

Paisley Abbey



Abbey Herald

April 2025

I, honestly, cannot think of anywhere else I would rather be on Easter Morning than with the congregation within Paisley Abbey. Nor do I say that lightly or frivolously. The building reeks with antiquity and holiness. The architecture speaks of the faith of generations past: the stones whispering prayers sung and said as part of a liturgy that has seeped through the changing patterns of worship as the centuries have suffused one into the next. It all gives an assurance of permanence even in the face of societal turbulence; an assurance that truth is eternal even in the face of a fashionable wokeism that would turn everything upside down and inside out; an assurance of peace, and place: the peace that comes through knowing forgiveness is real; and, place, the knowledge that we are, as a human being, where we ought to be, at home, safe, secure and loved.

But, its not just the architecture, the stones, the history. The Abbey is a living place: vibrant and full of energy. It speaks not just of yesterday's security but of today's hopefulness for tomorrow. Surely, this can be found elsewhere too? Well, yes. To an extent. What differentiates the Abbey at Paisley from churches great or small elsewhere is – in part – the music. Not just 'good' and 'competent'. You can find that elsewhere alright. It's more than that. At times, the music in the Abbey transcends its hearers, its participators. It has the power, far more than words, to lift the down-hearted, to strengthen the dispirited, to embrace the stranger and cuddle the broken. In other words, it can challenge and delight -often in equal measure.

And, so can the promise of the Easter Gospel. It can most certainly challenge. Make no mistake. It takes our sophisticated intellect and, at times, makes us as fools. It calls upon imagination and trust as it urges us to explore mystery and wonder. Over the next couple of weeks, we have two opportunities to do just that: to make our own, personal, exploration:

During Holy Week, Monday 14th to Thursday 17th April, a special series of services will be held in the Abbey Quire. They begin at 7.30pm and last approximately an hour. Each evening, sections of the Abbey Choir will make contribution. On the Wednesday evening the full Choir sing Compline – the age-old liturgical prayers said within the Abbey Church as the final act of worship for the day. On Maundy Thursday evening, Holy Communion will be celebrated. Each evening, however, we will be looking deeply at the events of that last week of Jesus' life, how they challenge our thinking and moral expectations; and asking how they relate to our life today.

On Good Friday, at 12 noon, the Abbey Choir sings the Durufle *'Requiem'*. Then, from 1.00pm students from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland sing *'Membra Jesu Nostris'* by Dietrich Buxtehude based on the medieval hymn *'Salve mundi salutare'* Between sections of the cantatas, meditations will be given, prayers offered and silence kept.

Nothing is gained without us first making an effort. This is certainly true of religious faith. We can do no other than consider his final days. Jesus experiences the worst that humanity can do. We watch how he reacts. We listen to his words spoken. We witness his love shown to his mother. We understand his disappointment at the absent disciples. We marvel at his forgiveness given to his executioners moments before death. The whole of life is played out in all its dramatic reality.

Then comes Easter Morning!

Everything changes!

Gloom and despondency has gone. People are almost dancing, certainly singing, speaking words of assuredness, new confidence and hope. And all of that is reflected in the worship of the Abbey that day in a way that is truly glorious, mind-blowing, triumphant. Words may fail but the message is clear. Christ is risen! Newness of life, is possible!

I, honestly, cannot think of any other place I would rather be on Easter Morning than with the congregation within Paisley Abbey.

I hope you will be there, too.

A very Happy Easter.

Jim Gibson

*Interim Minister at the Abbey.
Extra Chaplain to His Majesty The King in Scotland.*

ELDER DUTY TEAMS

April - Team 2
May - John Kitson's Team
June - Michael McGill's Team

PARISH REGISTER MARCH

Funeral
Elizabeth Lochrie

ANNUAL STATED MEETING

The Congregation is invited to attend the Stated Annual Meeting on Sunday 18 May which will take place immediately after the Morning Service.

PAISLEY FOOD & DRINK FESTIVAL

Paisley Food & Drink Festival will return to Abbey Close and Bridge Street on Friday 25th April from 4 pm - 10 pm and Saturday 26th April from 12 noon - 9 pm.

There will be a 'Bric a Brac' stall in the cloisters on Saturday 26th and any donations of unwanted gifts, plants or other saleable items would be gratefully received. (no books please). Any donations can be given to Priscilla Routley.

There will also be a Lunch Hour Concert at 12.30 pm on Saturday 26th with the 'Abbey Strings' tickets are £5 payable at the door.

The Abbey Shop & Café will be open as normal.

LENT APPEAL 2025

Dear Abbey Members

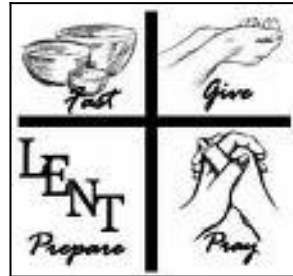
Every member of the congregation should have now received details of our 2025 Lent Appeal. Details will have been delivered by your Abbey elder. Other worshippers who are not Abbey members are warmly invited to take part in this appeal, whose purpose is to support the ongoing worship and witness of the Abbey Church. Envelopes with details of the Lent 2025 appeal can be collected at the welcome table at the St Mirin Chapel steps on a Sunday.

Every little bit of money, no matter how small, will be really appreciated and put to good use in supporting Paisley Abbey, a community and building that is close to all of our hearts.

Many Thanks

Stewart McDougall

Treasurer



RENFREWSHIRE FOODBANK

The congregation of Paisley Abbey generously supports the Foodbank set up to serve our local community in Paisley. By doing so we are trying to assist the most vulnerable people for whom life can prove the most difficult. The Foodbank distributes to those for whom the need is most urgent. If you would like to contribute, please bring along your donations to the Abbey on the last Sunday of the month. Anything you may be able to donate will be much appreciated. Shortages this month are pot noodles, cup a soup, tinned meat, juice, milk, custard & puddings.

In the last year the Abbey congregation have donated over £700 in cash much of which is gift aided which adds an extra 25p to every pound you give. Thank you to all who faithfully donate each month and to those who now give support. Your donations show the community that the congregation of the Abbey care for others and actively contribute to the wellbeing of all.

TALK IT OVER GROUP

The Outreach Committee at the Abbey oversee the Talk it Over Group and creche which meets on a Tuesday from 10.30 am—12 noon in the Place of Paisley.

This is a Peer Support group led by Fiona Small (Abbey elder and former health visitor) and Joanne Corr. The purpose is to support mothers who, after the birth of their baby are experiencing feelings of depression or anxiety. These feelings can vary from mild to extreme. Talking together in confidence with others in a similar situation can be very helpful and reassuring. Often there may be problems of isolation or guilt which can be assuaged by sharing with peers.

We are lucky to have a loyal group of volunteers who run a creche where mothers can leave their babies in a safe environment and have an hour of peace to chat about their feelings at this time.

Normally the group meets during school term time but Fiona is keen to continue during the holidays to encourage regular attendance. The Talk it Over group is supported by the Health Improvement Department of Renfrewshire Health and Social Care Partnership. Referrals are made through the health visitors. Fiona has spoken to the four health visitor teams who recognise the benefit of a group such as this. The health visitors will be invited to an Open Day and lunch where they can view the location and have questions answered.

Fiona and Joanne use the lounge (on the top floor) which is a comfortable and welcoming space and the creche meets in the Pink room in the Place of Paisley.

If you would like to be involved as a volunteer or know of someone who would benefit from the group, please email the Abbey office.

info@paisleyabbey.org.uk



ABBEY FLOWERS

We have been blessed over the years with beautiful displays of fresh flowers in the Abbey, arranged by a dedicated team of ladies who give generously of their time and talent to enhance the Abbey and for your enjoyment.

Unfortunately, the flower fund is depleted and we will rely on generous donations from church members to allow the continuation of the lovely Abbey arrangements.

If you would like this tradition to continue and would be willing to help, please leave your donation in the abbey office or contact.....

Stewart McDougall - Abbey Treasurer
stewart.mcdougall@paisleyabbey.org.uk - tel: 07775 900 744

Donations can be made either as a one off payment, or if you would like to choose a month that holds a special memory of someone dear to you, or a special anniversary, the ladies would be delighted to arrange something special.

We hope that by doing this, we can continue to have fresh floral arrangements throughout the year.

Irene Doole



ALLOVUS SYLLABUS Until June

Wednesdays - 1.30 pm - 3.30 pm
Meeting fortnightly

Varied programme of activities, speakers and outings
Refreshments served

9 April	Speaker
23 April	Spring Fever!
7 May	Paisley's Sma' Shot
21 May	Visit to St Mirin's Cathedral /fish & chips
June (date TBC)	Afternoon tea at Caulders



ABBEY SHOP

Based in Central Scotland, in the village of Clackmannan, from her Dragonfly Dichroic garden studio, Ann Maitland loves to create bright and quirky designs in fused glass.

Ann's award winning designs are simple but striking with no two pieces ever being identical. She has a strong commitment to using the best materials. Each piece is cut by hand before being fused in one of four kilns. Glass is then packed by hand in environmentally friendly packaging.

We have a selection of Ann's work for sale in the Abbey Gift Shop.



BRITISH EMPIRE MEDAL PRESENTATION

The Lord Lieutenant, Perter McCarthy, presented John Kitson with a British Empire Medal in recognition of his work over many years in the Inclusion Field of Scouting. This presentation took place here in the Abbey when Revd Jim Gibson was delighted to welcome a large group of family, friends and scouts to take part in the celebration.

John's current role in Scouting is as a member of the UK Inclusion Team with a specific remit to support the Leaders working in Scout Groups operating throughout the UK in Special Education Needs Schools, Hospitals and Children's Hospices. Until recently John was the Lead volunteer at the Group operating in Kilpatrick SEN School where there are some 85 scouts involved as part of the school curriculum.

Over the years John has volunteered in hospitals at Mearns Kirk, Great Ormond Street in London, Yorkhill and Crosshouse in Kilmarnock. He has also at times served in various support roles including as the Special Needs Adviser in Scotland and as the UK National Commissioner for Special Needs.

John also led international scout trips for the West Region of Scotland to Denmark, the Czech Republic and Malaysia. He also served for many years as the Deputy Lead Volunteer for the West Region.

Although John was a Chartered Accountant he went to help out during the summer of 1962 at the scout meetings held in children's wards at Mearns Kirk hospital and from there his interest and love of working with children needing a little extra support developed.



EVENTS AT THE ABBEY

LONDON CONCERTANTE - *Music from the Movies*
Sunday 6 April at 7.30 pm

Tickets from £21 available from candlelightconcerts.co.uk

LUNCHTIME CONCERT - *Abbey Strings*

Saturday 26 April at 12.30 pm

Admission is £5 payable at the door

ORGAN RECITAL - *George McPhee (Paisley Abbey, Director of Music)*

Sunday 4 May at 3 pm

Admission is £10 payable at the door

CITY MUSIC PROMOTIONS - *Vivaldi's Four Seasons by candlelight*

Saturday 11 May at 7.30 pm

Tickets from £20.52 available from citymusicpromotions.co.uk

LUNCHTIME CONCERT - *Cheryl & Gordon Cree*

Saturday 24 May at 12.30 pm

Admission is £5 payable at the door

ORGAN RECITAL - *David Pipe (Director, York Musical Society)*

Sunday 25 May at 3 pm

Admission is £10 payable at the door

LONDON CONCERTANTE - *Bond by Candlelight*

Sunday 1 June at 6 pm

Tickets from £21 available from candlelightconcerts.co.uk

LONDON FILM ORCHESTRA -

'Tribute to Hans Zimmer & Film Favourites'

Wednesday 4 June at 6.30 pm & 9 pm

Tickets available from £37.79 available from www.eventbrite.co.uk

MUSIC FOR APRIL

6 April

11 am
 Te Deum
 Anthem

Lent 5

Morning Service

God so loved the world

Gibbons (Short Service)
Stainer

13 April

11 am
 Introit
 Benedictus
 Anthem

Palm/Passion Sunday

Morning Service

Hosanna to the Son of David

Ave verum corpus

Weelkes
Gibbons (Short Service)
Byrd

Monday 14 April

7.30 pm Service with Sermon, Choir & Organ

Tuesday 15 April

7.30 pm Service with Sermon, Choir & Organ

Wednesday 16 April

7.30 pm Service concluding with Compline

Thursday 17 April—Maundy Thursday

7.30 pm Service with Choral Communion and anthem sung by the Abbey choir.

Friday 18 April— Good Friday - Three Hour Vigil

12 noon - 1 pm - 'Durufle Requiem' sung by the Abbey Choir

1 pm till 3 pm Meditations and Prayers with the cantata

'Membra Jesu Nostri' by Dietrich Buxtehude based on the medieval

hymn 'Salve mundi salutare' and sung by students from the

Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Sunday 20 April - Easter Day

11 am Easter Celebration with Choral Communion

The Abbey Choir sing Mozart's 'Coronation Mass' accompanied by a small orchestra.

27 April

11 am
 Communion Setting
 Anthem

Easter 2

Holy Communion

Ave verum corpus

Haydn (Missa Brevis)
Byrd

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER SERVICES

13 April - Palm Sunday
11 am Morning Service

Monday 14 April
7.30 pm Service with Sermon, Choir & Organ

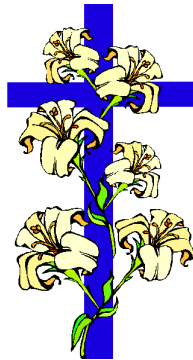
Tuesday 15 April
7.30 pm Service with Sermon, Choir & Organ

Wednesday 16 April
7.30 pm Service concluding with Compline

Thursday 17 April—Maundy Thursday
7.30 pm Service with Choral Communion and anthem sung by the Abbey choir.

Friday 18 April— Good Friday
Three Hour Vigil
12 noon - 1 pm - 'Durufle Requiem' sung by the Abbey Choir
1 pm till 3 pm Meditations and Prayers with the cantata 'Membra Jesu Nostri' by Dietrich Buxtehude based on the medieval hymn 'Salve mundi salutare' and sung by students from the Royal Conservatoire of Scotland.

Sunday 20 April - Easter Day
11 am Easter Celebration with Choral Communion
The Abbey Choir sing Mozart's 'Coronation Mass' accompanied by a small orchestra.



PAISLEY ABBEY REDISCOVERED

CELEBRATING A SESQUICENTENNIAL



It has been said that few royal houses have captured the popular imagination as has the Stuart's. Fixed in the lore of Scotland, a conflation of the romantic and the tragic that defines our country's history, they are cast in a national stereotype, possessed of the unerring facility to snatch defeat from the jaws of victory.

In his book "Princes, Poets and Patrons: The Stuarts and Scotland," written for the National Library of Scotland, Alastair Cherry credits his subject as being "a gifted race that has bequeathed to the world a remarkable heritage of poetry, drama, music and architecture." He does not, indeed cannot, deny their "long sorrowful catalogue of personal tragedies, assassinations, executions, violent revolution, lost battles, unsuccessful rebellion and bitter exile." He acknowledges the historic realities of political failure while bringing into focus the parallel traits of artistic appreciation and creativity that have had "an enduring influence on Scottish culture."

Paisley Abbey is well known as the "cradle of the Royal Stuarts." When King David I of Scotland appointed Walter FitzAlan as the first High Steward of Scotland, by adding the ingredient of the role being hereditary, however unwittingly, he founded a dynasty that was shortly to define itself in the name of that office: the Stewards, or "Stewarts," as they became known. Increasingly successful, and in turn powerful and influential, they proved themselves loyal and trustworthy servants to the crown. Their reward was personified in the marriage of Marjory, the daughter of "Robert the Bruce," to the sixth High Steward, and the birth of a son who elevated the family escutcheon to that of a royal dynasty when he succeeded as Robert II, King of Scotland.

The seeds of trouble and tragedy had already been sown by the time Robert II came to the throne. He was comparatively old for the times and his powers were failing while, at the same time, his son and heir lacked robust physical and mental health. Such circumstances encouraged other power-seeking family members to emerge, especially Robert II's younger sons, Robert the Earl of Fife, and Alexander the Earl of Buchan (who gained notoriety as the "Wolf of Badenoch").

Robert II died aged seventy-four, having for some time lacked the faculties to rule, and was succeeded by his enfeebled son John who assumed the regnal name of Robert III. He created his older son and heir, David, Scotland's first Duke – the Duke of Rothesay – the title which, together with High Steward of Scotland, is still held by the heir to the throne. During the later years of Robert II's life and continuing into the reign of the ineffectual new king, Robert III's younger brother, the Earl of Fife, had ruled in all but name. Jealous of his nephew David's elevation, he demanded a dukedom for himself and so became the Duke of Albany (Albany being an old name for the lands north of the Forth and Clyde).

Still not satisfied, Albany contrived to have his young nephew, the new Duke of Rothesay, incarcerated at Falkland where he was to die a short time later. Fearing the worst, and desperate to secure the succession, Robert III sent his remaining heir, James, to France for his safety but he was captured at sea by the English. Albany's power looked secure and following Robert III's death in 1406, while James remained captive in England, he continued to rule Scotland and did nothing to secure the release of his nephew James. On his death he was succeeded by his son Murdoch as Duke of Albany and Governor of Scotland, but James was finally able to return to Scotland in 1424 and was crowned at Scone. Having established his authority, King James I oversaw the trial of the Albany Stewarts. They were found guilty of treason and Duke Murdoch and his sons were duly executed, having been forfeited of all their titles, and Albany attainted.

Notwithstanding all the political challenges faced by the early Stewart kings, they showed interest in the arts, especially literature. John Barbour, the poet and first named literary figure to write in Scots, was retained at the court of Robert II, and James I returned from his long exile a well-educated and capable young man, accomplished in writing prose and poetry, with a taste also for drawing and painting.

Successive Jameses had varying degrees of interest in the arts, but it was James IV who first became known as a "Renaissance King," cultivating a court where artists, writers and musicians received royal patronage. He especially had a close relationship with Paisley Abbey where his friend George Schaw was Abbot. On his pilgrimages, he visited the Abbey frequently and it was doubtless through that relationship that he granted the charter to create Paisley a Burgh of Barony. Sadly, if his reign was something of a "golden age of cultural achievement and national prestige," it was brought to an abrupt and disastrous end on the field of Flodden.

James V succeeded to the throne when he was less than two years old. During his minority, a power struggle developed between pro-English and pro-French factions, the latter supported by John Stewart, Duke of Albany.

John had inherited his title from his father Alexander, the second son of James II, for whom the Dukedom had been revived. Alexander had been involved in insurrections against his brother James III, who failed to establish authority and was disliked because of his favouritism of artistic friends. Alexander was arrested for treason but escaped to England and returned to Scotland with English troops, forcing a restoration of his titles. He was again outlawed in 1483 and forced to flee to France where he died the following year, leaving his infant son John his successor as Duke of Albany.

In 1515, John, Duke of Albany, having been brought up in France, returned to Scotland at the request of the Scottish Parliament to serve as regent for James V. He renewed Scotland's *Auld Alliance* with France, incurring English displeasure which eventually resulted in warfare between Scotland and England. Albany proved himself a failure on the field of battle and was removed as regent after fleeing to France. Leaving no legitimate heir, he died in 1536, and the Dukedom died with him.

Having spent his minority as a helpless political pawn between French and English factions, James V was eventually able to consolidate his power in Scotland. First signing a treaty with the English but thereafter marrying Mary of Lorraine and allying himself once again with France, his army suffered a disastrous defeat to the English at Solway Moss. Said to have in consequence suffered a mental breakdown, he died aged only thirty, leaving his newborn daughter, Mary Stuart, to succeed him as Mary, Queen of Scots. He was credited as uttering the prophetic words on his deathbed: "It cam wi' a lass and it will gang wi' a lass." Whether he foresaw the end to independence of the Scottish crown implicit in these words and embodied in Mary is open to doubt, but they have assuredly become entwined in the legends and lore of the Stuarts.

Despite the political upheaval and turmoil that characterised his short personal reign, James V proved himself an enthusiastic patron of literature and architecture in Scotland. He supported the work of authors such as George Buchanan and David Lindsay, probably instigating the writing of the latter's most popular work, "Ane Satyre of the Thrie Estaits." He was a great builder, introducing French Renaissance style most notably at Falkland and Stirling Castle.

Mary, Queen of Scots, "the most tragic figure in Stuart history," may have been the supremely cultivated woman – the clever and formidable opponent of John Knox – that the superabundant hagiography suggests, but in her day, she had little opportunity to exert a cultural influence on Scotland. Her great legacy has been as the enduring and inexhaustible inspiration for countless works of biography, verse, song, drama, and portraiture. Queen of Scotland within days of her birth and Queen of France in her teens, Mary's hopes of succeeding her cousin Elizabeth and achieving the triple crown were cruelly dashed. It was instead the destiny of her son, James VI of Scotland, to inherit the coveted crown of England.

James VI was subjected to the intense education and indoctrination of tutors throughout his childhood. He grew to enjoy scholarship and was anxious to demonstrate his prowess and academic attainment.

He wrote poetry as well as treatises and tracts on subjects ranging from religion to witchcraft, and from politics to the use of tobacco. Often described as ungainly and uncouth in appearance and manners, he appeared paradoxically possessed of “formidable intellectual powers, sharp wit, and an eye for men of letters and learning.” Leaving Scotland in 1603, he was to return only once, in 1617, when his “homecoming” entailed a prolonged royal progress around Scotland, famously stopping to be entertained and indulged in the hospitality of the Hamiltons in the Place of Paisley.

His son, Charles, though born in Dunfermline Palace, spent most of his life in England. His interest in art led him to be a great collector, especially of Italian masters, perhaps his most famous acquisition being the Raphael cartoons. He also commissioned works, notably engaging Rubens and Van Dyck. His royal patronage for the arts was more in evidence in England than Scotland although he did encourage renovations of several of the Scottish royal palaces. Increasingly out of touch with his native land, Charles I’s attempts to introduce Anglican religious practice in Scotland contributed to growing popular disaffection that fuelled the burgeoning civil war and its fatal outcome that ended the Stuart dynasty’s long reign.

The Restoration brought a resurgent interest in literature, drama, architecture and painting to England but there was a lesser impact in Scotland where a decidedly puritanical culture had established itself following the Westminster Assembly of the 1640s. Charles II was regarded as an absentee monarch whose religious and political intentions were at odds with the mood in Scotland. Foolish attempts to convert and reform the Scottish people had led to terrible and needless bloodshed which could not be attended with any cultural reawakening.

In the later part of Charles II’s reign, his younger brother and heir, James, came to Scotland as the King’s Lord High Commissioner and established court at the Palace of Holyroodhouse in Edinburgh. Charles II had revived the old dukedom and had created James Duke of Albany. Despite his Roman Catholicism, James was accepted in Edinburgh and, for a period, culture flourished in the capital under his patronage.

Following Charles’ death, suspicions increased that James, now that he was king, was trying to introduce Roman Catholicism. He had granted religious toleration and converted the Abbey Church of Holyrood into a Roman Catholic Chapel Royal. Although Scotland’s role in the revolution of 1688 had been largely passive, news of events in England and James’ flight were followed by the collapse of the Scottish administration. The following year, the Convention of Estates voted that James had forfeited the crown and offered the throne jointly to William and Mary. Their successor, Mary’s younger sister Anne, was the last Stuart monarch and her death in 1714 finally brought the Stuart dynasty’s rule to an end. Jacobite hopes for restoration faded following the failed 1745 Rising and lastly with the death of James II’s sons, Charles Edward Stuart in 1788 and his brother Henry Benedict Stuart in 1807.

In 1881, Prince Leopold, the eighth child and youngest son of Queen Victoria was given a peerage and chose his own title. The Stuart dynasty fascinated him, and he became Duke of Albany. Born in 1853, Leopold never enjoyed good health. Although the condition was not then understood, he had inherited haemophilia from his mother and was susceptible to bleeding and swollen joints. Any minor fall would lead to problems. To make matters worse, he suffered from a form of epilepsy and, although infrequent, experienced seizures periodically.

Prevented from participating in sports and other activities, Leopold developed interests in art and literature. His intelligence and aptitude for study led to his attending Oxford University, where he developed friendships with some well-known figures including John Ruskin, Charles Lutwidge Dodgson (better known by his pen name Lewis Carroll), and the Liddell family – Henry Liddell, Dean of Christ Church, Oxford and his daughters, of whom Alice was the recipient of “Alice’s Adventures in Wonderland” from Lewis Carroll.

Leopold undertook secretarial duties for his mother, Queen Victoria, and was a patron of the arts and literature. His interest in the Stuart dynasty from which he was descended led him to visit Paisley Abbey on 25th September 1875. By doing so, he was the first member of the Royal family to have visited the Abbey since James VI in 1617. “The Graphic” published an account along with an etching of the Abbey from that period:

On the 25th September H.R.H. Prince Leopold visited the venerable Abbey Church of Paisley, the Church of the Barony of Renfrew, and the burying place of many members of the Royal family of Scotland. The Abbey was founded in 1163 for a company of monks from the priory of Wenlock, Shropshire, and was at one time the most opulent monastery in Scotland, Kelso excepted. When entire the church consisted of a nave, a tower, a choir, and a northern transept. The interior of the nave, which is the only portion now remaining entire, is used as a parish church. It is very magnificent. Ten massy columns, 17ft. high, divide the aisles from the body of the fabric. From the impacts of the columns spring pointed arches with delicate and graceful mouldings. From a floor formed above the first tier of arches spring those of the triforium; above the triforium rises the clerestory, the arches of which are simple and narrow, but of just proportions. This portion of the building, which had fallen into a state of great disrepair, was restored to its original beauty in 1870, subscriptions having been raised for that purpose by the inhabitants of Paisley. Among the monuments of interest in the church is that to the last abbot, John Hamilton, who was put to death at Stirling for adhering to the cause of Queen Mary, and another to an ancestor of Lord Blantyre, who was “captaine of the King’s Guard of Scots in France.” An elaborately carved shield commemorates the return of Sir Allan Cathcart from Spain with the heart of King Robert the Bruce, after Douglas, his companion, had fallen in conflict with the Moors. Sir William Wallace is commemorated by a stained-glass window, on which is depicted Samson holding in his hand the jawbone of an ass. The theory that the kilt is a dress of modern adoption is disproved by the fact that the carved figure of a man thus attired, and made by an architect of the eleventh century, supports the buttress of one of the pillars of the Abbey.

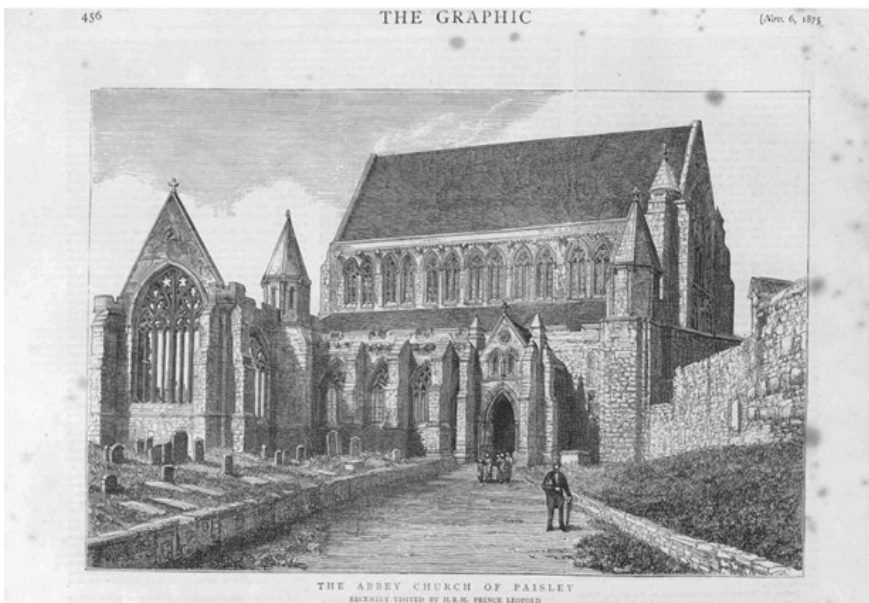
The Sounding Aisle, where lies the body of Marjory Bruce, and so named because of the strange and musical echoes which are awakened there, is another of the curiosities of the Abbey.

Prince Leopold is the first member of the reigning family who has visited the Abbey (once so closely connected with Royalty) since the time of James VI.

Prince Leopold married in 1882 and had two children, Alice (Countess of Athlone) and Charles Edward (Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha). Sadly, he did not live to see the latter who was born four months after Leopold's sudden death in 1884.

It was Prince Leopold's interest and concern that inspired the later visit, in 1888, of Queen Victoria herself when she gifted the Sicilian marble monument that can be seen on the south side of the choir inscribed, "To the memory of the members of the Royal House of Stewart who are buried in Paisley Abbey, this stone was placed here by their descendant, Queen Victoria, on the occasion of her visit to Paisley Abbey, 1888." This year is the sesquicentennial of Leopold's visit. Thanks to his rediscovery, the Abbey has been graced over the intervening years with many royal visits, and the memory of the members of the Royal House of Stewart has been honoured accordingly.

David C Davidson



ABBEY CONTACTS

Minister:	Revd. Jim Gibson
Director of Music:	Dr. George McPhee
Church Manager:	Linda Barrett
Church Secretary:	Karen Kerr
Session Clerk:	Marion Sommerville
Depute Session Clerk:	Dr David Davidson
Treasurer:	Stewart McDougall
Abbey Herald:	Karen Kerr

The Abbey office can be contacted on 0141 889 7654 or by email at -
info@paisleyabbey.org.uk

***The Abbey, shop & café are open
Monday to Saturday from 10 am - 4 pm with last entry at 3.30 pm
Tuesday & Thursday tours are at 2 pm.***

Abbey website - www.paisleyabbey.org.uk

Facebook - @paisleyabbey

Instagram - @paisleyabbeyofficial

X (formerly Twitter) - @paisley_abbey

