

Minister - Rev. Angus Adamson B.D. Tel: 01770 870228
Parish Assistant - Mrs Jean Hunter B.D. Tel: 01770 860380

Session Clerk – Bill Scott Tel: 830304
Church Treasurer - Fiona Henderson Tel: 830270

Lochranza & Pirnmill Church Elders

Bill Scott Tel: 830304, Chris Knox Tel: 830618
Anne Coulter Tel: 830219, Louise Minter Tel: 850263
Neil Robertson Tel: 850224, Wilma Morton Tel: 850272,
Elspeth MacDonald Tel: 850284,
Christine Black Tel: 850263, John Adam Tel 850230

Church Organists

Lorna Buchanan-Hollingworth Tel: 840681
Aileen Wright Tel: 830353, John Clarke 860219

Congregational Board Members

Rev. Angus Adamson, Christine Black (Clerk),
Richard Wright (Property Manager),
Fiona Henderson, Lizzie Adam, Archie Cumming

Pastoral Care Group

Group Leader - Anne Coulter Tel: 830219
Aileen Wright Tel: 830353, Lizzie Adam Tel: 850230,
Christine Black Tel: 850263, Robert Cumming Tel: 830302

F.O.L.K.

(Friends Of Lochranza Kirk)

Chair – Shared by the Elders – **Treasurer** – Anne Coulter

Sunday Services

Lochranza & Pirnmill Church 10.15 am
(alternate Sundays, see church notice board)

Tea & coffee served after the services - **All are welcome**

Lochranza & Pirnmill

Scottish Charity Registration No . SC009377



Church & Community Newsletter November 2019

www.lochranzachurch.org.uk



Corriecravie November 2019

'Should we stay or should we go?
Should we look east or look west, which is best?'

In the face of the decision made at this year's General Assembly to streamline the Kirk by drastically reducing the number of Presbyteries in Scotland from 43 down to just 12, these are the big questions our Church of Scotland Kirk Sessions on Arran are currently grappling with.

At present we are in the Presbytery of Ardrossan, which looks set to unite with the Presbytery of Irvine & Kilmarnock and the Presbytery of Ayr. To the minds of many, being a rural island, Arran might not fare too well in a predominantly urban, mainland presbytery. The alternative would be to petition to become part of the Presbytery of Argyll, made up as it is of predominantly rural and island congregations, not unlike ourselves. Indeed, that is what happened some 9 years ago when we felt we were not getting a fair deal in Ardrossan Presbytery. In the end we were not given leave to make that move, but following the setting up of a committee to look into our grievances and to Ardrossan Presbytery's credit, certain recommendations being put into place, Arran was content to remain and we are currently very happy with arrangements at presbytery level. To the minds of some, staying in the same Local Authority and Health Board area in many ways makes sense, and of course the main link to the mainland is via Ardrossan. It may be that we would therefore be content to enter into the new Super Presbytery of Ayrshire and currently on-going talks will hopefully reveal how that might work for us. To that end all three Ayrshire Presbyteries met on Tuesday 10th September in Kilmarnock and under the guidance of Rev George White the Principle Clerk of the General Assembly, discussions began.

Ardrossan however, is not the only link to the mainland. To the west of us the Presbytery of Argyll meet quarterly, twice a year in Tarbert, once per annum in Portavadie and on the other occasion the church of the incoming moderator. We now have an all-year round ferry link to Kintyre, albeit a reduced one in winter. Plenty folk on Arran feel that instead of becoming part of Cunningham District Council area, now North Ayrshire, the island might have been better served by remaining in Argyll and Bute local authority area. To help us make a comparison in which Presbytery area might be the best for the future, the Presbytery of Argyll helpfully approached us and invited our congregations to send representatives to their Presbytery Conference held at Portavadie Marina on the 2nd and 3rd of September, entitled 'Argyll Presbytery – Shaping the Future'

CHURCH DUTIES

	READERS	COFFEE	DUTY ELDER
03-Nov	Jt Communion	Brodict	11am
10-Nov	Remembrance	P/M Hall 10am	1055 War Memorial
17-Nov	Robert Cumming	Fiona Henderson	Bill Scott
24-Nov	P/mill		
*01-Dec	Richard Wright	Aileen Wright	Anne Coulter
08-Dec	P/mill		
15-Dec	Hazel Gardiner	Hazel Gardiner	Chris Knox
22-Dec	P/mill		
25-Dec	Family Service 11am		
29-Dec	P/mill		
05-Jan	Douglas Coulter	Elizabeth Smith	Bill Scott
12-Jan	P/mill		
19-Jan	Arran Churches Together	Shiskine 12noon	
26-Jan	P/mill		
02-Feb	Pip Siddle	Gail Scott	Anne Coulter
09-Feb	P/mill		

Dates for your diary.....

- 28th Nov** ACT St Andrew's Night Service 6.30pm & Ceilidh 7pm - Lamlash
- *1st Dec** Come to Church Sunday ARCO playing – Lochranza 10.15am
- 2nd Dec** Island Carol Service - Brodict 7.30pm
- 14th Dec** Carols at the Co-op – 11 – 12noon
- 18th Dec** Pirnmill School Carol Service – Pirnmill 11am
- 19th Jan** ACT Shiskine Church – 12 noon
- 9th Feb** Communion – Lochranza 10.15am

NB

Services will continue to be held on alternative Sundays until MAY

FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER!

Please could I have articles for this by **22nd Jan** at the latest!

bg.ornsay@btinternet.com Many thanks. Ed.

SINCLAIR MACLEOD 15th August 1933 – 08 October 2019

It is with great sadness that I write this. Sinclair was an Elder in our church St Bride's for many years and before that was an Elder in The Church of the Holy Rude, Stirling. Sinclair was a larger than life character who always had a joke or story to tell every time he met someone be it on the Golf course, Church or indeed the Co-op!! A distinctive character in his bow ties! His popularity and the regard he was held in was born out by the huge number of people who came along to his funeral.

Before his illness Sinclair was a great support to me and to many others in Catacol and Lochranza, he will be missed by everyone who knew him.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to Janette, his three sons, Grandchildren and Great Grandchildren at this sad time.

Bill Scott

F.O.L.K. (*Friends Of Lochranza Kirk*)

The first meeting of the season was a fund raising event a talk by Iain Quinn titled "**Steamers that called at Lochranza Pier in the 1960's**". There was a good attendance of some 50 people from around the island. The sum raised was **£220** split equally between the **Waverley Boiler Fund** and **FOLK** funds.

There was no business meeting.

Our next meeting will be on **6th November**. **Ken Pritchard** will be giving a talk on "**The Suez Crisis**".

On **8th January** **John Clark** will be giving a talk on "**My life as a Russian interpreter**".

On **11th February** **Penny McWatters** will be talking about the **Restoration of the two stained glass windows**.

All meetings take place in the church at 2pm.

Tea & coffee is served during the meeting. **Everyone is most welcome** to come along and listen to the speakers.

Bill Scott

TAKE NOTE OF DEFIBRILLATOR LOCATIONS

- Distillery** - on front wall of the visitor centre
- Gal Mac building** - on the outside wall
- Pirrmill Shop** - in red telephone box



All cabinets are unlocked and open to anyone who requires to take the defib. No prior experience of using one is required make sure you've called 999 to get an Ambulance & the **First Responders** on the way.

BLUE BIN

Nov 5,19
Dec 3,17,31
Jan 14,28
Feb 11

BLACK BIN

Nov 12,26
Dec 10,24
Jan 7,21
Feb 4,18



This was an excellent conference with the key note speaker being former Moderator and Principle Clerk of the General Assembly, the Very Reverend John Chalmers, the person entrusted with leading the task group, also appointed at this year's Assembly with the remit of streamlining the structures of the church to meet the challenging demands of the present times. Besides during the day and over dinner having the chance to meet with our presbytery counterparts from Argyll, we also had the opportunity over lunch to meet with senior presbytery figures to discuss how Arran might fit into the Argyll structure. The following day we attended the presbytery meeting. It was very comforting to listen to the way Argyll Presbytery conducts its business and understands not only island life, but the issues faced trying to resource and minister to the needs of multiple rural linked charges. And in many regards Argyll, having formed some 15 years ago with the union of the Presbyteries of South Argyll, Lorn & Mull and Dunoon is already ahead of the game. I was impressed that having grasped the nettle and having already made the leap of faith, many of the presbyters at that meeting were genuinely excited by the opportunities to be grasped in the midst of change.

In stark comparison, at the meeting of the three Ayrshire Presbyteries in Kilmarnock the following week, I was very strongly struck by the way the other representatives from the Ayrshire congregations, despite many of them seeing the island in the distance daily, had absolutely no conception of island life, or of the workings of multiple rural linkages. Indeed, they didn't even realise that I would not be able to get home to Arran that night. The new Presbytery of Ayrshire now has many teething problems to overcome in its formation and has a long way to go before it is in the same position as Argyll, who are up and running and working hard and well to serve the congregations within its bounds.

At least now in any future decisions we have something to compare what life might look like in Ayrshire, as opposed to Argyll. Historically Arran has previously been in both. In the 18th century we were in the Presbytery of Irvine and then in the Presbytery of Kintyre, until at the 1929 union with the United Free Church most Arran congregations entered the Presbytery of Ardrossan with the exception of the North End congregations, which remained in Kintyre Presbytery until the mid-nineteen-fifties, when they too entered Ardrossan Presbytery.

So east or west, which is best? That remains to be seen and for sure there are uncertain and challenging times ahead. But not in one very important regard. For one thing remains ever sure. In the words of the Psalmist 'were we to flee beyond the east or dwell in the farthest place in the west, our God will be there to lead us.' (Psalm 139: 9-10).

Angus

Friday August 9th 2019 is a date that we will not easily forget.

It was the start of the Brodick Highland Games weekend and Lochranza Campsite was bustling with caravans, camper vans, large tents and small tents and all four camping pods were fully occupied. We had received a yellow weather warning for intense rain and were up early. At seven in the morning the rain was light but Nigel was concerned that the burn was rising unusually fast. We followed our flood plan and began to move campers to higher ground. We were not unduly alarmed: we have experienced the burn breaking its banks over the Butt field fairways many times.

By mid-morning our visitors were safely off the campsite but those of us still out there found ourselves knee deep in flowing water. This was unusual. Water was now rushing through the machine sheds from behind the campsite. As I watched by the campsite gate, I saw a wide wave of water rear over the camping pods and pour into the campsite in a waterfall. A minute later, the pods, which had been anchored with chains, began to wash forwards like small boats. It all seemed surreal.



A couple of hours later and the flood had receded rapidly, as it does. Normally, when the burn breaks its banks there is little trace of the flooding afterwards. This time, the sight that met our eyes was devastating: the campsite and golf course infrastructure of tracks, hardstanding, gates, bridges and fences was destroyed. Rocks, rubble and black soil were strewn everywhere. Fortunately, the reception building and washrooms, as well as all motorhomes and caravans, were intact but the scale of the mess was overwhelming. We found tents in trees in the burn, bits of the campsite on the castle spit and as for our heavy wooden picnic tables: one was in a tree, one by the youth hostel and one floating out to sea past the Catriona.

"Why wear a Poppy"?

by
Don Crawford.

"Please wear a poppy", the lady said,
And held one forth, but I shook my head,
Then I stopped and watched as she offered
them there,
And her face was old and lined with care.

"But beneath the scars the years had made,
There remained a smile that refused to fade.
A boy came whistling down the street,
Bouncing along on carefree feet.

"His smile was full of joy and fun,
"Lady" said he "may I have one?"
When she pinned it on, he turned to say,
"Why do we wear a poppy to-day?"

"The lady smiled in her wistful way,
And answered: "This is Remembrance Day,
"And the poppy there is a symbol for
The gallant men who died in the war."

"And because they did, you and I are free,
That's why we wear a poppy you see,
I had a boy about your size,
With golden hair and big blue eyes.

"He loved to play and jump and shout,
Free as a bird, he would race about,
As the years went by, he learned and grew,
And became a man - as you will too."

"He was fine and strong, with a boyish smile,
But he'd seemed with us such a little while,
When war broke out and he went away,
I still remember his face that day.

"When he smiled at me and said good-bye,
'I'll be back soon, Mum, so please don't cry,
' But the war went on and he had to stay,
And all I could do was wait and pray.

"His letters told us of the awful fight,
(I can see at in my dreams at night),
With the tanks and guns and cruel barbed
wire,
And the mines and the bullets, the bombs
and the fire."

"That sure did sound like an awful fight,
But your son - did he come back alright?"
A tear rolled down each faded cheek,
She shook her head but didn't speak.

"I slunk away in a sort of shame,
And if you were with me, you'd have done the
same,
For our thanks, in giving is aft delayed,
Though our freedom was bought - and
thousands paid.

"And so, when we see a poppy worn,
Let us reflect on the burden borne,
By those who gave every all,
When asked to answer their country's call,
That we at home in peace might live.
Then wear a poppy, - and give.

**Remembrance Day
Lest We Forget.**

Count Your Blessings

'Blessed are those whose help is the God of Jacob, whose hope is in the Lord their God' (Psalm 46:5)

We have just come through another Harvest season with our Harvest Thanksgiving services in our churches in the linkage. Our thanksgiving doesn't need to stop there though now the Harvest services are over.

You may be someone who prefers warm, sunny days to gloomy, rainy ones. However, we know that rain nourishes the earth and brings forth green plants and beautiful flowers. Cloudy days also help you appreciate the days when you can bask in the sun. The biography of Johnson Oatman Jr. does not mention many gloomy days but he certainly encouraged others to take their cares to God when life becomes difficult for them. As a Methodist minister Johnson wrote more than five thousand hymns, including "Count Your Blessings." The lyrics of the chorus—

**Count your blessings, name them one by one,
Count your blessings, see what God has done.**

The words remind us that when we take our concerns to God, who is Lord over all, we do not have to be worried.

If you are feeling low or are experiencing many gloomy days, it may be time to stop and count your blessings. Remember the people who love you, the steps you have already taken toward a goal, and the beauty that surrounds you in this world. Be thankful for lessons learned from past frustrations. Thank God who sends blessings and is always with you. Trust that God will be with you as you continue on your way with him.

Jean Hunter

NEW PRINTER!

I would like to thank the various organisations and individuals who contributed so generously to my appeal for funds for a new printer to enable the Community Newsletter to continue to be published. The overwhelming support you gave makes it all worthwhile. As you will see we now have the new printer although only black and white it works at double the speed! I hope this will run smoothly for some considerable time and indeed make for a much less fraught time for the editor and indeed her husband!!

Bill Scott – Session Clerk

On Wednesday 7th August in the afternoon I had walked up Gleann Easan Biorach and there was no fresh landslide then. I returned on Tuesday 13th August when I met a broad slide of boulders, rubble and sinking mud blocking the path and descending into the burn. The path of the floodwater, laden with rocks, was clear to see all the way down and, as I write this, it still is. I am curious about when the landslide occurred and how long its journey down the glen took. I wonder what it looked like from above. Surely it must have been a very noisy journey with the turbulent water churning with boulders.

The shock of the severity of the flood left us feeling deeply despondent but on the very next morning, and for several days afterwards, a host of guardian angels in gardening gloves (that is Lochranza, Catacol and Pirnmill villagers) descended on the campsite and golf course and set to work on the big clear up, despite it being dirty and arduous work. Their presence, kindness and sheer hard work lifted us out of our despondency and gave us invaluable support at a difficult time.

To everyone who helped: a very big thank you. Your help was invaluable. We will always be grateful for the support you gave us.

Kathy Wells

Community Council Information

The Community Council meet the last Tues of the month at the Ormidale Pavillion @ 6pm with the exception of December. The public can attend.

The Minutes of the meetings are available to read in the Lochranza and Catacol Village Hall, The Lochranza Hotel and the Pirnmill Shop. They are also available on the Arran Community Council website page. The Ferry Committee Minutes dating back to 2012 and the Arran Economic Group Meetings are also available on this site. Google:- **Arran Community Council** then click Records.

If you have any concerns you would like taken forward, could you contact me (Lochranza and Catacol) or Liz Evans (Pirnmill). Thank you.

Contact Address:-

Julia Graham The Old Exchange, Lochranza KA27 8HL Tel: 01770 830 247
Email: acc.lochranza.julieg@gmail.com

Liz Evans Shore Cottage, Pirnmill, KA27 8HP Tel: 01770 850 267
Email: acc.pirnmill.lize@gmail.com

Julia Graham



Sad to think of *anyone* being on their own at Christmas

HOST UK arranges one day and weekend visits for International students all year round with three-night visits during the Festive season. Such hospitality is greatly sought after and valued by students far from home whose only alternative may be a lonely hall of residence.

Our "festive season" does not just mean Christmas but can also mean weekends in the run up to Christmas, and New Year. Your guest will be someone curious to experience British life with all its special traditions and culture...and keen to share those of their home country. Your hospitality will be a unique gift, a treasured memory and rewarding in so many ways.

Please consider opening your home and heart to an international student and remember that if the festive season is difficult for you, we do operate *all year round*, so hosting can become one of your New Year Resolutions!

If you should like to know more, please go to our website www.hostuk.org or leave us a message on <http://visits.hostuk.org/Public/ApplyToBecomeAHost>

Tel: 020 7739 6292

LOCHRANZA LADIES CHRISTMAS LUNCH

A change of venue this year, we are going to the **Wineport at Cladach Brodick on Friday 6th December for 13.30pm.**

Leaving on the service bus at 12.48pm (Church) returning on the service bus from Cladach at 16.30pm.

Numbers are limited to **32/34**, anyone interested **please let me know by Friday, 15th November.** Please **telephone me** for menu as I require your choice beforehand.

Prices are - 2 course including tea/coffee and tip £20.00 - 3 course including tea/coffee and tip £23.00.

Money due for meal on 3rd December or before.

Anne Coulter - Tel. No. 830219

Postings from Pirnmill Village Association (PVA)

Produce Show

This year's Produce Show saw yet another great turn-out in all categories, many thanks to all who participated. Special thanks to our judges Liz Dale and Colin Totty and also to Janet Logan for organising and co-ordinating the event. Congratulations go to our overall winners:

Iain Logan	-	Edward Rankin Trophy (produce)
Sue Cobban	-	Sunnyside Quaich (flowers)
Fiona Beaton	-	Millie Logan Trophy (baking)

Just a reminder, the Produce Show is open to residents of Pirnmill and surrounding Parishes. Be sure to join us for the 2020 Show, the more the merrier.

30th Anniversary of Pirnmill Hall

We had a great turnout for our Anniversary Celebration with over 65 attendees on the night, thank you to all who came to celebrate with us. Special thanks to our numerous volunteers for the grand job they did in sprucing up the hall beforehand, to the children of Pirnmill Primary for the beautiful card they made us, also to Pat l'Anson for donating the delicious cake, Liz Dale for her fabulous speech and commemorative poem and Edwina Milesi for providing the wonderful wall of photos on show. It was lovely to share in the hall memories and although our wee hall still needs a fair bit of TLC, hopefully one day we can return it to its former glory and see it come alive again.

Forthcoming Events

5 November	-	Bonfire Night, followed by Pop-up Pub
6 November	-	Weekly Wednesday Table Tennis Club
		7:00pm to 8:00pm children (under 14)
		8:00pm to 9:00pm adults (14+)
30-1 Nov/Dec	-	Arts & Crafts Exhibition
7 December	-	Pop-up Pub
25 January	-	Burns Night Pop-up Pub

Thank you for your continued support.

Hazel Cranstoun - PVA Chair

Lochranza and Catacol Sea Society cic. Report

2019 proved to be a relatively uneventful year for the Sea society albeit there has been a substantial amount of repair work required on the pontoon

The pontoon suffered some damage in the winter storms with one of the pontoon decking boards gone and a second one lifting about 2 inches. This resulted in the pontoon being closed for some 8 weeks waiting for **Gael Force** to source replacements.

Andy Lancaster reinstated the bottom leg of the pontoon in May and inspected it. There was nothing adverse detected in the chains or moorings. The **navigation beacon** base was loose and required repositioning and bolted into the structure. The **grab handles** for the ladders were repainted **bright yellow** as were the tops of the ladders.

Andy investigated the “**squeaky joint**” on the permanent section and it appears that the bolts and bolt holes have worn and become slack. There is slight damage to inshore float bottom where it lands on the rocks at Low Water. Both of these are be checked and rectified by Gael Force over the winter months. On the outer leg a set of the older bushes to also be inspected by Gael Force and possibly replaced.

The pontoon has been power washed and sprayed to prevent algae formation. After a storm in early July the **Swivel Joint Pin** required to be re-welded as discussed with Gael Force. Fortunately, a local welder was able to repair it with the help of **Nigel Wells**.

Dinghies were taking up a lot of the pontoon making it difficult for yachts to use the outer side of the permanent section. This has been rectified by painting on the pontoon area where they should go.

The Crew Lift and Community pump have both been serviced.

The **Ocean Youth Trust Mooring** has been regularly used by the OYT and also private yachts.

Our Website has proved invaluable for email queries and **PayPal donations**. **Douglas Cook** keeps this updated for us. **The donation box** with the envelope system has also proved to be successful.

We have put a notice on the navigation light pole “**no overnight berthing**” in an attempt to deter boats being moored overnight.

The bottom leg was removed at the end of September for winter storage.

Minutes of the AGM can be found in the Lochranza and Catacol Village Hall.
Julie Graham

Arran Medical Group PSUG Patient and Service User Group News

Keeping Involved, thank you to everyone who attended our local meeting in June this year. It was great to see a good turnout and thank you for your support. When making an appointment please continue to make it known that Lochranza is your preferred choice.

New Web Site - AMG has a new and improved web site
<https://www.arranmedical.co.uk/>

PSUG have a dedicated section with the minutes of meetings available as a matter of public record and we welcome feedback.

Have you registered online to book your appointments and order prescriptions? It is simple and straight forward eliminates telephone waiting and available 24/7 .
Just follow this link <https://www.patientaccess.com/>

North Ayrshire Health & Social Care Partnership - Integrated Island Services
The work going on behind the scenes developing this exciting proposal is extraordinary it is running to schedule and with updates expected early 2020.

If you have any questions, concerns or issues on health-related matters, please contact us.

Thanks again for your support

Patient Participation Representatives

Fred Shortland (Chair PSUG)Tel: 830610

fshortland@hotmail.com

Julie Graham Tel: 830247

julia74@btinternet.com

Mark Harwood (Pirmill) Tel: 850577

doctor.jug@gmail.com

Food Bank

Donations of tinned meat, fish, soups, toiletries and cleaning products are still needed.

Any donations can be left in Brodick Church, Lochranza & Pirmill Church or Lochranza & Catacol Village Hall.

Kids at War (part 2) *(the first part of Terry's story was in the May edition & it seemed appropriate to put this in in the Newsletter closest to Remembrance Sunday))*

Having been rejected by our Armed Forces on the grounds that it would be unfair on the Germans we had to find other means of spending our spare time. No problem. However, the first step was to solve our lack of transport. In those days tram cars were much as they are now: rounded at both ends with fitted, rounded windows that could not be opened. They were also fitted with large solid bumpers, at both ends, about 12 inches wide. We would hang around the tram stops until the vehicle set off when we would run out, skip on the back and sit on the bumper. We discovered that if we sat in the middle the conductor could not reach us while the tram was in motion. Short of sitting on the bumper himself there was not a lot he could do about it.

For longer journeys along the length of the docks there was the freight railway, which ran underneath the overhead railway. As there was no safety separation between the tracks and the road these trains ran very slowly. We found that it was quite easy to run alongside an open top truck and climb up into it. This had the added prospect of finding damaged crates revealing what it contained. We were only interested in anything edible, especially fruit, which we knew would be discarded as not fit for human consumption. We thought that was fair game.

Another pastime was far more adventurous. Many mainline trains into Liverpool stations travelled the last few miles underground. This required open areas for ventilation. The area on our patch was about 50yds long, 25yds wide and 60ft deep. It was surrounded by a stone wall about 8ft high topped by flat stone slabs 12 inches wide. We used to lie across the slabs watching the trains passing underneath. However, it was not long before we were daring each other to walk along the top. With increasing confidence (or recklessness), we were soon running along the wall. Later in life myself and my cousin George, who was more like a brother, decided to visit the 'Engine Wall'. It was just before I enlisted in the Armed Forces and George joined the Fire Service so we would probably be about 18yrs of age. On climbing the wall and looking down we were speechless. We just looked at each other, words were not necessary. We climbed down, walked away, and never went back. I sometimes think that the kind of childhood we had was setting us up for our choice of careers in later life. I doubt either of us could have tolerated a sedentary 9-5 existence. George was a front line Firefighter for many years until he suffered severe lung damage through smoke inhalation while rescuing two kids from a house fire which cut short his career. My future was mainly the Armed Forces followed by service in the Liverpool City Police. No. I was never too severe on mischievous kids.

It was before the D Day invasion when I contracted Scarlet Fever and was whisked into the local Isolation Hospital, which, fortunately was a very short walk from home. While I was not allowed visitors I was able to see something of my Mum and my little sister Eileen when I recovered sufficiently to be let out into the hospital garden with one of the nurses. Next door there was a four storey tenement block of flats with open verandas and, when I was due to be taken out into the garden Mum, Dad, and little sister Eileen would go up onto the second story landing and we could shout to each other. I cannot remember any other details of that stay as I am told that I was very ill. I also learned later that Dad was on embarkation leave when I took ill but was given a compassionate extension giving him more time at home. During that time his unit was posted abroad and apparently the ship was attacked and sank with significant loss of life. He was reassigned to the unit building and installing Mulberry Harbour. Needless to say, in later life he would on occasion have to hear me claiming, "Oh, come on Dad, I saved your life". It worked, sometimes. He was a great old boy and we became very close later in life. However, after a period of convalescence, at home, achieved by Mum nailing one of my feet to the floor (her words in later life) I suffered none of the ill effects commonly associated with the disease and made a full recovery.

Towards the end of the war I had four significant experiences heralding the start of the 'growing up' period: my first 'kiss', my first taste of wine, my first puff of a cigarette, and, best of all my first bicycle bought for me by my Grandmother. I must admit I was most unimpressed by all except the bike. That was magic and opened up a whole new world of riding as opposed to walking. At the time I was in the church choir. We kids had been discussing the 'kissing of girls' and, one day, after choir practice we were in the church porch after the adults had left. A girl I was friendly with and I were persuaded, by the assembled throng, to kiss. After the performance neither of us was impressed. We offered the feedback that 'teeth got in the way'. The wine tasting came about when two of us were tidying the Sacristy after the priest had left. We noticed a bottle of wine had been left out and decided to taste it. Again most unimpressed. Then, one day, we acquired a packet of Wills Whiff Cigarettes. Mum was out so we tried them out. Unfortunately my little sister Eileen caught us at it and threatened to tell Mum if we did not let her have a few puffs. Well, us big boys knew how to deal with a cheeky little girl who was making threats. We immediately capitulated and gave her one to try out. After puffing away for a minute or so she was promptly sick. When Mum arrived back home Eileen promptly grassed us up anyway. Mum made us surrender the goodies and we had to be content with the lesson on inter gender relationships.

Terry Crawley