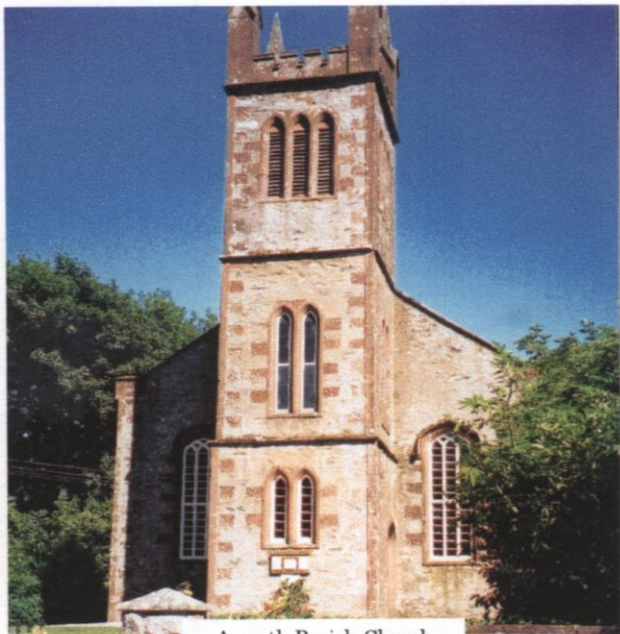


THE CHURCH OF SCOTLAND
ANWOTH PARISH CHURCH
ANWOTH

SUNDAY, 24th February 2002
3.00 p.m.



Anwoth Parish Church

CLOSING SERVICE

1827



2002

CHRISTIAN CHURCHES AT ANWOTH

- AD 600 Earliest likely building.
- 1100 A wall-mounted grave slab-cross was carved.
- 1200 Anwoth Church was referred to by name.
- 1590 The building was in ruinous state.
- 1627 The new church was completed, and an ancient bell installed.
- 1704 Two silver goblets were donated.
- 1757 Two further goblets were donated.
- 1800-1827 The church again in ruinous condition
- 1827 The present church was completed at a cost of £690-9s-4d, paid for by the heritors in proportion to the following estate rents:
- | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------------|---------|------|-----|-----------|--------------|------|-----|-----|-----|
| Cardoness | . £1160 | –13s | –4d | Logan ... | £175 | –0s | –0d | | |
| Broughton ... | ... | 622 | –0s | –0d | Kirkdale ... | 100 | –0s | –0d | |
| Rusco | | 433 | –6s | –8d | Kirkclaugh | | 90 | –0s | –0d |
| St Germain's | .. | 200 | –0s | –0d | Ardwall | ... | 80 | –0s | –0d |
- 1885 The vestry was built with a boiler house below for steam heating
- 1902 A harmonium was installed
- 1905 A new pulpit and new pews were built. The flat plaster ceiling was removed and exposed timbers covered in new wooden facing—as you see it now.
- 1925 A Positaire organ, with manual bellows, was installed.
- 1954 An electric heating system was installed. It is still working
- 1954 Wood carvings around organ were added.
- 1961 The organ was rebuilt, with an electric blower.
- 1968 Alder branches were placed alongside the roof beams to draw out the wood-worm.
- 1998 An electric organ was donated.

PEOPLE AND PARISHIONERS

Records of the pre-Reformation church started in 1432, but are not provided here. However, some salient dates and interesting appendices are noted below.

1627—Samuel Rutherford was ordained at Anwoth, in the same year as the 'new' church was completed.

1638—Samuel Rutherford published his book.

1639—He was removed on account of the book, and spent most of the remaining 22 years of his life as Professor of Divinity of St Andrews. 1780—The first Clerk of Session and Treasurer are named.

1827—The congregation moved into the present building.

1924—The *fast day* before Communion was discontinued.

1970—The deferred basis of union with Girthon was drafted.

1975—Anwoth and Girthon were united, but services continued to be held weekly at Anwoth until 1990, and from then they were generally held fortnightly.

MINISTERS OF ANWOTH (since the Reformation)

1563 Rev William Moscrop	1714 Rev George Gartshore
1564 Rev James Wylie	1724 Rev John Enslie
1569 Rev Alexander Young	1727 Rev John Welsh
1572 Rev Malcolm McCulloch	1753 Rev Robert Carson
1577 Rev David Murray	1770 Rev William Gordon
1577 Rev Elias McCulloch	1790 Rev Hugh Gordon
1585 Rev Robert Murray	1809 Rev Thomas Turnbull
1601 Rev Isaac Paterson	1839 Rev Thomas Johnstone
1627 Rev Samuel Rutherford	1876 Rev William M. Black
1639 No Record (probably vacant)	1902 Rev William Main
1648 Rev John Mein	1907 Rev Frank W. Saunders
1665 Rev John Richmond	1919 Rev Franklin Lornie
1666 Rev George Davidson	1925 Rev John Scott
1668 Rev James Shaw	1932 Rev William M. Campbell
1689 Rev Michael Bruce	1938 Rev Robert Hamilton
1696 Rev Thomas Hay	1946 Rev John Turnbull

On the death of Mr Turnbull in 1975, the parishes of Anwoth and Girthon were united under Rev J. J. A. Carmichael, Minister of Girthon.

MINISTERS OF ANWOTH & GIRTHON

1975 Rev J. J. A. Carmichael

1984 Rev Callum O'Donnell

1990 Rev Austin U. Erskine

Mr Erskine retired 30th June 2001. The charge has been vacant since then.

RUTHERFORD'S "THREE WITNESSES"

In the absence of a pastor, the parish of Anwoth, at least, had been limited to one service every two weeks. Far from finding his parishioners the godly, virtuous people that a new minister might desire, they were described as "a profane, irreligious set".

After morning service on the Sabbath, for example, it was the custom of many to retire to a pleasant meadow on the farm, Mossrobin, between the church and the Skyre Burn and there amused themselves with games—caber tossing, football, putting the stone, even wrestling; and when other fields flooded and froze in winter, there was curling.

Mr Rutherford disapproved strongly and remonstrated with them privately. This, however, did no good and the games continued. Then he spoke from the pulpit, but even such shame as this just rolled off their backs. Samuel Rutherford racked his brains for some scheme, for the practice must certainly stop.

At length he devised a plan. Choosing a Sunday on which the Sacrament had been administered, he joined the group of men gathered outside the little church at the end of the service. To their astonishment, he asked if he might accompany them and, though doubtless some were very suspicious, he was warmly welcomed. Arriving at the sheltered, grassy spot, Mr Rutherford announced that he had a new amusement he would like to show them. It required three large stones. They began searching and being strong fellows, soon produced three huge boulders which the minister pronounced as ideal for his purpose. Then he instructed the men to set them up firmly at regular intervals across the area where they played. Glad to use their muscles after the long sit in church, it was soon done and Mr Rutherford called the assembly around

him. Then in loud tones that all must hear, he cried: "These stones that you have set up I pronounce emblems of the Holy Trinity: the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost. Let them be witnesses against you on that awful day when you stand before your Creator, if you persist in these unholy and soul-destroying practices."

His words had the effect he desired. No more did the people assemble for joyful sports and games after morning service. And for many years the stones were held in peculiar veneration. They became part of a physical and spiritual landscape known as "Rutherford's Three Witnesses".

THE ARCHBISHOP OF ARMAGH

The Episcopalian Archbishop Usher, fearful of being recognised in such a staunchly Presbyterian area, was travelling incognito, and stopped at Mr Rutherford's house for shelter. Overhearing him at prayer, Rutherford realised that this was no ordinary beggar, and correctly surmised who his visitor was. He greeted him warmly and invited him to preach the sermon the next day as "*a visiting preacher*". His sermon was worthy of his reputation and he stayed the Sunday night as well. They both agreed to keep the Archbishop's identity a secret — for very good but different reasons!

RUTHERFORD'S BOOK

Rutherford's book of 1638, in outright Calvinist terms, was thoroughly at odds with the policies of episcopacy being enforced by King Charles. The result was that Rutherford was tried, first at Wig-town and then at Edinburgh. He was ordered to leave Anwoth and was appointed Professor of Divinity at St Andrews University. The congregation and nearly all the powerful men of the whole area petitioned for his return, but to no avail.

CHURCH LIFE IN 1870

James Palmer wrote the following account of church life in about 1870:- "When a very small boy I was taken to Anwoth Church, and well remember my first attendance. The gentry came in their carriages and the farmers in their gigs but the greater part of the congregation came on foot, and many of them walked long distances. On the rising ground behind the church it was usual, before the ringing of the bell, for friends to meet and discuss the weather, crops and kindred matters. The men wore top hats and black coats, some of which, with long service, had turned green. Some of the women wore mantles and others Paisley shawls, which were greatly in vogue at the time. Their head-gear was a millinery bonnet decked with gum flowers. There was no instrumental music but it was grand to hear John Combe, with his rich melodious voice, lead off with some old and favourite Psalm tune. The prayers were lengthy and the sermons were usually divided into sections, viz Firstly, Secondly, and so on. I heard of the minister of another church who was preaching on a hot summer day with the windows and doors open. He was getting on fine until he came to "*and Fifthly, brethren*". An old lady sitting near the draughty pulpit said audibly, "Ca awa Sir, yir *Fifthly* is awa wi the wind oot o' the windae."

When the minister started to preach, frequently he was timed and a remark such as this might have been heard at the scaling of the congregation, "Man, wasna' our minister grand the day, he preached for 45 minutes."

On Sunday afternoons we were taken for a short walk and in the evening there was family worship. It was rather a long dreary day for some young folks. On Sacrament Sunday communicants were admitted to the tables by token and it was usual on that occasion

for a neighbouring minister to come and assist at what was called *fencing one of the tables*. The fast day was almost like a Sunday. We were allowed no games and I once heard a young man, a visitor, sternly rebuked for whistling on an Anwoth fast day. Services were sometimes held on the Friday or Saturday before communion and in some churches on the Monday after. The minister gave out from the pulpit that he would visit certain houses during the week. On the day of visitation we got off from school. Our mothers gave the place an extra polish up and made us snod and tidy. When he came, he enquired kindly about our welfare, read a portion of scripture, offered a prayer and then passed on to the next cottage."

THE CHURCH'S OUTREACH

December 1903 saw as follows:-

Home Mission ...	£2 - 0s-0d
Aged & Infirm Ministers ...	£1 - 0s-0d
Foreign Mission ...	£1-10s-0d
Jews Conversion ...	£1-10s-0d
Endowment ...	£1-10s-0d
Colonial Mission ...	£2- 5s-0d
Life & Work Committee ...	£1 -10s-0d
Small Livings Fund ...	£1- 0s-0d

The Sunday School collections were more specific, donating £1 to Darjeeling Mission in India and the Blantyre Mission in Nyasaland, Southern Africa.

RANDOM STATISTICS

Church Roll		Sunday School		Church Income
1830	267	1882	53	£111-1s-1d
1904	222	1940	55	£216-8s-6d
1955	185	1987	45 with	6 teachers)
1962	270			

Baptisms

1963 20 (a record)

CHURCHES AT ANWOTH

There has been a Christian church at Anwoth for a very, very long time. A cross-slab in the graveyard has been dated to about 1100, but it seems likely from the evidence of place names, that there may have been a church on the site from the Northumbrian period, at about 600. Such buildings would be very small, simple and, of course, wooden. By 1200 the church was referred to by name in a grant by David of Cardoness, by which time it would, almost certainly, be built in stone.

However, by the 1590s, the building was in a pretty ruinous state, and, though still in use, led to a new church being offered by Lord Kenmure in 1616. Kenmure and his fellow Gordon, John of Cardoness, were thus

obliged. The Gordons of Kenmure were the hereditary owners of the Rusco estate, which at that time included all of Glenskyrebum and, with Cardoness, was legally responsible for the church, minister, manse and school.

The kirk was rebuilt by 1627, complete with the required bell, given by Lady Kenmure and, almost certainly, was the ancient dinner bell from Rusco tower. The ruin of Rutherford's kirk is in the old

graveyard, right beside the original road across Galloway.

In 1704 Col. Maxwell of Cardoness presented two silver goblets, which, together with a further two donated by the Kirk Session in 1757, are still in use and will be used in the service today.

This building was in turn, pretty ruinous well before 1800, but, by this time, instead of one heritor responsible for providing the church, minister, etc. there were seven within the parish (the Gordons having been losers in the covenanting wars). The seven were somewhat reluctant to dip into their pockets! Nevertheless, they met in 1809 but insisted that the old kirk could be repaired. It couldn't and a very serious battle ensued, with everybody, including the presbytery, against the heritors. The case went to the Court of Session and then even to the House of Lords.

Eventually the heritors agreed, and the new church, after many modifications, was built for £690-9s-4d, the cost being divided in proportion to the rents of the heritors.

In 1885 a vestry was built on to the east wall, with a boiler house below, while, in 1902, a harmonium was introduced.

The interior didn't look like what you see before and above you now, for new pews and pulpit were installed in 1905 and, at the same time, the plain flat ceiling was removed and the exposed roof timbers were encased.

The heating system did well, but by 1952 was giving trouble and within two years had been replaced by the electric system warming you now.

The harmonium was donated to the mission hall at Ornocknoch when the new hand bellows Positaire organ was completed in 1925. It too was deteriorating by 1968 and was restored, and electrically blown, after which it lasted until about three years ago, when the electronic organ in the corner was gifted.

We may not have a *loop system* here, but one of our present members, Ramsay Rainsford-Hannay, recalls that his grandfather on his mother's side, Col. David Maxwell of Cardoness, who was not only tone deaf, but also very hard of hearing, had a voice-tube installed all the way from the Cardoness pew to the pulpit! We still have pieces of the contraption here in Anwoth.

Ter-centenary of Samuel Rutherford's Death

Services were held outside the ruins of the old kirk and at the Rutherford monument on 29th March 1961 to mark the 300th anniversary of the death of Mr Rutherford. On that occasion the ancient bell, gifted to the old kirk by Lady Kenmure, was rung by the beadle, Sandy Millar.

Acknowledgement and Thanks:

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Photographs by Graham Robertson.