



The Greeting

CONGREGATIONAL MAGAZINE OF MAY STREET PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH, BELFAST

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ANNIVERSARIES AND SELFIES

2014 has witnessed and will witness several anniversaries. As everyone will be aware, 2014 marks the one hundredth anniversary of the outbreak of World War I. Even though it started a long time ago, the Great War, which was spun as the war to end all wars, still impacts us politically, socially and religiously a century later. 2014 also is the bicentennial of an event that is not quite as well known and not as well publicised.

In August 1814, British forces landed in Chesapeake Bay. They marched on Washington, captured America's new capital city and proceeded to burn the White House. For us in May Street Presbyterian Church, 2014 sees another important anniversary. It is 100 years since our magnificent Binns Organ was installed. Special events to celebrate the occasion are planned for the weekend of October 18.

What have these three anniversaries got to do with selfies? You do know what a selfie is? You probably do, and if you do, you probably taken at least one selfie. In case, you do not, a selfie is a photograph you take of yourself, normally using a

smartphone held at arm's length, which you then post on social media for all your friends to enjoy. Selfies are good fun – most of the time – but they are symptomatic of our culture. We are focused on ourselves.

Selfies are visual expressions of our me-first, look-at-me society. But again you are asking what have selfies got to do with our three anniversaries? Most historians argue that Britain's attack on Washington in 1814 and the outbreak of war in 1914 were driven primarily by self-interest. The desire to dominate, control and to be top dog fuelled the conflicts of 1814 and 1914.

However, what motivated the installation of the Binns Organ was completely different. It was not a desire to promote ourselves – to make a selfie statement before anyone had heard of selfies – but to promote God's praise. That is the greatest and purest motive for doing anything.

After all, as *The Shorter Catechism* reminds us, our chief end, our primary purpose, is to glorify God and definitely not to glorify self. As Christians we need to stand against the mind-set of our selfie culture by living for God's glory. That is something

we must do not just during a special anniversary weekend, but every day of our lives.

DR RODGER CROOKS
Vacancy Convenor

WATCH THIS SPACE

Work is expected to start in November on a £300,000 project which will involve a major upgrade of May Street's basement and a facelift of the lecture hall lobby. This means that the schoolroom, which has been lying virtually out of use for several years, will secure an entertainments licence and will be fit for purpose as a venue for a range of community based activities.

The design team is set to go out to tender on September 8 and it was anticipated that the construction contract would be let during October. Work will run from November through to the early part of the New Year. The funding has to be expended by the end of March 2015. We are confident that the building work will not affect our services in the church or our activities in the lecture hall. Work will be focused on the basement, but we apologise in advance for any disruption that this may cause.

During the research stage, the design team have come up with one most interesting nugget of information – the May Street basement celebrates its centenary this year. Historic records show that in 1914 the church decided to lower the level of the building's basement by nine inches to give more head room. So it is not just the Binns Organ which is 100 years old this year!

Funding is being provided in two tranches for the main scheme: £200,000 from Belfast City Council's Local Initiative Fund with match funding of £50,000 from the Alpha (Resource Management) Landfill Community Fund (Tax Credits programme). The ball was set rolling in August when we received back from Belfast City Hall an embossed copy of the grant agreement, signed by the Lord Mayor, Councillor Nichola Mallon, and the chief executive, Suzanne Wylie. This document effectively releases the funds.

In a separate but linked project, May Street Church is to receive £50,000 from the Biffa Landfill

Tax Credits programme. This grant is specifically to cover flood protection measures and improved drainage. The work will be carried out at the same time as the main project, to avoid digging the schoolroom floor up twice.

One condition of the Biffa scheme was that individual members of May Street congregation had to act as "third party funder", putting up 10% match funding for the £45,000 on offer from Biffa. An appeal was made to the congregation and this was answered. Within a little over two weeks, the £5,111 which was needed had been raised thanks to the generosity of a range of members of the congregation. It means that our £5,111 will unlock the main funding of £45,000, but it was still a major challenge. More important than the cash itself, however, was the commitment that the various members of the congregation were making to this project and to the future of May Street.

The drawings, which were being finalised at the start of September, have to be approved by the Church House Architecture Committee. This was one of the stipulations laid down by South Belfast Presbytery, which has given its full backing to the project. We are very appreciative of the support of South Belfast Presbytery as May Street steps out in faith.

May Street Church wishes to place on record its thanks to the three funders who have made it possible for us to start turning our dreams into reality. We hope that by next spring we will have a brand new basement venue which will spearhead our outreach into the community.

We are also hoping that we may be able to reclaim VAT on the expenditure on the project under the UK Government's Listed Places of Worship scheme. This applies to listed buildings which are regularly used for worship services, so we tick both boxes. If this is successful, it could release sufficient funding to replace our ageing oil boiler with a more efficient gas boiler to heat the church. To test the waters, we have submitted a VAT reclaim for two recent building projects in the church. This would be a big help.

I should like to record our thanks, too, to Ruby Hutchinson in the Urban Soul Management Committee for her dedication to the task of



**CENTENARY CELEBRATION
OF THE BINNS ORGAN**

Lunch time organ music

Thursday 16 & Friday 17 October 2014

12.00 - 2.00 pm

Thursday Service - 1.05 - 1.30pm

also

A Special Historical Musical Evening of the Binns Organ

Saturday - 18 October 2014

7.00 - 9.30pm

Admission Free

All Welcome

securing grant aid for this project. It has been a real team effort, but Ruby's commitment has been second to none.

ARTHUR ACHESON
Clerk of Session

URBAN SOUL CAFE

Urban Soul Cafe will be closing on a temporary basis as from Friday, September 12, 2014. We apologise to our regular customers for the inconvenience this will cause. We would invite you to send your email address to Robin Morton at romorton@gmail.com so that you can be kept in touch with developments over the winter.

May Street Church and the Urban Soul Management Committee would like to express sincere gratitude to Avril Gracey, our cafe manager, for her dedication and commitment to this cafe since her appointment on July 1, 2009. She has a passion for the Urban Soul project and has in many ways been the public face of the operation. We are sorry that we will have to lose her services and wish her well in the future. We would also like to take this opportunity to thank all the volunteers who have worked in the cafe under Avril's guidance.

This is, however, not the end of the Urban Soul project. Indeed, May Street Church is poised to start work on a £300,000 building project which will transform our basement area. The premises adjoining our cafe are to be redeveloped with a view to opening in Spring 2015.

This project will create new opportunities for outreach and build new links with the community. God's plan is unfolding for May Street and Urban Soul. We know we have been blessed with a strategically important city centre location which is already much sought after as a neutral, easily accessible venue. Our aim is to be more relevant than ever to the city centre and to attract a wide range of users to our premises.

We thank all our supporters, customers and funders for being part of the Urban Soul Cafe story thus far and trust that this is a comma, not a full stop. We will send out regular email updates to advise as to any developments. So watch this space!

Urban Soul Management Committee

GOD IS FIGHTING WITH YOU

Jesus said, 'A certain nobleman went into a far country to receive for himself a kingdom, and to return. And he called his ten servants, and delivered them ten pounds, and said unto them, "Occupy till I come"' (vv. 12-13). The word 'occupy' is a military term which means 'to take possession of'. We haven't been called to 'hold the fort', but to 'go up and possess the land'. Christ isn't coming back for a vanquished church, but a victorious church. You say, 'But the odds against me don't look good.' Then you need to look at 'God's odds'. According to His mathematics one can defeat a thousand enemies, but two can defeat ten thousand (Deuteronomy 32:30). God loves to take something that looks small and insignificant, multiply it by Himself and bring victory out of it. When God told Gideon He would use him and three hundred soldiers to destroy an army of hundreds of thousands, Gideon reminded God that he came from the smallest tribe and the smallest family. But God said, 'Surely I will be with thee, and thou shalt smite the Midianites as one man' (Judges 6:16 KJV). One 'surely' from God does away with all our 'maybes' and 'what ifs'. Gideon told his three hundred men: 'When I blow with a trumpet...blow ye the trumpets also on every side of all the camp, and say, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon"' (Judges 7:18 KJV). When you're swinging your sword on this side, look over your shoulder and you'll see the Lord swinging His sword on the other side. You're not alone. God is fighting alongside you, so you will win.

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CONGREGATIONAL COMMITTEE

A meeting of the Kirk Session and Congregational Committee will take place at 7.30pm on Thursday October 23.

LORD MAYOR'S VISIT

The Lord Mayor, Councillor Nichola Mallon, came to Urban Soul on Thursday August 21 to officially open an art exhibition which acknowledges the role of the "unsung heroes" of the Northern Ireland peace process.

The exhibition, by Belfast artist Susan Hughes,

is running until mid-September at Urban Soul Cafe in the basement of May Street Presbyterian Church in the city centre.

The 25 oil portraits are of men and women who toiled behind the scenes to promote peace and reconciliation. Some of them are familiar faces, but most are comparatively unknown.

The Lord Mayor said: "I am delighted to be asked to open this exhibition which I am sure will be a source of huge interest to people in Belfast and beyond, as well as to tourists.

"The fact that the role of 'unsung heroes' is one of my core themes for my year in office makes this exhibition especially compelling for me.

"I commend Susan not just for the high standard of her art but also for encapsulating the subjects of the various paintings in a few sentences in her catalogue.

"She has brought her subjects to life and has shown how people across Northern Ireland have quietly gone about the business of bringing people together.

"The various subjects all have a story to tell and until now their efforts have in many cases gone unrecognised. They are the glue which helped to create the relatively peaceful society that we now have."

The Lord Mayor said she was looking forward to bringing the exhibition to the City Hall later this year.

Ms Hughes, who was brought up in the Ormeau Road area with parents of a mixed, cross-border marriage, said her mother had inspired the exhibition.

"She suggested that I should continue with a series of paintings which had begun with a portrait of family friend Fr Gerry Reynolds, by seeking out other people who were working away quietly and steadily to facilitate peace and reconciliation," she said.

"I found that beneath the radar of the headline events in the peace process were networks of ordinary people moving mountains in courageous and imaginative ways. And so I began this venture to celebrate them in the best way I know: through art."



Busy scene: The May Street ladies serve refreshments to guests at the launch of the Quiet Peacemakers art exhibition in Urban Soul Cafe on August 21.



Top team: The Lord Mayor is welcomed to May Street by church members (from left) Colin Johnston, Chris Hewitt, Valerie Condy, Kathleen Rea, Arthur Acheson and Valerie Morton.



Welcome guest: The Lord Mayor, Councillor Nichola Mallon, is greeted by Urban Soul Cafe manager Avril Gracey.

The exhibition went on display earlier in the summer at the Duncairn Arts Centre on Antrim Road, but this is the first time it has featured in the city centre.

Arthur Acheson, clerk of session at May Street Church, said: "We are grateful to Susan for

selecting our Urban Soul Cafe as a venue. Since the paintings first went up a couple of weeks ago they have aroused considerable interest among our customers.



Pulpit view: *May Street congregational secretary Robin Morton lets the Lord Mayor see May Street Church sanctuary from the pulpit.*

“The exhibition has attracted more people through our doors, including many tourists. This is a win-win situation in that it gives Susan a platform in the city centre and raises the profile of our not-for-profit Urban Soul Cafe.”

ROBIN MORTON

QUIET PEACEMAKERS



In the picture: *At the official opening by The Lord Mayor, Councillor Nichola Mallon on August 21 of the Quiet Peacemakers art exhibition in Urban Soul Cafe at May Street Presbyterian Church are (from left), Arthur Acheson, Clerk of Session, Avril Gracey, Cafe Manager, The Lord Mayor, the artist, Susan Hughes, and Dr Rodger Crooks, Vacancy Convenor at May Street. The exhibition runs until mid-September and admission is free.*

TUESDAY CIRCLE

The members of the Tuesday Circle were deeply saddened by the death in May of their esteemed member and dear friend, Betty McKeown. Betty was one of the founder members of the Tuesday Circle, and was an active committee members for many years.

Looking back it may seem strange to describe Betty as shy, but she was, and yet despite this she actively took part in the Good Old Days, supported by her Sam who escorted the ladies regularly and helped with staging etc. Betty’s love for a cuppa made sure the ladies were refreshed at the meetings and she was never far from the kitchen helping out. And the Tuesday Circle revealed other hidden talents in Betty, such as card making, flower arranging....and ten-pin bowling!



Clean cut: *Jean McCrum cuts a slice of tart at the Tuesday Circle summer party in June.*

Always a firm supporter and active member of May Street church, Betty was the best advocate for May Street - every visitor on a Sunday would be sure of a very warm smile and welcome from the “meeter and greeter”. She would also be found on a Sunday morning enjoying a chat and cuppa before the morning service. Betty was a PWA member, was one of the original members of the Thursday Lunchtime caterers, and managed the monthly BB lunches on a Tuesday.

Over the years Betty worked tirelessly for church calendar events. She was a loyal friend to her May Street family and was well known for her fabulous baking! A very popular and much-loved



Family affair: Patricia McCrossan and her daughter Janet Booker at the Tuesday Circle dinner.



Party time: Chris Hewitt (left) and Kathleen Rea pose for the camera at the Tuesday Circle function.

member of May Street, and a highly esteemed lady in her local community, she will be sorely missed. Our thoughts are with Ian, Colin, Arlene and India, and the wider family circle at this time.

We are pleased to report that the following members are making great progress: Paddy Ferris, Mona Templeton and Betty McVicker - our love and thoughts continue to be with them.

We are also delighted to congratulate Muriel and Sam Nelson on the birth of their twin great grandsons - Samuel and James.

Our opening meeting took place on Wednesday September 3, when Stephen Gourley, son of our member Evelyn, gave a talk and showed film footage of Old Belfast. The rest of the programme for the winter will be unveiled shortly.

PATRICIA McCROSSAN



Great night: Ena Kirkpatrick at the May Street Tuesday Circle summer party.

SARAH ELIZABETH (BETTY) MCKEOWN

The death of May Street member Betty McKeown on May 30 is recorded with regret, and sympathy expressed to her sons Ian and Colin, and Colin's partner Arlene and daughter India. This is a tribute that Colin McKeown has written in memory of his mum.

"Mondays and Fridays will never be the same again."

Mum passed away in the Ulster Hospital on Friday May 30 this year, she had been diagnosed with cancer in 2013 and typically did not let her illness affect her spirit or interest in her family.

She was 87 when she died and was always at the heart of everything our family did and believed in throughout her life.

With my father she taught us to be honest, strong, hard working and always ready to help others, something she did by example never seeking reward or to be in the limelight herself. She was happy to stay in the background a solid support to everyone else. May Street Church meant so much to her and her strong Christian beliefs, she was very active in the church and enjoyed the fellowship of the all the other members, building life long friendships with everyone. A member of the Tuesday Circle and the Badminton Club, Mum supported and contributed to their work and activities and also provided like many others cups of tea, cakes and buns.

Born in Hatfield Street of the Ormeau Road to Adam and Mary Jane Irvine, she was the youngest in a family of three with elder brothers Tom and Jonty. Her father worked at the nearby Gasworks facility and she learnt her skills in baking and needlework from her mum and friends. On occasion she would mention going to Ormeau Park, to take cover during a bombing raid as the gasworks facility was a major target during the war. Mum feared very little except thunder and lightning, perhaps that was related to her wartime experiences. The family also lived on the Belmont Road and she attends the Belmont Tower School, somewhere in recent years she did go for a wee cup of tea and a scone.

On leaving school, she became a designer with Atkinson's ties in Belfast and applied her extensive creative skills in that role. Upon meeting (apparently at a dance) and then marrying Dad Sam McKeown, a printer from Durham Street in Belfast they lived at Brentwood Park in Castlereagh. Once married, Mum then used her skills to create a loving home with strong Christian values. Mum and Dad were like many couples at that time, working hard to ensure that everyone was looked after. They also built a great set of friends in the local area. Extended family was also very important to them and Mum would prepare and bake for social gatherings and get togethers. She always ensured a warm welcome, to anyone who came to visit and Ian and I made sure that any leftovers were taken care of.

Ian and I loved our parents dearly and as we

grew up and made our way in the world, Mum and Dad were always on hand to help with advice, support and love. Granddaughter India was born and they both were over the moon with her arrival and instantly directed their love and devotion onto her. Unfortunately Dad was only to have a very short period with her, as he died suddenly when she was just six months old. Mum loved India dearly, she helped and supported her and built that loving bond that only grandparents enjoy. Mum's proudest moment was India's graduation from University in 2012 a function she attended in person.



Happy memories: This montage of photographs, created by Colin McKeown, was featured on the order of service at the Service of Thanksgiving for Betty McKeown which was held at May Street Church.

For Mum living without Dad was difficult and she never really got over his death. However once again she managed her grief with hard work, looking after India as much as possible and staying involved with May Street. The BB lunches provided a welcome diversion and she always said that she did them as a memory to dad, a BB boy in his time. She also enjoyed the company of the Boys Brigade members, as it was a direct link to happier times with my father.

Nothing was ever too much trouble, a quality she maintained throughout her life even when in recent times her health was failing. To Mum getting older was never an excuse for not getting things done and her motto in recent times was "if I can just stay as I am and just keep going." Well, in writing this piece about Mum I certainly could keep going for a very long time.

How do you select with all the happy times, we as a family remember and indeed the memories of all of her many friends? Mum loved life; she was clever, practical, creative, and a good listener, trustworthy, loyal and will always be remembered. She loved the times with her friends in May Street Church and the peace and strength that her belief in God gave to her. Mum enjoyed a long and happy life, yet as a family we all would give anything for one more second with her.

“And Mondays,” well that was pension day and in recent times, I would collect her pension, write down the things she needed and go for the shopping, something I remember doing for her when I was a wee boy.

Doing things for Mum or anyone else was never too much trouble, something we all learnt from her.

COLIN McKEOWN

CONGREGATIONAL REGISTER

Deaths

MAY 30: Betty McKeown, Roddens Crescent, Belfast 5

Blessed are those that die in the Lord.

THE CHOIR

On Thursday June 12, May Street Choir enjoyed an evening of fellowship. Rather than having our usual summer outing, we decided to have an evening meal at Rockmount Golf Club, Carryduff. Many thanks to Kathleen Rea for organising.

We were delighted that our Clerk of Session, Arthur Acheson, and his wife Elizabeth were able to join us, along with some siblings and spouses of various choir members. It was a great night, the food was delicious and the chat flowed freely.

During the conversation it emerged that the majority of May Street Choir members had begun their singing choirs by joining their school choir. Our common interest in singing has therefore extend back over many decades!

The dinner was also an opportunity to mark the early retirement from his day job at Bombardier Aerospace of May Street organist Colin Johnston. Colin, who had worked with Shorts and then

Bombardier for the past 41 years, had retired at Easter.

October is an exciting time both for the choir and congregation because we hold our annual Harvest Thanksgiving Service. This year the service will take place on Sunday October 12. Anyone who wishes to help decorate the church in advance of the service is invited to contact Kathleen Rea.

Later in October, we have another special event. We are looking forward to celebrating the centenary of May Street's famous Binns Organ. Two lunchtime organ recitals will take place on October 16 and 17, while a special historical musical evening is planned for the evening of Saturday October 18. Thanks in particular to choir members Chris Hewitt and Ruby Fannin who have been putting a great deal of effort into planning this festival. Further details of the festival are available elsewhere in The Greeting.

VALERIE MORTON
Secretary

COLLECTORS

Sept: Gordon Kirkpatrick, Brian Gourley, Valerie Condy, Clive Gilmour.

Oct: Kathleen Rea, Barry Bell, Robin Morton.

Nov: Robin Morton, Jenny Wilson, Arthur Fannin.

COMMUNION

A Communion service will take place on September 28.

HARVEST SERVICE

May Street will be holding its Harvest Thanksgiving Service at 11am on Sunday October 12. All welcome. Come and join the praise and see the might Binns Organ in all its glory!

DEADLINE

The deadline for all contributions to the next issue of The Greeting is Sunday November 23.

MAY STREET'S HIDDEN GEM



Pulling out all the stops: *Charles Maginnes, who plays the organ at May Street Presbyterian Church in Belfast at Thursday lunchtime services and resident May Street organist Colin Johnston get tuned up for a festival which is being held at May Street in October to mark the centenary of the celebrated Binns organ. The programme will include lunchtime recitals on October 16 and 17 and then a special historical evening with the Binns Organ on October 18. This date marks both the organ's 100th birthday and the 185th anniversary of the opening of May Street Church. The Binns Organ, which is a rare example of an original organ built by JJ Binns of Leeds, cost £850 when it was installed. Full details of the organ festival on the May Street website at www.maystreetchurch.com*

I LOVE THIS ORGAN

As many of you will be aware, there lives rather a splendid two manual organ by JJ Binns in May Street Presbyterian Church in Belfast. It has been my privilege to play on (and with!) this gem for the Thursday Lunch Time Services for quite a few years now. I just love this organ, for many reasons, and indeed the number of reasons just keeps mounting, because every time I play it I find yet another reason to love it! For me, it's like driving a vintage Rolls Royce!

Well, in October it will celebrate its One Hundredth Birthday. The opening recital was given by Captain Brennan, who was then City Organist, as well as being Organist and Choirmaster at St. Anne's Cathedral. Built to a very high standard, this "Wondrous Machine" has just kept on going, and remains virtually unchanged to this day.

It was given a well deserved "Full Service" some years ago by Philip Prosser, and I can tell you that he did a splendid job, and the old girl's wonderful voicing is a testament to this she really sings! With my love for the crackle of those free reeds heard in so many exciting French churches I had asked if he could perhaps give the reeds at least a little bit of a tweak in that direction, and he did, bless him, in fine style they add a special excitement to the ensemble! I know that the visitors during the recent IAO trip to Belfast also loved this special original instrument too.

So, in October we are hoping to have a birthday party for the Battling Binns. The plan is to have the church open from 12 noon till 2pm on both Thursday 16th and Friday 17th of October, then a "Special Historical Musical Evening" on Saturday 18th, from 7pm until 9.30pm. And of course the church is also open for the Thursday Services, which last from 1:05 till 1:30. I hope that many of you will come along to one or more of these events. The lovely people of this historic church will give you a very warm welcome, as they always have to me.

CHARLES MAGINNIS
*Article originally written for
The Ulster Society of Church Organists*

U3A PAY A VISIT TO MAY STREET

On Wednesday May 3, May Street Church played host to U3A. U3A stands for University of the Third Age and it was started in France 50 years ago. Nothing way out, but simply people who have reached retirement age (one in four of the population) and are keen to go on learning. The First Age is of childhood and schooling, the Second Age of employment and family raising. Now there are about 700 U3A groups all over Britain with 20 in Ireland

U3A is a learning co-operative of older folk who want to share a wide variety of educational, creative and leisure activities. Belfast and Bangor have the biggest groups but recently a new 'chapter' has been formed in Holywood which meets in the local library with 100 members. My home town!

U3A is not an academic institution for retirees but a self perpetuating organisation for enthusiastic people wanting to go on learning

from each other. There is a small membership fee each year and a central committee and a wide variety of self run interest groups. For example - gardening, art, book reading, local history, bridge, craft, walking, creative writing and IT.

It was the Local History Group from Holywood with leader Robin Masefield and 12 members who came to visit May Street. We convened in Urban Soul Cafe where we enjoyed tea, coffee and hot scones (freshly baked that morning by Avril)! I explained the history of the cafe and Avril told them about the scope of the cafe and the value of our volunteer staff.

Then we went upstairs and I gave them a guided tour of the sanctuary with special reference to Dr Henry Cooke through to Dr Wylie Blue and all the special architectural features and furnishings. Our organist, Colin Johnston, had come in to play the Binns organ for them which was a highlight of their visit, (particularly in the organ's 100th year)! Thanks to Colin Johnson, and also to Martin Kate for the gleaming church!

Our visitors then saw the pictures in the Choir Room, the Church Lecture Hall and the Schoolroom where I explained about our plans for the future believing in God's vision for the future of May Street and its continuing most strategic use in outreach to the heart of Belfast. Hopefully they went away to tell others of the past, present and future vision for May Street Church. After 185 years God WILL complete what He started here so long ago!

CHRISTINE HEWITT

LISTED BUILDING STATUS

In August May Street Church received a letter to Church House from the NI Environment Agency. It advises us that NIEA has been carrying out a review of all historic buildings in NI and has re-considered the heritage value of both May Street Church and the adjoining lecture hall. The outcome is that the statutory historic building listing (B+) for both elements of our building remains unchanged.

The commendation reads: "Buildings such as yours make a particular contribution to NI's heritage and to the character of our communities."

The evaluation of May Street Church reads: "A good example of a church with a classical facade

built to designs by William Smith and completed in 1829. The church occupies a prominent city centre location to the south side of May Street. Essentially of classical character and proportions, the building's architectural fabric is largely intact with a well-preserved interior. The grand portico and fluted Ionic columns ensure that the church has a fitting entrance from street level. The railings to the front contribute positively to the setting and are integral to the overall appearance of the church. There is group value with the adjoining church hall. Of significant historical and architectural interest, the church plays a significant role in the social history of Belfast city, and remains a focal point for the Presbyterian community in the city."

GOLDEN COUPLE



Happy anniversary: Congratulations to May Street members Jimmy and Patricia McCrossan who are celebrating their golden wedding anniversary on September 9. They were married in May Street Presbyterian Church, by Patricia's cousin, the Rev Robin Bell. They had their reception at the Woodbourne House Hotel, and honeymooned in Scotland. The best man was Jimmy's brother-in-law James Taylor, and their bridesmaids were Patricia's sister Kathleen Rea, and her two best friends Paddy Ferris and Eileen Watt.

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

During the ongoing vacancy at May Street, the now familiar rotation of visiting preachers

for Sunday services week by week has been established and is working well. Details are printed below. The Sunday morning service runs from 11am until 12 midday.

Dr Rodger Crooks, convenor of the vacancy, is continuing to handle the Thursday services, which run week by week from 1.05pm to 1.30pm. The Thursday services resumed on September 3 and will run until Christmas.

During September, all our Sunday services (11am) will be conducted by the Rev Drew Abernethy.

A GOLFING GREAT



Captain's Day: *May Street member Jenny Wilson has the honour of being this year's Lady Captain at Bushfoot in Portballintrae, where she has long had a caravan. It has been a busy year, and this picture was taken on June 28, which was Lady Captain's Day. Jenny says: "The sun shone and we raised approximately £1,300 for Diabetes UK."*

EUROPEAN HERITAGE DAY

May Street Church will again be taking part in the European Heritage Open Day event, which will be held on the weekend of September 13/14. The church will be open for visitors from 10am to 5pm on the Saturday and from 12noon to 4pm on the Sunday. We will be offering conducted tours by members of the congregation - and an opportunity for visitors to go up the steps to the pulpit. This will be a special year, not only is May Street 185 years old, but our Binns organ celebrates its centenary. From time to time during EHOD, the organ will be played.

We are grateful to the team at EHOD 2014 for including May Street in the programme, and look forward to welcoming more visitors than ever to our historic church. May Street Church, built in 1829, is one of the few Georgian buildings in Belfast still being used for its original purpose so if you have never taken a good look at the church or heard much about its history, this is your chance.

WEDDING BELLS

Best wishes to Julie Wilson, son of Committee Member Jenny and the late Terry Wilson, on the announcement of her engagement to Andy Gillespie. The wedding is due to take place in May Street Church.

MARTIN'S MOVE

Our friend Martin Kate, who has been a volunteer at May Street for two years, has relocated to Larne, where he is a resident at the Simon Community hostel. Martin still comes up to May Street to see us and to clean the church on a voluntary basis. We are indebted to the Minister and members of First Larne Presbyterian Church who, after being contacted by May Street, have taken Martin under their wing. He has been enfolded in the church's life and the result - Martin looks happier than ever. Thanks to all concerned.

BROKEN

God has a special place for broken things,
For shattered trees, for birds with broken wings,
For children born to foolish minds and small,
The blind, the halt, the lame - he sweeps them all
Into some special paradise where he
Shall make them whole for all eternity.

God has a special place for broken things,
Beyond our feeble ken and reckonings -
For broken dreams, and battered longed for joys,
For shattered hopes and little splintered toys -
Since this is so, then surely he must take
A kindly care of hearts that sometimes break.

Poem contributed by Elizabeth Doran