

On-Line Art Exhibition Billy Scobie, Artist

We have known for some time that Billy Scobie is a man of many talents who has applied his skills to many aspects of the history and culture of this area:

- On recent local history he has provided many commentaries on subjects as diverse as street names and social history
- His work on medieval history and the dark ages has thrown light on many hitherto ignored subjects and compares favourably with what professionals have had to say on the subjects.
- His whimsical pieces on people such as Robin Hood have been diverting and entertaining
- And of course Billy has written well-received novels with a local setting.

However, he has another set of skills which he has kept pretty well hidden from public view. He is an accomplished artist. In fact, Billy was painting before he turned to writing.

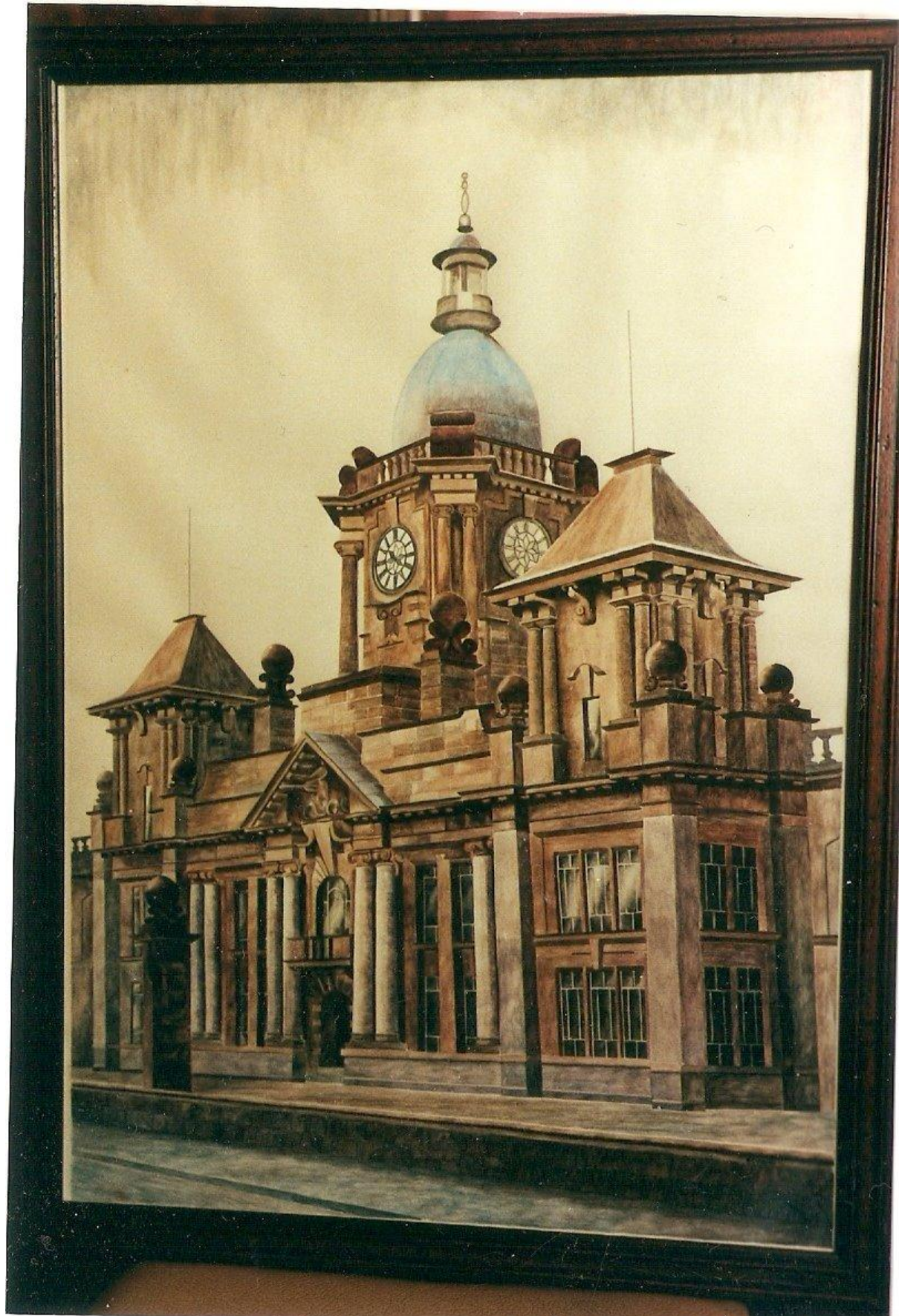
For the first time a collection of Billy's paintings are being made available for public viewing on-line on the valeofleven website. We are delighted to present this Exhibition of Billy's work. The earliest painting goes back about 40 years and as you will see the subjects are wide-ranging from landscapes to portraits to works with a religious and spiritual influence.

Billy has experimented with different styles and artistic influences including Cubism and Da Vinci but has always succeeded in projecting his strength of feeling command of his art in all of these paintings.

He has provided short comments on the background to most of the paintings.

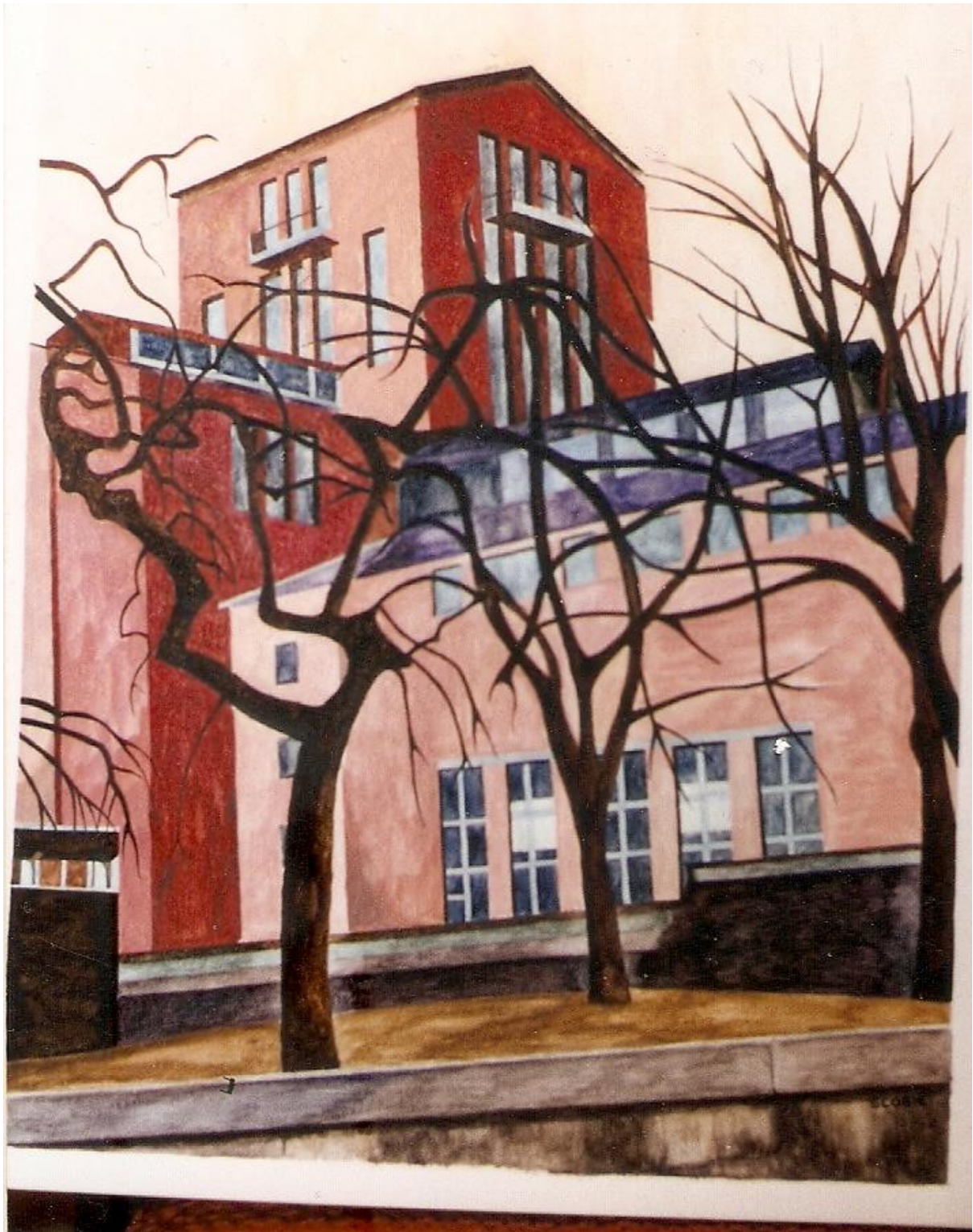
Enjoy.

1 The Royal Naval Torpedo Factory



2 The old Ballantine's distillery tower from Dumbarton's High Street.

The tower was finally demolished in the last week or so (ie the end of January 2017)



3. The Balloch Hotel

Many's the night I've spent in there, over a period of some thirty years. In the old "Jack of Diamonds", then subsequently the Public Bar and the Lounge downstairs.

I sold this one to Caroline Stewart, the then manageress. The painting hung in the Reception for many years until it was stolen!



4. Bluebells - Buddha Glayva

Just a simple still life. A Tibetan statue of Buddha, Glayva miniature bottle with bluebells (standing on a paper bag which almost certainly came from Mitchell's newsagents).



5 Three Wise Men of Bonhill

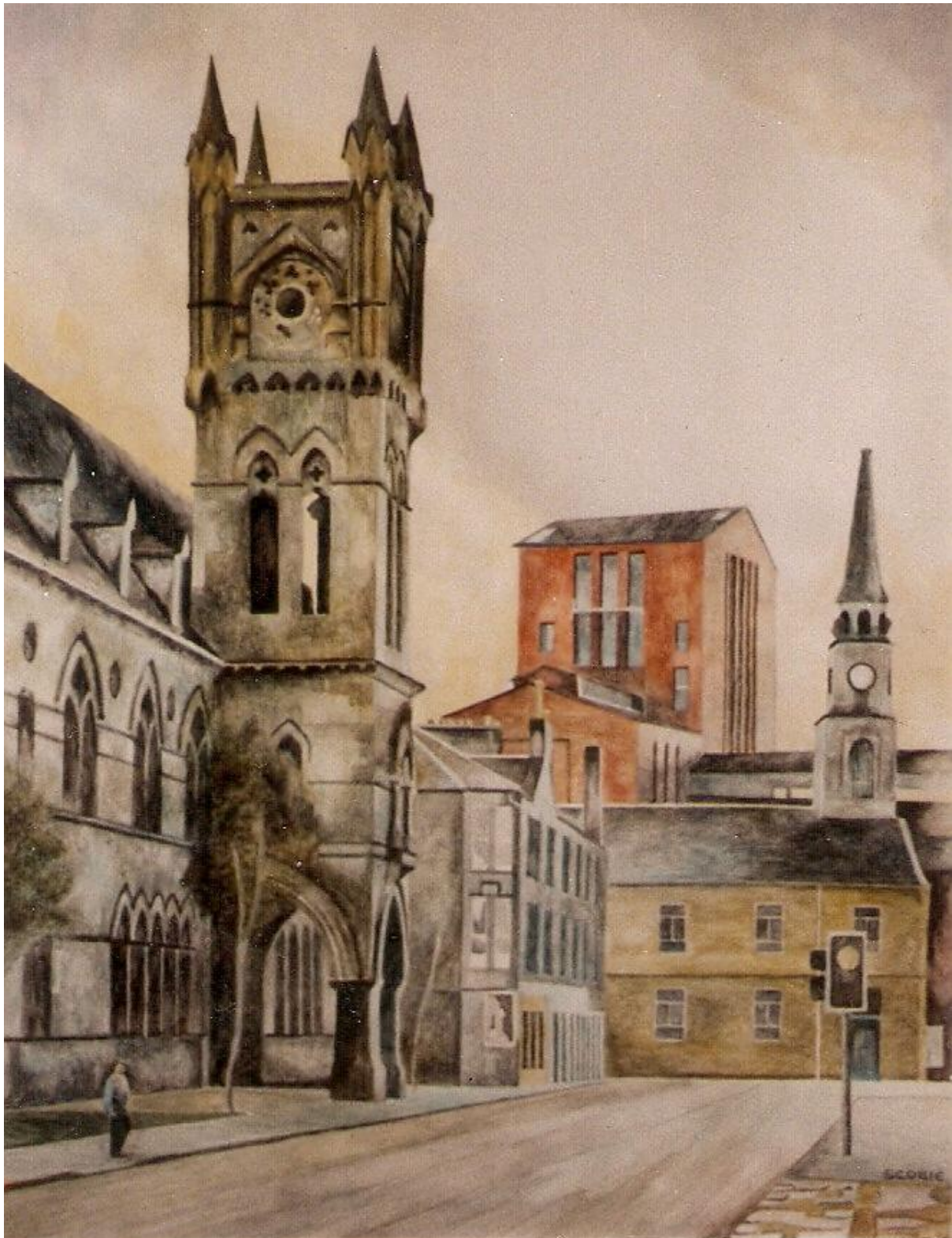


6 Boturich Castle

I knew the owner, the late Robert Findlay, first of all through the Scouts (the "Rob Roy" Scout camp being on his estate). Then in 1978 I read his book, "The Longest Shadow in the World". He was at that time Principal of the Edinburgh College of Parapsychology, and (in spite of our very different backgrounds) we developed a kind of friendship based on our mutual interest in matters psychic and spiritual.



7 Dumbarton Burgh Hall

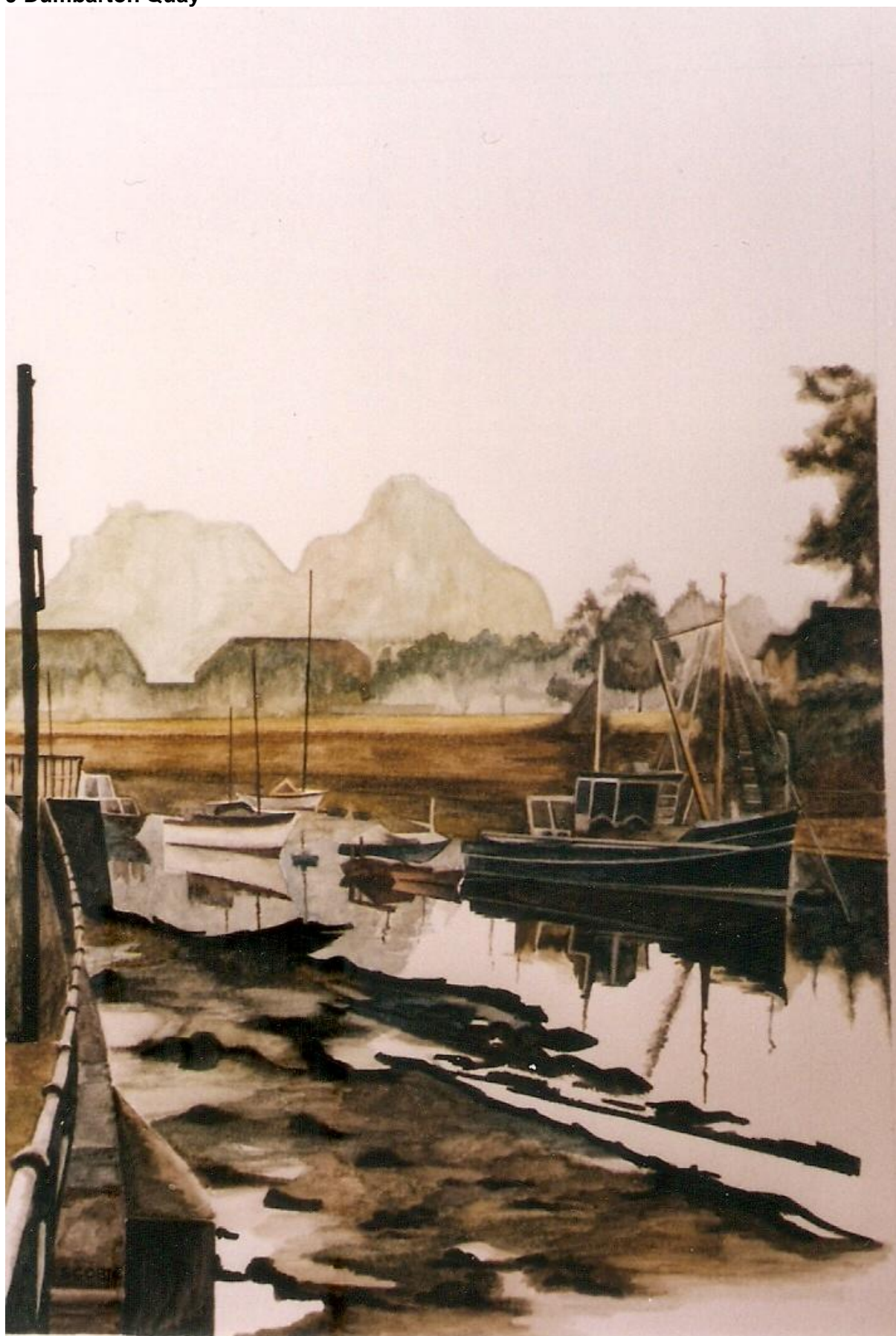


8 Da Vinci over the Vale

Rev Ian Miller in his autobiography, tells the story of the first time he and I met. I had painted the attached, and because it featured Bonhill Kirk (of which my maternal ancestors had been members) I thought it might be nice if the minister could find some corner for it in his church. It hung in the corridor outside the church office and as far as I know it's still there.



9 Dumbarton Quay



10 Dumbarton Rock Cube

Sometimes I would try a wee bit different style. The attached of Dumbarton Rock was influenced by what I imagined to be Cubism.



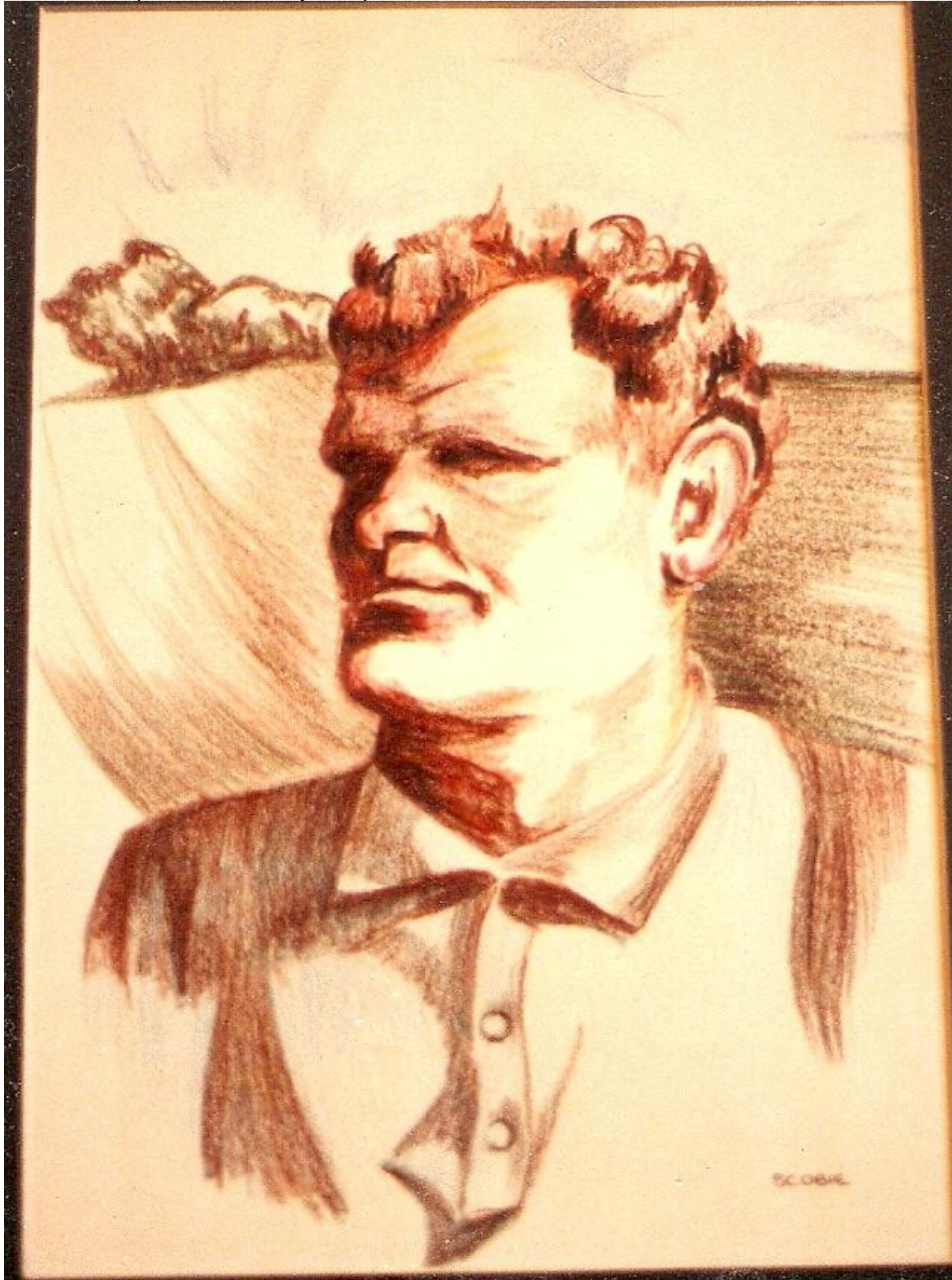
11. Evangelical Union

Most recognizable will be the old Evangelical Union Church in Glasgow Road, Dumbarton East. The first six years of my life were spent in the old Clyde Street there. Directly below "Lenin", you'll see the rear of the Wallace Street flats. That was one of the first sights I ever saw. For those six years I played in our washing green yards from those buildings. The painting is simply a rather eccentric adult attempt to depict a vivid and mysteriously enduring image from what was literally an infant dream.



12 George McFarlane

This is a portrait in pencil which was drawn around 20 years ago. The "sitter" is big George McFarlane. He has always been on the unofficial fringes of local politics, being (for example) a prominent member of the Rosshead Tenants & Residents Association and the fight to save the Vale Hospital. Well worthy of a portrait.



13 Trident

You will remember, back in the eighties, when, during the Falklands Conflict, the submarine HMS Conqueror torpedoed the Belgrano. The sub sailed back into Faslane flying a "Jolly Roger". Naval tradition or not, I felt it was in very dubious taste, given that men had lost their lives. I wanted to demonstrate somehow that this was the mentality behind the finger which hovered over the Trident button. The result was a painting. I asked for it to be hung in Dumbarton Library. Before I knew what was what a journalist and photographer (Evening Times & Glasgow Herald) appeared on my doorstep. Because the painting was political, a full Council Meeting had had to debate whether it could be hung in a public building (talk about the Russians!). These guys wanted the story.

Attached firstly is the resulting newspaper photo, then the painting.





14. Mary

This is a portrait of my wife, Mary. Included in the composition are the Portcullis Arch of Dumbarton Castle, where I asked her to marry me, and St Mahew's Church, Cardross, where we were married.



15 St Andrew's Church Alexandria



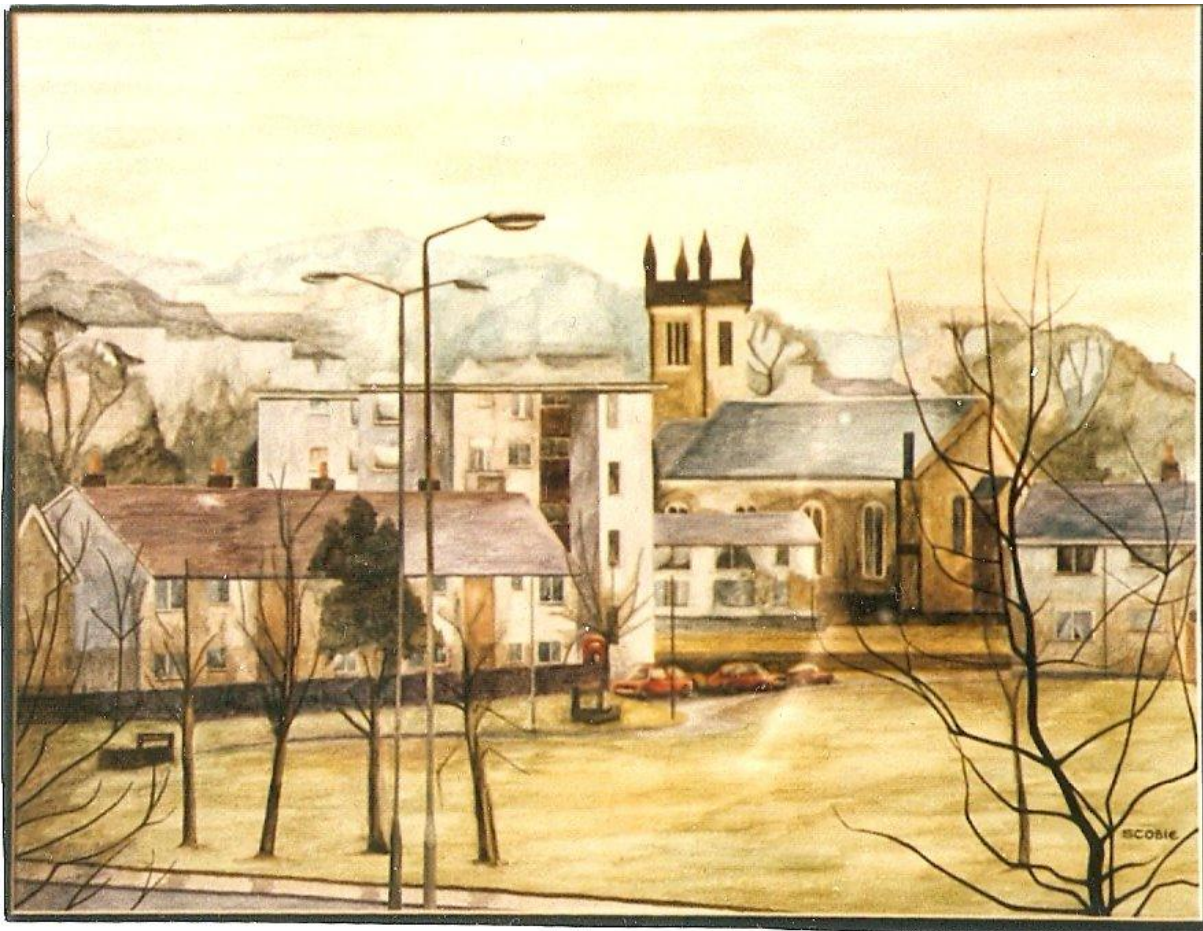
16. Stain Glass Window

When Rev Miller reached the 25 years milestone of his ministry at Bonhill, he wanted to commemorate it in some visible and lasting way. He asked me to design a stained-glass window for that purpose. This was something I'd never done, but I wasn't going to turn down this chance. This is the (slightly trimmed) painting on which the window was based. The theme is the Resurrection. Soldiers and priests looking into the empty tomb. Gravestones to the left, symbolising the hope of resurrection for the faithful, and Bonhill Kirk by the Leven on the right. The round window is at the rear of the church, above the organ pipes.



17 Station Brae View

This is the view from the Station Brae before the Bield Housing "Croft" was built.



18. The Bruce

This painting was my first effort (and it shows) some five years after leaving the Vale Academy and the artistic tutelage of Farquhar Fraser. It goes back to around 1975 (my early Old Vale Bar period). Obviously it's taken from the Bruce statue at Bannockburn. I know that the architecture of Stirling Castle in the distance is anachronistic, but call it artistic license. It was framed by Ian McPhie in "The Handyman".

