

## **Juniper Green Parish Church History**

The name Juniper Green Parish Church appeared on 10 March 1974 when the two congregations of Juniper Green St Andrew's and Juniper Green St Margaret's united under the Rev. George Donald Cameron the minister of St Andrew's. St Margaret's Church was deemed surplus to requirements and was demolished to make way for the sheltered housing complex of St Margaret's Court named after the former church building.

The Rev Don Cameron was minister until his retirement in 1997. The Rev Bernard Lodge was then Minister from 1998 until 2000, when Rev Jim Dewar was inducted as the present minister of the parish of Juniper Green.

There were no churches in Juniper Green before the middle of the nineteenth century. At that time Juniper Green was part of Colinton parish and people had to walk or ride to Colinton to attend worship. By an Act of the Westminster Parliament in 1712, ministers were inducted through patronage by the wealthiest members (the heritors) rather than by election of all the members of the congregation. This, the Patronage Act, was eventually repealed in 1874 but not before numbers of dissenters had left the established Church of Scotland to form churches free of state interference such as the Original Secession churches. In 1843 matters finally came to a head and 40% of the ministers and members walked out of the General Assembly to form the Free Church of Scotland. This is given the name "the Disruption".

### **History of St Margaret's Church**

Over the latter period of the 19th Century the expansion of the population of Juniper Green had added to the problems of the Church of Scotland members that remained in Juniper Green. Perhaps the proximity of the new Free Church had something to do with that, for those loyal to the Kirk had to go all the way to Colinton Kirk which was not now big enough for all its parishioners. This was exacerbated by bad winters. The winter of 1889 had snow drifts 4 to 6 feet deep which made the journey to Colinton a difficult one. Then the members arriving last might have to stand because the Kirk was full.

The first suggestion was to build a new Colinton Church between Juniper and Colinton but the heritors, who were then responsible for church building and maintenance, declined to do this. The result was moves to build a Mission Church of Colinton Kirk here in Juniper Green.

In 1890 the new Craiglockhart Church was completed and the Iron Kirk (a form of prefabricated building) which the congregation had been using became surplus to requirements. A total of 120 members and adherents of the Church of Scotland in Juniper Green signed a petition to the Presbytery of Edinburgh for the Iron Kirk to be removed to Juniper Green. This was agreed despite opposition from the parish minister at Colinton, the Rev Wm Lockhart, even though this was to be a mission church of his own congregation of Colinton. A site was found at what was then the south-east corner of the village at the corner of Lanark Road and Woodhall Drive and a committee was formed to raise funds.

Work started in the winter of that year, but disaster struck – the partly erected building was blown down during a gale on the 1<sup>st</sup> December 1891. Far from feeling dismayed it was considered to be a blessing in disguise as the old woodwork was unsound and it was able to be renewed. A minister, the Rev Charles Short, was called and the Iron Kirk was re-erected and opened with 350 seats on 21st February, 1892, On that day 250 people trudged through snow to hear the opening sermon by the well known blind preacher and hymn writer, the Rev George Mathieson, then of St Bernard's Church, Edinburgh, but the evening service had to be abandoned because the preacher, the Rev Dr MacGregor, Moderator of the General Assembly was unable to get through the snowdrifts.

But, the people of Juniper Green were not yet satisfied, they wanted a permanent church built of stone. Only six months' later a Building Committee was formed to consider building such a permanent stone church. A site was found across the Lanark Road from the Iron Kirk that of Mrs. Wright's dairy. (Now the site of St Margaret's Court). Such was the enthusiasm of the people concerned that the foundation stone of the new stone church was laid on the first Saturday in June, 1895, and the new church, later to be called St Margaret's, was opened by the Moderator of the General assembly on January, 1897. It was designed by Councillor R.M. Cameron, an architect, and built by Messrs Turner of Juniper Green.

The Iron Church continued to be used as the Church Hall but on the 26<sup>th</sup> December, 1907, it was destroyed by fire, only the old harmonium, a wooden chair, collection plate and the old church bell were saved. The congregation was faced with building a new hall and this was built on a new site adjacent to the church. The builder was again Turner of Juniper Green and was opened by Sir Oliver Riddell of Craiglockhart – a principal donor to the building fund of St Margaret's – in March 1913. The former St Margaret's Church hall now serves as a community hall for the sheltered apartments complex of St Margaret's Court which was built on the ground previously occupied by the Church.

The minister who followed Mr. Short was the Rev. William B.C. Buchanan who was inducted on the 18th March 1926. He was called to Kilmarnock in 1930 and was followed by the Rev. John Henderson who left on 16 December 1943 and went on to have a distinguished career in New Zealand. His successor was the Rev. Denis Duncan who served from 21 June 1944 until 28 February 1950. He originally left Juniper Green to go to Glasgow. He, too, has had a distinguished career but in England becoming editor of the *British Weekly* and in 2003 had a holiday house for disabled children named for him – Denis Duncan House. The Rev. Charles B. Eadie was inducted on 9<sup>th</sup> October 1950 and was followed by the Rev. Hendry F. Watt on 28<sup>th</sup> September 1955. The last minister of St Margaret's as an independent congregation was the Rev. Eric A. M. Davidson who came on 24 June 1962 and retired on the 3<sup>rd</sup> February 1973 at the age of 70.

## **History of St Andrew's Church**

Although neither minister in Currie or Colinton parishes came out at the Disruption, some members of both congregations joined the dissenters and

started the Colinton and Currie Free Church. So it was that the first minister, the Rev. Harry Anderson, was ordained in February 1844 and the church was built soon after in 1845 just outside the then village of Juniper Green where Juniper Green Church now stands. The site was chosen as being convenient to both the Currie and the Colinton members of the new denomination. Juniper Green village expanded considerably in the latter 19<sup>th</sup> century resulting in a need to expand the church. In the present vestry there is a painting of the original church before it was reconstructed in 1879 to provide another 200 seats.

The architect of the rebuilt church was James Fairley of Edinburgh and the builders were Messrs Turners of Juniper Green. The rebuilding took place during the ministry of the Rev. Charles McNeil who was inducted in 1870. It was he who arranged for the steps at the front to be built as closely as possible to the pattern of the steps in front of Register House. It was also at this time that the Evening Service was started, a Choir formed and Hymns introduced. The dedication of the new building, then known as Juniper Green Free Kirk, took place in 1880.

Two years later the Rev Mr McNeil accepted a Call to St. George's, Dumfries and the third minister was the Rev. Hugh Falconer who served in Juniper Green for ten years before he left for Jesmond Presbyterian Church, Newcastle. He was later in London and Carlisle and eventually became Moderator of the Presbyterian Church in England. Rev. Norman Mcfarlane, whose ministry extended almost 35 years, succeeded the Rev. Mr Falconer.

In 1900 the majority of the Free Church of Scotland including Juniper Green Free Church united with the United Presbyterian Church to form the United Free Church of Scotland. The church's name now became Juniper Green United Free Church of Scotland

In 1926, the Rev. George S. Gunn was ordained and inducted just before the Union of the Church of Scotland and the United Free Church of Scotland in 1929 after their differences had been resolved. At that time, the congregation took a new title, St. Andrew's Church of Scotland, Juniper Green. A few years later, in 1935, a fine new suite of halls was erected behind the Church.

Rev. Mr Gunn's successor, Rev. George Reid, was inducted in 1938. He was later to be called (in 1949) to Claremont, Glasgow. Rev John Malcolm was inducted in 1949 and served the congregation until 1968 when he was called to another St. Andrew's, this time in Lausanne, Switzerland. The new minister, the Rev. Don Cameron who had been called from Bellfield, Kilmarnock, was inducted in 1968. In 1974, Rev Don Cameron was inducted again, this time as minister of Juniper Green Parish Church which was formed following the union of St. Andrew's Church, Juniper Green and St. Margaret's Church, Juniper Green.

A book called "History of the Churches of Juniper Green 1843 - 1918" was written by Malcolm A Kinnear and published in 1991. The book goes into greater detail on the churches and a copy can be found in the church library.