

Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

Parish Magazine



Extracts from Christleton Parish Magazine for March 2002

Churches Together in Christleton - WEEK OF PRAYER FOR CHRISTIAN UNITY
The churches in Christleton have been joined together in the many people who helped us in so many different ways to put together this meaningful week; in particular we thank Anne Butterworth who kindly lent us the water feature from her garden to place in St. James', to make a central focus for the whole week whose theme this year was WATER in all its aspects. But we thank too all who lent us beautiful signs and photos and posters, those who helped at the Village and Neighbourhood Link Coffee Morning or with refreshments after the United evening service, and not least those who led or took part in any of the Prayer times or services. We should like to know what you thought of the different timings this year, too?
Below is an appreciation of the week written by Dorothy Robinson - thank you, Dorothy!
Jan Bowden

January 18th - 25th
Our Churches Together in Christleton provided us in 2002 with a 'unity week', which we can treasure throughout the year. The nationwide theme using water for the daily titles of Life-Giving, Cleansing, Quenching, Energising; Gathering; Healing; Delighting and Overflowing offers so much to us for thought, prayer and action not just for this year but for the whole of our lives. The loan of the fountain from Anne's garden, the wonderful photographs, different voices, varied hymns, times and venues used throughout the week all went to build and weld this special week of sharing.
God's gift to all of Living Water is priceless and beyond words but our effort to work and pray together will be rich and valuable, so that we can say again the final prayer of this week: "... that you will be shared, your people joined in one body with you, and all people brought to find in that interchange of love, Fulfillment and joy for ever. Amen."

TRIBUTE TO ROY FISHER 1928-2002



Roy and David Fisher

Teacher, Scout Leader, Bell Ringer, Good Neighbour and Citizen of Chester who died at The Hospice of the Good Shepherd on the 31st January 2002
Roy was one of the most likeable characters of Christleton that you could ever meet. He served others throughout his life, and it was very appropriate that one of his old scouts, Councillor Graham Proctor, now the Lord Mayor of Chester, visited his bedside at The Hospice to present him with a framed certificate to mark his service as a proud Citizen of Chester. This was a fitting tribute to Roy, and although by this time he couldn't speak, one was aware that he was delighted with the award. He died later that day.
Roy was a proud Welshman! Born in Brymbo, near Wrexham, the only son of Charles and Betty Fisher. They moved to Chester when he was young, and he attended Chester City Grammar School, Liverpool University and Chester College. He later did his National Service with the Royal Navy. He married Marjorie Jonas, a member of the famous Mayers Family of Christleton in St James' in 1958, and moved into the family home at Hawthorn House.
In his early life in Chester he had been involved with St Peter's Church, singing in the choir, Assistant Organist and one of the bellringers. That led to his great interest in bellringing and with the addition on to his own family to follow, he joined the Tower at St James' and had been Captain since 1995. Ringing Trips with the Bellringers will never be quite the same without Roy's primus stove boiling the kettle for afternoon tea.
He took over many of the tasks of looking after the Tower when Frank Poston died, and did a great deal to help both Frank and his sister Margaret in their later days at The Old Surgery. Roy was always helping people, and one of his most pleasant tasks was to organise a fish and chips tea once a week for the residents of The Square. Cliff Boddy regarded Roy as a "real gentleman", and that was some tribute.
Roy took it upon himself on several occasions to paint and decorate the almshouses with his Scout Troop to live in. He was a legend in the Scouting world and was known all over the country. He had a lifelong interest in the movement, joining the 8th Chester Group as an eight year old, finishing as Group Leader, a position he held until his 65th birthday, when he became President and Vice President of the Chester Scout Association. He was assistant producer of the first "Scoutabout" in Chester Cathedral in 1953, and produced 32 of the 48 productions at the Theatre, ABC Cinema, and the Gateway Theatre. As Chester District Scout Archivist he was also writing the history of the movement in Chester, and this work was almost complete when he died.
He always had a love of children, and after qualifying as a teacher, taught in Ellesmere Port, Chester College School, and Kingsway High School where he became Deputy Headteacher. Roy was also very proud of his son David and thrilled when he was ordained for the Ministry and recently appointed Vicar of the Parish Church of St James', Galley in North Cheshire. Although he suffered a great deal from illness in his later days, he loved to spend his time talking and being with David, around the old home and in his favourite haunts around the village and city. He had had a triple heart by-pass in August 1996, and had been battling against cancer since early 1999. In his bravery to keep on going he has been a great inspiration to others. Despite his illness, Roy was determined to enjoy life. He started to learn Welsh at night class to keep his mind active. He loved gardening and the garden at Hawthorn House was not only a burst of colour, but full of vegetables. He was keen on DIY, and his workshop was a veritable Aladdin's Cave! In 1991, he began to rebuild the Coach House Cottage for David, and with a little professional help for the roof, he did most of the work himself as one of his "projects". He really was one of the many characters of the village, always there for people when they needed him, giving himself tirelessly for others, and being a great inspiration. He will be sorely missed. His funeral service at St James' on Friday the 8th February was followed by cremation at Blaenau. St James' Tower ringers rang a special tribute peal on Sunday 10th February 2002.
David Cummings

PARISH MAGAZINE SUBSCRIPTIONS

Thank you to all the subscribers to our Parish magazine. Annual subscriptions for 2002-2003 will be £3.00 on 1st April. We are pleased to be able to hold the price at 30p per issue and the annual subscription price at £3.50. Subscriptions should be put in the envelope marked with your name and returned to your distributor as indicated or handed in at the Church. Please make any cheques payable to Christleton PCC.

CHRISTLETON VILLAGE FETE



Saturday 29th June 2002
ROSE QUEEN
We require a young lady to become our Village Rose Queen.

If you are interested in becoming Rose Queen and are between the ages of 13 and 15 and you live in the area, then please apply as soon as possible to either:
Dorothy Checkley (01244 336255)
Joyce Davis (01244 332083)
Pat Whyman (01244 336208).
Before 1st March if possible.

ATTENDANTS

We also require Attendants and a Crown Bearer for the 2002 Village Fete.
If you are interested in taking part in this annual event and are resident in the Parish then please come along to Christleton Primary School on Sunday 3rd March 2002 at 3.00 pm or contact:
Dorothy Checkley (01244 336255)
Joyce Davis (01244 332083)
Pat Whyman (01244 336208).

MILK BOTTLE TOPS

If anyone in the village collects milk bottle tops for charity, would they please let me know as my outlet has dried up again. Many thanks.
Jenny Raifs (01244 335693)

ON PAIN

Most of us have escaped long periods of physical pain, often only suffering briefly after foolishly mimicking our extra-fit sporting heroes by over-exertion!
It is a salutary reminder to have a period of excruciating pain. An Achilles tendon pulled when long-jumping at the age of 15 was my first taste, but in the fullness of teenage confidence it was duly forgotten and real pain was something other people had. Luckily for friends and family, my brash confidence has been shattered several times in recent years by inflamed muscles producing shooting pains in my lower back or leg.
As the last outbreak eased, I began to realise how fortunate I was. In my hour of need I was surrounded by central heating, good food, untainted water, access to doctors and physios, and to smooth roads and a car (also the money to fill it with petrol).
What of the innocent civilians maimed in warfare or of those writhing in pain or hunger in Afghanistan. Somewhat like the slums of South America? Most have no recourse to medicine or any quick relief from their anguish. Help often comes too late.
Of course, as Christians we try to put ourselves in the position of the suffering, and in prayer, goodwill and cash donations we are pretty good at it. But we need not read beyond this magazine to hear the direct experiences of those working in locations of desperation, pain and anguish far more profound than most of us will ever see. Without exception their faith keeps them going.
As we approach Good Friday, we think of the pain that Jesus Christ bore for us on the Cross and its deep significance for the subsequent 2000 years and beyond. Norman Macrow's graphic 1977 translation of Matthew's Gospel from the Ancient Greek mirrors no words.
"The crowds first spat on His face and punched Him with their fists while others knocked Him about with sticks... Later, as Jesus cried 'My God, My God' one of the bystanders made haste and got a sponge which he filled with sour wine. Then, sticking it on the end of a reed, he offered it to Him to quench His thirst."

The tortured loneliness of suffering.
John Carruthers

LETTER OF THANKS

Dear St James' Church
Thank you for your recent gift of £1081.68 for the work of The Children's Society from your Box Collection. Please share this letter with all those who have helped in this wonderful effort. Through over 100 projects in England and Wales, we work with children in schools, in prisons, in care homes and in poor communities.
One of the ways your generous donation has helped is with our work with young runaways at risk on the streets in Chester. It is an example of just one of the children we have helped. Joe first ran away when he was 14. His parents had split up and he was being bullied at school. He ended up hanging around with the "bad kids" to avoid them picking on him, by becoming one of the gang. His mother was worried and ended up having a row with him. He ran away in the middle of winter and ended up begging to get someone to give him something to eat. The Children's Society found him.
"I told them that I had a row with my Mum and that I didn't know what I should do. They took me for something to eat and we talked about what I could do. I was thinking about going home so we practised what I would say to my Mum and they let me phone her. She was angry, but was more understanding than anything else, and said I could go home. Sam and Chris took me to the bus stop and paid my fare for me. Chris gave me one of his cards and said that if I felt like running away or had any other problems at home then I could contact them. I get in touch with them every now and again when things go wrong. But I know now that running away isn't the answer."
The Children's Society makes a real difference in the lives of over 40,000 children every year. We use what we learn to campaign with the Government for the improvements that are needed in practice and policy to make things better for all children. We could not go any of this without your support - by helping us, you have already helped to change a child's life.
Yours sincerely
Stephen Blunden
Fundraising Director - The Children's Society

FOOTNOTE

Thank you to St James' Youth Group who once again (aided by a very skilled clarinetist!) braved the cold and raised £30.09 for the Society with their annual village carol singing. Also a big thank you to everyone who supported the January Christmas service, especially Christleton Primary School choir, the Guides, Brownie Scouts, Cubs and Beavers and all their leaders and helpers. The total raised was £337.26.
Lesley Morgan

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir
I was interested to read in your June 2001 issue (page 5) the Chester Cathedral Refectory Prayer.
It might interest your readers to know that the Prayer was written by Thomas Henry Basil Webb, only son of Lieut.-Colonel Sir Henry Webb, who was born on 12th August 1898 and educated at Winchester College. Sadly, he was killed on the Somme on 1st December 1917, aged 19.
Yours faithfully
Cathedral Chronicler
PS I am indebted to Mrs Margaret Croston who sends me a copy of the magazine monthly, and her contributions are recorded in the Cathedral Commemorative Book which is in my care. It is open for inspection when the Cathedral has its Open Days.

STEWARDSHIP ENVELOPE COVENANTS

To remind you that the covenants they giving to St James' through the envelope scheme, may I reiterate you that the end of the tax year approaches! I know that most of you ensure that you are up to date with your envelopes at the end of each calendar year but, from the point of view of the Inland Revenue, it is even more important that you are up to date at the end of the tax year on 5th April 2002.
We are allowed to reclaim tax on the amount covenanted or one the amount given - whichever is the lower. Thus, underpayment in one year leads to a loss of tax rebate which cannot be compensated by an overpayment in the following tax year.
So, please may I urge each one of you to ensure that all envelopes dated 31st March 2002 and earlier are handed in by 31st March at the latest, so that we can reclaim the maximum amount of tax.
This does not apply to anyone who has signed a Gift Aid Declaration form as, with Gift Aid, the tax can be reclaimed at any time.
Finally, on behalf of the PCC, I would like to thank everyone for their ongoing regular financial support of St James'.

Martin Wheeler
Covenant & Gift Aid Secretary (01244 336644)

LETTER FROM SUSAN GUMBRELL

Dear Gertrude and all at St James'
I know this letter will not get to you until after Christmas but it still brings with it my very best wishes - I do hope you had a lovely Christmas and that the new year will be blessed by God with good health and joy.
I find it very difficult to think of Christmas when the temperature is higher than in August and there isn't the great commercial build-up that happens in England. Christmas should be cool! Here Christmas is the time when everybody can return to their home town, probably the only two weeks of the year they visit. The roads have had some superficial repairs done but there will be massive hold-ups, the public transport costs will sky rocket and petrol will be scarce and expensive.
The students left for holiday last Thursday and the staff have been completing the reports - they will be paid today and most will leave, although a few will stay on the compound. I shall be here for Christmas but travel north to Joos on 27th (December). The climate up at the plateau is much more pleasant and I expect to meet up with folk working in various parts of the country. The scenery and food is pretty good too.
The chaplain of the school, Izuchuku Obiekwue, is one of those to be ordained priest on Sunday. The service is likely to take four hours but it will be in English and there will be mighty celebrations afterwards when the newly ordained men will be paraded shoulder high by their townsfolk, friends and parishioners.
The term has been very busy. Not only have the normal activities been taken care of but we have also started building a new Refectory. The contractor is responsible for the work but we have to provide the materials. I've become quite expert at discussing sand, stone, cement etc!
We have also dug a new borehole. The old one went wrong and instead of spending a lot of money to reactivate it we had to bring the water from it was never very good we decided to have a new one. It has taken far longer than was promised and has been a real palaver. This term every drop of water used has had to be brought in by tanker - expensive and inconvenient. Hopefully by the time the girls return on 11th January we will have crystal clear water flowing in abundance!
I do hope you have had a lovely Christmas. Please pass on my very best wishes to all at St James'.

God Bless
Susan
Nigeria

CHRISTLETON PARISH COUNCIL OPEN MORNING

On Saturday 16th March from 10.00 am to 12.00 noon in the Parish Hall.
Entrance is free and refreshments will be available.
This is an opportunity for residents of the village to voice any concerns or seek information about current projects by meeting and talking with their councillors. Everyone welcome. Christleton won the Best Kept Village Award for 2001, came second in 2000 and won in 1999. Thanks are due to all for these achievements.

Photo of the Month

A Village Store in Pepper Street in the 1960s.
This building was owned for many years by the Morgan family, who ran a very successful store and Post Office. Established in 1819, they supplied the village with a multitude of goods and services, as well as being insurance and travel agents. Thomas Johnson from another very successful Christleton family had previously run the business on the adjacent property, standing on the corner of Windmill Lane where the red brick building now stands. He was also a Post Master. We also learn that The Gables in Pepper Street built by the Mayers family was a Post Office in the early 1800s. This was demolished in the early 1890s and the store we see in the picture was established underneath a primitive Methodist Chapel. The distinctive windows of the chapel could still be seen as late as the 1970s. Morgan's shop sold everything and their advertisement in the Parish Magazine of June in Coronation Year 1953 includes the following selection of goods:

- Finest Groceries & Provisions; Home made Bread & Confectionery;
- Patent Medicines, Foods and Sundries; Toilet Requisites, Books and Toys;
- Tobacco, Cigarettes and Stationery; English & Foreign Fruits, Seeds, Plants and Garden Tools; Cattle, Dog, Cat and Poultry foods, Cat & Dog medicines;
- Ensign Cameras, Films & Photographic Materials; Snapshot Service; Developing Printing & Enlarging; Electric Lamps, Fires, Irons & Kettles; Electric Fans, Switches, Flex and Sundries; Torches, Cycle Lamps, Batteries and Bulbs; Wireless H.T. Batteries & Accumulators;
- Paints and Distempers - Hardware & China and Glass.

What a range of stock they could offer the village, at a time when most people didn't have cars, and had to travel to Chester to shop. It closed in the 1970s and was a great loss to village life.
David Cummings

CHRISTLETON LOCAL HISTORY GROUP

The Group cordially invites you to join them for their monthly meetings at the Primary School. The next is at 7.30pm on March 20th when Simon Ward will talk about Recent Archaeological Finds in Chester.

I've no doubt it will contain references to the dig taking place at present in Browns of Chester. Anyone interested in the history of the City should visit the store to see the dig taking place through a special viewing gallery on the second floor, together with a small exhibition of photographs of the dig and recent finds, including the bone of an elephant!

A NEW VIDEO

The Young Charles Darwin, published by Shropshire Connections
This fascinating video made by local people, takes a look at the early life of this scientific genius. Born in 1809 and raised in Shrewsbury, he spent his early life in the Shropshire countryside. The video traces his life from childhood at The Mount, through schooling at Shrewsbury School and Edinburgh and Cambridge Universities to his return from the historic voyage of HMS Beagle. It is an interesting account of a very important and historic figure. This excellent video is 45 minutes long, and costs £12.95. It can be obtained through myself (01244 332410) or from the History Group.
David Cummings

ROAD TO THE ANCIENT HIGHWAY HOCKENHULL PLATTS

The History Group has been busy with the closure of the rather unsympathetic upgrading of the "road" across the medieval causeway at Hockenhull Platts after many local people have complained about the "improvements" completed by AMEC on behalf of the County Highways. This work was done whilst a gas pipeline was being laid across the land adjacent to the site, and access to the area prohibited for many months.
Representing the Local History Group and Cheshire Wildlife Trust I recently had a meeting at the site with the City & County Archaeologists, and a County Highways representative to look at the problem.

The Highways Officer stated that the route was in fact classified as a highway and not just a bridle path, and had to be maintained as such. He also stated that the County Council wished to see the route have an increasing use as a cycle way between Tarvin and Chester, and wide enough to have access for horse riders and walkers.

He agreed that the contractors, when they came back in spring to complete the pipeline work, would be asked to increase the width of the ditch and vegetation on the north side, and examine the possibility of restoring the ditch on the south side. In doing so it would narrow the rural road surface, to a situation that existed before the work took place, and give it a more natural look than it has at present. He would also see if bollards could be re-installed on the Christleton side to prevent access by motor cycles and vehicles. From an archaeological point of view we would try to restore some of the fine sandstone edging that exists along the lane, to redefine the line of the ancient highway and once again make it a feature of the causeway.

The natural growth of vegetation would soon improve its present very raw look. After a very useful meeting we concluded that the area of the causeway needed to be treated more sympathetically, and that we would monitor the route to ensure that the area is restored to its original appearance.
David Cummings

NATURE NOTES

Cormorants, large black, fish eating birds, often seen with their wings out to dry, have begun to dominate the scene at the Pit, joining the now almost resident heron and Canada goose. Today, 5th February, five cormorants were resting on the small island in the centre of the water. Two were diving for fish. It's a good indication of the stock of fish in the Pit that so many of these birds are present. They are said to eat 11lbs of fish each a day and seem quite happy to return day after day for their pickings. The two cormorants present at the moment are CB07, a Christleton cygnet from 2001, and CB79 ringed in December at Wintley Pool in Crewe. Several reports have been made to me about the battles between the cygnets and our adult pair who return from time to time to claim their breeding territory. When they finally return the cygnets will not be tolerated anywhere near the Pit. Spring seems just around the corner and the heavy rain and strong winds of late, and the relatively warm temperature has ensured that snowdrops, crocus, primroses and small iris are well in flower with daffodils already beginning to drop their heads. For years I used to struggle to find a daffodil in the garden to wear to school on St David's Day. Nowadays there are always plenty to pick, and to admire around the Pit at that time of year. Whether this is caused by global warming or not, the present wet warm winters, have encouraged many species to flower earlier and many bird species to move further north.

Egrets, Avocets and Hoops are just three species that have done so in the very recent past, whilst others such as swans are breeding up to three weeks earlier than they were five years ago. This has caused a greater mortality rate in their young, possibly due to the fact that we have had wetter, and often colder spells later in the year when incubation is taking place.
David Cummings

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 hearing impaired & large print weekly notice sheets
Easy to follow Communion Service Books for children
Access for wheelchair users
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 printing of the Church & Pump House by Phil Hodgcs.
£12.50 & (£2.75 postage at 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, 22 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.

Mobile Library Van Service

The van calls for 300053. For details of when the van is next in your area, please telephone Upton Library on 387053.

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