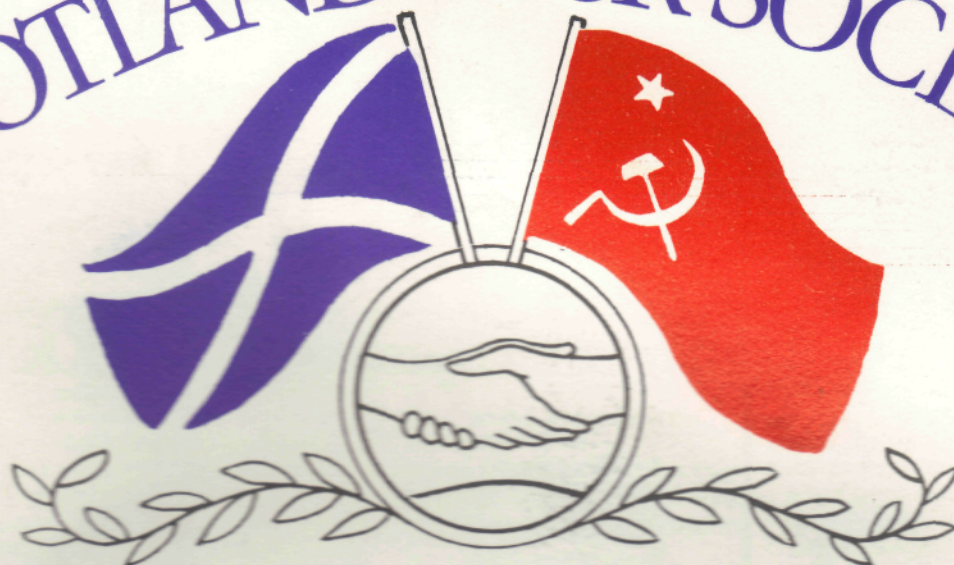


SCOTLAND·USSR·SOCIETY



PEACE AND FRIENDSHIP
МИР И ДРУЖБА

1945-1985

40 YEARS
WORKING FOR FRIENDSHIP

a brief account

President

Lady Ritchie-Calder

Chairman

Robert Brown

General Secretary

George McAlister

OUR AIMS

The Constitution of the Society says:
"Its sole aim shall be to promote friendship and mutual understanding between the peoples of Scotland and the U.S.S.R.

The Society shall be a non-party, non-sectarian body and shall not seek to champion any political or social system."

OUR ORIGINS

As 1985 draws to a close we can say that it has been a year of important anniversaries such as the fortieth anniversary of the allied victory over German Fascism in Europe and Japanese Militarism in the Far East, and the fortieth anniversary of the formation of the United Nations Organisation.

It is also the fortieth anniversary of the founding of the Scotland-USSR Society, and in this connection we thought that some purpose would be served if we published a brief account of our work from 1945 to 1985.

The invasion of Hitler's Germany's armies into the Soviet Union in June 1941 and the fact that Britain and the USSR were now allies in a common cause, provided an impetus to the formation throughout Britain of various "Aid to Russia" Committees and Friendship Groups. In order to co-ordinate the activities of the various organisations engaged in raising money for medical aid, a broadly-based organisation was formed in 1942, called the National Council for British-Soviet Unity. By 1944 in over 300 towns in Britain, there were local friendship groups or committees busy promoting British-Soviet friendship and raising substantial sums for Soviet medical aid and British war charities.

The Scottish Congress for Friendship and Co-operation with the USSR, was held in Glasgow on 16th and 17th June 1945. The sponsors of the Congress were well-known, respected Scots.

(see opposite column).

One of the decisions of the above Congress was to set up a provisional Council of approximately 20 members to establish an organisation in Scotland pledged to maintain in the post-war years the understanding, trust and friendship established between our peoples in the war years. This Council met and by October 1945 had established the Scottish - USSR Society.

Over these forty years the experiences of our Society have been overwhelmingly happy ones, but difficulties do arise from time to time and have to be faced. Throughout the twists and turns of post-war relations between both countries, the Society has adhered to its purpose of creating a climate of public opinion in favour of peaceful co-existence and friendship between our two peoples.

In any inventory of British-Soviet exchanges, the contribution of the Scotland-USSR Society would be a most impressive and important one, and it would be no idle boast to say that the Society is now accepted in Scotland as the authoritative non-Government link with the USSR through its association with the USSR-Great Britain Society, and numerous social and cultural organisations in the various Soviet Republics.

SPONSORS OF CONGRESS

16th - 17th June 1945

Civic

The Lord Provost of the City of Glasgow.
The Lord Provost of the City of Aberdeen.
The Lord Provost of the City of Dundee.
Provost of Greenock.
Provost of Largs.
Sir Alexander MacGregor.
Baillie Hector McNeil.

Very Rev. Dr. C.L. Warr, C.V.O.
Rev. Helen Woods.
Rabbi Kopul Rosen.
Rev. H. Taylor Cape.
Rev. N. Levison.
Rev. J.E. Hamilton.
Rev. Dr. E.D. Jarvis.
Rev. H. Andrew.
Rev. W.B. Tavener.

Art and Literature

Compton Mackenzie.
Dr. T.J. Honeyman.
Hugh Macdiarmid.
Neil Gunn.
Eric Linklater.
Hugh Crawford.
Benno Schot, R.S.A.
William Power.
Naomi Mitchison.

Co-operative and Trade Union

P.J. Agnew.
Neil Beaton.
Jack Tanner.
Abe Moffat.
John Fleming.
J.M. Davidson.
Gilbert McAllister.
James Crawford.

Sport

George G. Graham, J.P.

Science and Education

F. Fraser Darling.
Prof. H. Levy.
Dr. G. Dunlop.
Sir John Boyd Orr, M.P.
Prof. J. Walton.
Dr. T. Pettigrew Young, M.B.E.
Dr. G.W. Tyrrell.
Miss Margaret Pringle, J.P.
John Talman.
Sir H. Hetherington.
Sir Robert Greig.
Sir P. Chalmers Mitchell.
Prof. V. Gordon Childe.
Prof. D. Baird.
Prof. S.J. M. Newman.
John A. Nicolson.
Prof. W.F.K. Wynne-Jones.
Prof. Patrick Abercrombie.

Public Affairs

William McLellan.
J.M. MacCormick.
Lady Glen Coats.
Sir William Fyfe.
Lt.-Col. Sir Thomas Moore, C.B.E., M.P.
D.C. Thomson.
Sir W.Y. Darling.
Sir Maurice Bloch.
Sir H.J.C. Grierson.
Lady Dollan.
George P. Laidlaw, O.B.E.
Lady Douglas-Hamilton.
Robert J.G. Bothby, M.P.
William L. Lumsden.
John M. Scott.
James D. Hardie.
J.M. Paterson.
Harry Shaw.

Music, Radio and Cinema

Sir Hugh S. Robertson
Joseph Macleod
Francis George Scott
David A. Stewart, J.P.

We hope that this publication will convey to readers some idea of the scope of our activities and, at the same time, when leading figures in our country are stressing the importance of maintaining a dialogue and building trust between our country and the Soviet Union, encourage them to associate with us in our work.

Past Life Members

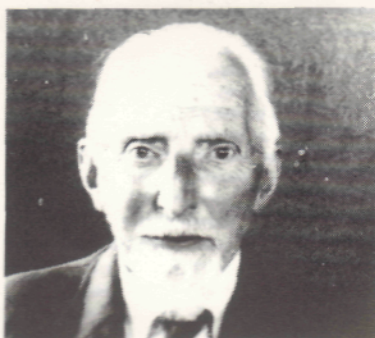
Dean of Canterbury, Dr. Hewlett Johnson
Mr. Paul Robeson
Mr. Samuel Marshak

Past Presidents

Lord Boyd-Orr
Sir Hugh Robertson
John L. Kinloch
Lord Ritchie-Calder

General Secretary

Mr. T. Murray (1945-51)



No. 8 Belmont Crescent is located in a fine sandstone terrace designed by the well known Scottish Architect "Greek Thompson." It is listed as being of historic interest and all properties were renovated in 1985.



Friendship House, Glasgow.



Duncan Macrae, Mrs. Kondrashova and Hugh McDiarmid relax after the Opening Ceremony.

An Historic Occasion - A Dream Come True!!

The National Council of the Society had had plans for some time to transfer the office from Edinburgh to Glasgow. The Edinburgh accommodation was inadequate for the purposes of our work. Following negotiations, the Society took full ownership of a terraced house in Glasgow's West End and it was officially opened the following year.

Official Opening of Friendship House

"There are three alternatives before the world: annihilation; peaceful co-existence based on a fear of the Bomb; or friendship," said John Kinloch, President of the Scotland-USSR Friendship Society in May 1955 when Friendship House in Glasgow, the present Headquarters of the Society, was officially opened. And he added: "This house is going to be a centre dedicated to building up peace between nations."

The opening ceremony was performed by Dr. Tom Honeyman, Director of Kelvingrove Museum and Art Gallery, Glasgow in the presence of Mr. Belokhvostikov, Counsellor and Mr. Kondrashev, Cultural Attache at the Soviet Embassy in London.

Many leading figures from Scotland's artistic, intellectual and business life were present - among them Mr. Duncan Macrae, Mr. J.D. Fergusson, Miss Margaret Morris, Mr. Hugh McDiarmid, Mr. Emrhys Hughes, M.P., Mr. Douglas P. Bliss, Dr. Mary Ramsay.

Messages of good wishes were received from Dr. Jarvis, Moderator of the Church of Scotland, Dr. Stewart Mackintosh, Director of Education in Glasgow, Lord Boyd Orr, Mr. Forsyth Hardy, Mr. F.P. Tindall, County Planning Officer for East Lothian, Mr. Abe Moffat, President N.U.S.M., Mr. T. Haston, Fire Brigades Union.



Dr. T.J. Honeyman opening Friendship House.



Soviet Guests at Friendship House.



In the garden, Friendship House.

Cultural Exchanges

Pioneering reciprocal visits by Scottish and Soviet cultural and professional groups has been one of the most important aspects of the work of the Society.

In the 1950's when the Cold War was at its height the Society organised the first of its Months of Friendship in Scottish towns.

From the very beginning, these events introduced Scottish audiences to Soviet classical and folk performances of the highest quality. The first group sent by the Soviet Ministry of Culture in 1952 included artistes from the Bolshoi Theatre and the Moscow Philharmonic Orchestra.

Months of Scottish-Soviet Friendship

The Soviet performers in 1953 included the Director of the Central Puppet Theatre, Moscow, Sergei Obraztsov. The Dean of Canterbury, the Reverend Dr. Hewlett Johnson was the main speaker, and the largest hall in Glasgow, St. Andrews Hall, had to provide overflow facilities for the huge audience. Which topped 3,400. Other attendances were Dundee 1,300; Aberdeen 1,300 and Edinburgh, Usher Hall 2,200.

By 1956 the Months of Friendship were being held in 14 Scottish towns. At that time the commercial agencies which arranged concert tours in Britain had yet to take an interest in Soviet artistes and the Society's status was greatly enhanced by the outstanding success of the Friendship Months, which consistently included performers who were among the most distinguished in the Soviet Union, some of them People's Artists.

In 1956 audiences all over Scotland were captivated by the music and dancing of the All Russian Theatrical Society representing all the Soviet Republics.

Politics were cast aside as receptions were arranged everywhere by the civic authorities. Of particular interest to the press was the willingness of the Soviet artistes to give extra performances for good causes - at the Princess Margaret Rose Hospital for Sick and Crippled Children in Edinburgh, for example. They also delighted audiences by including in their concerts Scottish songs and dances which they had learned since their arrival.

Reciprocal Visits

Responding to requests from people both in Scotland and in the Soviet Union the Society entered into negotiations with its Soviet counterpart to find a way to develop regular exchanges of folk-music song and dance groups between our countries.

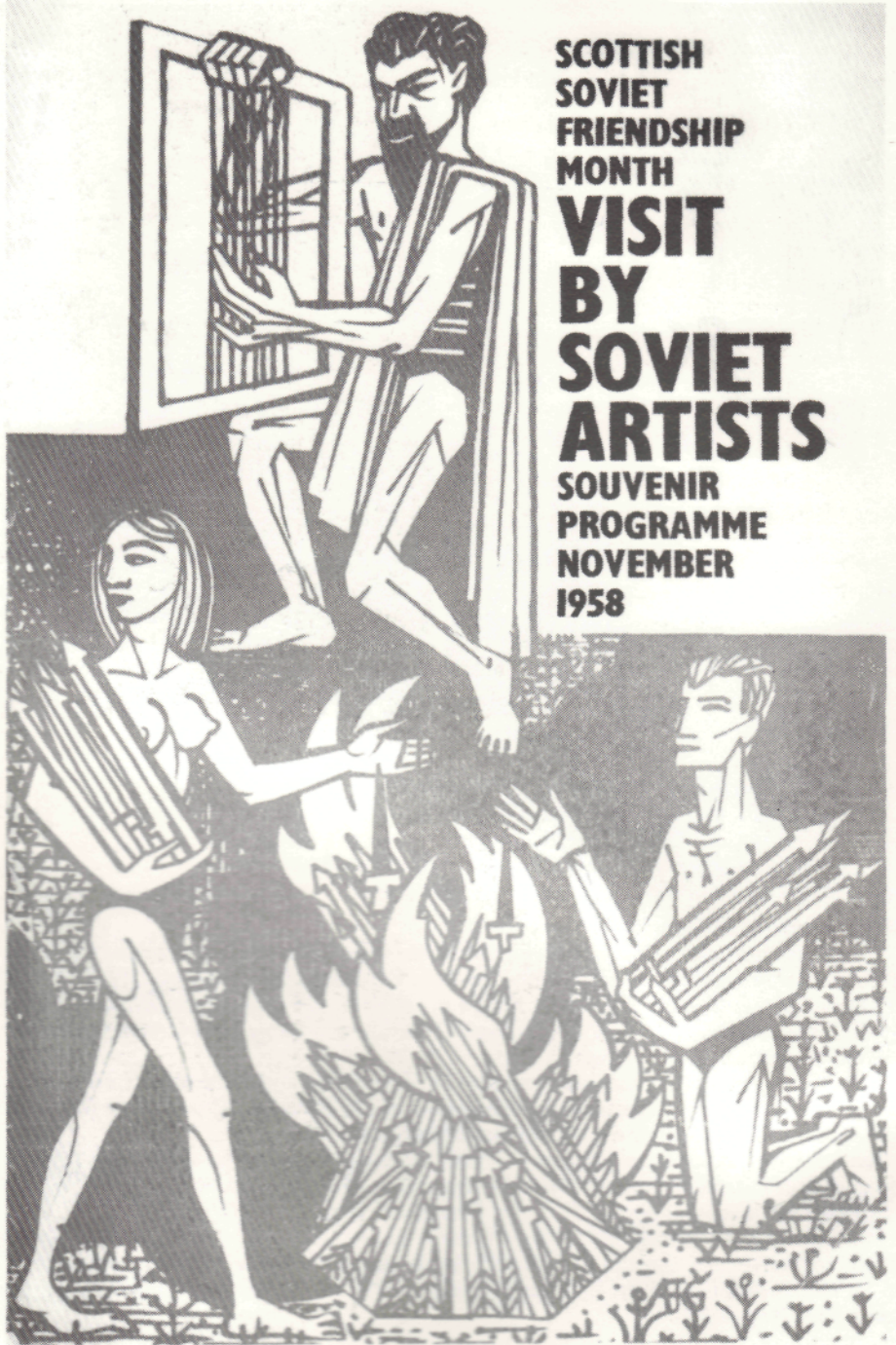
Such an exchange began in 1972 when a group of talented folk artistes from the Georgian Soviet Republic visited Scotland for a period of 14 days. With the invaluable assistance of the Entertainment Officers in many Scottish cities and towns the group were able to give performances in 13 centres in Scotland.

The Georgian group was followed the next year by a group from the Ukraine, and in subsequent years we received groups from Estonia, Armenia, the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and Lithuania.

We wish to acknowledge the assistance and support rendered to us by the Scottish Civic Arts Association in the promotion of these very successful events.

During the same period - thanks to the efforts of two leading Society members, Willie Mundie and Tommy Kettles - we were able to send a Scottish-music song and dance group to each of the republics mentioned above.

SCOTTISH SOVIET FRIENDSHIP MONTH VISIT BY SOVIET ARTISTS SOUVENIR PROGRAMME NOVEMBER 1958



Months of Friendship Concert at St. Andrews Hall.

Delegation Exchanges

In the difficult years of the 1950's and onwards the Society was also expanding its programme of professional exchanges enabling Scottish and Soviet people with mutual interests to meet colleagues and to gain first hand knowledge of each other's countries.

The very first of these delegations were both in 1949. Five Soviet miners (including Sergei Zaitsev, Chairman of the All-Union Council of Soviet Mineworkers) and six distinguished academics and artists (including the composer Dmitry Kabalevsky) were sponsored by the Society on a visit to Scotland.

In 1951 the Soviet delegation was led by the deputy Mayor of Stalingrad, Madame R. Murashkina.

In May 1954 the composition of the ten strong delegation which left Scotland to visit the Soviet Union clearly indicated that a wide spectrum of Scottish society was interested in contact with the Soviet people.

Even before the group left Scotland it was front page news in the local press. Included in the delegation was John L. Kinloch, later to become the Society's President. He was also a member of the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland, the Convention of Royal Burghs and the Scottish Council of the BBC.

Other members of the delegation were Professor R. Meek and his wife Dorothea, Jack House, Journalist and authority on Glasgow; the singer, Joan Alexander; Agnes Walker, pianist; William McLellan, publisher; Dr. Percy Bliss, Director of the Glasgow School of Art; and William Atkinson, Professor of Hispanic Studies at Glasgow University. The leader of the group was Mr. Farquhar Gillanders, Lecturer, Extra-Mural Studies, Glasgow University.

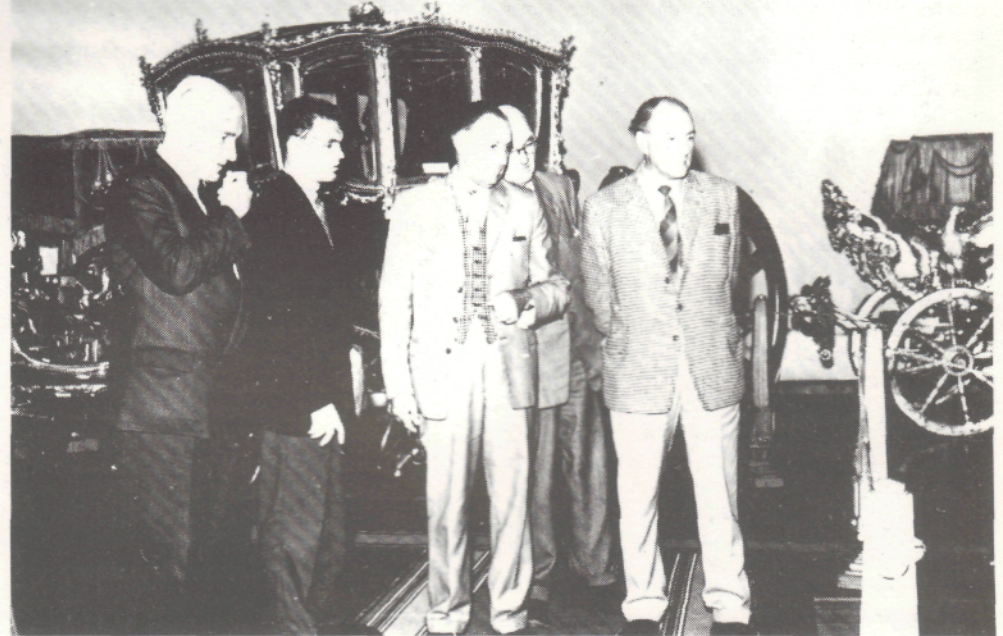
The impressions brought back by these distinguished Scots, 30 years ago, are strikingly similar to those still described by first time visitors to the Soviet Union:

The Society's Newsletter reported:

"All seem to have been overwhelmed and moved by the great friendliness of the Soviet people; and convinced, as few of them can have been before, of the genuineness and force of the Soviet people's and the Soviet Government's desire for peace. All greatly admired the Soviet educational system and the lavish provision for enriching lives through culture and sport."



John L. Kinloch and other Scottish Delegates meet renowned Soviet puppeteer, Sergei Obraztov.



Local Government Delegation invited by the USSR-Great Britain Society (1960). Sir A. Murray, Ex-Lord Provost of Edinburgh. Provost William McFarlane Gray of Stirling. Councillor William Taylor, Glasgow.



James Robertson Justice 1958.



Sir Compton McKenzie entertains Soviet guests at his home.



Mr. Kosygin visits Glasgow. Vice-President Mr. Tom Campbell (2nd from right) acted as interpreter at the request of the Lord Provost Mr. I. Johnstone.



Lord Ritchie-Calder and Professor Yanaev (Rt)



General Secretary with Mr. Rozanov and Mr. Pankov of the USSR-Great Britain Society.



Mr. V. Semyonov and Lord Ritchie-Calder.



Mr. G. Hamilton, Secretary of the Society's Trade Union Section, greets Soviet T.U. Delegation. The Society maintains close ties with the Trade Union movement in Scotland and many delegate exchanges have taken place. About 50 Trade Union Organisations are affiliated to our Society thanks to the work of Mr. Hamilton and his colleagues.



H.E. The Soviet Ambassador Mr. V. Lunkov with Mrs. N. Beattie and Mr. A. Parastaev.