

Origins of the Church in Gargunnoch



The origins of the church in Gargunnoch are lost in the mists of time but certainly go back to at least the year 1500 at which time the place of worship would have been a chapel coming under the jurisdiction of Cambuskenneth Abbey to whom the revenues of the Parish went.

This ancient connection is commemorated in the carvings on the ends of the Elders' Benches which sit on the raised portion in front of the pulpit. The one nearest the main door is a copy of the monogram on a reputed keystone of



WORSHIP

We hope you will find a sense of peace here within the church. It's a place for contemplation and prayer today as much as in the past. We are proud of our Church's history.

We worship each Sunday at 10:30am and during the summer months have occasional Joint Services with our linked churches across the valley at Kincardine in Menteith (Blairdrummond) and Kilmadock Doune

OPEN DAYS & TOURS

At times the Welcome Team run Kirkyard Tours and OpenDays. Contact gwelcometeam@gmail.com for more information

Church Timeline

- **Prior to the Reformation of c1560** the place of worship here was a chapel with a priest. Afterwards **c1615**, by decree of King James IV, the minister had a manse with glebe land and he received corn, barley and money as a stipend.
- **1626** Decision taken to replace the old, ruinous place of worship, to be financed by the Lairds of Gargunnoch, Leckie, Boquhan, Culbeg and Culmore as previously promised.
- **1629** Construction almost complete but with overspend of 200 merks. Money borrowed but Poores money used to finance repayments.
- **1644 & 1660** Loft enlarged to west (Meiklewood) and North. An east loft built to accommodate Lairds of Leckie & Boquhan.
- **1657** School in Church moved to top of Main St.
- **1702** Belfry built on north gable to accommodate new bell.
- **1774** Unspecified reconstruction work begun and cross and crescent from old church replaced on new one.
- **1891** Substantial internal renovations carried out. Galleries dismantled and replaced. Pews renewed, aisles relaid, Pulpit replaced and gifts of Baptismal Font and Communion Table received.
- **1920s** Removal of yellow rendering from exterior.
- **C1938-40** Electricity installed, new lights replaced oil lamps and electric organ replaced harmonium
- **1956 & 1968** Stained glass windows installed to right & left of pulpit by local donors.
- **1974** Bicentenary celebrations held.
- **1995** Gargunnoch linked with Kincardine in Menteith (Blairdrummond) then in **2000** with Kilmadock (Doune)
- **2015/16** Substantial repairs to roof and internal ceiling. Removal of some pews to create Welcome Area.

Cambuskenneth Abbey. The intertwining letters **MSMC** represent **Monasterium S. Marie de Cambuskennet**. The other depicts St Andrew extended on his cross of crucifixion, the symbol of the diocese of St Andrews.

Following the Reformation, King James 6th of Scotland and 1st of England, on 10th April 1615, conceded the revenues of Cambuskenneth to the Earl of Mar with the provision that the minister of Gargunnoch should receive 2 chalders (300 Kg) of corn, 1 chalder (150 Kg) barley and 200 merks (£40) with manse and glebe (land surrounding the manse and across the road from the church. He also received the minister's tithes of the lands of Gargunnoch, Leckie, Boquhan, Culbeg and Culmore which were 10% of the yield of milk, butter, eggs, cheese and wool and of the sheep, cattle horses and pigs.

Replacement of the Old Chapel

According to the old session minutes, in 1626 the pre-Reformation "House of God" was altogether ruinous so it was replaced by a new building financed by the Lairds of Gargunnoch, Leckie, Boquhan, Culbeg and Culmore whose responsibility that was.

The new building was rectangular in shape with a single loft or gallery but by the end of the century had been enlarged by the Laird of Gargunnoch to form a north wing with belfry and by then had three galleries. Thus the church took on the T-shape we are familiar with today.

Another Reconstruction

In 1774 another reconstruction took place and the cross and crescent from the previous church were re-used on the new one on the east and west gables respectively. The crescent is a common medieval symbol indicating wisdom.

The changes that were made to the external or internal appearance of the church during this last reconstruction are unrecorded.



In the northern belfry wing it is noticeable that the window in the eastern wall is further south than that in the western wall, as if to make room for something no longer there. Examination of the stonework on the outside suggests the presence, at one time, of a door here. Certainly there is what appears to be an old lintel at the correct height plus two uprights at ground level.

Above the north gable sits the belfry and it is obvious from the wear on the stonework that the bell was at one time rung from the outside, probably via a chain rather than a rope, and that the attachment to the bell was originally on the west side rather than the east as it is now.

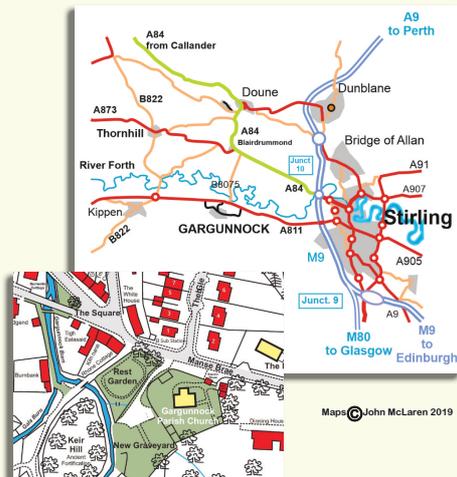
Another interesting feature at the top of the stairs to the Gargunnoch gallery is a view-plate set into the parapet wall showing the carse and the mountains beyond.



Where we are...

From Stirling pick up the A811 at the Kings Knot roundabout below the castle then head westwards for 5 miles and turn left where signposted Gargunnoch at farm.

From the M9 motorway exit at Junction 10 onto the A84 heading westwards past Dobbies. After 3.6 miles turn left at Blairdrummond onto the B8075 and follow the signs for the village. Or set your Sat Nav to FK8 3BH for the village centre (The Square) then bear left to the church on Manse Brae.



To find out more...

www.blairdrummondchurches.org.uk
www.gargunnochvillagehistory.co.uk

John McLaren's local history site containing lots more about the village, the graveyard, the church and its interesting archives.

www.stirling.gov.uk/

At the home-page click on "Libraries and Archives" then "Archives" to find out what is available in Stirling Council's Archives Department which holds a large amount of relevant historical records relating to the local area and its churches.



Funded by the Falck Renewables Kingsburn Community Fund administered by the Gargunnoch Community Trust



Gargunnoch Kirk

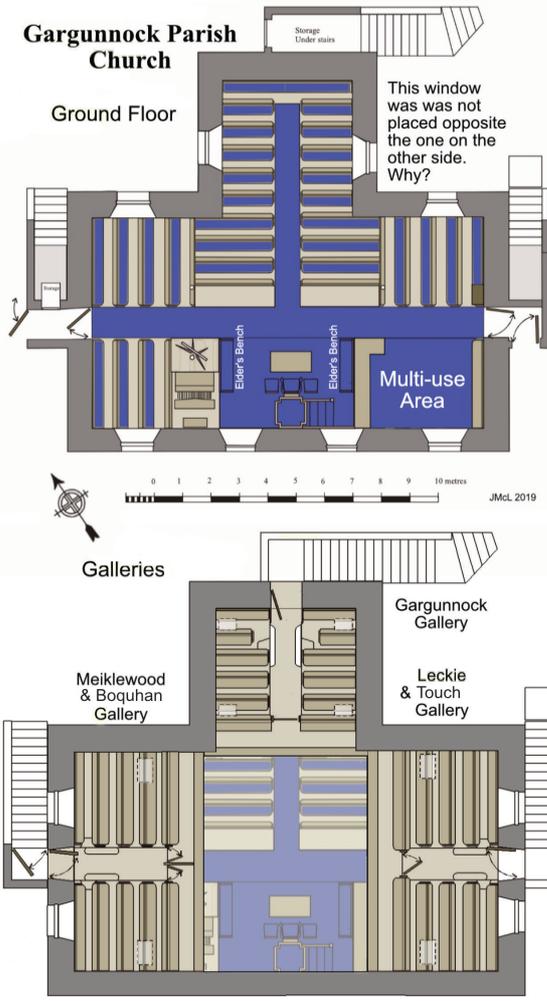
At this location there are
Commonwealth War Graves
www.cwgc.org

A Brief History

National Grid reference NS 707 943

Produced by members of the Welcome Team - Douglas Barr & Helen Rowell, with John McLaren

Gargunnoch Parish Church



This window was not placed opposite the one on the other side. Why?



The galleries (or lofts) within the church accessed by external stone stairs have long been associated with the estates within the Parish of Gargunnoch.

The northern one has always been the Gargunnoch Estate one but the other two are slightly less certain as opinions vary nowadays.

In the third Statistical Account for Scotland the minister of the day (1950s), Rev Turner, stated that currently the eastern gallery was for the Lairds of Leckie and Touch, the western one being for the Laird of Meiklewood and by inference also the Laird of Boquhan. It is plainly divided into two separate parts.

Sadly there is no one left now who can, for certain, confirm their former usage in the days when the various Lairds actually attended regularly with their families & servants



At the time of a substantial internal renovation in 1892 the Christening Font was given by the Stark family in memory of their father, Rev John Stark, who served here from 1844-88 and the Communion Table by Mrs Whitelaw of Bridge of Allan, previously a tenant in Leckie Mansion.

The window on the right hand side of the pulpit was donated in 1956 by local businessman and Elder, Archibald McLaren, in memory of his parents and brother. The one to the left was donated in 1968 by the Mitchell farming family, one of whom, John Mitchell, was an Elder.



Christ the Sower of Seeds
William Wilson OBE, RSA



Christ the Carpenter
Douglas Hamilton FSA



For many years after its replacement in 1891 this old bell, dated 1702, sat on a stand by the front door of the Manse next door to the church until it disappeared one day, only to be recovered some weeks later by the police from a local scrap dealer's premises!

There are a number of paintings of the church held locally. Here are two of them.



The first, an undated oil on canvas, shows the church from the west, still wearing its yellow rendering, removed in the 1920s. The second, a 1921 painting by an artist with local connections, James Boyle, was found in a car boot sale in Stirling.



Communion Silver

There are some interesting items used in the celebration of Communion through the years. All have been donated at various times by local Lairds and are inscribed accordingly.

The oldest cups are stored remotely in secure storage and belong to the period when many churches, after the Restoration, commissioned new Sacramental vessels to replace earlier ones lost in the troubled times of the Reformation. They fortunately also survived the uprisings of 1715 and 1745.

War Memorials

After the First World War a memorial to the fallen was erected on the wall behind the pulpit. Designed by Sir Robert Lorimer and erected by Nathaniel Grieve, Joiner.

Immediately behind the minister in his pulpit is a linen-fold panel and that part of the memorial above it was raised to ceiling height to allow for the insertion of a smaller Second World War Memorial panel.

