

A Challenging Time...



John Kitchen and Aaron Akugbo



Graham Meikle

The last two years have been a challenging time for us all, as we have had to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. March 2020 saw lockdown and a complete cancellation of the Trust's activities. It was particularly difficult for couples planning to get married in the church. Carefully laid plans had to be altered, with dates being postponed, in some cases more than once. As the months passed there was a gradual easing of restrictions. This allowed weddings and funerals to take place, although with limited numbers on those permitted to attend. There was only one service, on Armistice Day, led by Professor **Herbert A. Kerrigan QC**. We were also able to continue with the external maintenance of the church fabric. Edinburgh Stonemasons carried out essential work to the masonry and roof of the vestry and north transept.

During 2021, with further relaxation of restrictions, we were able to hold a Tyne Valley Parish service, a Service of Remembrance and Carols at Crichton. A concert with the Roxburgh Quartet was held in August, the first time they had been able to perform for eighteen months. The Lammermuir Festival returned for a Trumpet and Organ concert in September with **Aaron Akugbo** and **John Kitchen**. Aaron had performed at Crichton some years ago as a member of the St Mary's Music School Brass Ensemble with John Kenny. It was a triumphant return for him. John, who is the Edinburgh City organist, was delighted with the Brook organ. Again, numbers attending all these events were restricted in line with government guidelines. September also saw Midlothian Doors Open Day return as a physical rather than a virtual event.

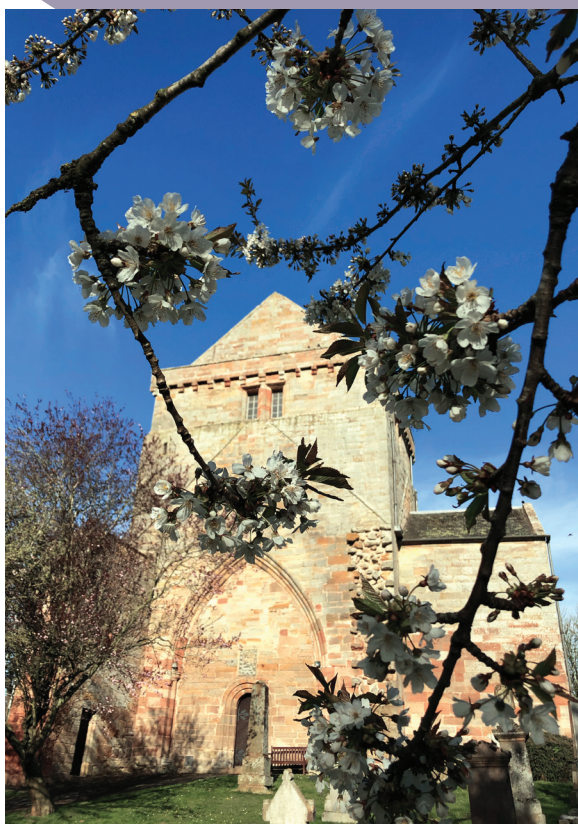
Delphian Records and Pentatone, a company based in the Netherlands, were able to record a number of musicians in the church, including Sean Shibe, Alexandra Whittingham, Bojan Cicic, Helen Charlston and Toby Carr.

Sadly, we have lost a number of longstanding Friends and supporters, among them our church beadle, **Graham Meikle**. A retired surgeon, Graham took great pleasure in the role of Crichton beadle. He enjoyed the wide variety of services, events and concerts, particularly when the organ was being played. His funeral service was held in the church and he is buried in the graveyard where a fine memorial stone has been erected. ■



North Transept works





Spring blossom



The Year Ahead...

Despite all the challenges, events have slowly returned and we now look forward to a near normal programme for 2022.

The Friends of Crichton are planning a number of fundraising events during the summer and will resume Sunday Openings from May to September. If anyone would like to volunteer and welcome visitors to the church for a Sunday afternoon from 2-5pm, please contact Jane Sanderson or Fiona Meikle via our website. ■



Service of Remembrance 2021

2022 marks HM the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with events being held across the United Kingdom. The Trustees, in conjunction with the Midlothian Lieutenancy and Midlothian Council, will be marking this special occasion with a Midlothian Service of Celebration and Thanksgiving. Choral music from the Queen's Coronation will be performed by members of Dunedin Consort and it promises to be a memorable day. ■

Membership Subscriptions

Although we have weathered the storm, one consequence of the pandemic has been its effect on our finances. During the last two years the Trust, like many voluntary organisations, has seen a noticeable fall in subscription income. The Trustees would like to encourage everyone to continue to support the Trust by renewing their membership and to consider asking people they know to become Friends of Crichton. Donations are also welcome be they large or small. ■



www.crichtonchurch.com

Information regarding upcoming events is available on the website and sent out via email. Please keep us up to date with your contact details. The Trustees are working to ensure that we are fully compliant with the new General Data Protection Regulations.

**My personal thanks to everyone for their support and encouragement.
Henry Duncan, Chairman April 2022**