

# The Society of Friends of St Andrew's, Jerusalem

November 2019



## Newsletter No 10

Welcome.

In this edition, as we concentrate on the promotion of our **scholarship**, we are delighted to focus on some of the past recipients each of whom shares their unique experiences of their time in the Holy Land and their subsequent path.

Importantly, please note our **St Andrew's Day Service** is taking place on **Saturday 30<sup>th</sup>** November at 2pm at St Cuthbert's Church, Edinburgh.

## News from The Minister



### Sacred Space

The above painting by Sieger Koder is one which we used in one of our Sunday evening services 'Sacred Space', which we started in September 2019, and which take place every Sunday evening at 6pm in the space at the back of St Andrew's Scot's Memorial Church (provided by the generous donation of the Friends).

After a year and a half of being here, I felt that we needed to reach out in a creative way to our context, and create an evening service that would offer something very different to our Sunday morning communion service. The idea was to create a sacred space for contemplative

prayer, meditation, engagement with art, poetry, story, sacred music; in a space lit with candles and filled with Taize music. It would be welcoming of inter-faith and ecumenical interaction (and so far, we have had internationals, Jews, Christians, non-faith attend). It is at 6pm so that the Jewish community where the church is situated, would have the option of attending after work.

### Children's work (Explorers Jerusalem)

We now have a kid's work running in St Andrew's Jerusalem with a team. There is always a brief children's address from the front by whoever is preaching, and then the children go out and have a time of activities, usually exploring the gospel story. We have had some more families come along, which is encouraging.

### Women's Bible Study

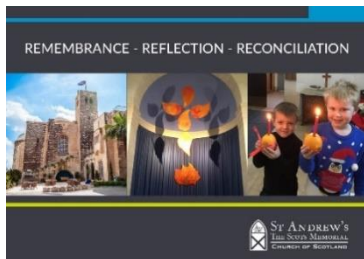
Ecumenical Associate Rev Anita Venter continues to lead a women's Bible study once a month. It brings together an eclectic gathering of messianic Jews, Palestinian Christians, internationals and others.

Now that we have the chairs and Bedouin rug, they hold their Bible study in the back of the church, which is a much better arrangement for the Guesthouse.



## Postcards

Marc Falconer (currently volunteering with one of the Church of Scotland partners here, and helping with the mission of St Andrew's Jerusalem & Tiberias), created colour postcards and A3 posters, advertising our service times. These have been distributed widely.



## Website & Facebook page

Please visit our updated [website](#) (still in progress and my thanks are due to Marc Falconer who has been a great help with this). Please also visit our Facebook page.

## Concerts

We have had more concerts than last year, which provides much needed income for the church. We host two kinds of concert, some charitable ones which we do not charge for the use of space, and other commercial ones where we hire out the church for 1500 NIS. It is also a good way of making connections with people across Jerusalem.

**Partner (and non-partner) work** is one of the most enjoyable and worthwhile roles of our mission here. The church and our institutions enable us to be here to do this, and we should never lose sight of this. Rev Kate McDonald and I have now visited ALL our partners within Israel and the occupied Palestinian territories.

## Advocacy

I believe that advocacy is one of our key roles here. The only way in which we are going to empower and not treat the Palestinians as victims, is if we help them to challenge to structural injustice of Occupation. Charity and money will never do this (although it is essential

that we continue to do all we can on this front); but real sustained and targeted advocacy needs to be central to our mission; and the whole of the Church of Scotland has a role to play here, given the territorial parish & guild connections, and all the expertise and contacts across our parishes in Scotland & beyond.

The role is varied and exciting, and I am greatly enjoying it. Thank you for your ongoing prayers & support, without which the mission of The Church of Scotland here would be much diminished.



*Rev Dr John McCulloch*

## Message from our President

There will always be a general degree of scepticism when the words 'administrative' and 'committee' are conflated. What is actually achieved, is perhaps the first question that is asked.

The Administrative Committee looks at how the Friends can encourage the Minister in St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church, one of the key objects of the Friends' Constitution. The Committee is staggered at how much the Rev Dr John McCulloch, and his family, have achieved and do in Palestine/Israel. His reports are always eagerly awaited and read. They cover so much and bring to life the realities of living in the Holy Land.

In his latest report, John McCulloch writes about Advocacy. The Administrative Committee recognised that as 'Friends' there is only so much that we can do. But in looking ahead the Finance Strategy Group is trying to

identify where we might help the Minister over the longer term in a consistent fashion. Hence the £5,000 per year for four years which has been allocated to Sindyanna's Olive Grove Project.

Another constitutional objective is to fund scholarships and bursaries, of up to £2,000 each, enabling individuals to travel and study in the Holy Land. I would encourage all Friends to spread the word; further details can be found through [friends@standrewsjerusalem.org](mailto:friends@standrewsjerusalem.org) or on our [website](#).

Other ideas being looked at are marketing and publicity; arrangements for lunch at the AGM (it does cost us around £100, but is considered a really good 'event' to get to know fellow Friends); and how we might reorganise the Friends in such a way as to make the Committees more effective. This is not re-arranging the deck chairs on the Titanic, but more accepting that we are all very busy and we need to ensure that our time is focused on what is really essential.

One of the ideas we are looking at is the establishing regional representatives who would be willing to go and spread the word about what The Society does. One in the North, East, West and South of Scotland would be perfect. Have no fear – there would be a common and agreed script to help them in their tasks. But the key thing is that there is a coherent message, which we are working on.

As a Committee, we welcome any comments or ideas. [friends@standrewsjerusalem.org](mailto:friends@standrewsjerusalem.org) will find us.

*Colonel Andrew Campbell, President*

## Meet our Honorary Secretary

Born in Darlington and brought up in Paisley and Perth, Walter is a Quantity Surveyor by profession and has had a varied career both in



and out of the construction industry. For many years in private practice and latterly as Commercial Director with a Civil Engineering company based in the Western Isles, in 1979 he was appointed as a Mission Partner to head up the Design and Build Department of the Christian Service Committee, an ecumenical, social development body of the Churches in Malawi.

In 1986 Walter was transferred to Israel/Palestine with responsibility for the maintenance and development of the Church's property in the region, during which time he also managed the Church's Guest House in Tiberias. In 1993, after living overseas for fourteen years with his family, Walter returned to Scotland to take up the position of Support Services Manager with the Iona Community, based in Govan.

In 1998 he returned to work directly with the Church of Scotland within the World Mission Council, firstly in Sub-Saharan Africa, and then developing the relationship of the Church's partners in the Middle East and North Africa.

Walter retired in 2009; as well as maintaining his links with the Middle East as Secretary of the Society, as a member of the Iona Community, he is currently project managing a major refurbishment project of the premises occupied by the Community within Iona Abbey.

*Walter Dunlop, Honorary Secretary and Membership Secretary*

## Scholarships – past and future

Scholarship awards from The Friends of St Andrew's have created a wide variety of openings over the past few years. Read on as scholars emphasise the benefits of their visit and share their updated news.

### Talah Anderson – 2014



Since my time as a Jerusalem Scholar in the summer of 2014, I specialised in the study of the Old Testament/Hebrew Bible within its ancient Near Eastern context at the University of St Andrews.

Having experienced first-hand the geographical context that partly inspired those ancient texts, I felt driven to understand them on their own terms, and was able to develop a new relationship with the timeless beauty and wisdom that can be found within.

I was lucky to return to the Holy Land in 2015. During this time, I also visited Jordan, and, perhaps due to some revelatory experience, it was there that I began my gender transition. Returning to St Andrews in the autumn, I wrote essays on the books of Amos and Revelation, the concept of atonement, and other ancient parallels to the biblical creation. As I learned more about the texts and their position in the ancient world, I deepened my understanding of myself and my own situation. In my final year of St Andrews, I wrote my undergraduate dissertation on the Sumerian city laments, a series of texts from ancient Iraq.

After graduating from St Andrews in 2017, I read for an MPhil in Assyriology, that is, the study of the ancient languages, history and culture of Iraq, at Cambridge, and I am very happy to report that I graduated this March. I'm

not sure where I'm heading next, but I am certain that I will be eternally grateful to the Friends for providing me with the opportunity to go to the Holy Land, an experience that I will always see as a great turning point in my life.

*Talah Anderson*



### Rev. Dr. Swarup Bar - 2015

This once in a life-time experience has enriched and exposed me to situations of both blessedness and human conflict. Since completing the trip and returning to India after finishing my PhD, I am engaged in both Pastoral ministry and teaching as Associate Professor of theology in Bishop's College, Kolkata.

After my trip to the Holy Land my whole perspective changed regarding the Israel-Palestinian issue as I was able to know and explain to others the true picture. I have kept up conversations with other scholars whom I met during my trip and during my stay in Scotland about these issues. I am working on a paper on Public theology where some of these issues will be reflected while I also talk about Indian perspectives.



I have also encouraged other scholars and Pastors to consider a trip to the Holy Land as an exposure to the struggle for peace and justice. Both Pastoring and teaching gives me immense

scope to interact with academics and believers and I look forward to opportunities where a general consensus will be built in favour of peace and justice. In fact, Indians have a lot to learn from the situations in the Holy Land as these issues connect us to the struggles of marginalization and oppression in India with respect to dalits, tribals and others.



I wish the Friends of St. Andrews will continue to make significant contributions in the lives and vocation of scholars and serious

thinkers. A big THANK YOU for this gracious opportunity.

*Rev. Dr Swarup Bar*

### **Elizabeth Martejijn – 2015**

With the support of the Friends of St. Andrew’s Jerusalem, and the help of Rev Páraic Reamonn and Rev Colin Johnston, I travelled to Jerusalem and Tiberias in the spring of 2015 to conduct fieldwork among Palestinian Christians for my Master’s Dissertation at the University of Edinburgh. This undertaking has now grown into a larger project of four years of PhD studies on Palestinian Christianity.

As part of my PhD research, I conducted twelve months of fieldwork in the Christian village of Taybeh. Since 2015, my research expanded from a focus on Protestant communities in urban areas, to the rural areas of the West Bank and a broadening of my research scope to the Orthodox and Catholic Palestinian Christian communities.

In the meantime, I published an academic article, presented my research at conferences,

produced popular writings on Palestinian Christianity and have been invited to contribute to books.

When I left Israel/Palestine after the year of intensive fieldwork, I stayed in the Scottish Guesthouse in Jerusalem for the last night. Sitting on the balcony, overlooking the beautiful skyline of the Old City of Jerusalem, I reflected on the past year. I realised that my time as St. Andrew’s Scholar in 2015 laid the groundwork for my current project and hopefully longer engagement with the Palestinian Christian community.



*Elizabeth on the ‘Al-Khader’ in Taybeh, a place of importance for the local Christian community.*

I am grateful to the Friends to have been given this opportunity and I appreciate to still be in touch.

*Elizabeth Martejijn*

### **Carrie Alderton – 2016**



I went on my scholarship to the Holy Land the summer after I graduated. My dissertation in Religious Studies ignited a passion for interviewing people and trying to understand their unique perspectives. I

interviewed people from all walks of life – founders of interfaith dialogue NGOs, Palestinian ex-freedom fighters turned lobbyists,

ultra-right-wing nationalists, coordinators of peace processes and even IDF soldiers.

My research started on the Anti-Normalisation Campaign and Inter-Faith Dialogue as a means of peace building in the Holy Land. But I soon realised that the most interesting



thing was seeing each person's unique perspective, how every person on this small piece of land has their own unique story of loss, historical memory, religion, pride, and victimhood.

After I graduated, I coordinated a project for the Edinburgh Interfaith Association, which we celebrated in an exhibition at the Museum of Scotland. Now I run an educational centre for refugees in Belgrade, Serbia called the [Workshop](#). These students have been stuck in Serbia without safe or legal access to the EU, since the closure of the Balkan Route; we have the opportunity to help them prepare for the rest of their journey, or integrate into Serbian society.

Understanding the diversity of perspectives in Jerusalem for a month changed the way I see socialisation and individual perspective. The reality for Palestinian refugees still inspires the work I do now. But most of all, my scholarship taught me how to really listen, and how that can cause people to open up to you, giving a window into their reality. This lesson will help me for the rest of my life. I'm very thankful for



the opportunity – and secretly wish I could go again!

Follow me on Instagram/Facebook (@theworkshopbelgrade)

*Carrie Alderton*

## Ruth Foster – 2017



The scholarship to study 'The Role of Religion in Peace and Conflict' at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem exposed me to both Israeli culture and the Hebrew language. I travelled around the Holy Land speaking to religious leaders from all perspectives of the conflict.

Having previously spent the majority of my time in the Holy Land working with Palestinians in East Jerusalem and the West Bank in Arabic, studying at the Hebrew University allowed me to both gain insight into differing narratives of the political situation and the different aspects of division – from language to religion to socio-economic opportunities. My experience at the Hebrew University exceeded



expectations, not just in terms of what I learned inside the classroom, but of the people I encountered. Personally, and emotionally, it was difficult to acknowledge and then willingly open myself up to have my views challenged and possibly changed, just as it was difficult to encounter views that differed so much from my own.

Coming from Northern Ireland, most people can understand why I am interested in religion, politics and conflict in divided societies. However, over the past few months my areas of interest have become more dynamic and

diverse. I am very interested now not only at looking at interfaith peacebuilding initiatives, but the issues of power and privilege within these peacebuilding initiatives, and how the inability to acknowledge these issues lead to the failure of such initiatives.

In addition, I am extremely interested in how



Irish Nationalism and Zionism have interacted throughout modern history, especially how groups in Ireland

continue to adopt narratives relating to the Holy Land to advance their own political agendas. My hope is that one day I will be able to investigate these topics further.

*Ruth Foster*

## **Craig Dobney - 2018**

As well as participating in worship in St Andrew's the main purpose of Craig's visit was to explore the background of the partners of Sunbula and Hadeel. Following his graduation from New College in this year, Craig is now Associate Minister at Dunbarney Parish Church in Bridge of Earn. His report will feature in the next newsletter.

### **2019/2020? - What can you do?**

We have up to £2,000 to offer to each of two students/ministers to enhance their studies or experiences through time spent in the Holy Land. Do you know of anyone who would benefit from this? Contact us on [friends@standrewsjerusalem.org](mailto:friends@standrewsjerusalem.org).

## **Eco Chapel at Tent of Nations, Bethlehem**



As many will know, The Tent of Nations is a farm owned by the Palestinian Christian Nassar family just outside Bethlehem. The farm is surrounded on all sides by illegal Israeli settlements and is under constant threat of demolition. The Nassar family work the land and live by the ethos written on a stone as you enter the farm "we refuse to be enemies". Through continuing to grow olives, grapes, almonds, and various other fruit, as well as hosting work parties, groups, and children's summer camps, the family non-violently resist the moves by settler organisations to remove them from the land which has been farmed by the family for generations.

At the General Assembly in May 2019, a deliverance was passed which instructed the World Mission Council "to assist the Tent of Nations in creating a sacred space for worship amongst the threatened olive groves and invite other agencies and congregations to help and identify with this project" (9b). This project is now underway, and we would like as many congregations as possible to be involved with the establishment of this sanctuary and as a mark of support for the Palestinian Christian community.

Below is the link to the original deliverance at GA 2019, where I set out the idea behind this project. I speak about the Tent of Nations at 1:08 (click on link [here](#))

*Rev Dr John McCulloch*

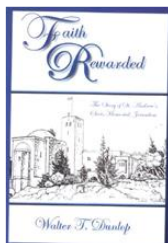
## Changing times in Jerusalem

As was hoped, plans for the renovation of the Church and Guesthouse are on schedule to begin towards the end of November. It is anticipated that the Guesthouse will be closed for around 15 weeks, enabling major repairs to be undertaken and many of the regular maintenance issues to be solved.

At the Guest House, occupancy this year is upwards of 77%, an exceptionally good result, with the lunch en-route market increasing exponentially.



## The History of St Andrew's



The story of one man's dream, a vision. It is the story of an enterprise unparalleled in the history of the Church of Scotland. It is the story of commitment in the face of danger and dogged persistence in facing up to immense obstacles in Scotland and the shifting political scene in Palestine and Israel. It is the story of a depth of faith that leaves you questioning your own.

£11.99

(£10 for new members)

Available from

[Dorothy McMonagle](#)

c/o Church of Scotland,

121 George Street,

Edinburgh EH2 4YN

## St Andrew's Kirk Jubilee

It was on Sabbath efternune,  
Oor Heids were really in a spin:

A broadcast for the BBC

An' it began at half past three.

We belted ower frae Bethlehem,

A hunder folk, wimmen an' men,

A hymn sheet met us at the door,

Wi' fu' instructions on the score.

Soprano or Alto I didnae ken,

So I sat on the side wi' the maist men.

I'll admit noo, 'twas Greek tae me;

My voice wid mak a peahen flee.

I felt sorry for the cheery souls

That suffered frae ma awfae howls.

Ma wallies clattered up 'n doon;

Ma enthusiasm kent nae boonds.

I groaned an' squealed my wey richt roon;

The engineers fiddled wi' their thoombs.

The tapes were broken by the score;

I should've drappit thro' the floor.

The ladies couldnae find the fault,

An' skelpit roon the kirk like bats.

I saw them gie an awfae cringe,

When I lat oot an extra whinge.

The very van it gi'ed a shudder,

Jist like a ship without a rudder.

The conductor raised his hands on high,

An' I gi'en up, wi' mony a sigh.

If I ever mak ma wey tae Heaven,

I only hope I'll be forgiven

*Daisy Pratt – 1908-2000*

### Email or post?

If you've received this through the post then do please share your email address with us. Quick, economical and instant access to the links in the newsletter. [friends@standrewsjerusalem.org](mailto:friends@standrewsjerusalem.org) will find us



# St Andrew's Day 2019 - Edinburgh



**Saturday 30th November at 14.00**  
**St Cuthbert's Church, Lothian Road, Edinburgh**

Donations will go towards the work of the Near East Council Churches in Gaza.  
The final destination will be decided between the Minister and NECC who will jointly select the project that would most benefit from the funds.

If you'd like to see a short video of the work of NECC, click [here](#)



## How we have supported St Andrews this year

As was reported in the last Newsletter, £5,000 was given to the Minister for distribution to projects at his discretion, all of them in Gaza

£2,000 towards the Darraj Family Health Clinic  
£1500 to NECC – the Near East Council of Churches  
£500 to the Psycho Social Centre

£1,000 to Samah Women's Cooperatives in one of the refugee camps, serving some of the most vulnerable communities.

Please read more about The Minister's visit in July to Gaza by clicking [here](#)

Rev Kate McDonald's blogspot (click [here](#)) will give you further information about the Women's Cooperatives, an UNWRA initiative.



## Seeds of Hope supported by The Friends



Along with The Scots Hotel, the Guesthouse and Tabeetha, The Friends have pledged to support [Sindyanna](#) of Galilee in their Olive Grove project at Rocha. This year our contribution amounted to £5,000 and we hope to continue that commitment for the next three years.

This marvelous olive grove allows promotion of the modernization of traditional Arab farming and agriculture by introducing new techniques, irrigation, and olive cultivars; aid of sustainable cultivation and agriculture; investment in all future proceeds of the grove in community projects that promote fair employment for Arab women; and oversee the entire value chain, from seed to extra virgin olive oil.



*A full report of the work that benefits from our funds will follow in the next newsletter*

**Can we help you? – just click on the link.**

[St Andrew's Scots Memorial Church, Jerusalem](#)

[The Friends of St Andrew's Jerusalem](#)

[St Andrew's Facebook](#)

[St Andrew's Scots Guesthouse](#)

[The Society's Secretary and Membership Secretary \(Walter Dunlop\)](#)

[Church of Scotland World Mission Council](#)

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