

Latest News from Nunraw Abbey

June 2014



Following the Information Circular sent out last December with the news of the plans to sell the Abbey Guesthouse and set up a new one beside the Abbey itself, we can now tell you that we have completed its sale. With its passing from the hands of the community, we have had to get used to hearing it called by its historical name, Nunraw Tower.

We are happy to say that the new owner is Linda Leith.

When told that there was going to be a general announcement of the sale, she commented that we could say in it that, 'she felt very blessed to have the opportunity to purchase this beautiful property. Her family came from Scotland several generations ago. She now lives and works in North Carolina, USA, but she has always loved Scotland. Her intention is to begin the work of restoration as quickly as possible to return Nunraw Tower back to a private residence. She and her family look forward to spending as much time here as they are can.'

These past six months have been trying ones for the community. The old Guesthouse had formed strong emotional ties for those who lived there before moving up to the present abbey building at the end of 1969, and to a lesser extent the younger members of the community who entered after that date. Naturally the monks who continued to work at the Guesthouse have found its sale harder to accept than the rest of the community. But all of us have our roots and beginnings in that building.

Our friends who have been visiting us for many years and also those who came more recently have also said how much their visits have done and do for their lives.

None of us can stop the demands of the times on us or of the need to re-evaluate our personal lives. The same applies to our community at Nunraw. We trust and pray that God will guide us as to how best we can adapt to a future that will be true to our vocation and to the needs of those who have been coming to us for help in their own inner lives.

Since our newsletter in December 2013, our plans to build a

completely new Guesthouse alongside the present abbey have been reconsidered. It was not thought right to add to the present buildings, as was the plan then, but to downsize and put the new accommodation for guests in the present reception wing. That means that the number of guest rooms will need to be reduced. In the current situation this will be facing reality. Because of our smaller numbers and our age profile, it will be easier for us to have our guesthouse within the monastic complex and of a size that we can cope with. In this new setting the improved facilities will be better for those who come on retreat or for a few quiet days.

The immediate plan now is make a few small changes to provide three adequate rooms for those who need better health care. Thankfully we have managed, with the help of the local medical care, to cope with our more seriously ill. But we must be ready for the worst if it happens. Our architect says that it will take only a few months to provide the rooms we need, once the work starts. Then we will turn our attention to the major job of the new Guesthouse.

- At present a number of you have been asking about our shop. That has already been transferred to the abbey. It is now situated near the front door. Br Philip will be delighted to meet you there.
- While we are very much aware of the fragility of our future, we are also living out our hope that our lot may improve. On the 9 June, feast of St Columba, our novice Br Séamus, happily made his first profession. There are others who are making enquiries about joining the community. This process takes some time, both for their discernment and ours. However we keep our fishing line dangling to catch any interested fish that God puts in our way.

We appreciate your continuing interest in the community here at Nunraw and in the recent changes we have had to make. As we move forward with our plans, we ask you to keep us in your prayers. We keep you all in ours.

Fr Mark and Community