

# The Tinto Parishes

Cairngryffe

Libberton and Quothquan

Symington

## Parish Profile

# 2013

## What we hope for in our new minister

We look forward very much to welcoming a minister. We look forward too, to the gifts that that person will bring and which will enhance our Christian experience. Each congregation has well tried and well-loved practices and we would hope to share and expand these as well as exploring innovative approaches and styles of worship. We are conscious that many find change challenging and we hope that we can work together to address this.

Our hope always is to further God's work in our communities and constantly to maintain active outreach to all. Accordingly we seek a minister who will provide leadership and will identify with people of our churches and villages. That person we hope will recognise the talent, commitment and goodwill already present within our membership and help us to build further upon these.

We would look for support for the congregations as they continue to make outreach to their individual communities. We have experienced limited response in the past but hope for pastoral leadership in continuing this work and attracting more (possibly younger) members with enthusiasm and energy.

At all times we would hope to continue to maintain caring contact with those who require support and we see the minister as having a strong locus in this.

We anticipate that the minister will encourage and support the office bearers in each congregation and be prepared to sustain existing delegated practice in areas such as visiting the elderly and housebound, organising worship through teams of members, conducting Praise and Prayer meetings.

We look forward to working with our minister in developing further skills to enable us to keep abreast of emerging trends to make our outreach more effective.

## Statistical summary as at 31/12/12

### Cairngryffe

Constitution

Quoad Omnia

No of elders 10

Others 1 (treasurer)

Roll 170

Finance 2010 income £23,629 deficit \*£7,093

2011 income £24,186 surplus £4984

2012 income £23,940 surplus £3,344

\* £7K spent fitting grilles to all windows in church

### Libberton and Quothquan

Constitution Quoad Omnia

No. of elders 12

Roll 84

Finance 2010 income £12,620 surplus £1880

2011 income £14,520 surplus £3349

2012 income £14,560 surplus £3050

### Symington

Constitution Quoad Sacra

No.of elders 20 (18 active)

No. of Board members 8

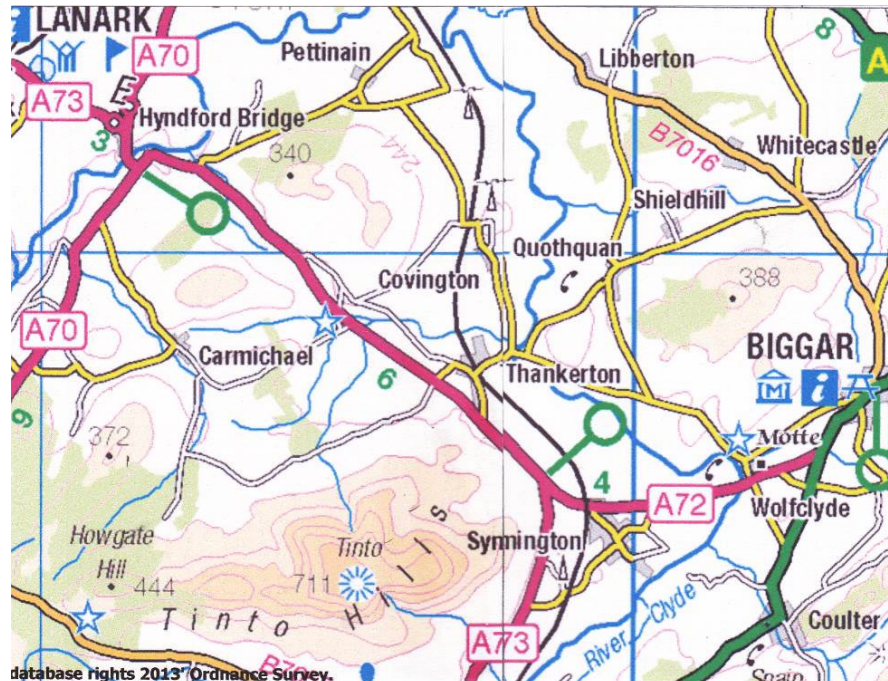
Roll 200

Finance 2010 income £30,611 deficit £1,352

2011 income £32,458 deficit £1,930

2012 income £32,025 deficit £4,136

## THE TINTO PARISHES – CAIRNGRYFFE, LIBBERTON AND QUOTHQUAN, SYMINGTON



The linked parish is situated in Upper Clydesdale in South Lanarkshire and encompasses the communities of Carmichael, Covington, Libberton, Pettinain, Quothquan, Symington and Thankerton with an extensive rural hinterland including several large farms, The River Clyde forms the parish boundary to the east and north and the Tinto Hills to the west.

Cairngryffe was established in 1995 as a union of the former linked congregations of Carmichael, Covington and Pettinain. The church at Carmichael was selected eventually as the place of worship for the united parish and styled Cairngryffe Kirk, The remaining two church buildings at Covington and Pettinain have since been sold. Symington was linked with Cairngryffe at this time and its church building retained. The manse of Covington that had served as the manse for the three linked congregations was sold and the manse at Symington, completed in 1995, was selected as the manse for the new linkage.

To establish the linkage with Cairngryffe, Symington was taken out of its previous linkage of some twelve years with Culter and Libberton and Quothquan. The new linkage was welcomed in Symington, and over the period of the previous two ministries,

relations with Cairngryffe have been cordial and productive and the two congregations share several common activities. The inevitable shifts in membership consequent on any union have now become historical and each church has been enriched by the addition of members who are no longer 'new' but full contributors to the life and work of their chosen place of worship.

In 2013 the parish of Libberton and Quothquan joined the linkage. This re-established the previous linkage with Symington which as already noted, was dissolved in 1995. This had been a successful partnership and both congregations welcome its renewal

The situation resulting from the readjustments finds three well maintained and comfortable church buildings. Cairngryffe Kirk is in the village of Carmichael, Libberton Kirk in Libberton village and Symington Kirk in Symington. There is a modern well equipped church hall at Symington which is well used by the congregation and the community. The congregation of Cairngryffe uses the Village Hall at Carmichael for church purposes while the Village Hall in Quothquan is used by the congregation of Libberton.

Services are held in each church on Sunday. Service times are 9-30a.m., and 11-00a.m. and these are rotated on a three monthly basis. From January to April 2013, services at Symington are at 9-30a.m. and Cairngryffe and Libberton at 11-00a.m. The 9-30a.m. service is taken by the minister who then conducts one of the 11-00a.m. services. The arrangements for the conducting of the other 11-00am service is in the hands of each respective Kirk Session. Services thus may be conducted by the Deacon, by invited clergy or by a group from within the congregation. Communion services are held in Cairngryffe and Symington on the first Sunday in March, June and November and in Libberton on the first Sunday in March and November or on the nearest convenient date. A Kirk and Community newsletter - FOCUS is produced four times a year and circulated to all members. This has been in existence for several years in Cairngryffe and Symington and Libberton and Quothquan have indicated their willingness to be included in the future.

The total population of the area is around 2000 and the congregational rolls currently stand at 170 for Cairngryffe, 200 for Symington and 82 for Libberton. The population is fairly typical of rural central Scotland with a reducing number of people employed in agriculture and many employed in the service sector in Lanark and Biggar. As the area is scenically attractive and is conveniently linked to the motorway system with good major roads, many have chosen to settle here and to commute to Edinburgh, Glasgow and beyond. A significant proportion of the population is retired and in Symington and Thankerton particularly, there are a number of people who are unemployed. Over the last two decades there has been considerable private housing development throughout the area although this has slowed in recent years. There is some local authority housing in each of the communities and some Scottish Housing Association provision in Symington and Thankerton. The local development plan envisages continued housing development in each of the existing communities,

Within the parish area, the main centres of population are Symington and Thankerton with smaller communities at Carmichael, Libberton, Pettinain, and Covington. There is a sub post office and mini-market in Symington and a small general store in Thankerton while Biggar (5 miles) and Lanark (7 miles) provide a wider range of shopping facilities. Public transport is limited to a bus service that runs from Lanark to Sanquhar via several small communities including Thankerton and Symington and another which runs from Biggar to Lanark from where more extended connections may be made. The Dumfries – Edinburgh bus service can be accessed in Biggar. There is a limited train service from Carstairs to Glasgow and Edinburgh and there is a regular train service from Lanark to Glasgow. As is common in rural communities, many people rely on private cars for transport. Both Glasgow and Edinburgh are accessible by car in around one hour.

There are three primary schools within the parish. *Tinto Primary School* at Symington has a roll of some 140 and was built in 1992 to replace three existing schools at Symington, Covington and Pettinain. The school serves

Symington, Thankerton, Covington and Pettinain. *Carmichael Primary School* with a roll of 25 serves the community of Carmichael and the surrounding area and *Libberton Primary School* lying between Libberton and Quothquan has some 36 children and serves the communities of Libberton and Quothquan and around. Tinto Primary and Libberton Primary are included in the learning community centred on Biggar High School while Carmichael Primary is part of Lanark Grammar School's learning community.

The communities sustain a wide range of recreational activities including bowling, football and badminton and there are several youth organisations including Guides, Brownies, Rainbows and Beavers most of whom meet in Symington. Although these are not strictly 'church' organisations, a close association with the congregation is maintained. Services involving the youth organisations are held in Symington on special occasions such as Thinking Day and Remembrance Sunday.

Social services and agencies such as a mobile bank and libraries serve the communities themselves. Greater provision however exists in Biggar and Lanark for medical, paramedical and dental services.

### ***Cairngryffe Kirk***

Cairngryffe Kirk is situated in the village of Carmichael, just to the east of the crossroads. Like Symington it is surrounded by its graveyard which is owned and maintained by South Lanarkshire Council.

**Looking down to the new Carmichael Primary School with the church just visible among the trees to the right.**



The graveyard is enclosed by a vernacular turf topped wall, itself surrounded by mature beeches.

The Church, which is listed “B” was until the union and linkage of 1995, the Parish Church of Carmichael and has close links with the Carmichael family and estate, the gates of which lie some 200 metres away.



**A view of Cairngryffe Church approaching from the west.**

The original Carmichael church was founded at the beginning of the 12th century on a site within the estate about a mile south east of the present building and was dedicated to St Michael.

The present building dates from 1750 and incorporates an external stone stair and several gravestones moved from the original site. The church was extensively remodelled in 1904 to plans by Sir John Lorimer; two of the three lofts were removed and much handsome stained glass added. The ornamentation was such that the building became known as the "little cathedral of the Upper Ward" The ornamentation was added to by a new stained glass window in 1998 which reflects the way of life in this rural parish.

**An interior view looking towards the communion table at Christmas**





The present building seats approximately 150 on the ground floor - the remaining loft is accessible but seldom used. The furniture is predominantly oak on a tiled and parquet floor and stone walls. The Organ is new, purchased about 4 years ago. Heating is electric, controlled by a modern, thermostat. There is a small vestry, toilet and vestibule. Several pews were removed 6 years ago and replaced by comfortable modern chairs which give greater flexibility of use. At this time a small Session room was created and this is used by the Sunday school. It holds 20 people and is ideal for Session meetings



An interior view looking from the communion table

Several articles from the former pre union congregations remain in use notably the pulpit falls, rotated on a regular basis and Communion silver valued at a considerable sum and dating back, in some cases, to the seventeenth century. The building is well maintained and in good repair.

There is no church hall as such. The village hall is sited about 50 yards from the church may be used as required. The Everyyoung Club meets in the village hall at Thankerton twice a month except in summer, while the Guild meets in the same hall once a month during the winter months.

### ***Libberton Kirk***

Libberton and Quothquan Church, or as known locally, 'Libberton Church', is situated in the hamlet of Libberton on the B7016 road 6 miles from Biggar. It is surrounded by its graveyard which is owned and maintained by South Lanarkshire Council. The B listed building was erected in 1812 and the interior and roof were extensively renovated in 1902.

**Libberton Church**



The present parish of Libberton and Quothquan is a union of the two separate and independent parishes of Libberton and Quothquan which took place in 1669.

Quothquan was a small, ancient, horse-shoe shaped parish bounded in the north by the Standing Burn with the river Clyde to the west and Biggar parish to the east. Libberton Parish originally extended into the area of what is now the Parish of Carnwath. In 1185 the church of Carnwath was given to the Bishop of Glasgow by William de Somerville. The parish was then bounded by the Medwin Water in the north, the River Clyde to the west, the parish of Walston to the east and the Standing Burn to the south.

The present church building holds around 100 on the ground floor and 50 in the gallery. All seating is traditional pews. The organ is electric and was purchased in 2006. Heating is by electrical tubular heaters controlled by thermostat.

The pulpit is raised at the north end of the church with a raised and carpeted area surrounding it. This part also houses the organ, the communion table, font and lectern. There is a wireless speaker system installed.

There is a small vestry and toilet and the building is well maintained and in good repair. Only minor items were raised in the last quinquennial report and these have been addressed.

At present Libberton Church has 82 members on its roll with average Sunday attendance of 30. A small Sunday School is held each Sunday during the service to serve 12 children. Average attendance is 5.



Activities and displays to highlight aspects of the Christian seasons are presented regularly in the church



There are 11 serving elders with all financial and fabric matters being dealt with by the Kirk Session. Financial matters are in sound condition.

**A Flower Festival to mark the Bicentenary of the church was held in 2012. This illustrated aspects of village life through the ages in a**



There is no church hall and all functions out-with the church are held in the village hall at Quothquan thereby maintaining a direct link between the two communities.

There are some 225 houses in the parish (20 families on the congregational roll live outside the parish). There is one primary school in the parish situated between Quothquan and Libberton. The school role is around 30. Children move from there to Biggar High School. In addition to the normal Sunday services, outdoor services have been held at the old Quothquan Church. A Harvest Supper, to which members of our linked partners are invited, is held each year in Quothquan Hall - the village hall, run by local residents. A Christmas lunch is also held here with all senior citizens in the parish receiving an invitation. A coffee morning is held fortnightly in a member's house.



An outdoor service in the grounds of the old church at Quothquan

Although our church is small it has a very committed and friendly congregation who actively participate in all our projects – flower show, outdoor carol singing, candle light services and much else.

### *Symington Kirk*

The church is situated at the end of road called Kirk Bauk and sits on a small knoll. It is surrounded by the original graveyard with a modern extension of this lying to the west. Within the old graveyard is an 18th century watch house built to shelter those who were obliged to watch over the kirkyard to thwart grave robbers. This building, like the church itself, is grade B listed.



Symington Kirk

The church building is not specifically dated although records indicate that the original foundation can be linked to similar establishments in the area.

These were set up in the mid-12th century by monks from the Priory of Lesmahagow, an offshoot of the Abbey of Kelso. The present church is substantially 18th century and was originally rectangular in shape with a flat roof. The entrance of this building was in the south wall where the present pulpit is located. Sometime during the 18th century, extensive renovation took place with the construction of an additional wing to the north and a porch to the west. This has produced a T-shaped building with a curved apse at the east end - added probably about the same time. It has a 'pepper-pot' belfry dated 1734.

The church from the churchyard looking west showing the vestry (left, in the corner) and the rear porch



The kirk was dedicated originally to St Ninian and was known as such until 1946. At this time a union took place with St. John's Kirk, the Free Church in Symington and Symington Church was established. For some 20 years it has been designated 'Symington Kirk'.

The church seats some 170 and is comfortably furnished with cushioned pine pews. The pews within the east section of the church were removed around three years ago and replaced by individual chairs for choir and general use. This has become a useful area for meetings. The front area has been carpeted throughout and the pulpit, organ, lectern and communion table occupy a raised platform along the front. The lectern was gifted some two years ago and constructed locally. A new font to replace an existing monumental stone font was dedicated in late 2000. This new font which was constructed to match the lectern was the gift of an anonymous donor and holds a decorated silver bowl which formed part of the previous font. The congregation marked the Millennium with the commissioning of a large wooden cross which has been

hung above the west door. The organ, purchased some years ago from a church in Coatbridge, is electric, and has been upgraded with the installation of a new speaker cabinet. Two glass cases in the north wall house a collection of book board falls and matching Bible markers. These were made a few years ago by members of the congregation and illustrate the seasons of the Christian year.



**The interior of the church  
looking east**

The church is heated by a combination of electrically operated oil filled pipes and electric floor level heaters. The building is in a good condition overall and is regularly maintained and repaired as required.

**Interior of the church looking  
towards the pulpit from the rear  
door**



The minister and kirk session use the small vestry for prayers of dedication before the service on Sunday. Meetings of the session and congregational board are held in the church itself as the vestry is too small for the purpose. There are currently 20 members of session and some 8 board members. The church has a talented and

enthusiastic choir of some 26 members which leads praise each Sunday and which presents concerts in the church and around the area from time to time. The choir meets in the church on Wednesday evenings.



**The church hall and upper car park from the church gate. The cemetery is to the right of this picture**

The hall situated some 50 metres to the south of the church opposite the modern part of the cemetery was gifted to the congregation in 1958 and is wholly owned by the congregation and administered by local trustees. It has been extensively modernised and redecorated and comprises a large hall with adjacent classroom and kitchen premises. It houses storage cupboards for use by the organisations. There is a ladies' toilet and cloakroom with a large store cupboard at the entrance to the hall and a gents' toilet off the classroom. Inside the hall there is another large cupboard. There is an electric heating system which has recently been renewed. The hall is used for congregational social functions and by SundayZone (Sunday school) and the Guild. Several local groups - Brownies, Guides, Badminton also use it during the winter. There is extensive parking adjacent to the hall and this was extended a few years ago along the south wall of the kirkyard.

The congregational roll stands currently at 200 with an attendance on Sundays hovering around 40. There are some 10-12 children attending SundayZone which meets during the service in the church hall.

### *Activities with younger children*

Beginning in November 2012, initiatives have been taken in relation to making outreach to young people in the three parishes. Members of each congregation working in conjunction with Ann Lyall, our Deacon and youth worker Alex Kelly of the Clydesdale Christian Youth Trust have set up club days for primary school children on school in-service days. The clubs are open to all and are provided free of charge. Children are involved in a range of activities as they explore issues presented within a specific theme and opportunities are given for discussion, arts and crafts, games and music in the course of the day. Outreach is made to school staff on the day through the provision of refreshments and catering during their break. The venture has proved successful in bringing children from different communities together, and has now become a regular feature.



## **Cairngryffe linked with Symington - Manse**

During the linkage of Symington with Culter and Libberton and Quothquan, it was proposed that a new manse should be acquired for the joint congregations. The new manse was jointly owned by Culter and Symington and as agreed, was situated near Biggar, outside all three parishes. Difficulties of access and the high cost of maintenance eventually led to a decision to sell this house and to build a new manse in Symington. The house was completed in 1995 just as the minister at the time, moved to another charge.

At the point of this change of minister, Presbytery decided to restructure the linkage and to link Symington with Cairngryffe. An arbitration committee was appointed to decide on the use of buildings and chose the house at Symington. Cairngryffe subsequently bought out Culter's share of the manse so that the present manse is owned jointly by Cairngryffe and Symington. A joint Manse Committee comprising members of both congregations oversees the fabric and maintenance of the manse.



**The Manse, Abington  
Road, Symington**

The house is situated on a corner site at Abington Road and School Road in Symington. It is adjacent to an area designated for private housing which is now extensively developed. The house is surrounded by an attractively laid out garden with shrubs and herbaceous borders. An additional piece of land alongside School Road was gifted to the congregation and has now been incorporated into the original site and the whole is bounded by a beech hedge. The house is sheltered from the neighbouring

property by mature trees and has an attractive outlook over the Culter Hills to the southwest. There is double garage with a pebbled parking area to the front of the house. The house itself comprises:

Ground Floor. Glazed entrance door, L-shaped hall with staircase to left to upper floor. A glazed door to right gives access to lounge with bow window and wall mounted marble fireplace with inset living flame LPG fire. To the rear of the lounge is the dining room with French windows to the back garden, To the left of this room at the end of the hall, is a room with TV point used as a study by the last minister. Opposite this is a large under-stair cupboard / cloakroom. The hall continues to the left and on the right is a toilet and cloakroom. Beyond this is the kitchen. The room is fully fitted with floor and wall units along two sides and has space for a fridge and cooker. There is space for dining. To the left of the kitchen at the end of the corridor is a utility room with stainless steel sink. A worktop extends the length of the room and there is space under this for washer, dryer and dishwasher. There is an external half-glazed door giving access to the side of the house and the rear garden. The oil storage tank is situated close to this door. To the left of the utility room, a door gives access to the extensive double garage within which is the central heating boiler,

First Floor The staircase gives access to an upper hallway with the master bedroom to the left at the top. The room extends the full depth of the house and overlooks the drive. It includes, to the rear an en-suite with shower, toilet and wash hand basin. Facing this along the other wall is a large fitted wardrobe unit with sliding doors. A window at the end overlooks the rear garden. To the right at the top of the stair is a single bedroom. It has a window overlooking the drive and contains a built-in cupboard. Beyond it on the right is a bedroom again overlooking Abington Road and with built-in wardrobe. On the left of the landing is the bathroom with bath, toilet and wash hand basin. Beyond it is a fourth bedroom with built-in wardrobe and window overlooking the rear garden. At the end of the corridor is a large walk-in cupboard

The house has an oil-fired central heating system and double glazing throughout. It is fully carpeted with tiling in the kitchen and utility room. It has been carefully maintained since its construction. During the two year period since the demission of the previous minister, the house has been let and so has been fully occupied during the vacancy.