

# The Link



**The magazine for the linked congregations and community of the  
West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood**

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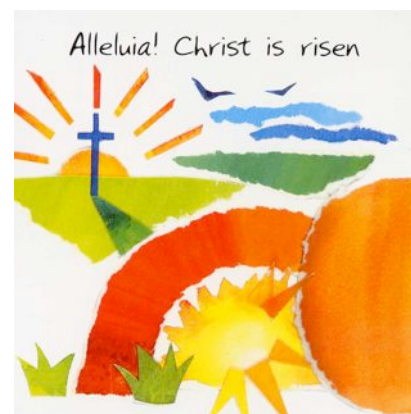
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## A Word From Our Minister

The Manse  
27 Learmonth Crescent  
West Calder  
EH55 8AF

Sunday, 30 March 2008



**'When our hearts are wintry, grieving or in pain,  
Thy touch can call us back to life again,  
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:  
Love is come again,  
Like wheat that springeth green.'**  
*(Church Hymnary 417)*

Dear Friends

Last night we changed the clocks to mark the start of British Summer Time, but as I write this piece for *The Link*, the weather still has quite a wintry feel to it with rain again this afternoon.

We have also very recently celebrated Easter – one of the earliest Easters for quite some years (Do look for the article on how the date of Easter was and is determined elsewhere in this issue of *The Link*). I hope you enjoyed the services and gatherings that took place around our parishes during Holy Week and Easter.

Over the next few weeks of April we should see more spring-like weather and our gardens will respond as they do each year. Similarly, as we continue to celebrate Easter and the resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ, let us look for the presence of our risen Lord in our lives and in the life of our churches. And when we become aware of that presence, like a garden to the changing seasons, let's respond and see what God will do and what growth will result.

*David A Albon*

Rev David A Albon  
Minister of the Parish Churches of the West Kirk of Calder and Polbeth Harwood

## The Parish Record

### **Funerals**

**6th February** – May Cairns, Limefield Road, Polbeth

**18th February** – Tom Smith, Calderburn Road, Polbeth

**5th March** – Harriet Miller, Burngrange Nursing Home, West Calder

**7th March** – Robert Black, Harburn Road, West Calder

Sunday Morning Worship takes place in the West Kirk at 9.30 am and in Polbeth Harwood at 11.15 am.

## An Eggstremely Early Easter – Part 1

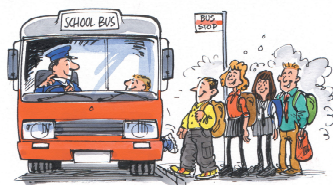
(vernal equinox 05:48 GMT, 20/03/08)

It can't have escaped your notice that there was a very early Easter this year. March 23rd is a ridiculously early date for Easter to fall, but that's the way the calendar works out this year. Oh yes, this is most definitely an Eggstremely Early Easter.



This year's Easter isn't quite record-breakingly early, but it nearly is. There's **not been an Easter this early since 1913**, which is nearly a century ago and you won't remember that. There **won't be an Easter this early again until 2160**, which is more than a century and half away and you definitely won't be around for that. And there **won't be an earlier Easter than this until 2285**, which is so far into the future that we'll probably have drowned the planet by then. Oh yes, this is most definitely an Eggstremely Early Easter.

Thanks to some very complicated ecclesiastical rules involving equinoxes and full moons, **Easter Day can fall on any Sunday between March 22nd and April 25th**. The period between March 28th and April 20th is the most common, and any Easters outside that range are rather less frequent. This year we're right up at the start of the possible range, on March 23rd, because a couple of unlikely events have combined to create this Eggstremely Early Easter.



As a movable feast, Easter feels very wrong when it moves too early. It may be nearly three months since we last had a bank holiday, but somehow mid-March is too early to be having a double bank holiday break. **School holidays are also all over the place this year** because of the early Easter. Some schools have already had their couple of weeks off, whereas others are waiting until mid-April, when Easter "normally" is, and having their break then. We hadn't even put the clocks forward! Look at the weather, it's more like winter than spring out there! Actually, maybe there's a reason for that. An Extreme Early Equinox.

The **20th March was the first day of spring** (in the northern hemisphere) – the vernal equinox. The overhead Sun crossed the equator at 05:48 in the morning, and we've now entered into the warm half of the year. Yes really, March 20th, not March 21st, is the first day of spring. Spring used to start on March 21st, certainly a century ago it did, but the shifting equinox means that **it'll now always be on March 20th**. Well, every year from 2008 until 2044 anyway.



It takes the Earth approximately 365 days, 5 hours and 49 minutes to orbit the Sun, so every year the spring equinox shifts almost 6 hours later than

the year before. That's approximately 24 hours later every 4 years, which is then cancelled out by the presence of a February 29th a few weeks before the next spring equinox occurs. **But this still leaves the calendar 11 minutes short of reality every year**, and this tiny difference shifts the spring equinox approximately three-quarters of an hour earlier every 4 years.

So it's not just Easter that's early this year, it's spring too. An equinox before sunrise on March 20th – it's unheard of. **In fact the spring equinox hasn't taken place before 6 am on March 20th since 1896.** Spring hasn't begun this early since the 19th century! But don't get too excited. The phrase "spring hasn't begun this early since the 19th century" has been true every leap year since 1900, and will continue to be true every leap year until 2024.

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## West Kirk Fundraising Group Report

The Candy Bars have been successful this year and it has been good to see all our regular and new customers.

In February, the group raised £674 and in March, The Youth Link made £950! This was truly magnificent and they must be congratulated for all their hard work cooking, baking and helping.

The next Candy Bar is run by the Guild on Saturday 5 April followed by the Choir on 3 May. There will be the usual stalls at these events and any donations are always appreciated.

The group members will be contacted soon to arrange a meeting to discuss future fund raising ideas and to arrange the June Candy Bar.

Our Candy Bars are very much a social highlight of the village and we are grateful for all the support shown.



*Jill Murray (Convener)*

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## Annual Concert



Each year I organise a concert in memory of my mother Effie. This year it takes place on Saturday 26 April 2008 at 7.30 pm in the West Kirk, West Calder. The money raised goes to the church and to various charities. The concert is presented by the Garrowhill Entertainers (the choir of Mure Memorial Church where I am organist) and there will be a variety of musical items and humorous songs.

Tickets cost £4 and may be obtained from me (01506 871693) or you can pay at the door. Tea/coffee and biscuits are included in the cost.

*Bill Russell*

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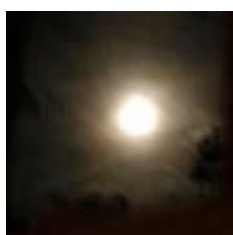
## An Eggstremely Early Easter – Part 2

(full moon 18:50 GMT, 21/03/08)



The Easter story, according to the Bible, is intrinsically linked to the Jewish festival of Passover. And **Passover is a lunar festival**, linked to the date of the full moon. So **Easter has to be linked to the date of the full moon** too. Here's how the date of Easter is determined ...

**Easter Day is the first Sunday after the first full moon after the spring equinox.**



To get an early Easter you need an early full moon. Like we have this year. This year the spring equinox was on 20th March, the next full moon was on 22nd March, and so Easter was on Sunday 23rd March. It's not very often that there's a full moon almost immediately after the equinox and then a Sunday very soon afterwards. And that's why Easter is eggstremely early this year. **Happy with that?**

OK, now for the real, rather more complicated explanation. You knew it wouldn't be that simple, didn't you? One reason for this is because the **church's method of determining Easter doesn't use the real spring equinox**, it always uses March 21st. You can thank the Council of Nicæa in 325AD for that one. And **Easter calculations don't use the date of the real full moon either**, they use something called the **Paschal Full Moon** instead. These form an artificial list of full moon dates, applicable globally, almost but not quite linked to the real ones. So the actual rule for determining the date of Easter is this ...

**Easter Day is the first Sunday after the Paschal Full Moon on or after March 21st.**

Let's take a more detailed look at these mysterious Paschal Full Moons. The ancient church didn't want to have to mess around with actual astronomical data, because that was quite difficult to predict accurately in those days, and leap years kept getting in the way. So they took advantage of a convenient **lunar coincidence called the Metonic Cycle** and used this to help. The phases of the Moon may not repeat on the same day every year, but they do repeat (give or take 2 hours) on the same day every 19 years. So if you know the dates of the spring full moons over a 19-year period, you can repeat that list every 19 years afterwards. **Simple?**



## Dates of the Easter Full Moon

Golden Number	Years	Full Moon
I	1976 1995 2014	April 14
II	1977 1996 2015	April 3
III	1978 1997 2016	March 23
IV	1979 1998 2017	April 11
V	1980 1999 2018	March 31
VI	1981 2000 2019	April 18
VII	1982 2001 2020	April 8
VIII	1983 2002 2021	March 28
IX	1984 2003 2022	April 16
X	1985 2004 2023	April 5
XI	1986 2005 2024	March 25
XII	1987 2006 2025	April 13
XIII	1988 2007 2026	April 2
XIV	1989 2008 2027	March 22
XV	1990 2009 2028	April 10
XVI	1991 2010 2029	March 30
XVII	1992 2011 2030	April 17
XVIII	1993 2012 2031	April 7
XIX	1994 2013 2032	March 27

Here's a table showing the 19 possible Paschal Full Moons. All the years from 1976 to 2032 are listed, but you can trawl back as far as 1900 and forward as far as 2199 should you want to. **Remember, these are all artificial full moons for calculation purposes only.**

Every year on the same line has the same full moon date. For example, the Paschal Full Moon in 1995 fell on April 14th, the same as 19 years earlier in 1976 and 19 years later in 2014. These years are described as having a **Golden Number of 1 (which is the remainder when dividing the year by 19, plus 1)**. Don't worry about that. All you need to know is that every year with the same Golden Number has the same Paschal Full Moon. Every year with a Golden Number of 1 (including 1900 and 2185, for what it's worth) has its post-equinox full moon on April 14th.



Scanning down the table you'll see that the first post-equinox full moon in the year 2000 was on April 18th, and that's the latest date possible. It's years with a Golden Number of 6 that have the very latest Easters. And the Paschal full moon this year was on March 22nd, which is the earliest date possible. It's years with a Golden Number of 14 that have the very earliest Easters.

**During the 20th, 21st and 22nd centuries the Paschal Full Moon never falls on March 21st itself, which means that Easter Day can never fall as early as March 22nd.** But in other centuries the table of Paschal Full

Moons is different. Throughout the 19th century, for example, March 21st was linked to a Golden Number of 14 (that's because 1900 wasn't a leap year, so the pattern skipped a day). And hey presto, **in 1818 there actually was an Easter Day on March 22nd**. Similarly **there'll be another March 22nd Easter in the 23rd century, in 2285**. But between 1900 and 2199, March 23rd is the earliest Easter we can possibly get. It really is an utterly extreme Easter this year.

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## West Kirk Guild Report

**4 February** – was the Inter-Organisational Quiz, teams were The Session, The Youth Link, The Choir and The Guild. We had a most enjoyable evening and a good laugh; the winners were **“The Guild”** congratulations.

**18 February** – we had a speaker from “Cross Reach Social Care” speaking about the work that is done by Cross Reach and telling us about the “Bluebell Project” (post natal depression) this was very interesting and made us more aware of the problem.



**20 February** – the West Kirk Guild were invited to send a “Quiz Team” to Breich Valley Guild to participate in the “Alice Linden Trophy” quiz, we had a great night and our Guild came in second, well done, the winners were Mid Calder Guild.

**3 March** – unfortunately our speaker from “Yorkhill Children’s Foundation” had to cancel due to the weather, but we will invite again. We held a Beetle Drive instead, and what a laugh we all had.



**10 March** – “Mary’s Patch” gave us an Easter Craft Demonstration.

**11 March** – Spring Rally in Mid Calder Kirk.

<b>Dates for your diary:</b>
Saturday – 5 April      Candy Bar
Monday – 7 April      AGM – Bring & Buy
Thursday – 24 April    Closing Social
Saturday – 10 May      Outing Going to “Gartmore House”

*Moira Jack (Secretary)*



## Easter Photographs



**Maundy Thursday –  
“Pot Luck” Supper**

**Easter Morning Service –  
7 am Old Kirk Yard**

*(followed by breakfast in  
Limefield Church)*



**Easter Garden and  
Empty Tomb**

*(note the grave  
clothes)*

**Polbeth Harwood Church  
Easter Cross**



## West Kirk – Eco-Congregation



The Youth Link Candy Bar in March again fell during Fair Trade fortnight, and again we focused on this. We were also generously given the organic vegetables, which were used to make the soups by local organic farmer David Murray: many thanks, David for your support. David runs a 'box' scheme with a difference – "The Whole Shebag" delivers fresh, local, organic produce in a bag.

Visit [www.thewholeshebag.com](http://www.thewholeshebag.com) or contact Tel/Fax 01501 785436, 07931 738767 or [bags@thewholeshebag.com](mailto:bags@thewholeshebag.com) to know more.

The West Kirk Sunday Sofa Group has just done a sponsored Slum Sleepover, in aid of Project Stedfast, the Boys Brigade project to build a school in Kenya.

We now have a compost bin, and three boxes into which paper for recycling can be put, which I then empty and transfer the contents into my own blue bin. In these ways I hope that what needs to go into the grey bins will be much reduced.

If you are interested in knowing more about climate change, you can find a list of the most common myths about global warming, with links to articles in New Scientist giving a scientific response can be found at:

<http://tinyurl.com/3bl5e6>

*Rosanna Rabaeijs*

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## Life & Work – April Issue

**The Editorially Independent Magazine of the Church of Scotland**  
**[www.lifeandwork.org](http://www.lifeandwork.org)**

### **Donor Dilemma**

A doctor, an MSP and the recipient of a donated liver discuss the proposed change to 'presumed consent' for organ donation.

### **Honest to God**

James Simpson urges us to admit that there are many questions to which we don't know the answer.

### **Leadership and commitment**

Jock Stein finds a reflection of the leadership skills of Jesus in an inspirational New York head teacher.

**Plus** – letters, book reviews, prayer, news and crosswords – all for just £1.60

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## Church to Close in 2008



The church will be **closing at the end of the year** due to **poor attendance** and **lack of finances**. There will be no more Sunday services, no more Communion, no more Christmas or Easter services and no more weddings or funerals. The **building will probably be demolished** and the **site sold for housing**.

No its not Polbeth Harwood or the West Kirk you'll be glad to hear, but these must have been the words that the members of Bathgate St David's heard last year and indeed St David's did close.

I was sorry to see it close, my parents were married there and I attended Sunday School there when I was a boy. However if the members stopped attending then surely the outcome was inevitable. I hope that they manage to save the building and that it can be used by the community for some worthwhile purpose.



But what of our two churches? When will we hear these same words? We both have memberships of over 300, but how many of our members attend Sunday worship on a regular basis? I cannot speak for Polbeth Harwood but I know that in the case of the West Kirk it is less than 100.

Our Sunday offerings are not enough to pay our bills. If it wasn't for the hard work put in by a small number of people to run the monthly Candy Bars and the generosity of those who support the Candy Bars, our church would be in serious financial difficulties.

We are not alone in this, the Church of Scotland's Stewardship Committee has written to all churches urging them to carry out Stewardship Campaigns.

Our church's expenditure rises every year broadly in line with inflation much the same as your own personal expenditure does. However last year our income from offerings did not rise it actually fell.

It is at least 10 years since the Kirk Session asked the congregation to consider their offerings and at the meeting held in March it was agreed that we do need to carry out such a campaign. This will take place this year and I hope that you will give it your full support. It is an unenviable task asking people for money and that is probably the reason why the Kirk Session has waited so long to face up to this challenge. How much easier it would be if we all considered our offering at the start of every New Year.

*Stewart MacRae*

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## Why Am I Married?

You have two choices in life:  
You can stay single and be miserable,  
Or get married and wish you were dead.



At a cocktail party, one woman said to another,  
'Aren't you wearing your wedding ring on the wrong finger?'  
'Yes, I am. I married the wrong man.'

A lady inserted an ad in the classifieds:  
'Husband Wanted'.  
Next day she received a hundred letters.  
They all said the same thing:  
'You can have mine.'



A little boy asked his father,  
'Daddy, how much does it cost to get married?'  
Father replied, 'I don't know son, I'm still paying.'



A young son asked,  
'Is it true Dad, that in some parts of Africa  
A man doesn't know his wife until he marries her?'  
Dad replied, 'That happens in every country, son.'

Then there was the man who said,  
'I never knew what real happiness was until I got married,  
And by then, it was too late.'



Just think, if it weren't for marriage, men would go  
through life thinking they had no faults at all.

## An Eggstremely Early Easter – Part 3



- The cycle of Easter dates repeats every 5,700,000 years. During this period, Easter falls on March 23rd only 54,150 times (less than 1% of the total).
- March 22nd, is the least likely date for Easter to fall – this happens in less than 1/2% of years. April 19th is the most likely, at nearly 4%.
- Almost exactly half of our Easters occur on the same date 11 years later (but never more than four in a row). For example, Easter falls on March 31st in 1991, 2002, 2013 and 2024, but not in 2035.
- The last time Easter fell before the clocks went forward was in 1959 (back when the clocks changed to British Summer Time in mid-April, not March).

### Easter dates from 1900 – 2099

	01234	56789
1900	og0Lc	w01sk
1910	7pg3L	dwh1t
1920	d7pat	Ldqh1
1930	te7pa	uL8qi
1940	4meyi	auf8q
1950	i5mer	jauf9
1960	qbvn9	rj6nf
1970	9kbvn	0rj6o
1980	fskcv	g0sc6
1990	o1skc	pg0Ld

	01234	56789
2000	w01tk	7ph3L
2010	dxh1t	e7pau
2020	Ldq1l	te8pa
2030	um8qi	5meyj
2040	auf9q	i5ner
2050	jbuf9	rbvn0
2060	rj6of	9kcvn
2070	0sj6o	gskcw
2080	g0sd6	o1tkc
2090	ph0Ld	xo1tL

If there's a digit in the table then Easter is in March, and that's the last digit of the date (22nd-31st).

If there's a letter in the table then Easter is in April, and the letter follows the code a=1, b=2, c=3 etc.

#### A list of really early Easters, so you can see how rare they really are:

- Easter on 22nd March: last happened 1818, next happens 2285
- Easter on 23rd March: last happened 1913, next happens 2160
- Easter on 24th March: last happened 1940, next happens 2391
- Easter on 25th March: last happened 1951, next happens 2035
- Easter on 26th March: last happened 1989, next happens 2062
- Easter on 27th March: last happened 2005, next happens 2016 (but then not again until 2157)

In three years time, in 2011 we've got an extremely late Easter on our hands. **You just wouldn't believe how rare it is to have an extreme late Easter so close to an extreme early Easter ...**

Source: [www.diamondgeezer.blogspot.com](http://www.diamondgeezer.blogspot.com)



## West Kirk – Rota Information

### West Kirk Crèche Rota

13 April	Melanie Dickinson
20 April	Aileen Hull
27 April	Val Occardi
4 May	Margaret Farquhar
11 May	Kathy Black
18 May	Shirley MacRae
25 May	Mary Calder
1 June	Olive Gibson
8 June	Melanie Dickinson
15 June	Aileen Hull

### West Kirk Tea Rota

Contact Olive Gibson 01506 871291  
*Note: Tea Makers, please bring milk.*

13 April	Katie Albon	Olive Gibson
20 April	Janice Cooper	Liz Dyer
27 April	Olive Gibson	May Young
4 May	Irene Grindlay	Margaret Rennie
11 May	Olive Gibson	May Arnott
18 May	Margaret Lamb	Janet Meikle
25 May	Moir McRae	Jill Murray
1 June	Isobel McChesney	Olive Gibson
8 June	Margo McEwan	Hettie Speirs
15 June	Jim Allan	Juanita Allan

### West Kirk Flower Rota

If you cannot manage your turn to arrange or deliver flowers, please either swap, or contact Margaret Greenhorn (01506 871139) for help in finding someone.

The calendar for 2008 is on the wall in the Church entrance, but with this rota produced bi-monthly there are often gaps. If you would like to donate flowers in the coming weeks, please still do so, by speaking to whoever is the arranger for the relevant week.

We could really do with a few more folk on the rota, both to arrange and to deliver – please consider this and let it be known if you can help.

	Given	Arranged	Delivered
6 April	Jill Murray	Margo McEwan	Moir McRae
13 April	Margaret Greenhorn	Rosanna Rabaeijs	Ivy Johnstone
20 April	Women's Guild	Katie Albon	Irene Grindlay
27 April	Olive Gibson	Margo McEwan	Kathy Black
4 May		Rosanna Rabaeijs	Moir McRae
11 May		Katie Albon	Ivy Johnstone
18 May	Christine Nicholl	Margo McEwan	Irene Grindlay
25 May	Mrs M Fraser	Rosanna Rabaeijs	Kathy Black
1 June	Betty Short	Katie Albon	Moir McRae
8 June		Margo McEwan	Ivy Johnstone

### West Kirk Duty Rota

	Door Duty			Car Run
13 April	Beryl Henderson	Alan Jessiman	Alison McNaught	Robert Hawes
20 April	Stewart Munro	Jill Murray	Christine Nicholl	George Stott
27 April	George Stott	Hazel Tod	Juanita Allan	Alan Jessiman
4 May	May Arnott	Angus Baxter	Richard Bryce	Hugh Clarkson
11 May	Liz Dyer	Alex Easton	Jeanette Ferguson	Richard Bryce
18 May	Victor Ferguson	Lorna Graham	Irene Grindlay	Beryl Henderson
25 May	Alan Jessiman	Beryl Henderson	Alison McNaught	Robert Hawes
1 June	Christine Nicholl	Stewart Munro	Hazel Tod	Richard Bryce
8 June	George Stott	Jill Murray	Juanita Allan	Hugh Clarkson
15 June	Richard Bryce	May Arnott	Angus Baxter	George Stott



## Polbeth Harwood – Rota Information

<b>Stewart Court Taxi Rota</b>	
13 April	David Prentice
20 April	Eleanor Davidson
27 April	Margaret Marr
4 May	Charlie Sturrock
11 May	David Prentice
18 May	Eleanor Davidson
25 May	Margaret Marr
1 June	Charlie Sturrock
8 June	David Prentice
15 June	Eleanor Davidson

<b>Polbeth Harwood Cleaning Rota</b>		
(for week commencing)		
13 April	Linda Eardley	Hazel Speirs
20 April	Ena Prentice	David Prentice
27 April	Mary Mabbutt	Frank Mabbutt
4 May	Laura Carroll	Petrona Carroll
11 May	Reeta Griffin	Tom Griffin
18 May	Mary Gray	Josephine Greer
25 May	Dot Cibbald	Norma Wilson
1 June	Anna Muirhead	Betty Macauley
8 June	Marian Kinsman	Joan Philips
15 June	Ann Watson	William Watson

<b>Polbeth Harwood Duty Rota</b>				
	<b>Door Duty</b>			
13 April	Anna Muirhead	Tom Walker	Reeta Griffin	Tom Griffin
20 April	Ena Prentice	David Prentice	Wilma Dickson	Lilias Fairley
27 April	Hazel Speirs	Linda Eardley	Margaret Hampson	William McCallum
4 May	Moira Mushet	Marian Kinsman	Jimmy Greer	Charlie Sturrock
11 May	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton	Betty Upton	Margaret Dempster
18 May	Etta Walker	Eleanor Davidson	Effie Halliday	Frank Mabbutt
25 May	Alice Mackay	Kenneth Mackay	Jenny Doyle	Janice Davidson
1 June	Jessie Kelly	Tom Kelly	Ann Watson	William Watson
8 June	Betty Macauley	Gordon Erskine	Janet Russell	Alan Mercer
15 June	Anna Muirhead	Tom Walker	Reeta Griffin	Tom Griffin

<b>Polbeth Harwood Café Rota</b>		
16 April	Betty Upton	Janet Walker
23 April	Grace Peace	Janet Russell
30 April	Frank Mabbutt	Gordon Erskine
7 May	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton
14 May	Wilma Dickson	Jessie Kelly
21 May	Betty Upton	Janet Walker
28 May	Grace Peace	Janet Russell
4 June	Frank Mabbutt	Gordon Erskine
11 June	Chrissie McCormack	Esther Hamilton
18 June	Wilma Dickson	Jessie Kelly



Abner, I just noticed, our marriage license has an expiration date! And it's today! Do YOU know anything about this Abner?..  
....Abner?

### **Contributions for the next edition ...**

Remember that during 2008 *The Link* will be published as double issues throughout the year. Your thoughts on this slightly reduced publication schedule would still be greatly appreciated.

**Remember that this is your magazine; your contributions are most welcome at all times.**

Contributions for the next edition of *The Link* Magazine can be **submitted at any time** however for Issue 27 (June and July) the latest submission date is Sunday 18 May.



**The *deadline for this issue is crucial* please make sure that all contributions are handed to Rev David Albon or emailed by Sunday 18 May.**

**Contributions can be handed personally to Colin Dempster until Sunday 11 May.**

### **Paws... for thought**



**To be a champ you have to believe in yourself when nobody else will.**

***Sugar Ray Robinson***