



# Arrochar Parish Newsletter

## Winter 2023



### The Future of our Parish

We are making progress with the joining together of Arrochar, Luss and Rhu & Shandon parishes into one united parish. The next stages in this process will see Rev Ian Millar, who lives in Succoth, allocated to us which will allow him to conduct our Sunday services 2 weeks out of 3, with the other week being covered by a visiting preacher as presently happens. This is a great step forward giving us a basis of stability and a regular face most weeks.

The other progress we have been making is to formalise the linkage between the three congregations, as a first step towards a complete union. Arrochar is currently linked with Luss whilst Rhu & Shandon have recently severed their linkage with Helensburgh. The plan is to create a new linkage of Arrochar, Luss and Rhu & Shandon which has to be agreed by all three congregations, the target date for this is the end of February 2024. We are also continuing to meet together as we plan the steps towards a full union of the three parishes into one parish, retaining all three churches for Sunday worship. At that point we will be able to look to call a permanent minister for our new Three Lochs Parish.

### Church Services

#### Arrochar Parish Church

Sunday worship normally at 10am but the service on **Christmas Eve** will be at 6.00pm.

#### Live streaming

Our services are now streamed live every Sunday at 10am, so if you can't get to church you can still share in our worship as it happens.

<https://arrocharparishchurch.org/streaming.html>

#### St Peter and St Paul

Details of services to be confirmed.

## Loch Lomond Tragedy - August 1828 – Part 2

In the last newsletter we told the story of the disaster at Tarbet in 1828 when ten people drowned.

Three of the dead had local connections and efforts have been made to find out more about them.

Statutory registration of births, marriages and deaths was not introduced, in Scotland, until 1855. Churches kept records of marriages and births/baptisms but only rarely deaths or burials. Another complication is that Parish Records were not always reliable or complete.

Headstones can fill in some of the gaps, but unfortunately Andrew MacFarlane's headstone is very badly weathered and can provide little further information apart from his age at death – 35 years.



At this point things become tricky. There are records of two babies named Andrew MacFarlane born in 1793; one in Luss and the other in Drymen.

Records also show two Andrew MacFarlanes married in Arrochar at about the right time.

One had three sons and two daughters, but significantly two of them were born too late to be children of 'our' Andrew MacFarlane. The other had three daughters all born before the date of the tragedy.

Andrew MacFarlane married Isabel or Isabella McMurrich in 1823. The record of their marriage gives her name in the Gaelic form – NicMurrich – who was born in Drymen. Is this significant?

## What's happening in our communities?

### Parish Church Winter Fair

Thank you to everyone who supported our successful and enjoyable Winter Fair which raised over £1100 towards the upkeep of the church.

### Coffee Mornings

The Three Villages Hall hosted a very well attended coffee morning on 11<sup>th</sup> November with proceeds going to Poppy Scotland. The magnificent sum of £380.65 was raised. Well done to all the volunteer bakers and servers and a big thank you to everyone who supported it.

Coffee mornings are taking a break for the winter.

From next year they will be held **monthly** on the second Saturday of each month, beginning on February 10<sup>th</sup>.

### Blythswood Shoebox Appeal

A big thank you to everyone who donated to the Blythswood Shoebox Appeal. On 1<sup>st</sup> November 71 boxes and bags were collected for distribution to needy people in Eastern Europe. This is outstanding generosity from our villages. On behalf of Blythswood and the recipients THANK YOU!

### Craft and Chat Circle at the Parish Church Hall

We meet every Wednesday from 1pm – 2.30pm. **Crafting not compulsory!**

Everyone is very welcome.

Come along and join us for a good natter, plenty of laughs as well as tea and biscuits.

We each pay £1 a week which not only covers the costs of refreshments but enables the group to give to charities.

This year the following charities have each received £50 from the Craft and Chat Circle.

Arrochar and Tarbet Senior Citizens

Fire Service Charity

Helensburgh Foodbank

MND

Parkinsons

SSPCA

### Three Villages Hall

We have recommenced the successful community gatherings in the Hall on Monday mornings only at present to build up over the winter months. Doors open on Mondays from 9:30 to 12:30 with tea, coffee, biscuits & sweet bites alongside opportunities for Tai Chi, Strength & Balance exercise, with other activities to come from those attending and requests for guest visits.

All locals are welcome to join in the exercise sessions or just sit & catch up on local news and interests.

Suggestions also welcome on topics for further discussion and guests that we could invite to provide information and facilitate activities that would be attended into Monday afternoons.

Following the festive season in the New Year, when everything settles, additional day sessions can follow if sufficient interest and numbers will want to attend.

Everyone is welcome to come along and lead topics and activity sessions, either on Open Doors days or as a separate group on other days or evenings, Introductory hall hire will be without charge, depending on availability, for new groups starting up, thanks to funding from the Arrochar Community Hydro Scheme, which has provided £22,000 this year for community benefit in Luss and Arrochar, taking total support to over £40,000 in last 3 years. Any suggestions or requests for Hall group use, please call 01301 702669 or via Email through Village Hall website : <https://threevillageshall.scot/>

Keep an eye out for all the upcoming music, drama and events at the Three Villages Hall on our Website: <https://threevillageshall.scot/whats-on/>

#### Thank you

Once again, we acknowledge the generosity of the **International Clan MacFarlane Society** for their support enabling us to live-stream our services.

We should like to say 'thank you' to an **anonymous donor** for providing the Christmas tree inside the church and to **Gerry Facenna, Chairman of Allied Vehicles Group**, for donating the Christmas tree outside the church again this year.