

# Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

## Parish Magazine

Extracts from Parish Magazine  
for February 2003



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### ST JAMES RESTORATION APPEAL – UPDATE

NEARLY ONE THIRD OF THE WAY THERE! £80,000 TO GO

The Appeal has now reached £30,000, which is a marvellous achievement in just six weeks. Thank you to everyone who has donated so far.

### CONCERT in aid of ST JAMES RESTORATION APPEAL SATURDAY 15TH MARCH at 7.30 pm in St James Church

The Vale Royal Singers  
Director: Roger Wilkes  
Accompanist: Brian Heald

On Saturday 15th March, the Vale Royal Singers will be coming to sing in St James Church to raise funds for the Restoration Appeal. Tickets are £5 (children of school age £3) and are available from Katherine Seddon (01244 335588). The ticket price includes light refreshments in the Parish Hall after the concert.

Formed by Brian Greensill in 1978, this versatile group of around 20 voices gives performances of sacred and secular music of all kinds, both light and classical, dating from 15th century to the present day. First performances of works written especially for the Singers have featured in a number of concerts. Having achieved a reputation for the excellence of their performances, the Vale Royal Singers are now firmly established as one of the leading chamber choirs in the north of England. Their success can be measured by the great demands for their services, and they now travel widely. Venues at which they perform regularly include Chester Cathedral, Eaton Hall and Ystym Colwyn Hall. They have broadcast on BBC radio and have made a number of recordings. The Singers take their name from Vale Royal Abbey, near Northwich, the rehearsal venue for the Singers in their early days.

The Musical Director is Roger Wilkes, who was born in Birmingham and has music degrees from Clare College, Cambridge (where he was a choral exhibitor) and London University. A former lay clerk in the choirs of Southwell Minster and Ely Cathedral, Roger was for many years Staff Tutor in Music at Manchester's College of Adult Education and his musical involvements are many and varied. He is President of the North West Early Music Forum and founder of Mostly Music (a music education enterprise with whom he has directed music events throughout north-west England and beyond). Roger regularly directs choirs and choral workshops in many parts of the country and has conducted in places as far afield as the Holy Land, Florence, Venice and Santiago de Compostela.

Accompanist Brian Heald is a Cambridge chemical engineering graduate who has studied organ and piano with Roger Fisher. He holds performance diplomas in organ and piano. He is organist at Wesley Methodist Church, Chester and gives regular recitals.

### **THE DINNER PARTY**

It had been a successful dinner party I thought as I raised David's red wine to his lips and then popped in the last piece of cheese into his mouth during a very brief pause in the conversation. Somewhat unusual though to be actually feeding the principal guest, but then David is a somewhat unusual person – intelligent, articulate, good-looking and amusing, but also tetraplegic, being paralysed from the neck down with only very slight movement in one hand.

David is an old friend of ours whom I met many years ago when I was working on a project connected with disabled children and he was living in Fazakerly Hospital. A colleague of mine introduced us, thinking David might be able to help with the project in some way. Although he was not able to help in any direct way, David taught me a great deal about what it actually meant to be disabled and we became firm friends. The dinner party I refer to came about as a result of a chance remark made by him during one of our conversations (the actual context of which I have long forgotten), 'I don't suppose, for example, that it would ever occur to you to invite me to a dinner party.' This was, for me, a metaphorical slap in the face. I had always thought of myself as a thoughtful and caring person – I was after all a social worker wasn't I? My guiding principle had always been Christ's exhortation to love my neighbour as myself and this was patently just what I was not doing. Although I knew that David often went out of the hospital to attend lectures and concerts, our meetings had always been in his room at the hospital and I had enjoyed our conversations and company in his space on my terms – very one-sided. It had not indeed occurred to me that he might enjoy meeting my friends and sharing food and wine with us – purely because of his disability and the potential hazards involved.

I felt very humbled but set about immediately gathering a few good friends whom I knew would enjoy David's company, and arranging a convenient date for him and his girlfriend Mary to come to dinner.

Any apprehensions I might have had about David's extreme physical limitations hindering his enjoyment of food, wine and company were very quickly dispelled by him, and within a very short time, we were all enjoying his conversation and humour, any physical differences completely forgotten. It was a memorable evening for all of us, a salutary lesson for me and the first of many similar

occasions.

I tell this story because I think it illustrates how easy it was for able-bodied people to take for granted their ability to lead a full life and to undertake so many enjoyable and rewarding activities which present huge challenges to some. Happily much has changed since I first met David in both public attitudes and in the provisions made for disabled people by organisations and government legislation. People with special needs are no longer excluded from most public places and forms of transport, although there is still much to do.

Attendance at and enjoyment of Church services is one of the aspects of everyday life which most of us take for granted but which was, until quite recently, impossible for some people and very difficult for others. The Church is, however, sharing in the general enlightenment towards the needs of disabled people, both countrywide and, as you all know, at St James. 'Parking' spaces for wheelchairs, large print service books and notice sheets, the Loop system, assistance when necessary from sidespeople etc all mean that more people can attend and enjoy fully the services at St James. Other potential areas of help are being explored by it is difficult to assess how many people there are whose needs have still not been addressed.

There is, however, only so much which can be done to alter the fabric of the Church – particularly in the light of the current financial constraints. The living part of the Church is the congregation, and although I witness many little acts of kindness every time I attend Church, I wonder if we sometimes fail to help when we could through (like me with David) thoughtlessness, embarrassment, thinking 'it's not up to me' or for whatever reason.

As well as increased awareness, there are more practical ways in which we can help, such as contributions to more large print books, join the wheelchair pushers rota, offer lifts etc.

If anyone knows of anyone who still needs help to attend Church or has any suggestions as to how the Disability Group or members of the congregation could help, please let me know.

Incidentally, David is now married to Mary and living in the community. He guides a motorised wheelchair with one hand with terrifying skill and has a full-time job as a Disability Advisor.

Liz Evans

## **THE COLOURS OF LIFE**

God gave us rainbows for our eyes to gaze upon and imagination to 'see' the colours of life when darkness falls...

Yellow is the colour of spring, the smell of daffodils, warming rays of the sun on my face, the sound of bees and a spoonful of honey.

Orange is a summer's day, hot sand under my feet, ice-cream melting, warm bodies soaking up the sun, the heady smell of citrus flowers and the juicy tang of fruit.

Red is the heat of a fire, the sound of traffic, a warning of danger, a blaze of anger, the smell of lipstick and the colour of passion.

Green is the smell of new-mown grass, the deepness of oceans, slippery moss on paths and springtime in the woods.

Brown is autumn leaves crackling underfoot, wood-smoke in the air, the taste of fresh gingerbread, the touch of animal hair and the closeness of friendship.

Blue is the colour of melancholy, the cold of winter, icicles hanging on a gate, a

sigh of regret and forget-me-nots.

Pink is a baby's breath on my cheek, the softness of a lover's lips, velvet petals of a full-blown rose and the first flush of love.

White is frost in the air, snowflakes on my face, the innocence of first love, the pureness of a lily and a young bride's wedding dress.

Black is the heaviness of sorrow, an ache of loneliness, the smell of fear and the home of a myriad of stars in a night sky.

Purple is the badge of royalty and religion, of death and mourning and the smell of fresh violets.

Grey is the colour of despair, a silent scream of a soul in torment, the wings of a whispered prayer and the softness of thistledown.

Silver is the clash of steel, tinkle of children's laughter, the bubbling of a waterfall, the sparkle in champagne, and birdsong at dawn.

Gold is the precious circle of love on a finger, the promise of happiness and the love of God.

Margaret Renner

#### **WOMEN'S WORLD DAY OF PRAYER**

"Holy Spirit, Fill us"

7th March 2003

10.30am St. Werburgh's Church

7.30pm Chester College Chapel

Speaker: Revd. L. Dixon

Speaker: Revd. S. Cliffe

The service this year has been prepared by the women of Lebanon who have chosen the theme: "Holy Spirit, Fill us".

Lebanon, is an ancient land whose name appears 75 times in the Bible; a land where the first Christians walked; a land where people are proud of its long Christian tradition.

Lebanon is a land where freedom of religion is honoured, where the Maronite Christian President appoints a Sunni Muslim Prime Minister. It is a beautiful land ravaged by the civil war of 1975-1992, which was aggravated by the influx of Palestinian refugees and the Israeli occupation of South Lebanon.

The land suffers from many environmental problems, deforestation, quarrying and pollution. The government is attempting to rebuild its economy through borrowing large amounts of capital, yet the people remain in two distinct classes: the very rich and the vast majority being poor.

Yet this biblical land is alive with faith today, and throughout all the difficulties the people endure, the women of Lebanon hold on to the love, compassion and mercy of God.

Let us join them in praying: "Holy Spirit, Fill us."

#### **THANK YOU**

to Hilary and Brian Devenport and Ally and Paul Anson for the splendid lamp post Christmas decorations. As usual they looked magnificent and gave a lot of pleasure to a lot of people.

#### **PARISH COUNCIL NOTES**

At Christleton Parish Council's December meeting it was agreed that Cllr Beech would redistribute bark on the worn areas of the playing field and seek estimates for new safety surfacing under the equipment. Chester City Council had received two complaints from families from Hoole and Coedpoeth alleging damage to personal belongings whilst using the tunnel at the Pit play area. The families would be contacted and any reasonable claims accepted. The new see-saw had now been secured.

The Council welcomed the appointment of a full-time co-ordinator for the Home Watch Scheme. Mr D Owen would be based at Mickle Trafford.

Cllr Crawford had responded to temporary traffic regulation orders for closures covering surface water draining and carriageway resurfacing on Plough Lane for two weeks in December and for the installation of a new surface water draining system at Quarry Lane, Sandrock Road and Hawthorn Road for six weeks from Tuesday 7th January.

City Cllr Brian Bailey referred in a letter to a proposal by the local joint committee for highways and

transportation to rescind four minor improvement schemes in the parish. These were the provision of a footway on Birch Heath Lane, west of The Park, and schemes on Plough Lane involving the provision of footways from Village Road to White House and from Windrush to Greenmantle, and for an unspecified visibility improvement and the provision of a footway. The Council would inform Cllr Bailey that they wish all the schemes to be retained. The District Maintenance Engineer would be asked to inspect reported damage to the road surface over Rowton Bridge.

A grant of £878 would be received from Chester City Council for minor works at the entrance to the Primary School to improve pedestrian safety. Proposed footway improvements on Quarry Lane had been referred to the District Maintenance Engineer. It was hoped these could be completed within the current financial year using funding from the Safer Routes to School initiative, Chester City Council and the Parish Council.

It was agreed to hold the Annual Open Morning on Saturday 22nd March. The newsletter would be distributed two to three weeks before this date to encourage parishioners to attend.

Birch Heath Common members were advised that due to a shortage of volunteers to help with the work currently being undertaken on Birch Heath Common, some extra expenditure for ongoing maintenance and for the development of work in the recommended scheme, as shown on approved drawings, was necessary. It was noted that anti-slip measures were to be taken on the dipping platforms at the Pit.

### **The Royal Arms at St James'**

Whilst carrying out research recently at St Peter's Church in Chester, I came across Church wardens accounts for the purchase of a painting of "The Royal Arms" by Randal Holmes. It made very interesting reading as the same artist was responsible for the Restoration Board hanging on the north aisle at St James'.

It read;

1659. 29th October

Item. Paid Mr Holmes for draweing Kings Armes. £4.5s.00

Item. Paid a porter for the carriage of them from

Mr Holmes House to Church. £ 1s.08

Item. Paid Ralph Almond for hangeinge them up. £ 2s.00

Item. Paid a mason and a man for helpinge £ 1s.00

Arms like the one above and at St James' were first placed in churches in the late 1530's after Henry VIII's break with Rome, to establish the sovereigns position as Head of the Church of England and defender of the faith. The story coincides with the reformation on the continent, and with a period of new learning and discovery, known as the Renaissance. At this time all services in England were in Latin and very unpopular. Henry VIII wanted to assert his new authority, and having defied the Pope, sensed a desire by many people to hear and read the bible in English. He also realised that it was important for people to have their own prayer book in the English language, that could be used for public services.

Two important decisions followed;

1. He ordered bibles printed in English to be placed in all parish churches.
2. He commissioned the Archbishop of Canterbury, Archbishop Cranmer to, produce a prayer book in English, and so the Book of Common Prayer was printed and used in 1549.

About one hundred years later, there was a great deal of unrest all over the land. The King, Charles 1st, was very unpopular with most people, even in Christleton, for imposing what people felt were unfair taxes, and soon the whole country was engaged in a terrible civil war. One such tax, was for the parishioners to provide money to build new ships for the English Navy. They had to respond, but felt it unfair, and a curate from St James' went to jail for not passing on the tax. This tax later had repercussions for all of us today, as this system of people from the ports sending inland for money to help build ships, gave us the phrase "Inland Revenue". The Puritan movement was also very strong, and there was a reaction against the church, and the monarchy. Royal Arms were taken down and sometimes destroyed, worship was to be of the simplest variety. Human figures were thrown out as idolatrous, stone altars and crosses smashed, including those at Christleton, Vicars Cross, Tarvin and Barrow.

By 1649 even the King himself was on trial, together with Archbishop Laud, and both were executed at Whitehall in London. The monarchy was abolished along with the Bishops, and the use of the Book of Common Prayer forbidden. However by the late 1650's people had become tired of the rule of Oliver Cromwell and his Commonwealth, and it was a great relief to people everywhere when Charles II was invited to return to England from exile. In 1662 King Charles II was restored to the throne with much celebration, and the clergy reinstated. The Book of Common Prayer was re-introduced, and every parish throughout the land invited to show their loyalty to the Crown by displaying The Royal Arms.

By 1665 the Royal Arms were to be seen again at St James', painted by the King's Herald in the north, Randal Holmes, who lived in what is now The Kings Head in Lower Bridge Street. This superb example is now only one of two such boards remaining in Cheshire, and commemorates the return to the throne of Charles Rex (II). These Royal Arms are a continual reminder to thank God for the Faith which has come through the ages; the heritage of worship which is ours through the bible and prayer book; and of Sovereigns who have helped and encouraged us towards these good ends.

David Cummings.

Ref; The Kings Arms at St James' by The Rev. Fred Pryce Parry.

Randle and Randal are both used as spellings for the Christian name.

### **CHRISTLETON TRAVELS THE WORLD!!**

I recently read an article about adventurer Rosie Swale Pope, which made fascinating reading, and had a Christleton connection in the tail!! It seems that this amazing lady well known for her incredible exploits of sailing across the oceans, running across deserts, climbing mountains and glaciers, in fact achieving almost everything she tackles, never goes far without her little friend called Christleton. Not content with all this adventure, Rosie also does not sleep in a conventional bed. To quote from the article in "My Weekly" she says

"My little house from home, the Terra Nova bivi, (tent). We've been through some incredible adventures together in Kosovo, Cuba, and other faraway places, but I also use this bivi whilst travelling around the UK during my lecture tours. It's fun to sleep under the stars. It makes you feel closer to God, humble and proud. When I descend to the town next day to do my lectures, I nearly always have brand new stories to tell, often about my neighbours. Once I woke up to see a little hedgehog snuggled close to me. Another time, the bivi was rather heavy and I discovered I'd been adopted by three sheepdogs, all curled up around its edges like furry anchors."

"When I travel I never forget my Mascot, a dear little knitted mouse I would never go anywhere without. Christleton lives in a small corner of my rucksack and comes out for a few crumbs, or to cheer me up. He was made for me by a kind lady in Chester!"

Perhaps the little mouse will soon be able to sample some crumbs, from recipes in the new Christleton Golden Jubilee Cook Book, which "the kind lady in Chester" will be sending to Rosie to use when she's at home in Tenby after her latest adventure, running in the mountains of Nepal. Next year she intends to run around the world!!, taking Christleton with her of course.!

David Cummings

With thanks to Rosie Swale, and "My Weekly" Jan 11th Edition 2003

### **CHRISTLETON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP.**

Next Meeting. Wednesday February 26th 7.30pm

Speaker Richard Nicholson. Collecting British County Maps.

At the Primary School in Quarry Lane.

All welcome.

### **ADVANCED NOTICE.**

David Cummings presents

Spectacular Wildlife.

Orchids, dragonflies, butterflies, swans, ducks and geese.

(In memory of Roy Fisher)

At 7.00pm on Saturday March 8th in The Parish Hall.

Tickets £6 including buffet supper, from David 332410 or

Christleton Post Office.

Proceeds to purchase oak trees for the village.

### **THANK YOU**

Mrs Mabel Kirk would like to thank everyone from the Littleton, Marbury Road, Cedar Park, Stamford Court and Broadmead areas and down the A51 for their generous support for the Poppy Appeal 2002. The amount collected was £387.91.

### **MOTHERS' UNION**

In November David Cummings very kindly came to talk to us and show slides on a holiday which David and Beryl took in Tuscany. It was a wonderfully informative talk and we learned much about the birds and their habitat and the lovely flowers and their surrounding meadowland.

We enjoyed our Quiet Hour in Church in December when with the help of our Rector we studied the meditations of John, Peter and Matthew. Later we went over the Parish Hall for tea and mince pies.

Our Christmas celebrations continued with a visit to St Paul's Mothers' Union, Helsby. We had been invited to their Christmas Party and we all had a great time. The hospitality is marvellous and we were treated to a super tea, took part in a quiz and all received a lovely Christmas gift before we left.

January's meeting took place on 13th of that month and it was our AGM. On 10th February, our speaker will be Mrs B Davies, wife of the Revd. Melvin Davies, who used to be the Rector of Waverton. Finally, we would like to say thank you to all who helped and supported our stall at the Christmas Fair and made it such a success.

### **CHRISTMAS TREE THANK YOU**

The Christmas Tree on the Village Green looked lovely this year, and we would like to say a big Thank You to John Carr for providing the tree and Frank Jones, David Goulbourne and Graham Ranger for setting it up and connecting the lights.

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY** to Mrs Ivy Dunn of Sandrock Road who will be 96 on 11th February and is still very active.

### **MORE MEMORIES OF THE 1920s**

Horse-drawn boats were used on the canal to move goods; they carried 25 tons and dragged low in the water. Soon motor boats pulling an extra boat behind were used. The canal was dredged by men pushing a very big shovel into the silt, winding it up manually and tipping it into a boat, which then took the silt to the then quarry at Quarry Lane where it was unloaded manually into a long trough to slide down into the quarry. What work! It has recently been done with mechanical diggers which dumped the silt onto adjoining land at the rate of 1300 tons to the acre.

Mr Cadman was a lengthsman on the canal who kept the banks very tidy and who plugged the many leaks caused by moles. There was also a lengthsman on the roads, Ralf Williams, later on Jim Foster whose wages were about 30 shillings a week (£1.50). We also had a full-time policeman at Christleton, Constable Price, who was always on foot – he did not even have a cycle.

Cows were all hand milked and the farmworkers' wives were expected to milk twice a day for around 14 shillings a week with no holidays (70p). Their husbands only got around 35 shillings a week (£1.75). Milk was delivered twice daily served from milk churns into customers' jugs. It was taken around by pony and float which was very difficult when the roads were icy as no salt was used in those days, although horseshoes were sometimes fitted with screwed-in studs which quickly wore out. We lost a favourite ex-army horse in one of the severe winters; it had fallen into a ditch, unknown to us for many hours. Neighbours helped to dig it out but it died just after it was rescued. My dad was very upset.

Thomas Johnson was the local coal man; he delivered coal by horse and wagon from Waverton station, which was then also a passenger station. T R and W E Morgan kept the grocer's shop and post office – they baked their own bread and cakes and delivered by pony and cart three times a week. I'll never forget their currant loaf – super quality for 1s 3d (about 6\_p). Mr Pickavance was the baker. Morgans also sold cattle food which was delivered by horse and cart.

A travelling circus once visited Christleton, the tent was erected in the field next to the then Infants' school. As we were tenants of the land we were given free entrance. Now of course it is the Sandrock Road area and is covered with houses.

There also came a 'Caravan Mission to Village Children' whose tent was erected in the field belonging to Mrs Cullimore.

If any readers of these memories wish to find out more about Christleton's past and do not already own a copy of Christleton 2000 Years of History, a very small number of copies remain at £12.50 (+ £2.75 postage and packing or free local delivery) from David Cummings, 25 Croft Close, Rowton, Chester CH3 7QQ.

### **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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[Top](#)