



**Fowlis Wester**



The Church of Scotland



**Madderty**

# Parish Magazine

**June  
2023**



**Monzie**



**Gask**

# Mid Strathearn Church of Scotland

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## Sunday Services

At the moment we are holding one church service each week.  
We rotate round our church buildings, a different church each week - service  
time is 10.30 am

Information on where our church services will be held and when can be  
found on our website

[www.midstrathearnchurch.org](http://www.midstrathearnchurch.org)

## Locum's Letter

Dear Friends

I received a cartoon the other day. Four old men with zimmer frames are making their way into an auditorium where a sign above the door proclaims "For One Night Only: The Greatest Rock Band of all time."

A young boy is watching the old men staggering along and shouts, "Aren't you a bit old to be going to see rock bands?" To which one old man answers "Sonny We are the band!"

It reminded me of when my father was told he could no longer drive the mini bus to collect the attendees of the weekly lunch club after his upcoming birthday as the council's insurers would not cover him when he reached 75 despite the fact they could not attract another driver. His reaction was to say it's OK for me I've got the car but a lot of the old folk need the bus because they can't drive or walk there. It took a lot of self control on our part not to point out that he was actually about the oldest one on the bus (he continued to attend lunch club for another 18 years but never used the minibus!)

Age as they say is just a number. That might be true but what is certainly true is that things never remain the same and that with increased age change is inevitable. Whether you are a 60s rock band or a retired gardener doing what you can for the community you can no longer do what you once took for granted.

This is not of itself a problem, the problems arise when you fail to take those changes into consideration and compensate for them by finding different and sometimes better ways of doing things.

Elsewhere in this august publication our esteemed Interim Moderator writes about the Mission Plan which has been adopted by Presbytery and hopefully will find favour with the powers that be in Edinburgh.

Change is often difficult but it is not a criticism of how things were it's an acceptance of how things must be so that organisations and people can continue to thrive and prosper.

Embrace change accept its challenges and reap its rewards.

As the saying goes, The Church of Scotland always welcomes change, except in the collection plate!

Love and Blessings  
Bob

Bob Milne  
Locum Minister

## **Services**

Sunday 11<sup>th</sup> June - Gask Church, 10.30 am – Communion will be served during church service

Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> July - BBQ Church, 11.30am - Madderty Hall.

## **COMMUNION IN MID STRATHEARN**

For information on when we are holding any Communion Services please refer to our website - [www.midstrathearnchurch.org](http://www.midstrathearnchurch.org)

Come if you'd like to, come if you're able to and come as you are to share the Lord's Supper with other Christians in Strathearn when you can.

Whatever your denomination, or none, all are welcome.

### **Mid Strathearn Website**

[www.midstrathearnchurch.org](http://www.midstrathearnchurch.org)

We are always looking to keep the website up to date so if you have any updates or news please send it to Colin Crawford by email - [webmaster@midstrathearnchurch.org](mailto:webmaster@midstrathearnchurch.org)

## **Perth Presbytery**

Dear Friends

### **Forward in Faith**

I am writing this article for the newsletter in the week in which the Presbytery of Perth has passed its Presbytery Mission Plan for the next five years. The Church of Scotland nationally is facing a very challenging time, with fewer people attending church, and a drop in the number of people responding to the call to ministry. Like so many other organisations, the Church is having to plan for a sustainable future, and to do this, some radical changes are having to be made, including the closure of church buildings all over the country, while others are being upgraded to be fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century and the mission of the church today.

What does this mean for Mid Strathearn, with its four church buildings in Fowlis Wester, Gask, Madderty, and Monzie? Firstly, there is a proposed linkage between the parish of Mid Strathearn and Crieff, with closer working relationships with Comrie and Dundurn, and a reduction in the number of ministers in that network. Secondly, it will see the closure in the not too distant future of at least two of our church buildings, those at Monzie and Gask; for the others, a clear plan must be put forward within the next year, to show that the buildings at Fowlis Wester and Madderty (and Gask Hall) are essential to the work and mission of Mid Strathearn. There is already a group working on this plan - because it is, after all, Mission that is the central purpose of the church – to spread the good news of the gospel of Jesus Christ to those in our neighbourhood, many of whom have little idea about what it is we believe, and why our faith is so important to us.

In these last four years, when I have been the Interim Moderator at Mid Strathearn, I have been hugely impressed by the commitment of so many of our members, whether it be as office bearers, elders, worship leaders, events organisers and helpers, or by taking on other less obvious roles. (You all know who you are!) Activities like Messy Church, and our occasional Café church, held in local halls rather than in our church buildings, are a sign that we really do want to reach out into our community, welcome everyone and share our faith. Other events like the summer barbecue and Super-adults outing/afternoon tea are similar methods of outreach and service. Our church is so much more than our buildings – it is the people and the fellowship we share together, as we go forward in faith. While we can acknowledge the

sadness at the closure of much-loved buildings, can we also embrace the possibilities and potential which ‘being church’ offers to us in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century? That surely is the challenge which faces us – I have confidence that with God’s help, we can rise to it!

With best wishes,

Marjorie Clark  
Interim Moderator



### **Funerals**

Senga Alexander	–	October 2022
Tony Murray	–	October 2022
Joan Cockburn	–	November 2022
Jean Hutchison	–	November 2022
John Low	–	November 2022

## **Social Events - Dates for you Diary**

### **Coffee Morning Gask**

On 22/4/23 a very successful Coffee Morning was held in Gask Hall. Besides Coffee, cake and excellent company we also had a book stall and a friend of Sue McLean's, Trisha Cumming, was there selling rice for the 90kg Rice Challenge. Did you know that the profit from selling 90kg of rice can meet the cost of a year at Secondary School for a child in Malawi? The Morning raised £329 for Kirk funds.

### **Super Adults Outing**

This will be on 19/7/23 to St.Andrews. Please see separate item from David Cameron.

### **BBQ Church**

This is planned for 30/7/23 at Madderty Hall, 11.30 am. Games for the youngsters are also being organised.

### **Walk 9/9/23**

It is hoped to have a walk from Crieff over the Knock to Monzie Hall where there will be refreshments. We have done this before and everyone thought it was a suitable length with things to see on the way.

### **Christmas**

It is hoped to have a Cake and Candy table at the Madderty Christmas Fayre on 2/12/23.

In addition there have been the usual Cafe Churches.

## Mid Strathearn Church Guild

It was with great sadness that Mid Strathearn Church Guild Folded, we tried hard to keep going but I think age caught up with us.

I took a few notes before the Minute and Treasurers books went into the Session House at Maddery for safe keeping. vThe Minute and Treasurers books from Gask Church Guild are also in the Session House.

The following is a short resume' from when Madderty Parish Church Women's Guild was formed, in 1936. The first minute book I could find went back to 1956 and this is the committee minute book. The first meeting was at Williamston Farm with Mrs W. McIntosh Vice President presiding. The Ministers wife was always the President, but when they were between Ministers, it was the vice President who presided at meetings. The year 1957, the annual outing was to Glamis Castle. Wm Alexanders bus was booked to pick up from Crieff, Monzie, Fowlis and Madderty. There was a short break at Coupar Angus then on to Glamis Castle. High tea was in the Royal Hotel Forfar. The homeward bound journey was via Dundee and Carse of Gowrie.

The same year a Sale of Work was held 10<sup>th</sup> August. Sir John Ure Primrose, Gannoch Farm was to be asked to open the sale, if he declined Mrs Maitland Makgill Crichton, Monzie Castle, Crieff would be asked, and she accepted. Cakes were ordered from Messer's McArtney bakers Crieff, and 4 gallons of ice cream. Mrs I Stewart, Craigmuir would be asked if her daughter Janet or son George would present Mrs Makgill Crichton with a bouquet of flowers after she declared the sale open. It was agreed that £1 was to be spent on the bouquet. Mrs Martin was paid £1 for making the tea, etc. on the day of the sale. Wm Alexanders bus was ordered to pick up people from Crieff, Monzie Fowlis, Abercairney and bring them to Madderty. The sum of £158-3s-5d was raised.

They always had good membership 1979/80 there were 35 members. It is nice to look back on history and find out what the Guild got up to all those years ago. However, we move on and look back with fond memories.

Isobel Robertson.

## **Super Adults**

This year we are meaning to return to the original format for the Super Adults Outing which is an afternoon bus trip and tea somewhere suitable on the way home. This year we are planing to go to St Andrews for the afternoon and have our tea on the way back. The day is Wednesday 19th July and the bus is booked. We haven't arranged for a visit to any particular site so everybody will be free to spend the afternoon as they wish as there are a good many attractions in At Andrews to see ranging from the cathedral and castle to the town itself and for the more energetic a walk on the West Sands and a look over the famous golf course.

A super Adult is defined as anyone 60 or over (including their partners even if they are not 60 yet!) who is a member of Mid Strathearn Church or lives in any of our former four Parishes. Details of the cost are not yet available but we hope to keep them in line with what they have been in previous years as we have the generous support of the McLagan Fund. More details of times and pickup points etc will become available over the next month. Put the date in your diary now!

Contact details are: David Cameron. 01764683264, 07775850316, or [ferneyfolddavid@gmail.com](mailto:ferneyfolddavid@gmail.com)

### **Perth Prison Visitors Support & Advice Centre**

Our retiring collection at our Watchnight Service was in aid of the Visitor Support & Advice Centre at Perth Prison.

They are managed by Cross Reach, which is part of the Church of Scotland, Social care arm of the Church. The Centre has been established since 16 January 2007. Since then they have had over 6,000 visitors each year, by choice, as it is not a booking in procedure.

The Centre provides a resting place; trauma informed, where families with small children can feel safe, welcomed & able to be supported through their time of crisis. The Centre aims to welcome everyone and provide a nurturing environment.

They provide emotional support through listening, warmly engaging with visitors whether they have travelled from London or Dundee to see their

loved ones. The team of staff safeguard adults at risk & any child concerns are followed through in the community for safe practice.

Sometimes, just knowing one of the team will be in the waiting area to engage with, or to be offered a hot drink, is what supports them to make that visit. People in general find it overwhelming and stressful to visit a prison as there is a lot of security and restrictions in place for safety reasons. The short visits of half an hour at the weekend, can also add to the anxiety. Other visits are longer at an hour. Our team have a wide range of soft skills which breaks down barriers and helps people to open up with any worries they may have. It may be that they just need reassurance & the Centre are able to give this to them when they need it most.

The Centre have visitors as in mums, grans, grandfathers who may not share anything for years, and just need acceptance and a non-judgmental approach. Families reflect daily on the crime, the long road ahead of visiting, as some visit between 4 and 10 years, & the cost that goes with that. Not only emotional cost, but financial as follows.

Some families spend up to £40 plus each time they travel to the prison, between public transport and food if a long journey. If the prisoner requires clothes, the family need to post these in as they can't hand them in to a Scottish prison and the cost of postage is high for large parcels.

The Centre provide food parcels through the Trussell trust, warm knitted clothing from different local Churches, Christmas gifts, arts & crafts in the visit room with their Children's Worker & now through an amazing donation, and a community fundraiser, the Children will receive a meal in their family visit.

The Centre work in partnership with 32 different agencies from The Neuk in Perth which is a well-being drop in, through to statutory services for people at risk. They also work closely with the prison regarding prisoner well-being and safety.

A recent quote from a Mum, 'this place is a Godsend'.

## **Pick-ups for Peace**

Pick-ups for Peace is a farmers' initiative. Pick ups and 4x4s are donated and filled with equipment and aid, then driven out to Ukraine and handed over to the Ukrainians for use in the fight against the Russian invasion.

Our son, Duncan Cramb, will be driving one of them out in the next convoy. His girlfriend, Ava, will also go. Her father, a fruit farmer from Fife, has donated the 4x4 that Duncan will drive out.

Pick-ups for Peace has already sent out about 70 vehicles, loaded with equipment ranging from generators, quad bikes, drones and chain saws; to spades, jump leads, winter clothing and cable ties.

The trucks (and a couple of vans which have been converted by paramedics into ambulances) are driven the c.1400 miles to Lviv in western Ukraine, where the drivers then leave them, and after meeting some locals and being shown around, they are taken to Poland to fly home.

The trucks then travel to the frontline in the east, where they are used to ferry supplies to those in need and on the frontline, and also to ferry injured troops (and sadly, the dead) from the war zones. They have to be able to cross rough terrain fast.

It is hoped that further convoys can go each month at least until June. The vehicles are desperately needed and greatly appreciated. The organisers are now planning on doubling the original target of 100 vehicles. They also require funding to get the vehicles there. If you would like to support this cause, please email [pickupsforpeace@memus.com](mailto:pickupsforpeace@memus.com) or use the link <https://www.justgiving.com/crowdfunding/help-cpg-ukraine> which should take you to a Just Giving page.

By the time this goes to print, hopefully Duncan and Ava are safely home again, and many more vehicles, with all the aid they carry, have successfully been delivered to the Ukraine war effort.

Meanwhile, God go with you Duncan and Ava!

Anne Cramb



# Community News

## Madderty

### Coronation Memories

My family of 2 sisters and 1 brother, were brought up in the Scottish Borders. My father farmed near Bonchester Bridge and we went to Hobkirk Parish Church where he was an Elder for 60 years, many of those as Session Clerk!

I remember, in February 1952, being taken into the headmistress's study, to be told that George VI had died.

Queen Elizabeth was crowned in June 1953. We didn't have a television; so we went to our cousins to watch as their father had MS and the television enriched his static life.

After the coronation, we were given bars of chocolate with a picture of the royal carriage on the outside. The chocolate inside was wrapped in tinfoil, then known as "silver paper". We saved it and made little halos for the Christmas Nativity play in Hobkirk Church, Christmas 1953.

Photo: My little sister, Elizabeth aged 5, is on the left and I am on the right aged 7.

Osla Guest.



## Fowlis Wester

### A Coronation lunch of 6 May 2023



To be or not to be is a fundamental question, but in this case there was very little hesitation!

What was suitable food for it; when would the Palace actually announce the timings for the day; what about drinks; how many could we accommodate; what style would we adopt and what décor? All weighty questions which were easily dealt with when discussed and discussed and decided upon by that well known centre of gravity on the hillside above the A85, the Village Hall Committee. That Fowlis Wester was going to celebrate the Coronation of HM King Charles III on 6 May 2023 was not at issue, it was the how and when.

As planning took shape it was agreed to have a lunch and a separate evening ceilidh. Bunting was strung, flags were struck and lampposts decorated. Lunch was laid out in a huge horseshoe U shape so that people coming would sit with others they may not readily know and so that all would be in it together.

For lunch the good chefs and cooks of the village and surrounds set to and prepared a feast. It was to consist of variations of home cooked Coronation Chicken, some quiches, ham and accompaniments, a host of different salads and a culminating cake, what a magnificent cake. All would be washed down

by such as people chose to bring with them under the BYOB banner of personal choice – and avoiding any problems over licencing.

It emerged that the royal cortege would leave Buckingham Palace in the morning. We had decided that there would be *coffee and bics* available in the hall from 10.30 with the events projected onto the wall inside, as we used to watch the rugby internationals 20 odd years ago. Neighbours and friends of all ages assembled, it having been decided not to advertise the lunch other than locally because of our constraint on numbers. Children played with killer whales and cars, people chatted, the dress and spectacle were appreciated, quite which black horse Tom Armitage was riding immediately behind the carriage up from the Palace was disputed, faces amongst the congregation at Westminster Abbey were discussed and the pageantry admired. As the service progressed the participating elements were commented on and the symbolism watched in relative quiet and awe. Behind the scenes, kick-off for lunch time was approaching, the Coronation had taken place; in fact it was getting very close and there had been no sign nor sound from Gourlays, booked to provide the ham and an array of warm mini quiches – a concession to the new King's reported choice of fare. The US cavalry did appear on time; Gourlay's driver explained that they had had an oven failure, had a massive wedding to provision too and yet had managed to deliver our food first and on time; life could continue.

And so began a delicious and inclusive celebration of community and, within that word, unity – even with discussion about the other forms of government. Morag Lindsay, our Chair of the Committee, invited everyone to lunch, Angus aged four chose that moment to show her his best car and the meal was launched. The coronation cake, baked by June McGrath and featuring sugar delphiniums and a new King Charles rose, was cut by Mary Turpie and Bill Brown, both of whom had been in the village for the last coronation in 1953.

The meal provided a wonderful sense of inclusion, using a common national cause to hold a celebration locally. We'd been particularly fortunate to have it pointed out by Liz Smith that there was Community Lottery Fund money available; Jim McColl and Morag had applied for it and the day was carried by the planning, enjoyment and effort of our local population and the funding of the generosity of others.

Afterwards, a child of three who had loved their street party celebrating The Queen's Jubilee, who had then been able to understand that she had died and that there was lots of pomp and circumstance and then, with a new Queen

crowned who logically wondered when she was going to die; try explaining that! Long Live The King.

**“And also to the bakers, waiters and waitresses and parking attendants. Great team effort all round”: The 13 May Plant Sale at Fowlis Wester**

Headline news: year on year the event has become more successful; the 2023 Plant Sale, in raising over £6,000, raised more money than any preceding year. In recent years the proceeds from the sale of plants has been split between a good cause and generous support to the running costs of the village hall. This year the plants women – Audrey McColl, Anne Hubbard, Caroline Comrie and Harriet Watkins had chosen Alzheimer Scotland. Out in the village tents a fabulous array of colours, knowledge, chat, systems, 21<sup>st</sup> century payment and cardboard trays had assembled and been refined eagerly and competently over the preceding few days, culmination of the previous year’s preparation. Back in the day there was the Daffodil Tea from which the two elements of its title have taken off.

What’s the key to the success of the tea and scones? Is it the table decoration of flowers and crockery, the care of the waiting staff, the usually seamless resupply of goodies or recognition of the vast number of scones baked by Betty Cowan in ever larger numbers since before she moved to Crieff or the friendship that is reinforced and which permeates from it? Closely following the scones on the loaded plates are the pancakes and then comes the jam and honey and behind those is the spreading team who make sure there’s a choice per plate of the equally delicious gingerbread or homemade biscuits; is it these? In themselves these elements don’t do it, there’s the team that assembles voluntarily on an annual basis and takes on different tasks.

Unlike last year when two highly entertaining, decorative fairies in bright orange tutus acted as parking attendants, this year three highly efficient parking assistants - Jen, Helen and Catriona, made use of spaces offered by households, kept the traffic moving and found slots for later arrivals of which NCP would have been proud. Innumerable bakers had set-to to produce a wide assortment of fare for the cake and candy stall, others had brought wonderful jams and preserves, and someone had donated a forest of bright red rhubarb stems also for sale from there under the enthusiastic eye of Meg, Georgie and Elspeth. Waiting staff, some worthy of the café at the Ritz – not least amongst them John and Jandy Stevenson, moved to and fro around the tables wielding trays of fresh crockery, plates of resupply and those

enormous aluminium tea pots with a balancing handle for ease of pouring to ensure tea was topped up. Others supplied coffee. Through in the kitchen Carol Page and Heather Walker had installed themselves as impromptu head washer-upperers and kept the whole flow and rhythm going. If visitors had come in to recover their strength from the hectic task of plant buying to sample the food and for a chat, others also took the opportunity to visit Graham Coupar's book stall. A range of browsing, varying on subjects from war to birds to romance to a few cookery books, tempted many. Not to be outdone, the raffle sales had been in full swing with Wilma Brown and Caron Johnson finding odd combinations of ticket colours to match the range of generously donated raffle prizes. The sound, the motion, the families, the friends, the familiarity and the unknown, the feeling of being able to be at ease amongst a community all made up the life that was within the hall. That the plant sale is a community effort of far more significance than the straight forward fund raising is undeniable. And now let's talk about the plants ...!

### **The Moon Tartan at TARTAN V&A Dundee**

In the dim and distant past of not so long ago, but well-wrapped in a lack of firm evidence and lots of opinion, a piece of MacBean tartan, taken to the moon by astronaut Alan Bean in 1969 had been sent to 'the Saint Bean chapel in Scotland'. Fowlis Wester church, being dedicated to St Bean - who had brought Christianity to this part of the world in the 7<sup>th</sup> century as a follower of St Columba, was the fortunate recipient of the patch of tartan.

For years the patch had hung in the vestry, mounted in a frame with photos of the Apollo 12 mission on which Bean had served. From time to time relatives of Bean have dropped in to the church while 'doing Scotland' and leave a comment in the visitors' book confirming its provenance. Even after he died there have been American Beans and MacBeans coming, including his daughter, the church having perhaps proved a reassuring link for the family.

If we scroll forward now to June 2019. Enterprising Elder, John Laing, with his feet firmly on the earth, had been intrigued to find out more background to the piece of moon-landed tartan. Accompanied by fellow Elder Tim Carmichael, they set off in the early morning for Dundee's V&A, the venue for recording Antiques' Road Show. Once there, surrounded by an eclectic mix of swords, cairngorm gems and bronze sculptures the intrepid duo presented the story of the tartan and the rest – if you were able to watch Antiques' Road Show, became history, as they say.

And so up to date; the V&A Dundee, as readers will know, is currently holding its most prestigious exhibition since before Covid titled Tartan. Simply put in one word the exhibition covers a magnitude of colour, uses, intent, mood and symbolism encompassed in tartan. The organisers had asked Marjorie Clarke whether the moon tartan could be used in the display. Alongside items such as the oldest known piece of tartan – from 1640s and found in Glen Affric, to designer outfits by Mary Quant and a host of other names in the fashion industry over the years, to the symbolism of hope and dedication in the Doddy Weir tartan for MND research, our piece was there to show the future, albeit 50 years still in the making. If you have yet to go to the exhibition there is nothing twee about it. It's themes and commentary are covering a broadest spectrum of opinion provoked by tartan and it's well worth taking the train or bus through to – for ease of parking.

## **Gask**

### **The Findo Gask King's Coronation Tea Party.**

On Sunday the 7<sup>th</sup> May in the afternoon there was a Coronation Tea Party at Gask Hall, organised by the Findo Gask Community Association. After the welcome and words of encouragement from Sue Jardine -Paterson of Gask House, the Deputy Lieutenant of Perthshire, and Jamie Findlay, Chairman of the FGCA the guests were invited to join in and enjoy the exotic spread of cake, washed down with Tea or Pimm's or Juice and then take part in various games and a final enthusiastic Tug of War to which all ages and sizes were encouraged to take a hand in!

### **The Great Gask Tattie Tournament**

Everyone who was interested was given a plastic bag (Recycled), and three potatoes to grow in the bag. There will be meeting In September when the contents of each bag is weighed and the greatest weight of new potatoes wins the prize!

### **The True Beauty of Clathy**

Clathy, a little known, hardly signposted village in Perthshire with magnificent views whichever way you look.

When John and I moved here from Suffolk almost three years ago in between Covid lockdowns, we were chuffed we'd found the house that suited our needs after an extensive search, which took full advantage of the view over farmland and hills, with tranquillity and interesting wildlife.

Within days we received callers to our door welcoming us into the village, some bearing cards and gifts, including homemade bramble jelly, a real delight. We soon heard that coffee and bacon rolls were being sold a couple of mornings a week a stones' throw away on a neighbours' driveway, whilst adhering to Government regulations of being outdoors and 2 metres apart. As they had gone to so much trouble to provide some form of normality in very strange times we were keen to support them. To our astonishment there was a queue waiting to be served, but it was worth the wait as we received a warm and enthusiastic greeting and introduced to others on the driveway, lots of whom we are now happy to call friends.

Fast forward nine months and I found myself unwell and in need of surgery in Aberdeen hospital followed by five months of chemotherapy. The support and care I received from St Margaret's Surgery, Aberdeen Hospital and Perth Royal Infirmary was second to none. However, as well as that, the warmth and support both John and I received from people in Clathy, Clathymore and Findo Gask was very heart warming. We were fed for the first week after surgery by beautiful home-cooked dinners delivered to our door each day by Defender Blender, people turned up with home cooked dishes, flowers and offers of help. Whilst going through an horrendous experience it felt as if the village had put its arms around us and took the sting out of our pain. This is just one account of the positive experiences we've enjoyed.

So, despite the beautiful scenery, stunning wildlife, clean fresh air and tranquillity, the true beauty of Clathy lies in something that is not that common these days, it's called *community*, a warm and wonderful thing to behold.

### **Defender Blender 'Who would have Thought...'**

'Grounds for new beginnings' – this was our strapline at the conception of Defender Blender, or DB as it is now affectionately known.

'Grounds' being the coffee of course, 'beginnings' being a whole new venture into the mobile events industry after 30 years in an office behind a screen. We have for the best part of our working lives been self employed so

imagination and risk sit fairly high up on our work ethic and decision making processes.

Established in Summer 2019, with our first gig under our belt in October, we headed into Winter where we could spend time building up our profile and making inroads to getting some bookings – all in all it went very well and we soon had 2020 sufficiently booked with various events that would work in nicely with our ‘day’ job.

Who would have thought what came next... And here in lies ‘the road less travelled’ that so many of us then had to navigate. Complicated for any business, very complicated for a brand new business.

It’s an interesting concept ‘the road less travelled’, metaphorically meaning ‘acting independently, freeing themselves from the conformity of others’ (who choose to take ‘the road more often travelled’). Does this saying come from the book or does the book come from the saying – who knows! But the author M Scott Peck makes some important observations that helped many of us through some difficult stages during this strange and enlightening time. At a time where the words religion and science were used so often, not necessarily hand in hand it has to be said, it is worth noting that this book is known as a spiritual classic, combining science and religious views to help you grow by confronting and solving your problems through discipline, love and grace.

It was therefore an explosion of awe and surprise (and many more things besides) that when outdoor catering was ‘allowed’ back open in the May of 2020 and a friend suggested we open up our, by now, in desperate need to ‘be used’ coffee trailer on our own driveway, the fact that people came was quite simply amazing. A gentle, friendly hub where people could come and just be, have coffee and chat to complete strangers.

Following the rules of each changing day, standing only, sitting only, no chairs, table AND chairs – we navigated it all with ‘discipline, love and grace’, regularly scooping up people in our wake who desperately needed sanctuary at that time. Strangers became friends, neighbours became familiar, communities within communities grew together. In many cases peoples sense of life was even saved – this is a powerful reminder of what Defender Blender most stood for then, and continues to stand for today.

We have been back out on the road again since 2021 with fabulous gigs and meeting new and interesting people. But most precious is that we continue

our 'DB on the Drive' and celebrate 3 years this month being right here, in the community, in the extended community and even the extended extended community!

As a couple who have been part of Gask community for nearly 30 years, we are so grateful to have met so many wonderful people along this particular 'road less travelled.' They say every cloud has a silver lining, for DB, and for so many of our amazing customers, 2020 delivered in ways many would never have dreamt.

I would like to dedicate this article to all of our fantastic customers who have built this road with us.

## **Monzie**

### **Mid Strathearn Coronation**

On 7/5/23 after our Sunday Morning Service at Monzie we marked the Coronation of King Charles III with cake and prosecco which was much enjoyed by all present.

