

THE SCOTS KIRK PARIS

A round tuit



At last we have these in sufficient quantity that each one of our readers may have one of his/her own! Please cut yours out and keep it. Guard it with your life! Never lose it and don't let anyone take it away from you.

These **tuits** have been hard to come by, especially the round ones. But now, by special arrangement, you can have yours. We rejoice, because the demand has been so great, and now that they are to hand, most of our problems of attendance and really getting things done at the church will be solved. We look for attendance to double now that everyone has gotten a **round tuit**.

For you see, so many have said "I'll get started in church just as soon as I get a **round tuit**". Others have said "I know I should come to worship but I just never seem to get a **round tuit**". Also, "I know my Bible knowledge could be improved if I attended a Bible study but it seems I just can't get a **round tuit**". Or "I've been wanting to set up a standing order for my offering but there's been so much to do and we're so busy that we just haven't gotten a **round tuit**".

Now all that is past! Everyone has his own **round tuit** and great things are in store!

Adapted from a text by Eileen Duncan (Peterhead), in the editor's possession for years but still as relevant as ever!

A word from Laurence, our Interim Moderator



Warmest greetings to everyone!

Over the years, it's been my privilege to be Interim Moderator at a number of congregations. It can be demanding and time-consuming, (no, it is always demanding and time-consuming!) but it does give you a chance to see behind the scenes - and observe the life, thinking and nature of another

congregation - where they are strong, where they are struggling...who the personalities are - and how people interact.

It is easy to grow very fond of this "additional" church family, and to feel very protective of them. That certainly is my feeling about The Scots Kirk Paris!

Which is why I take such great care about who is invited to be Locum with you.

Apart from James Patrick...who came with local recommendations...all the locums have been people I know and respect, and feel comfortable knowing they will conduct worship that is interesting, thoughtful, grounded and relevant - and that they are interested in people, their needs, their dreams and their hurting.

Rather than "fill the Sundays" with random, unknown people, who happen to be available, I want to make sure that you are in good hands, caring hands and gifted hands.

And it's been good to know that the locums, by the same token, will be welcomed, embraced and appreciated by the congregation.

We all hope that before too long, the Paris congregation will have a minister of their own and the chopping and changing will come to an end, to be replaced by continuity and a long-term vision and a clear direction of travel. Now, that will be good!!

Blessings as always,

Laurence

Helping others

Our **Bags of Hope** project came to an end on Easter Sunday when the final bags were taken to the Missionnaires de la Charité. A huge thank you to everyone who made the project such a success by contributing such a wonderful selection of items and by taking the bags to the hostel in the 15th arrondissement.

But of course our giving does not stop there. You can continue to put toiletries and food items in the basket which can be found at the door to the sanctuary every Sunday.



The work of the Missionnaires is never-ending and it is important that we remain faithful and steadfast in our giving.

Many charities have seen a decrease in donations in these times of high inflation but if we, collectively, add just one extra item to our shopping baskets and bring it to church, we can make a real difference.

With the cold weather behind us it is tempting to think that the needs of the homeless are not so great but eating and keeping clean are, of course, important all year round.

So thank you for your contributions - the Missionnaires and the homeless in their care are relying on us!

Caskie visit

On 2nd April we were delighted to welcome Gordon Caskie, nephew of war time SKP minister Donald Caskie. He brought with him an additional exhibit for our cabinet, namely a beautiful wooden communion plate which we would hope to use on occasion.



Gordon, who attended the same school as our April locum, John Munro, was accompanied by his son and daughter and it was a pleasure to share time with them before, during and after the informal ceremony held to receive the plate.



*Donnez-nous notre pain
quotidien*

*Give us this day our daily
bread*



And a word from John, our locum...

This is me doing my Marilyn Munro impersonation on the metro grill outside la Gare St Lazare. We had just got off the Giverny train after a wonderful day out to Monet’s House and Garden.

The formal garden in front of the house is already full of wonderful colour with lots more blooms in bud bursting to flower, especially the roses. Through the tunnel and under the road we emerged into a strollers paradise around the lake whose water lilies are starting to bloom and lots of purple flowers cascading from the trees over the bridge. I took a photo for a couple on the bridge, asking them to kiss! The romance in the air was palpable. We finished our visit with a delicious lunch in the garden of Les Nymphéas just yards from the house entrance.

I used to think the French and Parisians in particular were an unfriendly if not to say rude bunch. However, all the staff and customers we have met in cafes and shops and galleries could not have been more helpful and pleasant. So, it has been no surprise to find again SKP too just as warm and welcoming. It felt good to get reacquainted with well kent faces, especially the children, and to meet new people, including the regular smattering of visitors from all over the world. Listening to their personal stories and their impressions of Paris reminded us of the common humanity that we share, wherever we hail from. It’s great that SKP continues to provide such a haven of hospitality.



Sadly, I put Jacqui on the train home via London on Wednesday. She returns to work pretty much right away after our thoroughly enjoyable twelve day holiday together. We love the Manse apartment and the area in which it is located. It really is a splendid asset to the chaplaincy and a delight to those of us privileged to enjoy its invitation.

I’ll be sad to leave myself in a couple of weeks but at least I’ll be going with good memories and friendships to cherish. If you are ever in Edinburgh or East Lothian don’t hesitate to give us a ring.

Yours aye,
John

General Assembly of the Church of Scotland



This year’s General Assembly is being held from 20-25th May with the theme "Remember who you are". As in previous years, commissioners will be attending in person and virtually and the entire proceedings will be livestreamed on the Church of Scotland website.

Rev. Sally Foster-Fulton, head of Christian Aid since 2016, will succeed the Right Rev. Dr Iain Greenshields as Moderator for 2023-2024 and will represent the Church of Scotland at home and abroad.

Many important decisions affecting the life of the church are taken at the General Assembly and passed down to

Kirk Sessions via Presbytery for implementation in our congregations.

To read the reports to the General Assembly and watch the livestream, visit the Church of Scotland [website](https://www.scotskirkparis.com).

Quite a feat!

The following article appeared in the April newsletter of the Royal British Legion France. It concerns Brian Hewitt who used to be a familiar face at the SKP and is still a faithful member of our congregation.

"Brian Hewitt's letter attracted my attention initially because it is typed on an ancient typewriter with dodgy letters impressed into the paper - something I haven't seen for some years. The explanation, sadly comes in his opening paragraph but continues with a heartening account of his courageous stance in the face of ill-fortune. Here it is:

I am now diagnosed Parkinson atypique, trembling of the hands, and so, as you may imagine, smartphones, touch-screens, electronic keyboards, are of no use to me.

Not wishing to be just an object of pity, I found the cheek last November at age 85½ to participate in the 5k course a pied 'La Solidarité Montmartre' - although for me it's rather 'Parkinson on the run'. Klaxoned down the length of boulevard Rochechouard, the pavement being blocked by tourists and roadworks, we then had to climb from place Blanche the hill of rue Lepic, twice, it being a 2-lap race. As the oldest participant by far, I finished both last overall and 1st in my age category 'Master 10'. There followed the podium protocol in the presence of Mr le Président de la République de Montmartre, a cup for the sideboard and a painful tendino-bursite that grounded me for weeks.

Until last Sunday: the 5k 'La Charentonnaise'. Finishing 551st/552 I again took the cup for 1st (and only) 'Master 10'.

Next week the rheumatologist will tell me to stop acting the goat and hopefully prescribe a few anti-inflammatories. Here endeth.

Cheers,
Brian Hewett
3/3/23
(14)



Well done Brian and greetings from us all at the Scots Kirk Paris!

Find out more about RBL France and read their newsletters at rblfrance.org.

Looking to the past and to the future (2)



In the March issue of the newsletter we spoke about our unexpected windfall of £10,000 donated by Bomber Command and partly funded by a legacy in memory of Elwyn Edwards, a bomber pilot killed in action in 1944. Elder Scott MacSween suggested that some of this money could be used to help fund the June trip to Taizé organized jointly by Logie Kirk, Stirling, the chaplaincies of the Universities of Glasgow and St. Andrews and Scott himself. The Kirk Session was unanimous in its agreement, reflecting our firm belief that young people are the future of the church and deserve our support and encouragement.

The arrangements have now been finalized and we are delighted to report that the SKP will be funding two nights' accommodation for the group in Paris on 17th and 18th June. The young people, accompanied by Rev. Jan Steyn, will be with us in church on the Sunday morning and we hope to be able to host a pot luck lunch before they set off for Taizé in the afternoon. More details about this later.

And so past meets present and future. The death of a young man of 22 almost 80 years ago when the world was at war has given young adults of today the opportunity to take "one step back from daily life, to meet a wide variety of people and consider [their] commitment in the Church and in society".

"There is a taste of celebration to see so many young adults together in all their diversity. It gives us a great hope that it is possible for all humanity to live in peace."

Brother Alois, during a meeting in the Church of Reconciliation ([Taizé website](#))

The Scots Kirk Paris is very much looking forward to welcoming the group in June. Unfortunately they will not be stopping off in Paris on their way home but we hope to have some feedback from them once they are back in Scotland.

If you're ever in Chile...

Our music team leader Felipe Gallardo told us in the January issue of the newsletter that he worked in finance and software engineering. But he has another string to his bow! Felipe and a group of friends have just opened a restaurant in Viña del Mar, Valparaiso, Chile. Located in the town centre close to the seafront, *Hedrim's* serves healthy fast food for busy people on the move.

We wish Felipe every success in this new venture - perhaps he might see some of us there one day! Just ask him for the address!



¡Buen provecho!

George Mutch



We were shocked to learn of the death of George Mutch, a longstanding member of the SKP, after an operation at the end of March.

We are indebted to George for helping us set up our permanent display of Donald Caskie memorabilia and will surely miss his sense of humor and his mischievous look as he launched into the Doric, knowing full well that despite being native Scots, many of us were listening to what might as well have been a foreign language!

"George P. Mutch dedicated his life to teaching and fostering the Auld Alliance. His love for France and his home Scotland were in equal measure.

One of his first steps towards France was graduating with First Class Honours in French Studies, with Distinction in Spoken French at University of Aberdeen. He went on to pursue a Master of Literature, with specialisation in medieval French, prior to doing research at Oriel College Oxford. He continued in academia at Université de Paris-III - Sorbonne Nouvelle where he did a Masters degree in British Romantic Literature. He found his vocation in teaching where he helped future young talent excel in their English as part of their préparatoires for les Grands Ecoles for over 25 years.

Wherever there is a link between Scotland and France, George was there. A longstanding member of the Scots Kirk, President of the Caledonian Society of France, and committee member of the Association Franco-Ecossaise, the Auld Alliance was alive and well under George's care. Under his leadership at the Caledonian Society, he not only organised regular events and gatherings to cultivate connections, but also raised tens of thousands of Euros for deserving causes back in Scotland.

A true gentleman, people who met him were immediately struck by his sharp wit and the glint in his eye. Famous and sought after for his master of ceremony skills at ceilidhs, everyone got the full Professor George teaching experience. There was hardly ever a ceilidh in Paris without George at the helm. Whether it's the British ambassador or a girl from Buckie, he commanded attention and awe of everyone when he was in the room and even more with a microphone at hand. People would leave with tears of laughter and joy and fond memories of their evening thanks to him.

A family-only funeral service was held on 27th April in Keith, Scotland, where George was laid peacefully to rest next to his parents. Although he was returned to Scotland, he left an ever lasting impression here in France".

Lyly Fong

A memorial service for George will be held in the Scots Kirk Paris on **Saturday 17th June at 2 pm**. At the request of George's family, our former minister, Rev. Jan Steyn will be officiating. All who knew and loved George are warmly invited.

A Google sheet has been created to enable people to share their memories of George. If you would like to contribute, click on this link <https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1LNgUkILPDhg7JZxjoPZOMBkVMYos6plYwy3Z5ORI2kl/edit?usp=sharing>

The SKP needs YOU!

Sunday is a notoriously lazy day. We all like to stay in bed longer than usual and even if we are up early, it's nice not to have to rush. For some people Sundays are busy - we play golf, go running, catch up on the chores we haven't been able to do during the week. Others mooch around and don't do much. Others again go to church, perhaps out of habit, perhaps



because they feel they should or perhaps, just perhaps, because they want to! What better way to start the week than by taking time out from our busy lives for quiet reflection in God's presence. All followed by a good cup of coffee and lively conversation! Your church needs you! Come and join us! It's worth the effort!