

# **Mothers' UNION**

Christian care for families

## **DIOCESE OF GLASGOW AND GALLOWAY**



## **NEWSLINK AUTUMN 2009**

Scottish Charity SCO23885



Dear Friends,

This will be my last letter as DP as I demit office at the end of December '09. The last six years have been very busy and I have learnt a great deal! Geoff and I will be travelling around Australia from mid-October to early December, visiting MU branches, learning about the project work and meeting members. We are really looking forward to our great adventure.

However, my thoughts will be with you all at the start of the new triennial in January '10. To members who will be leaving office and taking a welcome break from responsibilities, "Thank you for working so hard and with such enthusiasm. Your efforts have been a great encouragement to all of us." To those of you who are taking up a new office, or continuing with your present one – "Thank you for giving so generously of your time and talents."

We are all busy with family, church commitments, work and other roles and responsibilities outside, and in addition to, our MU responsibilities. The time and talents you give to MU means that a woman in Sudan learns to read, a child in Malawi receives food and an education, a widow in Zimbabwe is given grain and fertiliser to enable her to feed her grandchildren. Without you none of this would happen.

Do you remember the film "The Good Life" with James Stewart (one of my favourite film stars)? As the hero, with his guardian angel as guide, he sees how people's lives would have been poorer had he not lived. He was unaware of how much his actions and love had enriched the lives of those around him. We are also unaware of how our lives impinge on the lives of people we know and even those we don't know!

Each of you brings a special warmth and unique contribution to the work of MU in the Diocese, the Province, and internationally. My prayer is that in the next triennial we will take up the challenges that face us through faithful prayer and the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

May God continue to bless you and give you the strength and vision to follow as He calls you to His service.

with love,  
*Enid.*

## **Scott writes.....**

I hope that you had a good and not too soggy summer. One highlight for me was climbing Goat Fell for the second (and possibly last) time. Alison and I wanted to take the boys up a real hill and, despite the dreaded Arran midges at the top, we really enjoyed the day. We were fortunate to have a great view of the Ayrshire coast when we got to the summit and, before we were eaten alive, took loads of photographs. Of course we felt it the next day, and the day after that, and the day after that – but at least it served as a painful/pleasant reminder of our successful expedition.

Hills play a large part in many of the stories in the Bible. Two immediately stand out (Biblical Monroes, if you like) – Mt Sinai where Moses received the Ten Commandments, and the unnamed hill where Jesus delivered what's become known as the Sermon on the Mount. As you can probably guess, important things in the Bible tend to happen on high places. The reasons for that I suppose are pretty obvious. There was the sense of theatre – the creation of a space where the action can be witnessed by many. Apparently the voice can travel quite a distance in Palestine (when there's no traffic!) so going up a hill would make sense if you wanted to be heard. But of course there's the pulpit factor where whoever's speaking wants to appear several feet above contradiction. And then there's the God factor. The idea which persists to this day that God is ‘up there somewhere’ lends itself to the thought that hills hold some spiritual resonance for us. And it is certainly true that when one goes into the wilds and up the hills, one can get a completely different perspective on life.

And that is what happened on Mt Sinai, and that's what happened on the hill when Jesus preached. In both instances, the world heard something transforming. But the point I want to make is that they had to get to the hills to hear it. The hills in Israel are notoriously stony and uncomfortable places to be (and that's without the added factor of heat) so to go there implied a degree of commitment. And the lesson is an obvious one. To get the good view, you have to get to the top of the hill; in the same way, to have your spiritual eyes opened or refocused, you have sometimes to make a bit of an effort.

I'm not suggesting for a second that we all need to ‘head for the hills’ in order to find God. That, in a sense, is an easy thing to do, and sometimes folk are all too quick to confuse ‘getting back to nature’ with ‘running away from reality’. Often the effort to get close to God in our own back yard can be just as much of a struggle – sometimes more so. But the impression I'm left with (carrying this hill metaphor to its conclusion) is that ultimately it's worth it.

The work of the Mothers' Union can often seem like an uphill struggle itself. There are always challenges that we have to face, one way or another. In a sense that is a part of life. It's how we respond to these challenges that makes us who we are. As I approach the end of my term as Mothers' Union Chaplain I am extremely grateful for the support and guidance of the MU trustees and particularly Enid, our President. I would ask your continuing prayers

and support for her and the team as they seek to fulfill their role and provide a stable succession in the life of MU in our diocese.

Each of us, of course, has our own hill-walk with God. We each have our struggles and disappointments. Occasionally we have glimpses of what we think is a summit only to find that its yet another ridge and the top is still some way off. Often it can seem hard going. But the view is worth it. When we were on Goat Fell I saw my first ever sea eagle soaring over the valley. If I hadn't gone up the hill I would never have had that opportunity, and I guess that is maybe what the prophet Isaiah was trying to hint at as he was consoling the struggling people of Judah when he said:

*Do you not know? Have you not heard?  
The Lord is the everlasting God, the Creator of the ends of the earth.  
He will not grow tired or weary, and his understanding no one can fathom.  
He gives strength to the weary and increases the power of the weak.  
Even youths grow tired and weary, and young men stumble and fall;  
but those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles;  
they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.*

Scott Robertson  
MU Diocesan Chaplain

## Farewell to Barbara Elliott

Barbara Elliott has played a big part in the life and work of the Mothers' Union in this diocese for almost 50 years and we are sorry to hear that she will shortly be moving to York, where her son Christopher and family live. From there she will continue with her visits to daughter Alison and grandson Tom in Uganda.

She was a founder member and treasurer of the branch at All Saints' Bearsden in 1961, later becoming Enrolling Member and Regional Presiding Member. At a diocesan level she held several offices and became Diocesan President in 1993 and represented the diocese at Central Council. More recently she helped with the children of prisoners visiting Low Moss prison.

Barbara is passionate about the Mothers' Union and has been very supportive of all the branches and their members individually, visiting them at times of trouble and in her quiet unassuming way giving help in whatever way she could.

We shall miss her very much and wish her every blessing in her new life.

Renee Cross

## Lady Day in Galloway

This year's "Lady Day" in Galloway was celebrated at St Ninian's Episcopal Church in St Andrew Street, Castle Douglas. The Revd Canon David Bayne conducted the service. Its theme was "The Annunciation" and a delightful conclusion to the service was the ceremony of the candles. These were lit by members and guests during the intercessions, providing an atmosphere of reverence and light.

After the service the Mothers' Union members provided a delicious luncheon for members and guests from some of the local organisations and churches. Dr Enid Scobie, the Diocesan President and her husband attended and members from St John's Episcopal Church in Dumfries as well as a group from the nascent Mothers' Union group in Kirkcudbright were present. It was another memorable occasion in the Christian calendar.



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## Lady Day and Spring Council 2010

27<sup>th</sup> March 2010 in Holy Trinity, Kilmarnock (provisional)

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**Thanks to all the contributors. All articles for the Spring 2010 edition of Newslink should be sent to me Elsie Murray, 1 Comrie Street, Sandyhills, Glasgow. G32 9TU or by email to [elsiebmurray@btinternet.com](mailto:elsiebmurray@btinternet.com) by 14<sup>th</sup> February 2010.**

## **Visit of WWP to Glasgow and Galloway Diocese May 2009**

### **Dumfries**

Rosemary Kempsell, travels all over the world in her role as World Wide President and it was a great honour to receive a visit from her. Members from Castle Douglas joined with those from Dumfries to greet her and share with her their celebrations for the 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the formation of the region within the diocese. After the cutting of the cake, she joined in an ordinary Branch meeting and enjoyed soup and sandwiches with the members. Then we had a presentation about Sun Dials given by a member of the congregation. This was fascinating and there were lots of questions. Rosemary then gave an illustrated presentation of her visits to various MU members abroad.

Rosemary and John then joined fourteen members for an early dinner at a local restaurant which was followed by a service for Ascension Day, held in St John's when Rosemary gave the address.

Carolynne Sorrell

### **Largs**

Mrs Rosemary Kempsell, the World Wide President of the Mothers' Union visited Largs branch on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> May to help celebrate their 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary and to inform them of all the activities she has seen in her travels to meet members around the world. She spoke of her travels to Guyana (South America) where she was taken by canoe up rivers to where the local Mothers' Union members are running parenting groups, that had been found to be very helpful both for Dads and the Mums. In Trinidad she met members who were sponsoring children from poor families, so that they could attend school.

Locally the branch currently helps Starter packs in Glasgow (goods for newly housed homeless people), knit blankets/hats and jackets for premature babies and gowns/angel pockets are provided for stillbirths to maternity units. They also sell a guide to all aspects of Largs Life at the library and at St.Columba's Scottish Episcopal Church.

The sunny afternoon was completed by a tasty strawberry tea.

Rosemary travels all over the world in her role as World Wide President and it is a great honour to receive a visit from her.

Hilary Moran

## THE FESTIVAL SERVICE MAY, 2009.

St. Cyprians, Lenzie was beautifully adorned with colourful floral arrangements for the occasion of our Festival Service on Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> May. The theme of these magnificent displays was the five objects/aims of the MU It certainly was an inspiring sight which greeted all our MU members and invited guests. We were honoured to host the visit to our diocese of our world-wide president, Rosemary Kempsell and her husband, as well as welcome our Bishop Idris Jones.

We listened with great interest as Mrs Kempsell gave us several examples of some of the MU projects she had visited all over the world and the awe-inspiring work being undertaken by members in some of the world's remotest places. Her talk certainly gave us plenty to think and pray about, as well as widening our knowledge of the enormity of the MU organisation and its work from Baghdad to Tobago! We all enjoyed the beautiful choice of hymns, prayers and readings. Our members from The Church in the City added a splash of colour in their beautiful African costumes and taught us one of their joyful hymns which we sang in English while their choir used various languages and dialects.

All too soon our Eucharist came to an end and we moved into the hall and grounds for lunch and fellowship. The Bishop's attempt at the Selkirk grace was much appreciated. A magnificent buffet ensured that no one went hungry.

A tremendous amount of work had gone onto organising and providing for this Festival Service and lunch and on behalf of all who were there would like to say a sincere thank you to all who made this a memorable occasion.

Jill Cameron.



At the Festival Service Helensburgh's brand new Mothers' Union banner had its first outing. Over the winter months members planned and designed their banner with the help of Mrs Joan Sadden. Several gifted members sewed the individual angels which were then placed onto the banner. Mrs Margaret Gilbert proudly carried the banner in the parade and our members were justly pleased with their efforts.

Margaret Horrell

## Stop Climate Chaos



Over 500 people gathered on Wednesday 22 April outside the Scottish Parliament, Edinburgh, to demand that MSP's deliver a strong Climate Change Bill. The Mothers' Union were there as so many of their members around the world are the first to be affected by global warming as many live in low lying countries, by the sea.

The rally was organised by Stop Climate Chaos Scotland (a coalition) to show the strength and breadth of public support for these three key asks for the Bill:

- Statutory annual reductions in greenhouse gas emissions of at least 3% year on year starting now
- The inclusion of emissions from international aviation and shipping from the beginning
- Ensure that the action to tackle climate change takes place in Scotland and is not 'bought in' from overseas.

Over 30 MSPs came and showed their support and 5 from all the political parties spoke at the rally.

Hilary Moran

## From your Enterprise Representative

I would just like to thank all members who have been so supportive over the last three years and assure them that I will continue as Enterprise Rep. for the foreseeable future.

I would like to appeal through Newslink for an understudy with a view to taking over from me in three years time. No special requirements or CV but able to carry boxes of cards would be an advantage. Even better if you can add up mentally under pressure on the stall. Owning a computer and being able to use it (at least partially, like me) would be a boon. If you are interested in sales please let me know and we could meet up and discuss what is involved.

My e-mail address is [margaret.horrell@talktalk.net](mailto:margaret.horrell@talktalk.net) and telephone number is 01436 676936.

Margaret Horrell

## From your Diocesan Correspondent Barbara Jeffries



We are rapidly approaching the autumn, the season particularly beautiful in its changing colours and its fruitfulness.

At creation God created 'trees bearing fruit' – fruit is expected from a tree, and we too, are expected to 'bear fruit'.

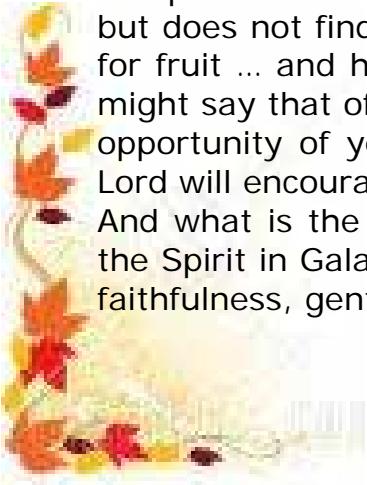
How do we do that? Psalm 1 helps to show us – one who follows God is 'like a tree planted by the streams of water which yields its fruit in season. Jeremiah shows us that one trusting in the Lord will be 'like a tree planted by the water (that) never fails to bear fruit.'

Jesus expects fruit from us; he said 'every good tree bears good fruit,' but he adds that we cannot bear fruit unless we remain in him, part of the 'Vine'.

A tree needs good roots, and sunshine – we need to be rooted and grounded in love and to live as 'children of light, for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth.' Whatever our stage in the Christian life, and whatever our age, we can bear fruit – a Psalm reminds us that 'the righteous will still bear fruit in old age.'

The parable of the fig tree gives a moving picture of one who expects fruit but does not find it – he says 'for three years I have been coming to look for fruit ... and haven't found any.' Maybe there are times when the Lord might say that of us; the wonderful thing is that the fig tree was given the opportunity of yet another year in which to produce fruit. Similarly, the Lord will encourage us and patiently wait for our growth in him.

And what is the fruit? It is suggested in the inspiring list of the fruits of the Spirit in Galatians 5 – 'love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control', truly fruit we long to see.



## **Obituaries**

### **Mabel Gray**

At Holy Cross, Knightswood, we have once again lost a dear friend and loyal member of the Mothers Union (albeit latterly as an Indoor Member). She was a happy choir ‘girl’. A very self-effacing lady, always with other people in mind and her very staunch faith was evident when her family suffered the loss of the early death of her son Campbell. One did so admire her acceptance and forbearance. Mabel was the person I asked when stuck for a Bible reference, psalm or hymn tune – she knew it all. She served our Branch as the correspondent with our link charge in Queensland and was present when we had a visit from the Enrolling member. A great day. Sadly Mabel’s husband predeceased her by a very short time and our heartfelt prayers and sympathy go out to Evelyn, Kenneth and families at this arduous time for all of them. We rejoice that Mabel has earned her Laurels.

*Mary Reynolds, Knightswood*

### **Jessie Thomson**

The death in June of Jessie Thomson, one of our most treasured members has been a very sad blow to all of us. She was a remarkable lady. She showed such courage and determination throughout her long illness and various treatments but lost the battle in the end. She will be greatly missed for her many good qualities, which she had in abundance – her generosity of spirit, her readiness to help whenever it was required, her lively sense of humour which never deserted her but most particularly for her empathy with others. Even when she herself was very ill, she was more concerned for the suffering of those around her than she was for her own. She really is the perfect role model for any MU member.

*Jessie Lockhart, St Ninian’s Castle Douglas*

### **Nancy Devine**

It is almost a year since Nancy Devine died and passed on to life eternal. Despite this lapse in time Nancy’s name is frequently spoken at St James the Less Branch, Bishopbriggs, the branch she started with the help of Barbara Elliott, Diocesan President and the incumbent, the Rev Robin Paisley.

Nancy recognised St James would benefit from an organisation which would both support families and also provide an opportunity for outreach. Nancy loved the opportunity the MU provided for meeting other members at Diocesan and Provincial events. Nancy served as branch leader from 1996-2000 and during that time the branch became established and flourished under her enthusiastic, spiritual, leadership. She followed the progress of the branch for the rest of her life and was delighted to be able to attend the branch’s 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations in 2006 and join in the singing of her favourite hymn How Great Thou Art! She had words of encouragement for members who volunteered; stating that with the help of God there is no telling what can be achieved.

May she rest in peace

*Elliot Glenesk, Bishopbriggs*

Please remember in your prayers the families and friends of MU members – Nora Wilson (Cumbernauld), Pat Samuels (Largs) and Margaret Grainger (Lenzie) who have died recently.

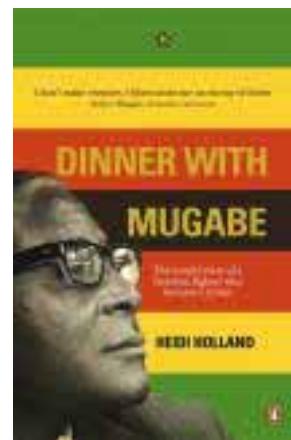
## Book Review

### “Dinner With Mugabe:”

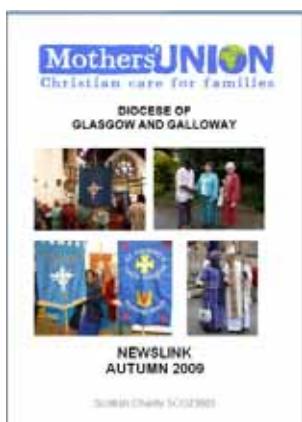
#### The untold story of a freedom fighter who became a tyrant

Heidi Holland, 2009. Published by Penguin Books, (ISBN 9780141040790 £9.99)

The destruction of Zimbabwe is a tragedy still unfolding on the world stage. In the thirty years of its existence, a country rich in natural resources has seen its people become some of the poorest and most desperate. With the collapse of infrastructure and the disastrous forced redistribution of farmland, agriculture is in chaos and the people are starving. Yet flying in the face of this reality, the catastrophe of Robert Mugabe’s presidency goes on! In the West he is often portrayed as a monstrous tyrant, hell-bent on his own self-aggrandisement. Among African nations, criticism has been muted because of his image as a freedom fighter, who led his people out of the shadow of colonial rule. But, argues Heidi Holland, how helpful are such epithets for truly grasping the horror and complexity of what has happened? Holland is no apologist for Mugabe. By interviewing some of those closest to him in the course of his career - and towards the end of the book, the man himself - her task is to understand rather than condone. Holland convincingly shows how Mugabe’s own tragic life story helps to make sense of his terrible decisions and inability to grasp the truth. In no sense is he excused from responsibility for the catastrophe but neither are western governments for their role in the descent to chaos; Holland points to their failure to challenge human rights abuses at the beginning of his rule, and to the more recent policy of ignoring Mugabe altogether, which has only served to exacerbate the suffering of the people. Powerful and concise, this book provides a fascinating insight into a man who wanted to do so much, but who, ultimately was blinded by his own unshakeable sense of being *the saviour*, in the story of Zimbabwe’s emergence and freedom.



**Andrew Richardson**  
Rector East End Team Ministry



*Photographs on the front cover of this issue from the Festival Service.*

*Top Left*  
*Banner Procession*

*Top Right*  
*Rev Lucas Njenga with WWP Rosemary Kempsell and PP Sheila Redwood*

*Bottom Left*  
*Banners – Dumfries and Castle Douglas*

*Bottom Right*  
*Olu Akitoye (our link for Lagos) with Bishop Idris*

## "Healing Blankets"



Last summer, the Revd. Canon David and Alison Bayne were in Louisville, Kentucky, filling in for the rector of St James Episcopal Church, Pewee Valley, while he was on sabbatical. It was here that they heard about "Healing Blankets" which were being given to anyone going through a bad time in their life. It was felt that in times of illness, grief or loneliness, a soft shawl or blanket can warm and soothe - it is sometimes called a 'comforter'. David and Alison were so impressed by this simple gesture of caring that they decided to carry this forward at home.

The MU members initiated the project and members of St Ninian's and other local churches have kindly joined in. Each blanket, measuring about 3ft square, is knitted, crocheted or sewn with love and prayer and is then formally blessed in Liturgy, so that the blanket becomes a sacramental sign - a symbol of our prayers for healing. Inside each blanket is a prayer and a little message from David, for the recipient, explaining the purpose of the gift.



Revd. Canon David Bayne with Alison and the late Jessie Thomson.

## 'Moments with Members'

Answering the questions is Ethel Shaw our Diocesan Vice President and member of Holy Name, Cumbernauld

**Q1. *Who or what has made a lasting impression on you?***

Recently, while I was on holiday in America, I spent a wonderful day at the Kennedy Space Centre at Cape Canaveral. I was very impressed to learn that Japan, China and other countries worked together to send astronauts into space.

Over the years we have seen wonderful developments in medical science, which have been achieved by these journeys into space. In everyday life there are so many things we now take for granted such as microwave ovens, freeze dried food, disposable nappies etc.

Putting women and men into space may sound glamorous but the hard work and bravery shown by them to advance science cannot fail to make a lasting impression. It is a visit I will long remember.

**Q2. *Name a poem, song or hymn, or piece of music, which inspires you.***

I very much enjoy the poems and sonnets of William Shakespeare. One written in the language of his time begins ...

'Let me not to the marriage of true minds admit impediment.

Love is not love which alters when it alteration finds'

To me he is saying that when we love someone, we accept them for who and what they are. We don't walk away when they don't live up to our expectations. Shakespeare's words are as relevant today – and in our 'modern world' perhaps more so.

**Q3. *'Hindsight is a wonderful thing' it is said. What might you have changed with hindsight?***

Music was a big part of my life when I was a young girl. We had an organ and a piano at home and my Dad was organist at the local Presbyterian Church. When he went to practise the Sunday hymns I had to go along too as it was a pump organ and I had to work it up and down at the back. I enlisted my friend Molly to go along with me as I was a skinny child and she was much stronger. After a while we would get tired and the music would fade away and we would be in trouble.

Piano lessons were a chore for me. I had to practise for an hour each day. In the winter I had to wear my coat, woolly hat and scarf because our sitting room was so cold. I left school at fourteen and went to work. The piano and I parted company. I am sorry now and



quite sad that I didn't keep up with my playing. Music is a joy and to be enjoyed. However we learn by our mistakes.

Q4. *Has 'political correctness' gone too far?*

Certainly it has. Each time we pick up a newspaper we read of something or other that doesn't make sense but would if it was explained correctly. There seems to be no give and take. Unfortunately it is always the silly things we hear about. I sometimes think – is it me. or has the world gone mad? I have come to the conclusion that it's a bit of both!

Q5. *What could you not live without?*

I couldn't live without the love and support of my family and friends. I am richly blessed in having them. When I speak to people who say that they are lonely and nobody cares, I feel sorry for them, but if you don't give you don't receive and I make sure that my family and friends know that I am here for them. Being alone doesn't mean you have to be lonely.

Q6. *What are you doing to minimise your carbon footprint?*

Probably not as much as I could but I do try. Outside four bins make sure that all waste is separated. One small bin inside is for food scraps. As the white goods in my kitchen have worn out I have replaced them with eco friendly ones. As I travel by plane quite frequently I am aware that the bad and good may well cancel each other out. I hope not.



## **LOVE AND GREETINGS FROM CHESTER DIOCESE!**

*There has been a prayer link between our two dioceses for many years now and last year this link was intensified when your Diocesan President, Enid Scobie, together with two of her Trustees, attended our Diocesan Festival in Chester Cathedral. This year I had the pleasure, along with a couple of my own Trustees, of being invited to your service at St Cyprian's, Lenzie.*

*As with all MU members we share the same common aim – of Christian care for families worldwide. Perhaps you would like to know of one or two ways we are hoping to achieve this aim in Chester.*

*Since September 2005 Chester Mothers' Union has funded, jointly with the diocese, a Family Life Officer, who works specifically in five areas – baptism, parenting, marriage, older people in the church, and bereavement. This joint venture was the vision of our Diocesan Bishop, Peter. Jenny Gillies works full-time – her contract was originally for three years but we are so delighted with the impact she has made, particularly with regard to raising the profile of Mothers' Union in the diocese, that this contract was extended. With Jenny's help we have trained over 30 parenting course facilitators.*

*Four adjoining deaneries that comprise the Wirral peninsula are working together with virtual babies. Five babies were bought (if you buy four you get one free). The finance was resourced from The Britain & Ireland Fund, Church PCCs, deaneries, branches and an Educational Trust Fund. It has taken two years of meetings, negotiations with the schools and fundraising to come to fruition. We are now working with two schools on the Wirral and last school term a total of 16 pupils successfully took part in the project. We are now 'booked' again for the autumn and spring terms in these two schools. If we can help some young people to make life choices everything is well worthwhile.*

*In June this year we launched a network of support groups for families in the Chester diocese who have had a sick or premature baby. Run by volunteers from the Mothers' Union these groups are supported by Bliss, the charity for families of premature and sick infants, and the Cheshire & Merseyside neonatal network. Four groups have been set up as a pilot. It has been a slow start, not helped by the swine flu pandemic which has made mothers reluctant to take their babies to places where they may be exposed to the infection. But for those who have come, it has already been a help; one lady came 26 years after her premature baby was born. She had so many issues she wanted to talk through. When she left she told the leader, 'I have laid some ghosts to rest this morning'.*

*All in all, we are an active diocese, but, like so many, our numbers are declining. The three initiatives I have highlighted bring us into contact with younger people who we hope will see the wonderful work that Mothers' Union does both here and worldwide and will want to join us so that this can continue.*

*We send you all in Glasgow and Galloway our love and very best wishes. Enid and I both hope that the link we have forged will continue.*

**Jean Shelmerdine**  
Chester Diocesan President



*Another wonderful lunch at Castle Douglas*



*DP Enid Scobie and WWP Rosemary Kempsell*



*Hilary Moran and DP Enid Scobie*



*WWP's visit to Dumfries.  
Carolynne Sorrell, DP Enid Scobie, WWP Rosemary Kempsell,  
Ruth McLellan and Alison Bayne*