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The Falkland Society

Scottish Registered Charity SC017201

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Committee for 2025–2026: [Peter Burman](#) (Chair), [Ross Burgess](#) (Secretary), [Robeena Dhar](#) (Treasurer), [Alan Graham](#) (Archivist), [Marietta Crichton Stuart](#), [Robin Bell](#), [John Fletcher](#).

Falkland Society Newsletter, November 2025

Dear <<First Name>>,

Last month we held our first hybrid meeting in Falkland Church and online. We're continuing this month with the same arrangements, but hope to get off to a slightly prompter start. So please come along (or join us online) to hear Judith Roebuck.

Starting with this Newsletter, we're using a new version of the Mailchimp software, which is an improvement in many ways, but seems to produce odd results for some people. To view this Newsletter the way we intended it, you're advised to click "[View this email in your browser](#)" near the top.

Peter Burman (Chair)

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November Meeting

Our next meeting will be at 7 p.m. on [Wednesday 12 November](#), when [Judith Roebuck](#) will be talking about [Closure of parish churches in Scotland: rationale and consequences](#). This will be a hybrid

meeting: online via Zoom, and in person at Falkland Parish Church.

Please join us from 6:45 p.m. onwards on the 12th, at
[The Craig Room, Falkland Parish Church, KY15 7BU](#)
what3words: [///wooden.backpacks.recipient](#)

All welcome, no charge, donations very welcome.

Or you can join us online by Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85792371502>

or one-tap mobile: [+442034815240](tel:+442034815240), [85792371502#](tel:+442034815240)



Given the ongoing uncertainty over the future of Scottish Churches, in Falkland as much as elsewhere, we are delighted to welcome **Judith Roebuck**, Sanctuary Development Manager for the Church of Scotland, as our speaker for November, on the subject **Closure of parish churches in Scotland: rationale and consequences**.

Judith previously worked for English Heritage as archaeologist for Fountains Abbey and later as an ancient monuments inspector, before coming to Scotland as an historic buildings inspector. Her current role includes dealing with and giving advice on the interior of churches. She leads a specialist stained glass group and a

communion ware group. She is a member of the Places of Worship Forum, and the Scottish Carved Stones Symposium. She advises the Church of Scotland's General Trustees on archaeological matters, deals with inventories for church closures, and advises congregations about the heritage value of their assets.



[Millais in Perth](#)



Perth and the River Tay

The fair city of Perth is one of our favourite haunts in Scotland for cultural history and heritage. It has a medieval central church, St John's Kirk of Perth, well-known for its craftsmanship and the many changes wrought in the 20th century by architect Sir Robert Lorimer and the craftspeople he gathered around him. It has a Scottish Episcopal cathedral designed by William Butterfield. And it has a fine new Museum, where the Stone of Destiny is now presented.

Last year's opening of the Museum, in the former City Hall, has freed up space within the renamed Perth Art Gallery, which is always on the lookout for items or collections eloquent of Perth and Perthshire. So it was exciting to learn that Sir Geoffroy Millais, great-grandson of the painter Sir John Everett Millais and his wife Euphemia (Effie) Gray (previously married to John Ruskin), has made a long-term loan of a private collection of 300 artworks and personal belongings of the artist and his wife. They have been beautifully presented in an exhibition which opened in late July.



Items from Millais' studio

The collection includes 19 oil paintings, more than 150 works on paper, personal correspondence, studio tools such as the artist's paint brushes and palettes, and Effie Gray's lace, jewellery and family heirlooms. Suzanne Fagence Cooper has already made excellent use of this material, through special access, in her most enjoyable book *Effie, The Passionate Lives of Effie Gray, Ruskin and Millais*, Duckworth Overlook, 2016 edition.



Bowerswell House

On entering the room where most of the collection is shown, the eye is seized at once by a map of Perthshire on which are marked twenty-two sites associated with Millais. Well-known are Bowerswell House, home of the Gray family, and Brig o' Turk, where the painter fell in love with Ruskin's wife, and she with him, while working on the first stage of the powerful portrait of Ruskin, standing on a rock in the turbulent waters of the stream, which is now one of the treasures of the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford.



Ruskin by Millais (Ashmolean Museum)

But there are many more including houses which the painter and his wife took for holidays and painting expeditions while their young family was growing up, so that they were fully conscious of their Perthshire heritage. We also come to appreciate the enthusiasm of Everett (his second name, so called within the family) for field sports, especially for the high skills of salmon fishing. The stuffed salmon which is one of the exhibits has the following inscription: 'SALMON (MALE) 44 lbs caught with fly on the Tay (Murthly Water) by J. E. Millais Bt RA Oct 8th 1884.'



Stuffed salmon, caught by Millais

Millais was born in Southampton in 1829 and was a child prodigy, admitted to the Royal Academy as a student at the astonishingly early age of eleven. Together with his friends the painters William Holman Hunt and Dante Gabriel Rossetti he founded the Pre-Raphaelite Brotherhood in 1848. Their radical departures from the style of painting advocated by the Royal Academy made them famous and, at the same time, controversial. Ruskin came to their defence in no uncertain manner and by the summer of 1853 he was on sufficiently warm terms to invite Millais and his brother William to join him and his wife Euphemia ('Effie') on a painting holiday at Brig o'Turk in the Trossachs.

Two of the most intriguing images in the exhibition are the drawings in pen and brown ink of his tiny cupboard-like sleeping quarters in the cottage which he shared with Ruskin and Effie (his brother opted for the local hotel); and of himself bathing in the stream with nearby a female figure who could only be Effie. The first is labelled 'My Feet Ought to be Against the Wall' and the second 'Shower Bath in the Highlands'.



My feet ought to be against the wall ... Shower bath in the Highlands

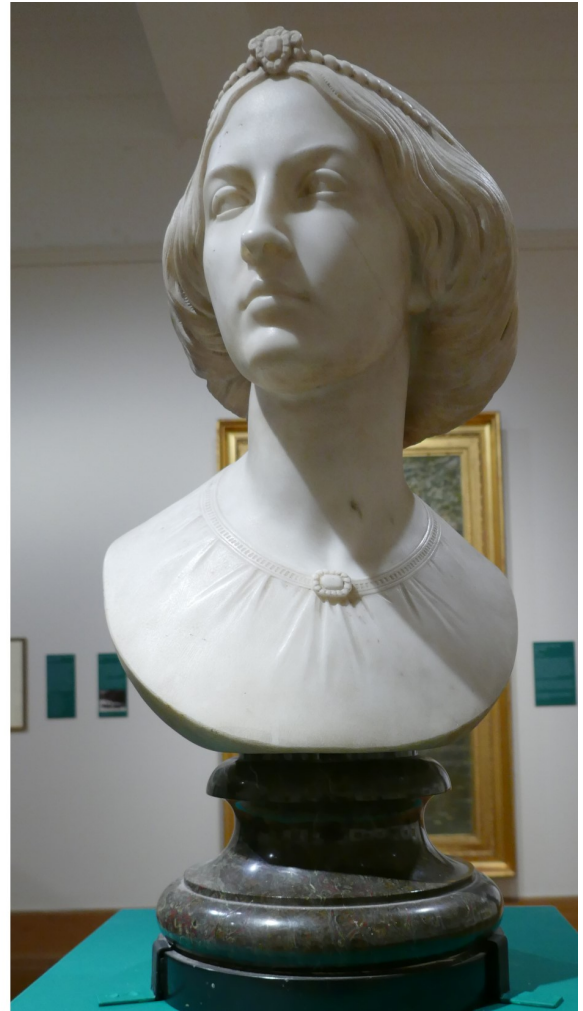


The star of the show is the exquisite watercolour of Effie which Millais painted during their informal courtship during the summer of 1853. It shows her as a radiantly beautiful young woman perhaps unconsciously beginning to realise that her future happiness lay with Millais rather than with Ruskin, who had refused or been unable to consummate their marriage.

Millais married Effie in 1855. They settled in Perth for some years and even after moving to London in 1861 they continued to make Perth and Perthshire an integral part of their life, returning frequently.

A significant portion of the exhibition is devoted to images of Millais and his wife. There is a portrait of Millais c.1880 by an unidentified Florentine painter, a copy of the self-portrait which Millais sent to the Uffizi

Gallery in Florence at that time. Dating from 1882 there is a fine bronze portrait bust of him, showing him as the confident professional painter he had become, by Joseph Edgar Boehm. There is also a hint of sadness about his face. The tragedy of severe illness was not unknown in their closely-knit family. As a companion piece there is a white marble portrait bust of Effie by Baron Marochetti. Both sculptors were great favourites of Queen Victoria, and these are fine examples of their work.



Millais by Boehm ... Effie by Marochetti

Among the portraits of the Millais children there is one of Alice Sophia Caroline (known as 'Carrie'), the subject of many of her father's paintings, who became a close friend and confidante of the composer Edward Elgar.

There is also a portrait of George, second son of Millais and Effie, who died at Bowerswell House at the age of twenty. He, later his mother, and altogether a good number of the Gray and Millais families, were buried in a vault in the Kinnoull church burial ground.

Landscapes, with figures and buildings in them, were among Millais's specialities and it comes as something of a shock to see the dark painting of Urquhart Castle, close to Drumnadrochit, to which Millais retired in sadness and distress after George's death in 1878.



Urquhart Castle

Millais, by then (1896) President of the Royal Academy and a Baronet, is buried in the crypt of St Paul's Cathedral, under a ledger stone superbly combining black marble and brass, designed by the architect Richard Norman Shaw, RA. Nearby lie various friends including Lord Leighton PRA (1830–96) and Sir Joseph Edgar Boehm (1834–90).

PETER BURMAN, 3 August 2025

Future Programme

Wed 12 November: Judith Roebuck (**see main article above**)

Wed 10 December: Marietta Crichton Stuart – *Mausoleum, Mansion and Monuments: a virtual walk through the Falkland Estate in times gone by*

Wed 21 January 2026: Ross Burgess – *Falkland's Historic Buildings*

Wed 11 February: John Fletcher – *Local deer, climate change and the environment followed by the Falkland Society AGM*

Wed 11 March: Robin Bell: *Music as performed in Falkland in the 19th and 20th centuries*

Wed 8 April: Carron Tobin, Director, Rural Solutions and founder of SCOTO – *Community-led tourism*

Wed 13 May: Craig Cameron, formerly Head Gardener and now Factor of Teasses Estate, Ceres. His talk on the revival of the Estate may be followed up by a visit to the outstanding gardens.

Wed 10 June: James Simpson: *Highlights of his architectural career* (to be confirmed)

July - August: Summer break

Wed 9 September: Joe Fitzpatrick: *Recent archaeological finds in Falkland*

Wed 14 October: John Gilbert: [Hunting with Mary Queen of Scots](#)

*Look out for more details of all these events on our website
and in our future Newsletters.*

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