

CHAPTER TEN

THE KIRK AT THE MILLENIUM

Since becoming minister of the parish, Alan Greig encouraged and supported a great deal of change and innovation. In March 1993 it was agreed by Session that

“Children be allowed to attend communion subject to establishing seriousness of intent.”

Kintore Session Records, 16 March 1993.

In May 1993 the **Cradle Roll Service** was introduced, and the first **Christingle Service** took place the following Christmas (also 1993). These changes emphasised the importance of family worship, and of children as the future of the Kirk. That same year attendance at communion, which had dipped to a low of 372 in 1992, rose again to 442. In 1996 Evening Services were re-introduced and on 10 May 1998, **John Bell** was invited to Kintore to promote the new ecumenical songbook, **Common Ground**. Copies were purchased for the Choir and later that year for the congregation. It proved to be a popular addition to the **Hymnary** and **Songs of God’s People**.

Session Clerk in 2000 was **Mr John Sim**, who took over, in October 1990, following **Mr Alex McCubbin’s** retirement due to ill health. Clerk “pro term” during the vacancy was **Mrs Elizabeth Milne**, the first woman to carry out the duties. Mrs Milne was then in charge of the Senior Sunday School. As previously mentioned, **Mr John Dinnie** had served faithfully as Treasurer since 1967, when he took over following the death of Mr R J Davidson. Roll Keeper in 2000 was **Mrs Evelyn Gray**, **Mr Gordon Dow** had served as Church Officer for many years and **Mrs Vicki Graham** was Clerk to the Congregational Board. Women were playing an increasing role in the church as elders and members of the Congregational Board, as well as in the traditional roles of Sunday School teachers and singers in the choir. It is sometimes hard to believe that in 1945, the Session voted against the admission of women to the eldership.

The church still had a large number of popular organisations such as Junior and Senior Sunday Schools, Creche, Lazer Group, Youth Fellowship, Men’s Club, Woman’s Guild, Young Woman’s Group and Boys’ Brigade. The Brigade has the claim to fame that on 18th November 1986 a new officer was appointed. This was Aberdeen Football Club star **Brian Irvine**, who as well as being a committed Christian collected several honours with the club in the days when it still won trophies and enjoyed success! Other youth organisations such as the Guides, Brownies, Rainbows, Scouts, Cubs and Beavers joined us for special services. We had a youth worker, **Stephen Ogston**, and a Probationer Assistant, **Peter Johnston**. **Bob Black** was organist and choirmaster, sharing the task with Mary Burnett (herself for a long time organist and choirmistress) and Joan Veale. The current organists had survived in post for much longer than many of their predecessors and had managed to keep the choir under control and in good heart – most of the time, although the following was noted after the elders visited the choir in 1987!

“Mrs Meta Chalmers reported that along with Mrs Mary Archer she attended a meeting of the Choir. It consisted of 10-12 members with a requirement for more members. A complaint about draughts in the choir seats was passed to the Fabric Committee.”

Kintore Session Records, 17 March, 1987.

The organ also seems to behave well (except in power cuts) having been rebuilt in 1979 by David Loosley of Stirling, but is now frequently supplemented by the marvels of the electronic keyboard. Indeed, Kintore Church has always been interested in modern technology. Although the 2000 Session Records were still handwritten for tradition's sake, as early as 1985, Mr L Rennie asked

“that the use of computers be investigated for church records. It was agreed that the clerk raise the matter with the Presbytery.”

Kintore Session Records, 13 February, 1985.

Later that month

“The Moderator intimated that Mr G Morrison, the Hill, wished to donate the sum of £1500 to the church in memory of his late wife Mary. This sum would be used to purchase and service a sound reinforcement and recording system within the church.-----The gift was warmly acknowledged.”

Kintore Session Records, 24 February, 1985.

By the April meeting, the “*amplifiers*” had been installed, and at the Millennium, Kintore Church could boast that most up to date of technological achievements, a **Website** on the **Internet**, largely thanks to the expertise of Peter Johnston.

In 2000 we had a communicants' role of around 900 people. As mentioned by several past ministers, Kintore Church attendance was good, probably well above average for North East Scotland. However the Session continued to guard against complacency. In December 1987 at the annual review of the Roll it was reported that 200 members had not attended Communion for 4 years. Those no longer contributing to the church were to be sent their lines and encouraged to join another church. Despite these measures the Church continued to have a large postal membership.

We were still aware of our duty to others and are actively involved in **Christian Aid** and in **Jubilee 2000**, a campaign to clear the debts of poorer nations. Minister and Session still focused on the pastoral care of as well as the spiritual needs of the parish. In recent years the Session had continued to distribute funds from charitable bequests to the elderly or needy of the parish. For example, at Christmas 1985 six sums of £30 each were allocated from the **Sangster Bequest**. By 1990 this was down to three sums of £50. Although the days of the Session's acting as judge and jury over the sinners of the parish are long gone, elders of the parish still feel a moral responsibility towards inhabitants of the village. In recent years they had felt it necessary to voice their disapproval of matters as diverse as the introduction of condom machines in Kemnay Academy Community Education Centre and the unsavoury spectacle of mud wrestling at the now defunct Crown Hotel.

In 1996 the Session was able to record the following:-

“Kirk Session met and played host to the Quinquennial visitation team from Presbytery. ----- The team expressed satisfaction with the current state of affairs in Kintore Church with the Convener indicating that he had a strong feeling that Kintore was a congregation at peace with itself, yet aware of the challenges awaiting in the future and willing to tackle same.”

Kintore Session Records, 16 January 1996.

Parish life in 2000 was busy and vibrant and there was a range of events currently taking place for the celebration of Christianity's Third Millennium. We were televised (on 26 March 2000) and in July, a party from the parish were due to visit Oberammergau to view the Passion Play. As we celebrated the year 2000 AD, it was good to look back on the people and events that contributed to the history of the parish of Kintore and its Kirk. And it was still indeed **“A Place of Some Consequence”**.