



The Guildry Gazette

The Newsletter of The Guildry of Dundee - *An Ancient and Honorable Incorporation*

SUMMER 2026

Guildry in Action - Events, Fellowship and Future Plans

Our Purpose

In a world, shaped by uncertainty and change, we remain steadfast in our commitment in promoting the Guildry within the City of Dundee through a programme of visible and purposeful events and activities that bring members together and raise our profile in the wider community.

Past Events

During May and June, members represented the Guildry at the AGM of the Court of Deans of Guilds of Scotland, 13 members gave their time to mentor primary school teams in the Guildry Primary Schools Enterprise Project and 35 attended the Kirkin' of the Guildry. Further details can be found in the attached articles.

A particularly enjoyable impromptu event took place on the 1st of May, when 16 members and partners came together at short notice to attend the Voyages Concert at the Caird Hall, featuring the Edinburgh Philharmonic Orchestra and the Royal Marines Band. With a meal beforehand at a local restaurant, the evening offered not only excellent entertainment but also the chance to enjoy each other's company in an informal setting. This may well provide a model for similar informal events in the future.



Are there any similar occasions you would like to see included in the programme which others might enjoy? If so, please drop Stuart Clark a line to let him know the kinds of events you would welcome.

Future Programme

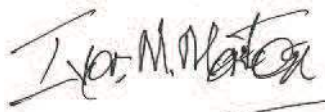
Jim Pickett and the Social and Fundraising Committee are now finalising arrangements for the Annual Dinner, which is anticipated to take place in late August or early September, with the date to be confirmed. The keynote address will be delivered by the well-known raconteur Michael Marra MSP. Musical entertainment will also be provided, promising an evening of warmth, enjoyment and good fellowship.

From this summer onwards, informal social gatherings over a drink or coffee will become a regular feature of our calendar. These occasions will offer members the opportunity to enjoy one another's company in a relaxed setting while also deepening the knowledge and understanding of the Guildry and its work.

This year's AGM will be held on Wednesday, 14th October in the City Chambers and will feature an address from a distinguished speaker.

Looking ahead to 2027, the forthcoming 700th Anniversary presents a wonderful opportunity both to advance our wider ambitions and to celebrate the Guildry's enduring place in the life of the city. With careful planning and the active involvement of members and Assessors alike, there is every reason to approach this landmark occasion with confidence and anticipation. Preparations for the Anniversary will continue to feature prominently in discussions at all forthcoming Assessors' Meetings, alongside the principal events planned for the remainder of 2026. Members will, of course, be kept informed as these important and exciting plans continue to take shape.

All very best wishes for a tremendous summer and may the sun shine upon us.



Ivor Morton, Lord Dean



St Clements RC Primary School Win The Guildry Primary Schools Enterprise Cup

by Brian Cram



Pupils from eight primary schools - Eastern, Fintry, Glebelands, Rosebank, Sidlaw View, St Clement's RC, St Joseph's RC and St Pius Primary Schools - have enjoyed an inspiring five month journey of creativity, teamwork and enterprise, developing innovative business ideas and raising an impressive total of more than £5,300 for local charities.

The enthusiasm, commitment and pride shown by pupils, teachers and Guildry mentors throughout the project has been truly outstanding, with results that exceeded all expectations. Special recognition is due to our dedicated team of Guildry mentors - Ric Russell, Iain Murray, Ewan Pate, Jim Patrick, Musheer Hussain, Graeme Reid, Graham Summers, Bill Barr, Brian McLeod, Brian Cram and Ian Mathers.

Four teams were selected to attend the Network Day at Morgan Academy to present their projects with the aim of winning the Guildry Enterprise Cup. This year, the trophy was won by Crazy Clemmies Water, the enterprise run by P6 at St Clements RC PS, taught by Nicola Forbes. They sold environmentally friendly water bottles with personalised decorations. They researched the amount of single use plastic and counted the numbers of plastic water bottles disposed of daily in their school. It gave them the impetus to try to do something about it, and the provision of metal water bottles was chosen as their project.

Team Mentor, Assessor Brian McLeod said "It was a great honour to mentor the team and see the effort and commitment the pupils put into developing their project - from the first small ideas through to a fully fledged enterprise. While winning the Project Cup is a wonderful achievement, the greatest reward was witnessing the learning, teamwork and confidence the children gained throughout the process."

The competition was very intense and both Eastern PS classes and the Fintry PS class presented exciting and interesting projects.

The objective of the Enterprise Project is to provide a vehicle for the teachers to encourage their pupils to think about the world after school.

The idea is to get their pupils to work together to make money that they can donate to a charity that they want to support. We give them some ideas about the types of jobs they need to do i.e. Finance, Marketing, Manufacturing, Selling, Buying, Dispute Resolution and Team Building but the class and their teacher decide what structures they need.

Every child is part of the process and the teachers consistently say how pleased they are when they see the subjects that they teach being used to help their pupils achieve their goals.

St Clements RC Primary School receive their trophy from The Lord Dean.

Under the expert guidance of Project Organiser, Brian Cram, the USP of our Enterprise Project is provided by our team of Guildry members who act as Mentors. The presence of someone who has experience of the world they are being asked to join is the vital component. Mentors turn ideas into plans and plans into actions, and actions into outcomes which are recorded and measured. Thanks to them this project has had a consistently high ranking within our local schools.



Guildry of Dundee steps out for time-honoured Kirkin' Ceremony

Members of the Guildry of Dundee gathered at St Mary's Church for the Annual Kirkin' of the Guildry, continuing a tradition of worship in the heart of the city that stretches back more than 500 years.

The Lord Dean of Guild, Ivor Morton, together with Guildry members and guests, welcomed the Honoured Guests: Depute Lord Provost Nadia El Nakla; Deacon Convenor of the Nine Incorporated Trades John Fyffe; Convenor of the Three United Trades Alan Lundie; and the Rector of the High School of Dundee, Lise Hudson.

Proceedings began with a short welcome from the Depute Lord Provost, followed by a response from the Lord Dean of Guild. In keeping with tradition, guests then processed from the City Chambers to St Mary's Church, led by piper John Bryson and flag bearers from the High School of Dundee.



Guildry Procession from City Chambers to St. Mary's Church, led by Piper John Bryson.



Guests at the Kirkin' of the Guildry, featuring (shown left to right in robes) Lise Hudson, Rector of the High School of Dundee, John Fyffe, Deacon Convenor of the Nine Incorporated Trades, Ivor Morton, Lord Dean of Guild, Nadia El Nakla, Depute Lord Provost, Alan Lundie, Convenor of the Three United Trades.

The service was conducted by the minister, Rev Keith Hall, whose sermon reflected on the importance of ambition, faith and determination in achieving successes, often in unexpected ways.

The origins of the ceremony can be traced to 1515, when the Guild of Merchants, with Council approval, founded an altar in the south aisle of St Mary's Parish Kirk in honour of the Holy Blood. Priests or chaplains were appointed by



Lord Dean Ivor Morton congratulates Past Lord Dean David Adam on his 80th Birthday.

the Guildry Merchants to celebrate mass, attended by the Dean and Assessors. Despite centuries of change - including war damage, fire and alterations to the building - the service has endured.

Members and guests were also delighted to learn that the occasion coincided with the 80th birthday of Past Lord Dean David Adam, who attended the Kirkin' on his special day. Many Happy Returns, David - You don't look a day over 79!

Lord Dean of Guild, Ivor Morton, said: "We are proud to continue this time-honoured practice and to preserve the traditions that have shaped the Guildry's place in Dundee's civic life for centuries.

We are also bowled over that David Adam was able to join the Kirkin' on his 80th Birthday, allowing us the opportunity to offer our congratulations and best wishes in person."

The Annual General Meeting of the Court of Deans of Guild at the Merchants Hall

The Annual General Meeting of the Court of Deans of Guild of Scotland was held in Edinburgh on Friday 17th of April 2026.

Lord Dean Ivor and several of his Assessors attended the meeting which was held for the first time ever in the magnificent Hall of the Royal Company of Merchants of the City of Edinburgh.

CoDoGoS Lord President Alan Robertson presided over the meeting which received reports from ten Guildry Incorporations of Scotland and Ivor spoke for the Guildry Incorporation of Dundee.

The official business ended following the installation of Mr Ewan Begg, Lord Dean of Guild of the Guildry Incorporation of the City of Perth as Lord President of the Court of Deans for the year 2026/ 2027.

A fine lunch, hosted by the Merchant Company ensued, during which the gathering heard from Grant Macrae OBE the Master of the Merchants Company, who explained the role of his “800 year old vibrant membership organisation” which in addition to governing George Watsons College and Erskine Stewart’s Melville Schools is a charitable trust, partnering charities and standing behind a wide range of charitable causes throughout Edinburgh.

After lunch, the assembly received a highly informative talk from Guy Cartwright, CEO and Secretary of the Company, during which he explained the efficient and modernised approach of their charitable impact on their community within Edinburgh and the Lothians.

The Autumn meeting of the Court of Deans will be held in Stirling and organised by Ayr Guildry. Date to be announced.



Lord Dean Ivor Congratulates Ewan Begg on his appointment as the new Lord President.



Outgoing Lord President, Alan Robertson, shakes hands with his successor, Ewan Begg.

Happy 90th Birthday to Sinclair Aitken, OBE

Many congratulations to Sinclair Aitken, OBE, our distinguished and greatly admired Past Lord Dean, who recently celebrated his 90th birthday.

There are few 90-year-olds who are as physically and mentally adept as Sinclair, who remains as sharp and perceptive as ever and as fit as a fiddle. To this day, he is still on the golf course, achieving highly respectable scores, although disappointed not to be matching the handicap of years gone by.

His drive, energy and ambition remain undiminished, complemented by his truly affable personality and quiet self-confidence. These qualities come as no surprise, for they are underpinned by a continuous record of achievement throughout his career and his family and civic life.

Born and bred in Musselburgh, where he attained the title of the “Honest Lad”, Sinclair moved to Dundee in the late 1950s after his National Service in the RAF. His talents as a go-ahead businessman were soon recognised. He joined Smith, Hood and Company (Allied Coal and Shipping) and was quickly appointed a Director of the Company at the remarkable age of 27, later becoming the Company’s Senior Managing Director.

Expanding his career portfolio further, he moved to the D.P. and L. Shipping Company, taking up the role of Assistant Group Managing Director, and later became Business Development Director for P.S. Ridgway Ltd. In each of these appointments, his achievements generated immense additional value, and the businesses prospered through Sinclair’s acumen and hard work.

However, his greatest life achievement has been his marriage to his lovely Lindore and the joy of raising his two sons, Rhogan and Innes. Family life has been, and still is, Sinclair’s *raison d’être*, around which everything else revolves and which gives him his greatest fulfilment. His four grandchildren, Imogen, Georgia, Jones and Tay, are his pride and joy.



Sinclair’s role in public life has been distinctive and far-reaching. For 20 years he has served as Honorary Consul of Finland and was awarded the Order of the Lion of Finland – Knight First Class. He was appointed Deputy Lord Lieutenant for the City of Dundee, served as Former Lord Dean of Guild and Former Chair of Leisure and Culture Dundee, spent 18 years as Chairman of Dundee Repertory Theatre, and was named Dundee Citizen of the Year in 2001. He has also served for 50 years as a member of Dundee Rotary Club and was Past Chairman of Dundee Round Table.

He is competitive and has thoroughly enjoyed taking part in a wide range of sports: Rugby Union, where he was a highly talented front row forward and Past Captain of Morgan Academy RFC; golf, where he is a member of the R&A, St Andrews, and was Past Captain of Panmure Seniors; and curling, where he was Past President of Broughty Ferry Curling Club.

On this special milestone, we celebrate not only Sinclair’s many accomplishments, but also the generosity of spirit, loyalty and friendship for which he is so warmly esteemed. We wish him continued health, happiness and every blessing in the years ahead.

Merchants Letter of 1515

by Iain Flett

In the City Archives there is an intriguing meticulous copy made in the early 19th century of a 1515 grant to the Guildry. Today they might be known as Standard Operating Procedures, but in 1515, before Martin Luther and John Knox were heard of in Scotland, we have to get our heads round the biggest financial burden of all – the Guildry support for the income of their chaplain to say mass at their individual altar in honour of The Haly Blude (Holy Blood). In the twilight of candlelit silver and gold chalices before the Reformation of 1560 this altar was at the top of the iconographic pecking order of holy relics. Just as Arbroath Abbey proudly exhibited its fragment of the shattered skull of St Thomas a Becket, so the wealthy in Dundee proudly boasted of its tiny fragment of the True Cross, possibly with a silver phial stating it contained a drop of the blood of Christ captured from the foot of the Cross. Chaplain, altar goods and a liability to upkeep part of the huge one-piece parish church would be a heavy financial liability.

In 1515 the Guild of merchants, with consent of the council agreed to erect altar on the south aisle of the parish kirk for the love of God Almighty and of Christ's precious blood.



This splendid carved altar in Germany dedicated to the Holy blood is contemporary with what the Guildry commissioned for their prime spot in the South Aisle - (roughly like the window in The Mary Slessor). You can imagine it being backlit on a sunny day from the inside and the chaplain in gilded robes as he said mass and performed baptisms and marriages.

The appointed chaplain would daily sing and say divine service there. 'And singing mess solemnly ilk Thursday; power given with the body of the merchants to choose a dean of gild yearly who will have power of collectorship of holy blude silver. This to be taken of all goods loaded from on a proportion of cloth and hides and barrel goods to be gathered by the Dean and his assessors. For example, a merchant setting up a booth shall pay first upset to the Dean 40 shillings for the reparation (upkeep) of the altar. In 1515 a Scots pound was worth one twelfth of a pound Stg, so 40s would be 3s 4d stg. The cash equivalent today would be about £160, so it looks as though the Guildry easily covered its dues to the Mither Kirk.