We held a raffle and four lucky members went home with the arrangements. It was an excellent and enlightening evening - a huge Thank You to Margaret.

What's next? Well, we're thinking about another flower evening (or afternoon) where each member brings along a bunch of supermarket flowers and a container (to be specified) so that we could learn from each other what makes a suitable arrangement for the Chapel.

Watch this space for more information.

Fiona Pigott

Flower Supervisor



Membership Update

We are pleased to welcome some new members for 2024 including Antonia Chambers, Maggie McKnight and Margaret Humbrecht. We hope they will find their membership of the Guild rewarding.

As is usual, new members are required to have completed their forms and be welcomed to the Guild by 31 July in order to be awarded their certificate at the AGM. We have a few outstanding forms which we hope will be returned ahead of that date.

For all membership enquiries contact our Membership Secretary: Angela Casey angela.casey@outlook.com

Exploring new ways to donate

Since booklets were removed from the Chapel last year, we have seen a noticeable drop-off in cash donations. While we were aware there were many people taking booklets without donating, it has still resulted in a drop. The committee has therefore been exploring ways to change how people donate.

On visiting the Castle it is clear that many visitors are from abroad and that they also spend very little time in the Chapel, so we have been looking at installing a contactless payment terminal to offer an eye-catching representation of our organisation and to make donation swift and straightforward. To understand better how this could work for the Guild, Hazel Dunn and Angela Casey met with the team at the War Memorial to learn how contactless payment is working for them.

Hazel and Angela are now looking into costings to run a trial for six months with a provider who will supply a tap and pay machine. This machine would include a cash donation box as well as the opportunity for anyone to donate. This will allow us to use up the remaining booklets and also inspire would-be donors to support our work.

We are also exploring a leaflet or a downloadable information page via a QR code – offering something in return for the donation and hopefully forging future relationships with interested people. We hope to have the terminal installed later this year when we can monitor its success and allow us to make a decision for the future.

Angela Casey, Membership Secretary Photo credit: A Casey



Making a donation in lieu of placing flowers in the Chapel

One of the main priorities of the SMCG is to place fresh flowers in the Chapel twice a week throughout the year. If you would like to commemorate a special occasion or would like to sponsor a floral display, please get in touch and we'll do our very best to place flowers in the Chapel as close to your chosen date as possible.

For more information, please contact Fiona M Pigott fpigott19@gmail.com

Fiona Pigott, Flower Supervisor

Sistema Scotland Event featuring Big Noise Wester Hailes and RSNO

This was a truly heartwarming event which I had the privilege to attend.

Sistema Scotland is a Scottish Charity that started and supports the Big Noise programme. In 2008 the programme commenced with 35 young schoolchildren; they currently support over 3,500 young people across Scotland. The charity works in underprivileged areas throughout Scotland to help children through music “to improve their concentration and language skills, enhance problem solving and decision making, increase their self-esteem and develop strong friendships and support networks”.

The event was held at The Usher Hall. At the start of the evening, we had the opportunity to meet the parents and carers of some of the children who were performing. They talked about the positive influence the Big Noise had on the children, giving them a focus so that as their skills progressed, so did their confidence and self-esteem. The children thoroughly enjoyed travelling to the various events they attended throughout Scotland and best of all - they were having fun.

The performance began with Big Noise Wester Hailes and the Royal Scottish National Orchestra. Each child sat with their assigned member of the orchestra, one playing guitar and the others all playing brass instruments. They were outstanding with no sign of nerves but sheer concentration on each of their little faces. We could see that they were completely comfortable on stage as the RSNO had taken the time to work closely with each of them prior to the evening.

The audience were captivated by these very young performers from primary 3 to 6 who were beaming from ear to ear when, as you would imagine, they received a standing ovation. The performance by Big Noise Wester Hailes was a delight to witness and then the RSNO performed *La Mer* -- what an evening!

It was clear to see the great work that Sistema Scotland and Big Noise Wester Hailes are doing for communities in Scotland.

Margaret Williamson, Committee Member

Social Media

Work will shortly begin on a new social media strategy for the Guild. Our social media channels are an excellent way to promote our work and raise awareness of the charitable efforts taking place throughout the year. It's also a lovely opportunity to share the fruits of our flower-arranging labours by sharing pictures of arrangements!

Our current channels are very successful, with good follower numbers and high levels of engagement, and we are very grateful to those who have submitted stories and pictures as well as those who have drafted and posted content.

The Committee is really keen to enhance the work already happening by increasing the type and volume of social media content we post as a Guild. In the next few months you will hopefully see the results of this work. Please, help us along by “liking” and sharing posts and, if you can, send in pictures or updates that we could use.

We're also extremely keen to hear from people who have ideas for future posts. In particular, we'd love to hear from people who have personal stories about their connection to the Guild and how it has impacted their lives, or any active Margarets who live abroad but maintain their links to the Guild.

You can access all Guild social media channels via our website at www.stmargaretschapel.com

Please get in touch with Holly Williams at hollygiffether@hotmail.co.uk.

Queen Margaret University Costume Showcase 2024

It was a pleasure to attend this year's show at the Traverse Theatre, Edinburgh. The costumes were outstanding as were the students who performed on the evening. We witnessed a range of skills from puppetry and corsetry to the production of historical garments and embroidery. What a fun, creative and professional show they put on and it was encouraging to see such an abundance of talent on our doorstep.

St Margaret's Chapel Guild were represented by Committee members Margaret Williamson and Fiona Pigott on the evening.

Margaret Williamson, Committee Member

St Margaret in Lourdes

This statue of St Margaret, cast in bronze by Arthur Guéniot (1866-1951) in 1929/30, was commissioned by the Scottish National Pilgrimage Committee to Lourdes in south-west France. It is the only statue of a national patron to have been permitted in the Domaine of Lourdes.

The statue stands on the left bank of the River Gave, a short distance from the grotto where many believe the Blessed Virgin Mary appeared 18 times to a 14-year-old peasant girl, Bernadette Soubirous, in 1858.

While Lourdes is known as a pilgrimage destination recognised by the Catholic Church, visitors from all faiths and none from all over the world travel to this place of peace and prayer every year. Scots, in particular, seek out this statue of St Margaret to remember her kind and generous life, as a woman of faith, like Mary the mother of Jesus.

(Thanks to church archivists Donna Maguire and Mary McHugh for assistance)

Catrina McGillivray, Committee Member

<https://musees-reims.fr/oeuvre/sainte-marquerite-d-ecosse>

<https://musees-reims.fr/oeuvre/sainte-marquerite-d-ecosse?print=complet>

Introducing Our New Daisy Pendant

Designed by Patricia Dudgeon, our daisy pendant compliments our current jewellery range. Each pendant comes complete with an 18-inch silver chain adjustable to 16 inches. The daisy represents St. Margaret's flower, the marguerite, whilst the centre pearl recognises St. Margaret's unofficial title: The Pearl of Scotland.

The necklace is priced at £53. The Guild make no profit on jewellery sales and therefore any donation towards the charities we support while making this purchase would be greatly appreciated. Postage and packaging will be added where appropriate.

Our jewellery is only available to members of St. Margaret's Chapel Guild. For information and purchases, please contact Margaret Williamson m_doig@hotmail.co.uk



Guild Coffee Mornings

Coffee mornings continue to be held each month at the Johnnie Walker Lounge, 145 Princes St Edinburgh on 16th of each month (except November) from 10am unless it falls on a Sunday when we meet on the following Monday.

The monthly coffee mornings are an excellent way to get to know other Guild members, and if you haven't managed to get along yet, please mark the next date in your diary. We will be at the Johnnie Walker rooftop bar from 10am on Tuesday, 16th July. If you are coming from further afield, you would be particularly welcome.



Governor of the Castle

Major General Alastair Bruce is stepping down from his position as Governor of Edinburgh Castle in September. Those who attended the St Margaret's Day lunch last year will recall how he spoke with pride at being an honorary Margaret. He has taken a keen interest in the work of the Guild and we thought it would be appropriate to mark his departure by giving him a gift from Guild members.

We commissioned a daisy tie pin for him and will ensure that he receives it before he leaves.

The new Governor is also called Bruce, Major General Robert Bruce (known as Bob), and we hope he will join us on the 16th of November this year.

Hazel Dunn, Guild Convenor

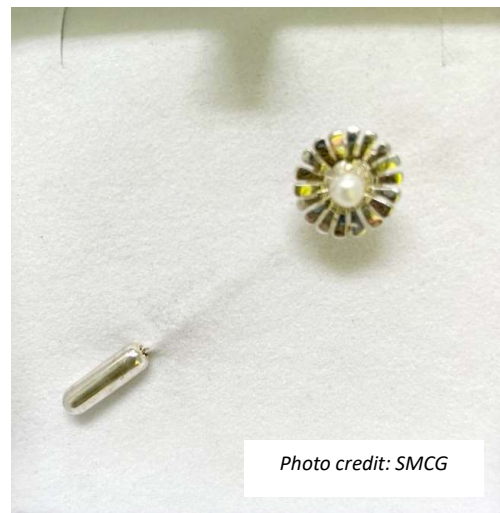


Photo credit: SMCG

Hannah Frew Paterson

We were sorry to learn, belatedly, of the death in September 2023 of Hannah Frew Paterson MBE, an artist well known for her exquisite and original church embroidery.

In 1992 the Guild commissioned Hannah to create an altar cloth for the Chapel as part of its refurbishment prior to the 1993 celebrations marking nine hundred years since the death of Queen Margaret of Scotland. The beautiful altar cloth which she stitched for us was dedicated on St Margaret's Day in 1993 in the presence of our late Patron, HRH Princess Margaret.

By this time Hannah had become very interested in the work of the Guild. We had come to regard her as one of us and she was invited to the AGM for the next few years. In 1998 she was appointed an Honorary Vice President and the following year she was elected a Trustee. She retired in 2012.

Joanna Milne



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Baptism

Maeve Margot Frazer, daughter of Guild member Gillian Frazer, was baptised in the Chapel on 17th March 2024 by the Rev Neil Gardner. It was a very happy weekend for the family, coinciding with Maeve's 1st birthday. Maeve has two godfathers, both named Andrew.

