

## PERFORMANCE



Tribute Jane Stirling

Kaiya Marjoribanks

**An historic local heroine who helped bring one of the world's greatest composers to the fore is being honoured at a free concert in Holy Trinity Church on Friday (July 15).**

Jane Stirling (1804-1859) of Kippendavie was a pupil and major benefactor of Frederic Chopin.

She escorted him on a tour of Scotland to try to help him make more money as he had become ill and impoverished and paid for him to have a decent burial in Paris when he later died.

Now, thanks to the efforts of Polish wellwishers, her contribution to music and to his legacy is being recognised at "An Evening with Jane Stirling" from 7.30pm in the city centre church.

The evening will feature Anna Debowska (piano), Marek Kucharski (narration) and Marcin Jaroszek (Chopin's letters) in a special presentation of music and history.

Sue Stirling Aird, a member of the church Vestry, was contacted by Anna and Marcin who, along with a group of academics from Cracow, rediscovered

the story of how Jane helped Chopin in the last years of his life and he dedicated several nocturnes to her. Jane's family and other local families gave money towards building the church.

Now, almost two centuries later, all the connections are coming together for the special performance.

Sue, whose husband Patrick is a great nephew several times over of Jane Stirling's, said: "At a time when there seems to have been so much negativity about Europe, it's refreshing to be able

to show this lovely cultural link and such willingness from these people to come here all these years later to show their gratitude to and remember Jane Stirling.

"Anna is a talented Polish concert pianist and she and her colleagues feel passionately that more people should know about how Jane helped Chopin. They have insisted they are giving the concert entirely free. Anna feels she and Jane have a lot in common and she particularly enjoys playing the music

which Chopin dedicated to Jane.

"Music is a great part of the life of this church." Church spokesperson Claire Brims said: "Jane Stirling gave Chopin considerable financial and emotional support in his last years, helping to pay for his funeral and memorial in Pere Lachaise and also buying numerous artefacts connected with him which were subsequently sent to Poland. Marcin and Anna think that, were it not for Jane's efforts, far less would be



# Championing a music great

## Jane was benefactor of composer



**Genius** Jane Stirling was a pupil of Frederic Chopin

known about Chopin. They are very concerned that Jane is now known as she ought to be and that Chopin was indeed rather ungrateful to her.

"This concert is not only a lovely thought for our church, but just the kind of outreach project we want at an exciting time for us as the church hall is being extensively restored. We hope it will become a great resource, not just for us but for the wider community. We also have a new rector who will join us soon.

"We are in for a treat with this performance. For the three performers, it is primarily an act of gratitude to Scotland and more particularly to Jane Stirling. Sadly her generosity has not been recognised by history or indeed by Chopin himself, however these three enthusiastic Polish performers are seeking to redress this neglect. Their programme includes a video presentation with photos of the areas Chopin visited in Scotland and a piano recital. It will appeal to both music lovers and to anyone with an interest in history. There will be refreshments afterwards."

More details on the performers and their passion for Jane Stirling and Chopin's music at [www.theAboutProject.com](http://www.theAboutProject.com).