

Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

Parish Magazine

Extracts from Parish Magazine

April, 2004



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Building a Strong Parish Community

The PCC would like to thank all those who have already reviewed their Christian Giving in the light of the Appeal which went out with the March Parish Magazine. If you have not already done so, could members of St James please consider the information and appeal as soon as possible. Our target is to increase our regular income at least to meet the 12% increase in our Parish Share to the Diocese by Easter. The initial response has been encouraging, but so far this year Parish expenditure has exceeded income.

PS The Bankers Order form included with the PCC Appeal should be changed to the following:- Sort Code: 720002. Account Number: 98319705.

CHRISTIAN AID

House-to-house collection
9 - 15 May

We need YOU! I would be glad to hear from anyone willing to join the team of house-to-house collectors during Christian Aid Week so that we can be sure of covering every house in the Parish.

Individual volunteers or in pairs (to 'job share' a road) would be most welcome.

Fiona Lee
(335663)

Christleton Village Show 2004

Saturday 10 July

Schedules are now available from Paul Jackson at the Post Office. Choose some categories and start planting, sewing, painting etc. It doesn't cost much, is great fun and you could win a trophy - there are lots of them.

The theme this year is ROMANCE as it is a leap year and the Theme Trophy will go to the exhibit which portrays this best. Any queries about the Show or the Craft morning, or if you would like to help on either of the days, please contact any of the committee below:

David or Beryl Cummings 332410
Janet Brown 335785
Charles Smeatham 335209
Sue Haywood 741814
Chris Marsland 335424
June Pearson 335101
Jane Pickering, Judith Butt 335296

Each month I intend to feature the activities of one of our village groups, and where possible to include a photograph of their activities. If you would like me to put a feature about your group, in the magazine please let me know.

David Cummings

Christleton St James' Bellringers.

The cover photograph is of the current team of bellringers in action in the Bell Tower led by Captain Ian Braithwaite.



St James' Bellringers

St James' ringers have been ringing the changes successfully in the village since the early 1740's when the first six of the bells, was installed by Abel Rudhall of Gloucester. The peal was extended to eight bells with the addition of new bells in 1812 and 1839, again from the Rudhall foundry.

The most prominent ringers have come from the Mayers Family, through Samuel, George and Joseph who between them rang for over 160years. Samuel was born in 1809 and rang for over 60years. He always rang number 4 and his bell rope still hangs in the tower. A board commemorates his service;

"It is worthy of note that Samuel Mayers is in his 82nd year, had rung in a mourning peal for William IV, also a peal for the Queen's Accession in 1837, and as this testifies, took part in peals rung both on Jubilee Day 1887 and Diamond Jubilee Day 1897."

George was Schoolmaster & Parish Clerk in the 1840's and carried out and hand wrote the first census of the village in 1844. He was a bell ringer for 52years and was probably the most famous nationally. He once led the team in a contest in Oldham, and at the end of the competition he was carried through the streets in triumph.

"The Christleton Ringers had the honour of carrying off the first prize ... at the conclusion of the contest, so pleased were the various competing companies of ringers with the performance of the Christleton men, that they carried their leader, Mr George Mayers shoulder high through the principal streets of the town."

He was also regarded as the cleverest ringer of the Steadman system of ringing in the country, and his fame was so great, that ringers came weekly from Liverpool to receive instructions from him. He also conducted the Christleton team through the performance of a peal of grandsire triples and a peal of treble bobs, a feat regarded as a very rare occurrence.

George's brother Joseph was born in 1840, and was also highly regarded as a ringer, and his name and photographs appear on the Tower Boards in the ringing chamber. In 1911 he was presented with a small silver bell, by Captain Townsend Currie, in recognition of over fifty years of service as a ringer.

David Cummings

References; Parish Magazine for 1880.

"The Bells of St James' Church Christleton" by The Reverend David Fisher

THE HOSPICE OF THE GOOD SHEPHERD

We have an elderly lady who crochets knee blankets for our patients and our shops. She is finding it difficult to get enough wool. Could you please look and see if you have any wool that you do not want. Please contact Jane Warrington, The Beeches, Plough Lane – Telephone 336324.

On Magnificat

"My soul doth magnify the Lord: and my spirit has rejoiced in God my Saviour"

There are some fine musical settings of the Magnificat. When the church choir rendered one of Stanford's joyful versions in the autumn, both the Rector and I mused that we had first sung the work as boy trebles!

In my case I had been rescued from a childhood career as a failed pianist by one Peter Cliffe who died last year. Peter was an enigmatic teacher and a versatile musician; I once heard him play eight different instruments in one evening. He could also persuade boys to sing in the School choir, especially those disinclined to be seen to do anything well in public. (most of us!)

Son of the vicar of St. John's, Keswick, Peter was Assistant Organist at Ely Cathedral when he was 19. However by the time he was 22, the Second World War broke out and he was called up and sent to the Front. Rescued from Dunkirk, Peter lost many of his compatriots, but he survived to take up a post teaching music in South Yorkshire.

By 1947 Peter's father was very ill and so he took compassionate transfer to teach music at the Friends' School at Wigton. He stayed for over 30 years.

Working in an Anglican Cathedral and then in two Quaker Schools, the latter on the edge of the Lake District, Peter's soul magnified the Lord in everything he did. He introduced many of us to his beloved mountains nearby and by his spirited example Peter taught us to rejoice in God our Saviour, and always to be thankful.

Sadness in his life, and never marrying, somehow fertilised Peter's concern for others. His talent for making and for repairing clocks was a generous example. Peter was forever shooting up church towers as he passed to correct or restart the clock (and tell the vicar afterwards, if he even bothered!)

In 2 Corinthians 4, St Paul assures us that in faint "we know that the one who raised Lord Jesus from the dead will also raise us with Jesus" into God's presence. Then our thanksgiving will "overflow to the glory of God."

Peter taught pupils of several different faiths, and plenty of doubters. Glory, Magnificat, and praise were central for him, whatever the Christian season.

by John Carruthers

Parish Rambling Group

Sunday April 18th

Thurstaston Common. Royden Park Grange & Frankby. 5 miles (Moderate)

Meet at Church Car Park at 1.30pm

Leader David Cummings

Tuesday April 27th

Ilam & Dovedale in the Peak District. 8 1/2 miles (Moderate)

[Superb river walk in a limestone gorge, and fascinating village]

Meet at Church Car Park at 8.00am

Leader David Cummings

Friday - Sunday May 14 - 16th Weekend. In Lake District

Leader Liz McClure

Tuesday 25th May

Lathkill Dale in the Peak District 10miles (Moderate)

[National Nature Reserve mainly for butterflies]

Meet in Car Park at 8.00am

Leader David Cummings

Sunday 13th June

Nantwich & Acton 5 1/2miles (Easy)

Meet at Church Car Park at 1.30pm

Leader David Cummings

Tuesday 29th June

Snowdon 8 miles (Hard)

Meet in Church Car Park at 7.30am

Leader David Cummings.

OUR FIVE SENSES

God is in the deep, sweet perfume of the rose,

Whose slender stem clings closely to the wall.

Glossy green leaves point sharply to the sun,

As lingers one last drop of glistening dew.

The smell of new baked bread, which takes one back

To my old home & Grandma, baking in the kitchen,

And the kettle singing on the hearth.

God's love is in the deep emotion felt thro' dreamlike passages

And surging crescendos of a Kataturian adagio,

And to sit in comfort by a glowing fire

Listening to Sibelius' plaintive strains on the radio;

Hearing the sighing wind in trees

And rain, like pebbles thrown against the window,

And know that God is there.

The pleasure to feel the warm, smooth texture

of polished wood,

and the soft touch of your first born,

as she gently curls her fingers around your own.
These are the magic moments that God freely gives.

Those melting moments, when at last,
you pop that chocolate into your mouth,
after agonising weeks on the Adams Diet.
And to taste that first cup of tea, on a cold, frosty morning.

And when you stand at the close of day,
And gaze at the wondrous colours of the sunset,
Colours that could never be reproduced by man,
and as the deep purple of the evening, falls upon the earth,
and the myriad stars glitter in the velvet sky;
who can ever doubt the existence of God?

To be loved, cherished, and needed in return,
but not always see.
Let us be forever grateful for these precious gifts;
These senses which our Lord has freely given.
Rena Griffiths

Learn Bell Ringing in Christleton

Christleton has a long and illustrious history of bell ringing and you can read all about it elsewhere in the magazine. However we are short of ringers at the moment and need new learners to help us carry on.

Christleton Church has eight bells in its tower, and they are recognised as particularly melodious and easy bells to ring; the perfect bells on which to learn to ring. We have ringers aged from 10 to 70 years old, and the only prerequisites are a pair of legs to get you up the tower steps and a pair of arms to pull the ropes! You do not have to live in Christleton, and you do not have to be a regular church-goer. You would become part of a group which enjoys a good drink after practice, and enjoys trips to other towers on Tower Outings

You do not have to be strong or musical to ring bells, but it does take some time to develop the skills of coordination required. If you were to start learning this year – a learners class will start after the summer holidays – you would be able to ring a bell all by yourself within three months, ring rounds and call-changes with other ringers within six months, and ring simple methods (tunes) within a year.

So why not come along to see what it's all about, see the bells and meet some of the bell ringers? We practice on Tuesdays at 7.30 pm, and we ring on Sundays at 10.00 and 5.45 pm. Alternatively watch out for the Tower Open Day on a Saturday in the Summer. All ages very welcome – 10 and upwards.

We look forward to seeing you.
Ian Braithwaite – Tower Captain
Telephone Chester 300565

Tribute to my beloved Doreen after 55 years

She was 16 when I met her, and little did I know that someone special had come into my life, and never thinking we would spend so many years together.

We married on April 2nd 1949 and it was very apt that the song "A, you're adorable" was all the rage, together with the Billy Cotton Band Show.

The years passed and we were blessed with 2 lovely daughters, Deb in 1959 and Bev in 1963. 7 grandchildren followed.

1995 brought the bad news that Doreen had been diagnosed with Alzheimers. We had to let go in July 2001 when she went into residential care.
I could not have coped with all the trauma without the support of my family and church.

I still visit her 3 times a week and although she can no longer speak, I know she is happy in her own little world. I hold her hand and she squeezes it in recognition and think what a blessing it was that the two of us should meet.
James Murray

Cathedral Link

Mrs Judy Davies, Education Officer at the Cathedral is looking for anyone who might be interested in helping with the PILGRIM DAYS 2004

These will take place between Monday 27 september and Saturday 2 October excluding Thursday 30 September.

It involves helping with children from the Diocesan schools who attend workshops in the Cathedral covering various activities. One can pick the number of days involved. It is very interesting work and very rewarding. Several of us from St James already take part. If interested contact Judy on 01244 324756, Fax 0124 341110 or Email davies@chestercathedral.org.uk

The Dying Tree

The tree that shaded flowers upon the village green
 Will slowly die, and nothing can be done,
 The boughs, like naked arms, are easy to be seen
 Without the leaves to shade them from the sun.
 The tree, first planted on Victoria's Jubilee Day,
 Has seen the village life from year to year,
 The children from the school, as they came out to play,
 Would run beneath the branches without fear.
 The tree first saw the horses with rumbling drays
 That ran along the cobbles in the street,
 And saw the people go their hurried ways,
 And heard the clatter of the running feet.
 The tree saw brides arriving at the church's gate
 And going up the pathway to the door.
 It wonders what will be the new-weds' fate,
 And hopes the marriage lasts for evermore.
 The tree has heard the tolling of the funeral bell,
 As weeping mourners follow the bier.
 It hoped the mourned one lived his life so well,
 Or whether he was worth the silent tear.
 The tree has spanned the green for eighty years or more
 And for our help the withered branches call,
 But now it's lost the shape it had before,
 And we'll be sorry when it has to fall.

Cliff Boddy 13.11.1986

(Written when one of the trees on The Green began to wither)

Chinese New Year

Hilary Devenport

The Year of the Monkey began on the 22nd January 2004

Brian was reading the Travel Supplement of The Sunday Times. It was cold, rainy and generally dull and grey. "Why don't we go to Singapore and spend Chinese New Year with your Mother?" said Brian as he lowered the paper. He always seems to have all the good ideas.

One telephone call to our much-used travel agent resulted in the last two seats for the 20th January on the only available airline being bought and confirmed. This was on 31st December 2003. While we are there why don't we go to Bangkok and also experience a much heard about beach holiday in Thailand? Asked Brian. Why not, indeed. So flights to Koh Samui and Bangkok were booked along with sumptuous sounding accommodation.

Why don't we break our journey in Dubai on the return leg, just for a few days, said Brian? Good idea I thought.

We boarded our flight in Manchester with great excitement, the last time in the Far East being 5 years ago. The journey was broken on transit in Dubai. Wide-eyed with astonishment and wonder we took in the opulence of Dubai Airport. Soon we were on our way again. The usual announcement warning of death to drug traffickers signalled our arrival at Singapore.

A sumptuous steamboat dinner at my brother Andrew's house awaited us, along with my sister and her family, close friends and family. Chinese New Year's Eve is an important part of the celebrations. Families usually gather to eat together, from the simplest to the most magnificent meals. The joy of being together was apparent in the happy banter, laughs and most of all, radiant smiles on my mother's face. It is a wonderful thing that at the age of 85, she still maintains the role of the Matriarch of the family, and cooks wonderful food for such big numbers.

The first day of the New Year, traditionally, is for visits to the elders of the family. Their married children give red packets or envelopes with money to them. In turn any young children visiting are also given red packets, known as "ang pow". The best drinks, wine and food are always available in Chinese homes all over the celebration period when "open house" exists.

On the morning of the New Year, young children waited excitedly for their "ang paws". Preparation for the evening dinner begins to take place; the house is tidied, but never swept, for visits by friends and family. The belief that gold dust of prosperity, sprinkled in the home by good spirits, must not be swept away. Sweeping, dusting and hoovering only takes place on the second day. I have always had a sneaky feeling that this belief was created to give mothers a break from household chores!

The rattle of drums and clash of cymbals broke the calm at about 10 in the morning. This signals the arrival of The Lion. Lion dancers, invited by the people opposite my brother's house, performed a spiritual cleansing ceremony for the start of the New Year. The gyrating, aggressive lunges and nimble leaps of the Lion was a spectacle of delight and awe for children and adults alike. An "ang pow", strategically placed to exhort the most spectacular and strenuous efforts of the Lion Dance team, was the coup de gras. Hung from the gable end of the house, it took several efforts by three or four, sometimes six men, on each others' shoulders, for the Lion to finally grasp the packet in its mouth and "swallow" it. Traditionally, long strings of firecrackers would, at this point be lit, the ear splitting explosion giving emphasis to the feat and signalling the end of the performance.

These performances are usually done by trained martial arts expert from community Clubs, and the monies raised go towards maintaining the existence of these clubs. Thoughts of St. James having a Lion Dance team for the Restoration Fund were quickly dispelled by Brian. Some one had to be realistic in our family. Chinese New Year lasts for 15 days. The first three days and the fifteenth evening are the most important for the Chinese community. Lion dances, however, can and do perform throughout the whole of the fifteen days. So the "ang pow" contributions can be quite considerable for the clubs.

Dinner at the end of the first day was at sister Shirley's home. A delicious dinner of around ten dishes filled the dinner table, again enjoyed with yet another gathering of other relations.

The next day saw us heading off in the early hours to Malacca, Malaysia, to visit sister-in-law Audrey's sisters and brothers. All 8 of them. Malacca, was the first trading port in Malaya established by the Portugese. We arrived at Andrew and Audrey's holiday home by the sea, overlooking the Straits of Malacca. The Straits is still one of the most dangerous bandit infested waters in the world for seafarers. Two attacks took place while we were there. Our arrival at Audrey's eldest brother's house were greeted with immense warmth by all the families. Gifts of oranges and home made food items were exchanged. Lunch in relays were provided for everybody, prepared by family maids.

Steamboat was on offer, with raw meat, fish and vegetables, cooked in boiling stock with forks and eaten with dips of various types. Noodles, a dish signifying "long life" was also served. The next two days were spent visiting other sisters and brothers with "ang pows" all round again. One of the parties were held in a rubber wholesaler's warehouse to accommodate the whole family. The children played badminton and other games in the hot sun; the men indulged in Black Jack, the women gossiped and caught up with family news.

One hot sultry evening found us in an open air restaurant, on decking by the water's edge eating Black pepper crab, fried rice, crispy local fish, piquant watercress and drinking out of whole young coconuts. Brian and his new friend, sometime bookie and football result gambler, Ah Hai, watched Scarborough play Chelsea. Brian spoke no Chinese and Ah Hai spoke very little English but the chasm was amiably bridged by football. A wonderful international language!

Stocking up in Malacca meant huge sweet pomelos from Ipoh, big juicy sweet oranges from China. The return journey to Singapore started very early at seven. Everyone slept through the journey. Visiting relations is exhausting for both young and old. It was only at the border two hours later, where Custom Officers took their duties very seriously, that various members of the family stirred and woke. All of a sudden we and other motorists were ushered aside for the unfettered journey of the Malaysian Royal entourage.

We flew to Koh Samui the very next evening. A very quaint and pretty airport awaited us. Buses painted blue with under water scenes and beautiful fishes met the plane and ferried us to the thatched open sided terminal.

Checking into The Imperial Boat Hotel, we were greeted with a delicious fruit drink wonderful kindness and friendliness.

On our morning walk we discovered the famed beautiful white beaches, restaurants in the hotel and on the beach, gleaming blue

swimming pools and wooden boats converted into living accommodation. Evenings were spent having dinner and lounging on the sand on mats with coffee and brandy. A driftwood fire nearby. Frogs, giant cone snails, butterflies and geckos abound. I was lucky to come across a snake, probably on his way home. He was about 3 feet long and very fast.

Thousands of scurrying crabs paved our way as we walked on the white sand, clear warm sea water lapping over feet. The sun on our faces, legs and arms. Travel was cheap. The pound is strong. So we had a driver take us round the island to show us places of interest. He delighted in taking us to see Grandfather and Grandmother rock. These bore a similarity of certain body parts.

The rehabilitation of elephants, work horses in the logging industry in the jungle has been widely reported. They now work giving rides to tourists. This we found to be true. It was a lovely experience riding on the back of one of these huge magnificent animals. Our elephant was 45 years of age, and had finished her working life as a log mover. They appear to be kind, patient, obedient and accepting of their lot. Once the rides were over, they were unsaddled, washed, given unlimited water to drink then sent off to feed in the surrounding jungle area. Tourists buy bananas for them but some prefer palm leaves. Two youngsters came up for their treats, drink, and a shower. One was seven years the other only five. Good though it all seems, a part of me wished they could enjoy total freedom.

Soon the leisurely life ended with a flight into Bangkok. One became instantly aware of the change on emerging from the airport. Vehicles were tearing around on purposeful journeys. When not tearing around they jostled for positions at junctions, all the while in fume laden air. People moved at a horrendous speed. Gone were the laid back relaxed atmosphere of Koh Samui. We watched in amazement as pedestrians routinely braved crossing four lane expressways, overhead bridges being too far apart. Someone told us that as the Thai people are Buddhists they abhor termination of any form of life, so really no one will get killed on any of these crossings. It will take me years of injury free expressway

crossing for me to be convinced of this. A journey to the famed Night Market had to be made. Brian suggested that we take a Tuk Tuk. This is a tricycle rickshaw, open sided with an upholstered seat for two in the back. This vehicle is powered by a small motorbike engine, something in the region of a 100 cc. This is an adventure after all, we convinced ourselves. We made it to our destination, all the while feeling that it was only through the kindness of the other road users that we got there in one piece.

Feeling very pleased with ourselves we made the return journey by another Tuk Tuk. Next day our tour guide arrived to take us on a City Tour. She was horrified that we had entrusted our safety to the Tuk Tuk. Chigwood Palace was on the agenda. Here we were told the story of the Thai Royal Family. The palace was beautiful with big airy rooms, polished floors and furnished with pieces of antique furniture from the West. This is evidence of where the Royal Family were educated. Although the film *The King & I* is banned in Thailand, the storyline deemed to be not totally true, the guide informed us that the featured in the story came from this palace. We took in two Buddhas, one of which was the Gold Buddha recovered after it was encased in concrete and placed in a lake to prevent it's destruction during a very protracted war in Siam.

We returned to Singapore for the celebration of the 15th night , to more delicious food and copious wine from Andrew's wine fridge.

LEPROSY MISSION

Stamp out leprosy!

Please donate your used stamps so that money can be raised for Leprosy Mission. Stamps should be trimmed to quarter inch border around the stamp, and can be left at the back of Church.

PLEASE TELL US...

If you know of any special birthdays, anniversaries or anyone celebrating a special occasion, who is a Parish Magazine reader, please inform the editor, David Bull.

AVAILABLE AT ST JAMES CHURCH:

"Loop" system, for the hearing impaired

Large print books for the visually impaired & large print weekly notice sheets

Easy to follow Communion Service Books for children

Access for wheelchairs

Please ask any of the Churchwardens or Sidesmen if you need assistance in any way.

NATIONAL CHILDBIRTH TRUST (N.C.T.) OPEN HOUSE GROUP:

Informal coffee mornings are held locally offering support to mums-to-be and families with young children (whether members or not) in a friendly, informal way. Please contact your local organiser Debbie Tel. 332103 for further details.

CHRISTLETON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

Books for Sale

Christleton 2000 years of History.

136 pages of text, fully illustrated with b&w photographs, maps & drawings, and including 8 pages of colour photographs. Laminated cover with water-colour painting of the Church & Pump House by Phil Hodges.

£12.50 & (£2.75 postage & packing.) Free delivery locally.

Christleton Village Trail

A self guided tour of the Village in aid of the "Well for Africa" Appeal.

£2.50. (+30p postage& packing))

From David Cummings, 25 Croft Close, Rowton, Chester CH3 7QQ

or from Christleton Post Office.

CHRISTLETON UNDER-FIVES COMMUNITY PLAYGROUP

Registered charity 1022817

Christleton Under-Fives is an established pre-school playgroup attracting children from a wide area. It enjoys good and well-founded links with Christleton Primary School.

Children from the age of 2_ years until school entry age are accepted.

Please contact the Supervisor, Carole Penney, on 336586 for further details.

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The van calls weekly: alternate Thursdays all day and alternate Fridays in Quarry Lane 11.15 am – 12.45 pm. For further details of when the van is next in your area, please telephone Upton Library on 380053.

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