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Parish Church of St. James, Christleton

Parish Magazine

Extracts from Parish Magazine for May, 2004



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PARISHONERS IN THE NEWS

Congratulations to Tina Lightfoot who has won a National Award for her work as a Colorectal Specialist Nurse and lead cancer nurse at The Countess of Chester Hospital. Tina who has worked in this specialism since 1987, also sits on the Royal College of Nursing committee for the speciality.

Anna Nilssen has also hit the headlines by chairing a team from Christleton High School who won their way into the finals of the Youth Speaks Competition to be held shortly in Cardiff. Anna along with team members Daniel Brattan and Neil Ashdown won the regional finals at Frodsham against strong competition from schools in Cheshire, North Wales and Wirral. They are coached at the High School by Jocelyn Platel. Congratulations to all, and good luck in the final.

CHRISTLETON WEDNESDAY GROUP

Thank you to everyone who supported us throughout 2003.

Thanks to you, we were able to present £1,300 to Vision Support in Chester and also to purchase a large new cooker for the Parish Hall.

This year we are raising funds for Claire House and Hope House, our two local Children's Hospices.

Barbara Clarke

Giving to St James through your Self-assessment Tax Return

From April 2004, people who complete a self-assessment tax return will be able to nominate a charity to receive all or part of any repayment due to them.

The new scheme will have real advantages for participating charities:

- The donation will be paid directly to the charity's bank account.
- The form will incorporate a Gift Aid declaration.
- Gift Aid tax will be paid without the charity having to make a claim.
- For the first time, charities will benefit from Gift Aid on anonymous donations.

Participating charities are now registered on the Inland Revenue website with identification codes.

The identification code for Christleton Parochial Church Council is WAM30SG and donors can enter this code on their tax return form. As a continuation of our appeal for Christian Giving, the PCC would be most grateful if donors who are affected by self-assessment would consider this new scheme.

MOTHER'S UNION

Mother's Union met in Church on Monday 5 April for Holy Week Quiet Hour, with Fellowship afterwards in the Parish Hall.

On 10 May, the Rev. John Carhart has kindly agreed to come and talk at our meeting about the role of Non Stipendiary Clergy in the Church. The meeting is in the Parish Hall at 2.0 pm.

Feature of the Month

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

Junior Confirmation Group

This month's group is the Junior Confirmation Group meeting with the Rector and teachers Gill Hibbert and Tina Lightfoot in The Lady Chapel. They meet each Monday evening, preparing for their confirmation by The Bishop on the 23rd May. Congratulations to them all.

Life in the Rectory

On Palm Sunday 2003, Mum began to put pen to paper to recall her days in the Rectory at St Michael's, Coppenhall (CSM). Her Father was Rector there and it was there that 'Rob' arrived as curate when she was just 14 years old. She was to return to the Rectory at CSM as his wife several years later. The Church's year with its feasts and festivals was central to her life. Below are a couple of extracts from her story which highlight this.

'Church life was full of exciting things – besides uniformed organisations, with monthly parades complete with Scout band - we had youth clubs, King's Messengers, special Lenten weekly services after school – stories with a weekly stamp and a card with 6 blanks on it and Ash Wednesday. We always tried to be careful not to get "kept in" on that day – we didn't get notice of detention in those days.

Living at a Rectory is really to have everything. We made all the Palm Crosses when the big sheaves arrived by post. We helped clean the church – much, much later my daughter Anne was to scrub the same steps with Mrs Thornhill that I had done when I was 6 years old – I have a photo of her!

We were able to join in so many things such as fetes and plays etc but we had to wait our turn for the parts. I was 17 before being allowed to be Mary in the Christmass Tableau and a married woman, wife of the Rector, before I was to have the part of a fussy housewife in a play called "Who Cares" written by our Curate – Eric Mercer, later to become Bishop of Birkenhead and then of Exeter. I still hear from him.

Going through the Church calendar, there is so much to enjoy. At CSM, we had Festal Evensong the night before the major events such as Ascension Day and Michaelmass Day. As a teenager I had loved my days as a choir member. Now I had two small daughters to keep interested and reasonably quiet. I was able to be an "ordinary" member of M.U. and Rob always tried to be at home on the nights when we had a newly formed Ladies' Society (there was already a flourishing Men's Society). Later there was to take place a 7 day Mission to the parish and there were 150 candidates for Confirmation following that – several from these two groups. We had the usual Summer Fetes taking place in the garden and the Orchard.'

Mum died on April 29th 2003 and was unable to complete her memoirs. Private prayer and public worship remained the cornerstone of her life so there is no doubt that ever since she has been singing God's praises ... what heavenly bliss!!

"When we've been there one thousand years
Bright shining as the sun
There's no less days to sing his praise
Than when we first begun"

Tina Lightfoot

Parish Rambling Group

Friday – Sunday May 14 - 16th Weekend in the 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.

Links with the past

William Butterfield, William Webb Ellis and Rugby School.

A week or so ago Beryl & I spent a few days holiday near Rugby, and explored the town looking at both Ruby Football memorabilia, and the town itself. As we parked near the famous Public School playing fields and looked over towards the school, I immediately saw the link with

St James that I thought I might find. There in the distance, were school buildings with the designs and patterns in coloured brick so clearly the work of William Butterfield, the architect for the new St James' building in 1876. Although he built in red sandstone at Christleton, almost all his other work is in brightly coloured and patterned tiles and bricks. His work at Rugby School is no exception, and the buildings all around the close have all the attributes that he was known for, as well as a magnificent brick tower, almost Town Hall like in its construction at The Close. This tower stands on the site of an old Cistercian monastery, was surrounded by a moat complete with a drawbridge, and the scene of the last stand of the great school rebellion in 1797, eventually put down after the last reading of the "riot act" in England, by a small group of militia supported by local farmers.

We were able to walk around and see some of Butterfield's fine buildings, much of it done for Dr Thomas Arnold, the famous Victorian Headmaster. Thomas Hughes a pupil there from 1834 to 1842, was the author of "Tom Brown's Schoolday's" a semi autobiographical account of life there under Dr Arnold. Famous literary giants Rupert Brooke, Matthew Arnold and Lewis Carroll were also pupils there. However the school is probably best known for being the birthplace of Rugby football, where in 1823, 16 year old William Webb Ellis "with a fine disregard for the rules took a ball in his arms and ran with it". This changed the nature of the school's game from a kicking to a handling game and was indeed the birth of rugby football. Another link with rugby football and the town, is that all rugby balls were made by the Gilbert Family, maker of boots and shoes to the boys of Rugby School. These now colourful balls are still made by the Gilbert Company and are used in matches all over the world including at the World Cup Final which England won last November in Sydney, Australia. There they were presented with the "Webb Ellis Trophy" for the first time, and have since brought it back to the birthplace of the sport at Rugby School.

The photograph shows the statue of William Webb Ellis outside the school, with the background of some of the coloured brickwork designs of William Butterfield. The Architect began work at Rugby School in 1867 and completed his designs in Tudor Gothic style, mainly in polychrome brick. Another of his distinctive buildings was the new Big School which was completed in 1885, now a theatre, where you can see the chequer board pattern used so distinctly in the sanctuary at St James, and also at Keble College at Oxford. Incidentally his glass artist at Rugby was Gibbs, who also created the baptistry window for him at St James' in Christleton.

David Cummings

ON Confusion

I cannot speak for why other people pray for in Church, but so often we beg God to solve our confusion. "I'm a bit mixed up, Lord; my friend whom we prayed for last weekend just doesn't deserve to be so ill, that war that seemed nearly over has started again"

Bewilderment comes to many of us. Economic prosperity in Britain has given us so many comforts at home most adults have cars, children have better and better educational opportunities, thousands of people have mobile phones. Yet our roads are increasingly congested, teachers seem burdened with ever more paperwork, and the Internet can be sickeningly abused both for business objectives and for even more sinister purposes.

After the economic depression of the 1920's, Christians actually prayed for jobs and for personal wealth; in 1945 people prayed for peace and the end of all major international conflict.

Now, from the perspective of a new century, we look back with amazement at the modern history of our own continent, Europe. Architectural treasures that took intricate design and craftsmanship to erect have been treasures one minute, bombing targets the next. Beyond, the lands of Israel and Iraq have cultural (and Christian) treasures second to none.

No wonder that I for one arrive at Church confused.

A further thought. In the months before He was crucified on the cross, did Jesus Christ really think that (for all our sins) the human race would still be at each other's throats 2,000 years on?

John Carruthers.

Nature Notes

The warm weather in late March encouraged early butterflies to take wing, and they made a wonderful sight with their bright colours. Amongst species seen were bright yellow brimstones, probably the reason that these beautiful winged creatures were first called "butterflies", peacocks, tortoiseshells, comma's, painted ladies and orange tips. The earliest bird migrant was the tiny but noisy chaff chaff, and large numbers have been heard everywhere this year, significantly more than in recent years. The first swallows appeared along the canal at Rowton on the 2nd April, but didn't stay, and were soon followed by slender green willow warblers. These delightful birds fly north from Africa, and their very delicate song can be heard from the tops of trees all around the village. Just recently I've seen, and had many reports of siskins, feeding on peanuts in village gardens. These small birds look like miniature greenfinches, and the male has a distinct black patch on its head. They are not very common and it was good to see them, together with even rarer redpolls in some parts of the village. One or more great spotted woodpeckers continue to drum around the copse at the Primary School, and buzzards, and both male and female sparrow hawks can be seen every day in the sky above the village. Our swans settled down on The Pit nest site very quickly, and after watching the cob sit on the eggs for about two weeks, the pen took over for her 34 day incubation period, to enable all eggs to hatch out within a 24 hour period.

A number of parishioners have asked where they can see the kingfisher. The answer is anywhere between Ring Road Lock and Rowton, if you are lucky. There could possibly be two birds, and they tend to be seen early morning and late evening, although if they are feeding young it can be at anytime. The bird might surprise you by flying from the top of a hedge, and across to one of the over hanging willows on the canal. They fly low over the water and you will see a vivid flash of colour

(turquoise or salmon pink) as they fly away from you often making a clear piping call. The Christleton bird(s) are also quite friendly in that they often just move fifty yards or so away and keep post hopping for a distance along the canal, allowing you to catch up with it, time and time again.

David Cummings.

Chinese New Year

Part 2:

Hilary Devenport

A warm and humid morning at seven. We set off for sister Shirley's contribution to our visit to the Far East. Today's destination is Bintang, a tiny island part of the huge archipelago of Indonesia. It measures approximately 5 miles by 2. The first part of our journey was undertaken on the MRT. This is Singapore's equivalent to the Tube.

Beautifully clean trains and stations made the journey pleasurable. The MRT tickets were purchased with a deposit of \$1 included in the fare. On reaching our destination we inserted this ticket into a machine which refunded the \$1. All through the journey we had felt something was missing. It then dawned on us that there was a certain lack of discarded tickets on the floor as one had become accustomed to in other countries.

Checking into the ferry port we encountered procedures reminiscent of airport security. The short journey in a Catamaran of around an hour was comfortable, though lacking in sustenance for those of us who needed breakfast. Bintang is very quaint, very relaxed. Small and perfectly developed as a golfers' paradise. The Indonesian people were very courteous and warmly welcoming. However, only golfers will appreciate the very costly maintenance the island paradise warrants. A walk on the white sandy beach was very tranquil interrupted only by hotel staff sweeping the sands collecting debris brought in by the gentle tide.

Idyllic though it seemed Bintang lacked soul. Fresh food abound, fish, tiger prawns and shellfish were almost staple offerings. Brian declined selecting a fish from the Kelong, for dinner. The Kelong is a series of net covered frames suspended in the sea, as a holding area for live fish and seafood.

Indonesia is a Muslim country, very much in the news these last two years after the atrocity at Bali. I seized on the chance to speak to a couple of Senior Managers of the complex on the prevailing subject of terrorism and the effect it has on them. The general consensus is that there is an under current of subversive activity by the different sectors of the Muslim community. Most though, wish to live peaceably alongside one another as they used to do through out the generations. That was the world I knew when I was young when I lived amongst all the differing religions. However, all believed that America is the contentious party, and fully understand the deep distrust by other Muslim countries. The deep feeling that peace in daily life is more important to the ordinary folk was apparent as the conversation progressed. Suddenly I was asked if I was a journalist and concern expressed that maybe they had expounded too much. They are in paradise and they want it to stay that way. Why not? I thought.

The return to Singapore, re-encountering the hustle and bustle of a vibrant busy city with a work ethic second to none, brought me back to reality. Just a few more days to catch up with infrequently met friends and cousins. Dinners and lunches were packed into these last few days. More delicious food was eagerly consumed, one's eye taken off the waistline for a while. Singapore Cricket Club on the Padang in the heart of Singapore was always a place Brian wanted to visit. It had been his enduring wish to set foot on the pitch and the historic Pavilion, marvelling at the images of days gone by when the British influence was at it's height. It remained a great feeling of affection for the bond of English Cricket bringing culturally different peoples together. Therefore Sunday Lunch at the Cricket Club consisted of lunch, which lasted an hour, and a brief visit to the Men Only Bar lasting 4 hours. The ladies, as always, waited patiently and without comment. This is the Far East.

It was time to return home. Not quite though. Brian's suggestion for a stop over in Dubai sounds exciting. The eye-boggling airport at Dubai was once again in sight. The glass, the shimmer, the gold and the spectacular designs all around, was astounding. I wondered aloud if we were looking at Pilkington's contribution to the splendour. Stepping outside the airport we were surprised to find it very chilly. Sunny, but chilly. We were met and transported to The Sheraton Hotel at Jumeirah Beach.

I began to understand the information given me by the travel agent that it would take half an hour to get into town from the hotel. Also the warning that nearly all of Dubai is under construction means just that. We marvelled at the number of building sites as we drove towards the hotel. The estate agent term of "Blank Canvas" came to mind. I must confess I have never seen so many lifting cranes in my life! Building dust was a problem although we did not encounter this at our hotel. I had picked a hotel with no building round it. We could see the Palm Island from our room window. It is interesting to see container ships spraying sand on to the infrastructure creating a base for eventual building. Further along from the hotel, resembling a sail, is the Burg al Arab, the only 7 star hotel in the world.

We took the shuttle from the hotel into Dubai City. The Gold Souk was astonishing! There were gold jewellery encrusted with diamonds and precious stones on sale in every shop. I can now relate to the treasure in Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves.

We did the usual things tourists do. A trip down the river in a fast long boat, walking along the riverbank, marvelling at the spices and ogling at the fantastic new buildings everywhere.

"We must go on a Desert Safari" said Brian. And so it came to pass that afternoon, we went on a Desert Safari. We were picked up in a 4x4 vehicle, driven to the desert and waited for others to join us. There were 6 vehicles altogether. The drivers met, conversed, semi deflated the tyres and we set off all in our respective order. There is a security element in this, as I understood that one could lose one's bearings easily in the desert. Fully belted up, we speeded off in a cloud of dust. It was indeed an experience being driven in a vehicle, through sand dunes, without any limitation to boundaries of length, breadth or depth. We rode up blind summits, dove down the other side, traversed the banks and slide at will down precipitous slopes. Occasionally he stopped on the peak of a shifting sand dune, held us there, as we peered down the next steep downhill. I was certain they were 90-degree drops but it could not have been. Just seems like it. As we hung on for dear life, blood pressure soaring and gills going green, the driver berated us for holding on to hand rails.

"Relax!" he shouted, "Let the seat belts do their job and enjoy the rough and tumble of the ride".

He was right!

Finally the enjoyable ordeal was over. Released from the vehicle with sighs of relief we stumbled on to the desert sand. Clean soft warm powdery sand extruded through our bare toes. The sensation was indescribable. We gathered in little groups and watched the beautiful colours of the desert sunset. Romantic and breathtaking!

"Time to eat" was the next decision. We boarded our vehicles and roared off to an Arab encampment to a mouth watering buffet of Arab origin. The encampment was sections built in a circular manner. The structures were clothed with carpets on the walls and floors. The effect was stunning. Low tables were placed in the centre of each section surrounded by huge substantial cushions. Friendships spanning the world materialised over these low tables.

Loud Arabian music signalled the start of energetic belly dancing performed with great agility by a very pretty and fit Arab lady. Encouraged to participate we all contributed to our version of this traditional dance. Fun was central to all this energetic gyration.

Sand boarding was available to the able and lithe. Camel rides offered to the very brave.

All too soon the Arabian sojourn had to end. Wearily we packed our bags for the last time, and headed to Dubai Airport to take our winged Pegasus home. It was a very welcome thought. Home.

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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