

A Brief History of the Area of the New Kelty Community Centre



1896 - 2014

Jean Hogg

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Kelty North Church

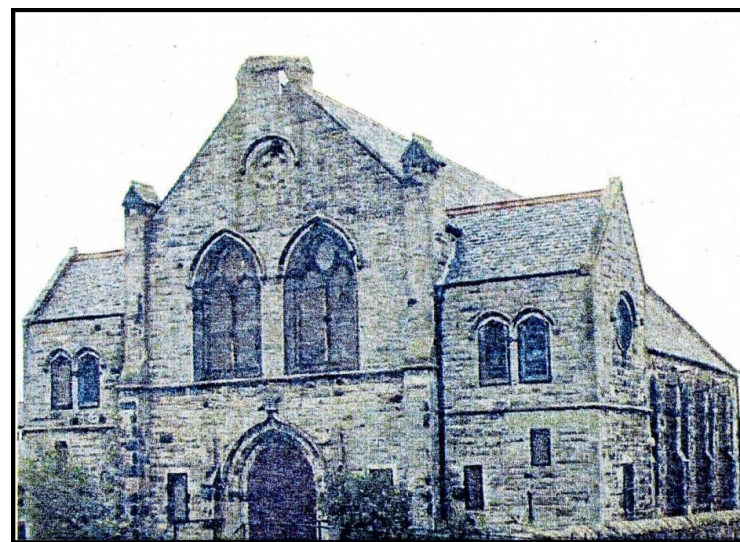
It may be that the origin of Kelty North Church of Scotland began with the Kirk of Cleish. Long before the Reformation (1560) it was the Church of St. Mary in Cleish and dated to the early years of the thirteenth century The land of Cleish which lay in Fife (Fife and Kinross were not to be made into two shires until 1426) had been gifted to the Church of the Holy Trinity of Dunfermline by King Alexander I and the charter was confirmed by his grandson Alexander III in 1257.

In the following three hundred years only occasional glimpses are given, in contemporary documents, of the community and its church. The year of the first Succession was 1733. On the 6th December 1733, Ebenezer Erskine with Wilson of Perth, Fisher of Kinclaven and Moncrieff of Abernethy, left the Church and constituted themselves as an Associated Presbytery. The historic meeting place of the fathers of the Succession was in an inn at Gairney Bridge situated between Kelty and Kinross. In 1737 an Associate Synod was formed and began its career as a powerful branch of the Christian Church in Scotland.

At a later great division of 1843 there were a few who elected to follow the minister but were not sufficient in numbers to maintain a district Communion. Those who withdrew from the Established Church were to travel to Kelty, where a building was erected to provide for any who might gather to it from Beath and from Cleish.

The building on this site was constructed in 1895-6 to replace the original Kelty Free Church (The Moray Church as the old Kelty Free Church dating from 1843) because it had become too small for the growing congregation. This was situated in the road leading from Main Street to Blairadam Brickworks This road is called Church Row and now leads to Blairadam Park.

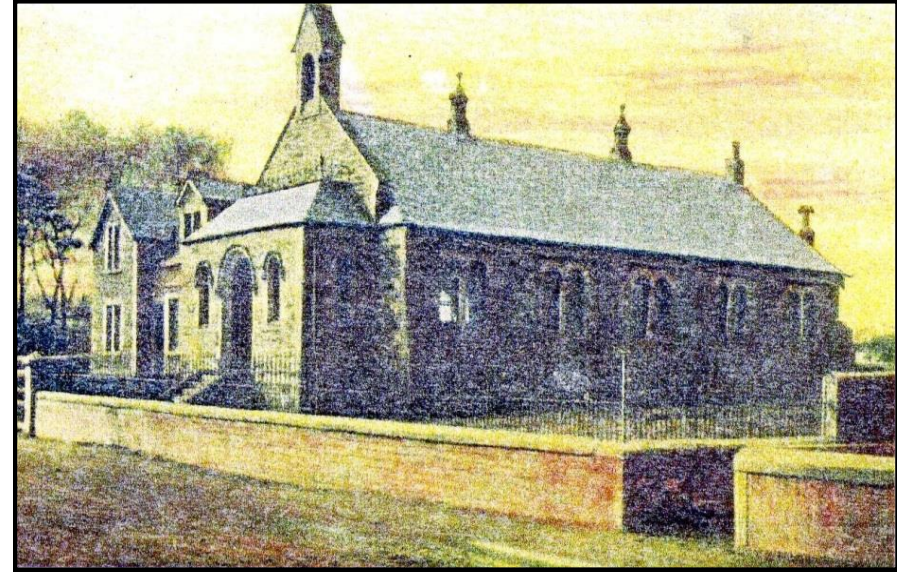
In 1900 the church became Kelty Moray United Free Church following a union of the United Presbyterian Church and Kelty Free Church. In 1929 the two United Free Churches in Kelty, the Trinity United Presbyterian Church (which became the Trinity United Free Church and was situated in Mossgreen Street) united with the Church of Scotland. This building was retained for worship under the name Kelty North Church of Scotland and the Trinity United Free Church became the hall for this church.



1895 Kelty Free Church



Site of Free Church and School at Church (Kirk) Row



**Trinity U.P. Church, then Trinity U.F. Church
then Trinity Hall**

When the congregation united with Kelty Parish Church (formerly Kelty Oakfield Church of Scotland) in 1974, the church was bought by Mr W. Moore who was going to develop it. He gifted it to the community as a community facility.

Kelty Public School

The aim of the Free Church was to erect a church and school in every parish in Scotland and they relied entirely on voluntary financial support. The first school was situated at the north end of the hamlet of Maryburgh and was known as Woodlands. In many parishes the new church met with extreme difficulty in obtaining building sites from proprietors, as landowners were, in most cases, staunch supporters of the established church.

An old map of Kelty dated 1856, shows a church and school to be situated on the same site in Church Row. This was the first church building and school in Kelty. The Education Act of 1872 made education in Scotland compulsory for all children up to the age of 12, when it became the responsibility of the State. Kelty had two small schools supplying basic education before the Act. The Parochial School for the whole Parish of Beath was sited at Cantsdam and dated back to 1676. Beath School Board was set up after the Education Act and erected a four roomed school a few years later adjacent to Kelty North Church. More buildings were put up around it as the school population grew. Kelty Public School's earliest recorded entry from Fife Education archives show entries from log books dating from 25th September 1874 and it is obvious that this part of the school was for older pupils as there were references in the log books relating to English, French, Latin, Geography and History. The school master's house stood between the two school buildings, Kelty Public School and Kelty Infant School (Kelty Primary School as we know it today which bears the date 1896).



Church – Public School – School House

An entry in the Kelty Public School log book dated 20th August 1875 refers to a new Kelty Public School opening. It would appear that this building was added to the existing building and became part of the school. It is quite interesting to note that a log book exists for Kelty Public School Evening Continuation Classes and dates from 1894-1924. Classes provided various subjects including domestic, commercial and mining. These classes may have been held in the double storey building which was situated at the back of the school playground behind the senior school building. However, it is evident that evening classes continued beyond 1924.

Clentry Nursery School, situated in Keltyhill Road, started off in two classrooms of Kelty Primary School when nursery education was introduced around 1943. There was a kitchen/dining hall building to the right behind Kelty Public School. On 11th January 1983 Kelty Public School building was destroyed by fire.



**Kelty Public School burned down
on the 11th January 1983**



Area of former Kelty Public School

Kelty Community Centre

In 1973 Fife Education Committee decided to provide temporary youth and community accommodation in Kelty and progress to permanent provision in the new primary school planned for the village. This was later changed to the provision of temporary accommodation on the grounds of the existing primary school. The North Church was gifted to the community by Mr William Moore as a community facility. Kelty Community Association and Fife County Council took over the management and it was decided that this building was in an ideal site and suitable for a Community Centre.

Kelty North Church was transformed into Kelty Community Education Centre and was officially opened on the 22nd March 1977 by Mr William Moore. The Centre had been open for ten weeks of successful activities before the official opening. Kelty Community Association was replaced with Kelty Community Management Committee and Fife County Council met the running costs of the Centre and staffed it with Community Education Workers, a Clerical Worker, a Caretaker and, in the late 1980s, added a Centre Supervisor. The Centre was expanded in 1984 with new buildings.

In 1981/82 Sunday badminton was started by Mary Smith who continued to coach until 2003. In 1986/7 the Centre played host to young volleyball players from Wilhelmshaven, Germany. The group were in Fife for three days and, during this time, the group were very busy visiting Dunfermline, Glenrothes, the Trossachs and Edinburgh. The Miners' Shield was won by Kelty Badminton Group in 1987/8 and the Kelty Chiefs volleyball team won the Fife Championship, the Fife Cup, the League Cup and the Bill Fisher Plate. They were also set to enter the National League.

The introduction of video to the Youth Club was very successful. In 1988/89 they were involved in a number of projects to produce educational videos on topics ranging from numeracy for Clentry Nursery to basic reading for St. Joseph's Primary School. Music was another new activity that was very popular. The equipment that was available included a digital synthesiser, a programme drum machine, a Carlsbro amplifier, a four track tape machine and a computer based eight track sequencer. Youth club members began to learn how to programme the synthesiser and they produced a promotional rap jingle using the four track tape machine.

The Centre held an annual Christmas party for members of the community, who were housebound, that was organised and hosted by volunteers and youth club members. As it was a struggle for many of the housebound people to go to the Christmas party, it was decided that it was a better idea to make up a Christmas package of groceries which was delivered by 'Santa Claus' in a Fife Regional Council minibus.

In 1989/90 the Workers Educational Association Women's Group began in the Centre. By 1992/3 the W.E.A. had classes for embroidery, Italian, German and traditional Scottish cooking. Members of Kelty Child-minding Group completed a S.C.O.T.V.E.C. course on child development and received their certificates. Kelty Area Under Eights Forum was involved with District Councillors, Council Services and interested parents about lack of play areas in Kelty. A new committee of Kelty South East Neighbourhood Watch, which started about 1990, was formed and the membership increased to nearly 400 households.

In 1995/6 the Management Committee agreed to develop a large waste area to the rear of the Centre buildings as both a conservation and play area which could be utilised by the Centre user groups as well as the wider community. A community wild life garden was completed in 1996. A new Under 8 Forum was formed in September 1996. The group consisted of parents, guardians, local professional workers, child-minders and other representatives from local organisations. A Kelty Women's Group started in approximately 1993/4 that had courses on health and safety and childcare. A Sign Language Group and a Health Issues Group were started by youth workers and they were open to anyone from youth clubs in the Centre.

In November 1997 the Adult Education Suite was officially opened by former Councillor W. Rowley, who was the current chairperson of the Community Centre. The opening proved the catalyst for the Centre as a local learning establishment. The I.T. classes far exceeded expectations and the adult education suite needed to be moved to larger accommodation with more equipment.

In 1998/9 Councillor J. Brennan became the chairperson. The computer training programme and the adult education programme had proved very popular and this led to the development of a further course in the Moray Institute. The Nett Project started and was offered to young adults to increase their skills in I.T. and to produce a web page named B.B.C. WEBWISE. The Outreach Youth Work started and, although the Kelty After School Club opened in the Centre in June, it was officially opened on 18th September by Chancellor Gordon Brown. The Company of Friends is mentioned for the first time in the annual report.

In 1999/2000 Mr T Logan became chairperson. The Rainbow Playgroup closed after twenty years. The computer class was re-located to the Moray Institute. B.B.C. WEBWISE ended in April. The Outreach Youth workers helped to form a group known as The Kelty Street Kids who organised an outdoor music event, the Millennium Showdown in Blairadam Park and helped with two environmental clean-ups in Kelty. Kelty Heritage Trails and Home-Start Parents Group (Kelty) began at the Centre.

In 2000/01 members of the Kelty Badminton Group won competitions in the Fife Primary Schools' Championship, under 15's girls' shield and the Centre's Miners' Shield. The Heritage Trails members organised the first piece of permanent art to be installed in Blairadam Forest in January 2001 and involved the young people in the community. The art work was an iron tree, benches and little arches made out of handmade bricks.

In 2004/5 Mrs. Janet Young became Chairperson. The M90 Pitstop Cafe opened and was run by young people of Kelty, 14-15 years of age. The cafe was run like a small business and was open on most youth club evenings to both junior and senior clubs. In the summer period it was open to staff and children who took part in the summer programme. The new youth shelter was erected in August in Blairadam Park. The shelter was designed by the youths and supported by the Kelty Partnership. The media suite was designed and decorated by members of the Youth Group and it was officially opened on 4th July 2005 by Jim Leishman. One of the things it would be used for was a homework club which started in September. The motorbike and cars group learned to maintain and upkeep a motorbike and maintain and upkeep a car and its engine.

On Saturday 27th August 2005 there was a totem pole unveiling ceremony in Blairadam forest. The pole was made by two First Nation Canadians from the Squamish Nation. The wood was a Scottish spruce cut down from Blairadam forest with carvings of an owl, deer and red squirrel, also hand prints from members of the KAS club and Kelty Youths. There was a film project organised by three members of the youth group to produce a documentary on the Squamish Nation totem pole carving. They interviewed each of the First Nation Canadians individually and they were asked questions about their family, home, culture and what they did for a living. Whilst visiting Kelty the two native Canadians produced two unique totem poles. The first represented the Wild Woman of Kelty. The pole had a large eagle at the very top and the panther of Blairadam carved into the pole. The eagle is said to watch over the people of Kelty. This totem pole is in the Millennium Garden. The second pole was designed for Kelty Heritage Trails Group and represents a coal miner along with his canary. This pole can be seen on the Great North Road at the end of a right of way path from Main Street at the north end of Kelty.

In 2007/8 Mrs Betty Cargill became Chairperson. Kelty Development Trust began monthly meetings in the Centre and Loving Hands Charity Knitting Group had meetings in the Centre. A fishing club was formed by youths keen on fishing and the Fubar was opened as a non-alcoholic bar for teenagers between 13 and 18 years old. The Full Volume Group was a group of 13 to 18 year olds who organised and carried out activities at the junior youth club. The youth workers and a group Triple B (Bladers, Bikers and Boarders) worked together to have a skate park erected in Blairadam Park. Kelty Heritage Trails Group organised a Blairadam Entrance Project. This was the installation of an organic-style wall at the entrance to Blairadam Forest, near Kelty, with a plaque dedicated to all those who worked in the collieries around the village of Kelty. The wall displays the initials of the nine core members of the Blair Adam Club. The Blair Adam Club was formed in 1817 by Chief Commissioner of the Jury Court, William Adam and were friends from the legal profession and members of the Bannatyne Club, an antiquarian society in Edinburgh.

Kelty Community Council asked the youth workers in the Centre if they would help to hold a competition called 'Kelty's Got Talent' (The K Factor) for the young people aged 11 to 16. The winner was to switch on the Christmas lights in November. Auditions were held in the Centre with judges from Kelty Community Council, the Community Centre and Kelty Development Trust. There was a solo and a group category.

In 2008/9 Mrs Janet Young became Chairperson. A Sub Group of Kelty Social & Economic Forum proposed to develop sports and recreation facilities in Kelty. Baby Memory Book classes began which combine literacy, arts and crafts in one class. Kelty Youth Forum organised three very successful band nights. The Kelty Tae Kwon Do class had been running for two years with students travelling from Burntisland to train. Kelty Development Trust organised 'Woodfest', a consultation exercise which served as a festival in Blairadam Forest. This was about plans to create a natural play area for children of all ages in the forest. The Physio class started.

In 2009/10 Kelty Forum created a large children's play complex in Kelty and the Play Park Sub group discussed further developments for this area. Kelty Management Committee took part in the Cowdenbeath Area Management Committee Seminar. The seminar enabled members throughout the area to meet each other and share ideas and concerns and think about issues relevant to their particular Centre/area. The Job Club started and provided the opportunity for people to access support and resources to find work. The Kelty Crop was a scrap book class which was started in this year. Weightwatchers and 1-2-1 Big Fun Fitness, Zumba and Sparkles dancing classes started in 2010.

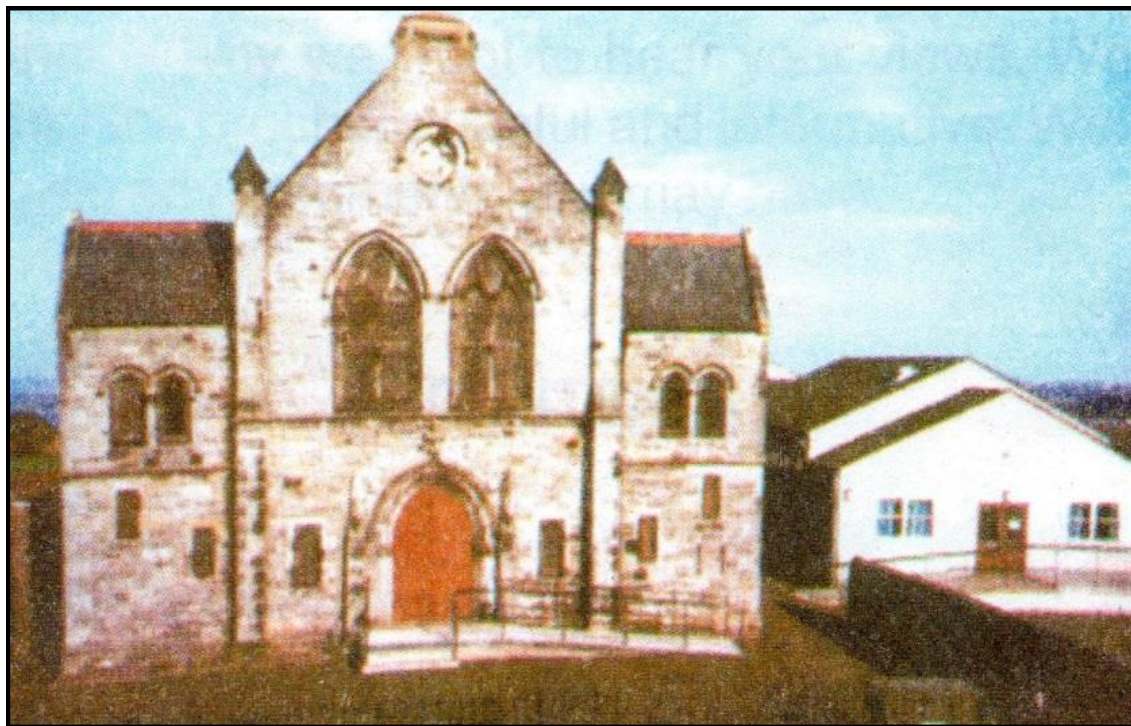
In 2011/12 The Youth Forum was restarted. The senior youth club designed their own float for Kelty gala and the club also hosted a 'Come Dine with Me' event where they cooked a variety of different dishes. Members of, the junior and senior youth clubs participated in 'Fun in the Park' which was held in the Lochore Meadows Country Park. This was an action packed day with a football tournament for the young people to play against the Police. Other activities included B.B.Q., stalls, tennis, zumba, arts and crafts, face painting, bouncy castles and more. The MUGA (Multi Use Games Area) was created with a partnership between the Centre and Kelty Primary School.

There were some award winning initiatives started in the Centre that were popular within the community. Kelty Heritage Trails won several national awards for their own work but also sponsored the plan prepared by Heriot Watt students which also won a major prize. The totem poles work was very successful.

Activities with groups noted below have been and some are still ongoing, namely Parents & Toddlers, Rainbow Playgroup, Baby Memory Books, Adult and Junior Badminton, Table Tennis, Volleyball, Football, Amateur Boxing, Junior, Intermediate and Senior Youth Clubs, Youth Forum, Girls' Club, School use of Centre, After School Club, Adult Education Classes, Job Club, Whist Club, Old Time Dancing Club, Zumba, First Aid Classes, Computer Courses, Unemployed and Careers Courses, Aerobics, Elder Aerobics, Karate, Tae Kwon Do, Yoga, Arts & Crafts, Knitting Group, WEA, Heritage Trails, Kelty Development Trust, Carpet Bowls, Pool, Community Network and Sport and Lochleven Terrace Tenants Association and Neighbourhood Watch.

The Centre continued to be involved with local groups whenever possible. Over the years these groups have included Kelty First Aid, Kelty Gala Committee, St. Joseph's Parish Council, Guide Dogs for the Blind, Kelty Ladies Circle, Company of Friends and Kelty Community Council.

Kelty Community Centre closed on 1st May 2014.



References

The Kirk of Cleish: By P.T. Hall

Discovering Our Roots: A Brief History of the Presbyterian Churches in Kelty by L. Barr.

Welcome to the Independent Republic of Kelty: By Kelty Heritage Group.

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The dates and events identified in this document are constrained by the availability of Community Centre Annual Reports.