

fear. They got little to eat and he only survived on leftovers given by a few kind Germans while at work. Paradoxically his greatest fear was from allied bombing as, although he knew they were trying to liberate him, still he cursed the bombers as Ukrainians were not allowed into the air raid shelters.

Dad was liberated by the American army in April 1945. Trouble was not yet over for dad as the Russians wanted their citizens back and forcibly returned some. Also Ukrainian nationalists had set up in the camps and wanted their countrymen to go and fight the Russians. Dad did not want any of this so he escaped the camps and went to live in bombed out squats.

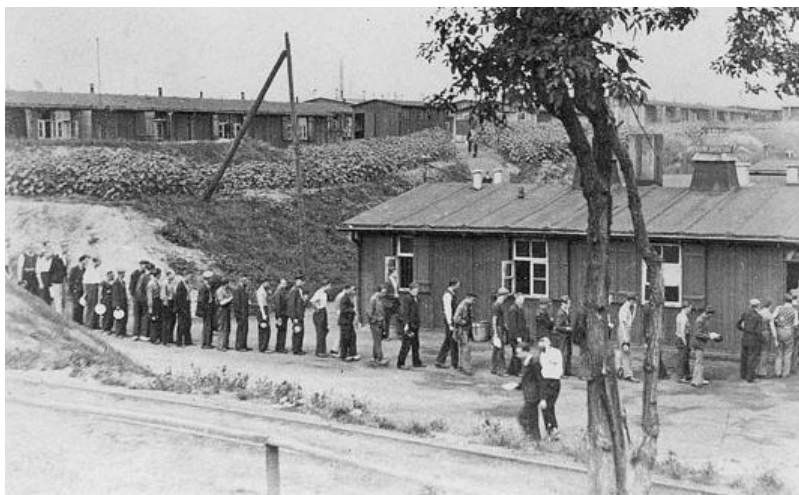
He met my mum, a German girl Maria, and got married in 1947. The German economy had collapsed with no sign of recovery. The slave labourers who did not want to return home were 'encouraged' to leave Germany. Dad got the choice of Brazil or Scotland and he chose the latter as, while he was entitled to one free passage, mum was not and dad would have to save up for her fare which would be cheaper to Scotland.

Dad landed in Harwich in 1948 and made his way to Balharrie camp near Alyth north of Dundee and got work on a local farm. Mum was sent for and three children were born. In 1961 he got a better paid job in the jute mills in Dundee where for leisure he was active in the Ukrainian club. Mum and dad had a peaceful and prosperous retirement and after a battle with ill-health brought about by the war died within six months of each other in 1988.

A slave labour camp (top)

*Ostap's children:
Nadia, 1951, Ostap, 1953 and Rena, 1956 (middle)*

*Peaceful and prosperous retirement,
Dundee 1986, Ostap, Sandra, Mum and Dad*



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37 Years of the Clarkston & District Christian Aid Committee Art Exhibition and Sale

Myrtle McGregor



Every second Saturday in March, since 1981, we have been selling original art work in Clarkston and making huge profits for Christian Aid .

Many walls in Clarkston and beyond are covered in 'our' paintings and it all started with members of Busby Church. Although personal computers were not in use until 1993, we can estimate that we have sold over 3,000 paintings and donated thousands of pounds to Christian Aid.

In 1981 we still had the East and West Kirks in Busby and so we had four members on the Christian Aid Committee with two each from St Josephs, St Aidans, Netherlee, Stamperland, and Greenbank all working happily together to be joined a few years later by Williamwood.

Many will remember the late Mary Thomson whom I replaced on the committee at the request of Lawrence Whitley and along with me was Anne Ferguson also from the West Church. My husband had just been saved from a life threatening illness, one of the first to be cured of Hodgkins lymphoma, and I felt this was an opportunity to give thanks for our good fortune. We've had to weather some difficult times over the 37 years but always found solutions that encouraged me to keep going and, to my surprise, I'm still there.

At first, there had been discussions about the lack of income at the coffee morning and I thought this might be a good time to sell paintings as I had seen this done for Cancer Research. Mary was a great help as a talented artist and member of the Southern Art Club. This club has played a key part in our success ever since, organising the 'Hanging' on the Friday afternoons, ensuring that paintings are arranged to compliment each other.

Over the years I have kept records of sales, our turnover and profit , allowing us to see if any artist is not selling. After three years of no sales they are not invited back. At first there was a suggestion by some that this might be 'unchristian' but it does ensure that we can welcome new artists and keep our show fresh and appealing. After all, it is not a charity for artists but for Christian Aid and we need to sell.

At first we sold many flower paintings and landscapes, especially of Arran. Now popular are more modern works such as the quirky paintings of Stan Milne who regularly sells all his entries. Gordon Avison's painting of Glasgow scenes also fly off the screens.



"The Eagle has landed" by Stan Milne (top) and (below) an Arran landscape by Ed Hunter



1/3 of sales of paintings is donated by artists to our profits. Added to this is money from craft stalls including original jewellery , wood turnings, hand painted china and hand made cards. Every year local businesses advertise in our catalogue giving £1200 in 2017 towards expenses.

Paintings by Ian Elliot (left) and Jan Wright

All this needs careful planning and preparation. We did once have a painting stolen and never discovered what happened to it. Each artist now gets a receipt for anything brought in and all not sold are carefully checked out at the end.

Until the year of the financial crash, 2008, our profits rose annually with a turnover that year of £20,200 and the profit to Christian Aid was £6,700. We have gradually crept back up to a turnover of about £17,000 and profit of £6,400 this year.

With all paintings original and of a high standard it has now become an annual social event as well as a great fund raiser for Christian Aid. Enthusiasts return every year, perhaps to buy another work by a favourite artist, to see what is new or just to meet up with friends over coffee and enjoy the scene.



2017 Winners:
"Autumn" by Linda Gardner (top)
and "Study III" by Laura Hunter

One of our most successful painters was Joe Henderson RSA. He sold many works with us and collectors kept coming back every year to buy. When he died, his widow Eva, donated a silver trophy in his memory. At first Eva came to the preview to choose her favourite painting and later, each year, the previous winner would choose who should be awarded the Joe Henderson Trophy.

Don't miss out on the next one. Please make a note of the date,
10th March 2018, 10am-4pm in the Carmichael Hall, Eastwood Park



Ex provost Alex Mackie, Chair of Clarkston and
District Christian Aid Committee,
Provost and supporter Alistair Carmichael
and Myrtle McGregor, Exhibition organiser

On our 25th anniversary we had planned to have a special day until a message came to our secretary to say 'the car park would be closed that week-end to allow resurfacing'.

What a disaster, no parking, no artists and no customers. Who could help? No one at the Council offices was in the least interested and then someone remembered that our MSP at that time, and now Presiding Officer, Ken MacIntosh, had a real interest in Christian Aid. His Mother was the Scottish Chairman at that time, a solution seemed possible. Of course the word of our MSP was enough for Council officials to admit that the finances for the car park did not indeed need to be used before the end of the financial year, could be carried over, and yes, it could all be delayed for at least two weeks. Hurrah!

We have two trophies and the artists are very keen to win these or to get the runner up prizes. Millers Art Store and The Shawlands Picture Framer have been paying for these by donating gift vouchers and picture framing for many years. At first we allowed customers to vote for their favourite painting, until one year we noticed that towards the end of the show several votes appeared in the box in the same red ink and the same handwriting. There seemed to be a bit of cheating going on and this suddenly changed the winner of the prize. We surmised that his supporters had come in at the end and somehow repeated votes! It was a good painting but unfair to the other potential winners. After this we asked a professional artist, often a local art teacher to judge this Artists' Prize. This has worked well. Eventually we bought a silver salver to record the names of the winners of the 'Artists' Prize'.

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