

Marx, Groucho that is rather than Karl, proclaims that he would never want to be part of a club that would be prepared to have him as a member. You can understand his point. The church, of course, exists for all comers. We don't have members who sign up and belong to the church but rather the church is the body of Christ into which all are invited, all may be drawn and all are equally welcome. Of course, having invited all people, through the mission of the church be it through organisations or individual contacts, when people do come into church we need to care for each other. I do hope that you feel at St. James' that we are able to care and practice that care in a regular consistent and compassionate way.

One of the ways in which that care is exercised is through visiting. When I was a curate my vicar used to give me a list of people to be visited. On one occasion I remember visiting a family and as I was half way through the meeting the father said:

"Well, just why have you come?"

I replied: "I just came to visit you,"

and he retorted: "Yes, but why? What do you want?"

And I in my innocence said: "I don't want anything".

To which he further replied: "But the vicar only visits us when he wants something".

I hope that is not true here although some of you may recognise it.

We visit because we care and we care as an expression of God's love. We care because God cares for all and our visiting is a mirroring of God's dwelling in all of us. For ours is an incarnational faith in which the joys and the pains, the successes and the failures, the hopes and the fears of human existence are taken seriously.

It is therefore with enormous joy that I am able to tell you of a new venture in our parish for which 14 people have been trained. We now have a parish visiting programme in which members of our parish community as well as your clergy will undertake visits to anyone who is in need or who requests a visit. You don't have to have a particular reason, although it might be related to a baptism or an illness, at home or in hospital. It may be related to a particular concern, a bereavement or you may simply be a newcomer in one of the streets of our parish.

It may be that we haven't seen you for a while or it may be that we have heard that things are not going very well or indeed that they are going very well, but for whatever reason our group of visitors are most happy to express that outgoing love of God and concern for God's creation by visiting you. They are not counsellors, they are not clergy, they are not social workers, and they are not nosy parkers. They are visitors extending the love of God through practical witness and care in our community.

Please do remember them in your prayers as they carry out this task on behalf of the whole church at St. James' and if you would like to know more about their work then please ask. Greta Rosten (8979 6222) is the co-ordinator of the visitors and if you would like a visit or you know someone else who would appreciate a visit then please

do contact her or Brian whenever you can.

Remember the words of Jesus as he talked to his friends and showed them the way to live. He said that it should be as if: "when I was hungry you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me". But they said to him: "When did we see you hungry and feed you or thirsty and give you drink? When did we see you a stranger and welcome you or naked and clothe you? When did we see you sick or in prison and visit you?" And he will say to them: "Truly I tell you just as you did it to one of the least of these my brothers and sisters so you did it for me". Thank you visitors and welcome into the ongoing life of our parish and all its members.

Brian Leathard

Freda Evans: A Letter from Kingshurst

If someone had mentioned to me four years ago that I would have spent this weekend camping at a Youth Festival for a thousand young Christians, I would have given them a strange look! But there again, I would never have thought I would be living much further than 8 miles from Central London! God can certainly be a God of surprises. In some ways, it doesn't seem possible that I have been here five months; in other ways, it is a million miles away from the lush grass of Bushy Park. Kingshurst is lucky to have a newly-established nature reserve in the parish which includes a lake and a very old bluebell wood; this is a miracle in the midst of such a densely populated area of housing and high-rise blocks of flats. When the slums of inner Birmingham were demolished after the war, it was replaced with housing built in an outer circle of the city and so, it is possible to drive for miles and miles in the suburbs going past street after street of 1960s architecture. The little touches of grass are a luxurious relief.

Alongside these streets, my detached house is conspicuous and somewhat vulnerable, standing alone on raised ground next to the church/church hall/car park complex. I have given the go-ahead for the local boys (and one girl) to play football using the garage doors as goalpost or on the green alongside the church (don't worry, the church now has polycarbonate windows!!). There is nowhere else nearby where they can play and I would rather that than risk their getting involved with drug dealers. So at least I've made a hit with them! I don't know that everyone in church understands my thought processes!

Life here is seen in the raw; the Doctor's surgery advertises healthy living but people in the queue display, unhealthy eating and smoking habits. People here are poor and needy and each Wednesday, we have a 'nearly new' in the hall - it is as much as anything an opportunity to drop-in for a cup of tea and a chat. I have discovered that

brummies accept you for who you are and they are not remotely interested that I have a different accent. Many of the locals consider St. Barnabas as 'their' church though they never come into it: that is, apart from the occasional offices. A large percentage of the population is ageing, because they are people who moved here when the houses were built. Consequently, there is a considerable number of funerals. Alongside this, there is a declining number of young people and a second infants school is closing this summer.

The hall is vibrant and used by many groups in the community, not least for dancing! Though attached to the church, it's a community hall because of lottery funding which also supports a full-time paid project worker. Jean is a blessing and a sparkling personality. She also runs the Girls' Brigade which has about 45 girls between the ages of 7 and 17 who meet every Monday evening. I am their Chaplain and I am currently trying to revolutionize the monthly Parade Service, which the Scouts also attend! It was to be with the older girls that caused me to be in muddy wellies at this huge site in Hemel Hempstead for part of the weekend. Not my normal habitat but these teenage girls and their faith really boost and support me. They are quite likely to get it in the neck at school or college if their peers know they are Christian but they stand their ground. Nikita was confirmed at a wonderful Easter Vigil service at the Cathedral, supported by all her Girls' Brigade friends. Afterwards, they had a sleep over at the hall (count me out there) so that they could all get up for our wonderful Dawn Service, share in the cooked breakfast afterwards and join in our balloon festooned church for the 10a.m. service. These are the magical moments to hang on to when life is at the edge.

Like all Dioceses, Birmingham is faced with a future of reducing the number of stipendiary priests; this isn't easy when there are no 'spare bodies' to cover for sickness or holidays, when the distances between churches are not walkable and when mission is terribly necessary, but the Bishops are determined that these changes should be used creatively and they both spend a lot of time supporting and motivating their clergy. Someone recently asked me if I was happy. Happy is a difficult word. I have always believed that God called me to work with people on the margins and we are certainly on the margins here. Fulfilment will come when I see the faces of a few more parents at services and that will take just a little longer

Freda Evans

PATRONAL FESTIVAL

SUNDAY 13TH JULY

Family Communion at 11a.m.

Preacher: the Bishop of Kensington

followed by lunch and sponsored Beating the Bounds



CHAMPION TRAVEL

Champion Travel is on the east side of Hampton Hill High Street at No. 28 just beyond Parkside Café.

The company takes its name from the founder and first manager Holly Champion. A former Conservative party member of Richmond Council and the borough's first Lady Mayor Holly opened her agency in the late 1960's at the same time as her sister Joan opened a travel agency in East Molesey.

In the 1960's the principal holiday tour operators were Thomas Cook, Frames and Blue Sky. Holly organised trips to the bulb fields at a time when holidaymakers went by coach, train, and boat, and visitors to Europe were limited to a £50.00 spending allowance. The sea crossing to New York took 5 days and the journey to Australia meant an eight week voyage via the Cape of Good Hope. So although holiday leave was gradually becoming more generous, most employees had 14 days annual leave making longer trips out of the question. In 1966 flights to America cost £108.00 and £109.00 to Bermuda a sum that would take a large slice of the average income. In 2003 even after years of rising prices the same journey is relatively cheap at £140 00. Over the years holiday travel has changed. Flights became plentiful and cheaper, salaries higher and holidays longer. The package holiday grew in popularity, as people went in search of the sun and headed for France, Spain, Italy, and Greece while the more adventurous traveller explored China, India, South America and Australia. Increasingly Champion Travel focussed on the sophisticated demand for overseas travel and ceased to reserve seats on local trains and coaches. Although it retains the name Champion Travel, and gained a reputation for being the best travel agency in southern England Holly sold the company to Steffanhoffers when she retired. In 1990 it was bought by the genial Geoff Lance who remains with the company as manager after selling to the Patel family (not the newsagent) in 2001.

As you walk past the agency and you can watch through the plate glass window as staff make phone calls tap at keyboards and keep a watchful eye on their computer screens. The agency has moved with the times and uses the latest technology. Shelves are stacked with lavishly illustrated brochures offering trips as near as Paris or as far away as Peru and although holidays can now be booked on the Internet, the agency, continues to thrive.

Sheila Bligh



HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO OPEN A DOOR?

The simple answer is - just a moment before a chink of light appears, a second before you can see through it, and a few more before you can walk through into the space beyond. Not so the West Porch!

Following initial discussions in the summer of 2001 about how to provide some space to accommodate the increasing amounts of church administration, plans for a development of the West Porch were drawn up that autumn. A visit of the Diocesan Advisory Committee in December was encouraging. The PCC supported the scheme in principle in January 2002, and a planning group was established. The group reported to the PCC in May, proposing an ambitious timetable which introduced the idea more widely at the Spire Open Day on June 2nd, launched the 'Opening our Doors' appeal on St. James's Day, hoped for planning permission in September, to issue tenders in October and have most of the fund raising done by December. The fund raising target was £100,000, with a third coming from events and donations, a third, we hoped, from charities and grants, and the remaining third from our own Church reserves.

What actually happened? So far we have raised no money at all from grants, despite our best efforts, but we have had a windfall in the form of a developer buying out a covenant owned by the church, some of which the PCC has agreed will be put towards the costs. But most importantly, we have raised an amazing almost £50,000 ourselves!

However, it took much longer than expected to get the planning permission, firstly because the plans had to be modified to keep the building a little further away from St. James's Road, and then because of concerns about an adjacent tree. This meant that we had to withdraw the application and resubmit it with a report from our own tree expert. We finally obtained planning permission, with some conditions, on 22nd May 2003.

The architect is sending out tender documents, our application for a Faculty from the Diocese is going ahead and we hope to start building as soon as we can. The Bishop is visiting us on St. James's Day, 13th July 2003, and will, we hope, at least open our West Door, even if he cannot open the new West Porch this year.

Once the project is complete we will have a superb new facility for the parish and the community, including office space, a counselling room, a disabled toilet and child changing facility, but, most importantly, a clear view into the church through the new glass doors.

How long does it take to open a door? In the case of St. James's, a lot longer than you would think, but now, after a year, we are really going ahead to 'Open our Doors'!

Rodney Taylor

Many congratulations to all who helped in any way to raise the splendid sum of £4083. Thanks to all the volunteers - about 30 - who did the house-to-house collections; they worked very hard, especially since this year they asked everybody who donated to make a certified declaration by filling in the relevant details on the envelope. This makes the collecting time longer, but the tax-back amount will be about £600, a splendid sum which makes the effort worth while.

And, of course, thanks to all the people who donated so generously, either in the house-to-house collection, or in other ways. Your very welcome contributions will make a difference to the lives of many others. For instance:-

£175 pays for Thadaham Rural People's Organisation to build a water pump in a poor village in Sri Lanka.

£350 - £750 will enable the rehabilitation programme of the Young Men's Christian Association in Beit Sahour in the Palestinian territories to modify a bathroom so that someone who is disabled can live in a hygienic and active way.

£600 pays for a year's salary for a community field worker at the Institute for Social Development (ISD) in Sri Lanka, enabling workers on the tea plantations, particularly women like Engel Selvi, to know and exercise their rights.

£600 pays for the publication and distribution of one edition of the children's monthly magazine, *Rainbow*, by Sanayee Development Foundation in Afghanistan, which helps entertain and inform young people about culture and practical peacemaking.

£1,500 will buy a very sensitive metal detector to enable mine clearance workers in Cambodia, to locate landmines buried in soil or vegetation.

£1,700 would pay the annual salary of a de-miner, working with the Mines Advisory Group in Cambodia, supported by Christian Aid partner, the Church World Service.

£1,800 covers transport costs for a year for two teams from Fondation Femme Plus in Democratic Republic of Congo to do daily home visits to women who are HIV-positive, providing help with health care, psychological counselling and income generation.

£2,000 will cover a three-day training course for volunteers and families living with HIV/AIDS, including meals and transport, run by Fondation Femme Plus in Democratic Republic of Congo.

£8,500 will enable Thadaham Rural People's Organisation to buy a tractor to enable some of the poorest people in Sri Lanka to plough the land, increase productivity, and begin working their way out of poverty.

Margaret Taylor



St. James's Chronicles

The Hampton Hill Parish Magazine 1903 Extracts from the July Issue

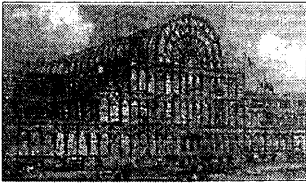
MY DEAR FRIENDS,

It is a matter of considerable importance that today the control of our Schools passes into the hands of the new authority, i.e. a Committee appointed by the County Council. A small body of six Managers will carry on the Schools under the direction of this Committee.



The six Managers are as follows, i.e. four "Foundation Managers" appointed by the former Managers, Mr. Vine C. Griffiths, Mr. C. R. Foster, Mr. E. A. Joseph and myself; Mr. A. E. Storey appointed by the District Council, and Mr. Arthur Elsee appointed by the County Council. I am informed that the County Council offered the appointment to the Rev. H. G. Hastings, the Congregational Minister, but I regret to say that he did not see his way to accept the appointment. The financial matters will be managed entirely by the County Council Committee, excepting that the Schools which are our own property, will have to be kept in proper repair by us. I am sure it will be the desire and the earnest effort of the Managers, as newly constituted, to do everything in their power for the efficiency of the Schools, the welfare of the children, and for the wishes of the parents. May I say to our Subscribers that, while we shall no longer require the large sum we have hitherto had to raise every year, we shall nevertheless require a considerable amount for repairs, and I would express the earnest hope that not a single subscriber will fall out of the list, but that all will continue to give something, however small. If the amount subscribed is not wanted in any one year, it will be reserved for whatever we may be called upon to do, and it is important that we should have a substantial sum for any emergency. This year the working expenses of the School have a claim upon us for seven months out of the twelve, so I hope that most of the subscribers may see their way to give about half their usual subscription for this occasion, even if a larger reduction has to be made afterwards.

On Saturday, the 23rd inst., 38 of our Band of Hope Children were taken to the Crystal Palace for the Annual Demonstration. They were in charge of Mr. Phillips, Creane, Miss Barton and Mr. Basey. There was an immense gathering of upwards of 20,000. The greater part of the day was spent in competitions in Musical Drill for prizes and banners. The Princess Henry of Battenberg distributed the prizes, including those obtained in the written examination.



Six of our members, whose names appeared last month, received prizes. Special thanks are due to Mrs. Creane, Mr. Basey and Mr. Evans for the great assistance they have given in training the children. The Band of Hope is one of our most promising organizations.

I am, my dear friends, Yours very sincerely,
Charles R. Job

BOOK REVIEW



Undersong, Listening to the Soul, by Peter Price

The "undersong" is the movement and meeting place between ourselves and God. I think this is a very moving and thought-provoking book. Peter Price writes at the beginning "this is a book about journeys of the spirit with some 'wandering and grasping', into the experience and insight of others." It describes vividly and with humility his experience of "undersong" in all sorts of people in many parts of the world. He writes of our need to be loved, of peace-making, justice, poverty, suffering, prayer and finally about reconciliation and love, the goal of the church to create a single new humanity, a renewed creation where all things are shared and we are all equal. And he writes how: "the Christ who has accompanied me through it all can be seen, longed for and known as the source of joy and companionship, the inspiration and the fire to shape this world more humanly than it is."

I would call it an "awakening" book, because it has aroused so many feelings in me - shame, shock, sadness, sorrow, hope, to mention but a few. It has woken me up to the reality of many things which happen in the world, which perhaps before I have conveniently shut out of my mind. I found it quite inspirational and very readable. Peter Price is the Bishop of Bath and Wells.

Greta Rosten

3rd Hampton Hill Brownies

Once again my apologies for not letting you all know sooner what the Brownies have been up to lately. Time seems to rush away with us and before you know it another six months have flown by! The girls have been working hard particularly with fund raising, holding a bring and buy sale for the Blue Peter Appeal and a sponsored quiz evening to raise money for the church's Open Door project. They worked towards passing badges at the annual district badge testing evening and enjoyed the usual fun, games and craft.

You may have heard in the national press about the changes in the Brownie Programme which from September 2003 is to be called THE BROWNIE ADVENTURE. This will include a whole new outlook to the Brownie meetings with new handbooks, badge books, badges and most exciting of all, uniform - look out in church next time you are at the All-age Worship - we have one or two Brownies looking very smart!

As always Angela and I are open to any offers of help - now would be a good time to come along and get involved with Guiding - we can all go on the ADVENTURE together!

*Lesley
Brown Owl*

FROM THE MAY REGISTERS

Baptisms

- 4 Georgina Sophie Mackworth, 36 Partridge Road, Hampton
4 Benedict Alexander Mackworth, 36 Partridge Road, Hampton

Funeral

- 1 William Anthony Lucas, 23 Manor Gardens, Hampton

57

Wedding

- 3 Andrew Paul Bourdeaux & Nicola Jill Catto

Church Missionary Society - Mission Partners

The Church Missionary Society (CMS) is advertising for Mission Partners. There is a very wide range of mission and practical needs in a very wide range of places. Some of the areas in which there are openings are: Outreach, which includes evangelism, youth work, mission administration; Medical, including doctors, nurses and health professionals; Clergy and Theological Educators; Community Development, including rural development and water engineering; Education, including TEFL, teacher trainers, primary and secondary teachers. There are other openings, for drug rehabilitation workers, reconciliation legal work, accountancy and management training consultancy. The CMS also welcomes speculative enquiries from those with other qualifications.

Mission Partners usually serve for a minimum period of between four and six years, although some openings can allow for a shorter period of service. Applicants must be active members of a local church.

For more information about Mission Partner service, the contact is:

Stuart Buchanan, Programmes Manager, Church Mission Society,
Partnership House, 157 Waterloo Road, London SE1 8UU.
Telephone: 020 7803 3348, Fax: 020 7401 3215
e-mail: stuart.buchanan@cms-uk.org



Congratulations to Gordon and Janet Stowell on the arrival of their second grandchild, Eloise Charlotte, and to her parents, Ingrid and Leigh. Congratulations also to Mike and Val Butterfield, on the birth of their grandson Laurie Alistair, and to his parents Pippa and David. Laurie is a brother to Beth. We apologise to Aidan Young - we omitted him from the family when we congratulated them all on the birth of Erin in the June magazine. We send our good wishes and prayers to

the parishioners who are in hospital or nursing homes - Louise Wilder in Kingston, David Nunn in Laleham, and Irene Watson in Chelsea and Westminster. Our prayers also for of Rachele's husband Kevan, diagnosed with cancer. We are sad to record the death of Mary Swatland, who died in Solihull on the 22nd April. Mary was 92 years old and her ashes were interned at Hanworth Crematorium on the 18th June.

With great sadness we record the tragic death of Gavin Milmer, our Organist and Director of Music since Easter 2003. In a short space of time, he made a deep impression on the members of St. James's and we cherish his musical contributions to our worship. We pray for Gavin and his family. May he rest in peace and rise in glory.

Our new deacon-to-be, Julie Gittoes, has moved in to 82 Pigeon Lane. She will be ordained deacon on 5th July in St. Paul's Cathedral.

DATES TO NOTE IN JULY

3	1400	Holy Communion
5	1700	Ordination of deacons at St. Paul's Cathedral including Julie Gittoes to serve in this parish. 3 rd Sunday after Trinity
6	0930	Parish Communion at which the Revd Joanna Udal will preach. Joanna is our CMS mission partner and is adviser to the Archbishop of Sudan
9	2000	PCC - Church Hall
13	1100	ST. JAMES' DAY Parish Communion with the Bishop of Kensington celebrating Opening Our Doors followed by lunch and beating the bounds (see details elsewhere in this magazine).
14		John Keble, priest and poet, 1866
20		5 th Sunday after Trinity
22		Mary Magdalen
27		6 th Sunday after Trinity
30		William Wilberforce, social reformer, 1833
31		Ignatius of Loyola, founder of the Society of Jesus, 1556

COPY DATE FOR AUGUST MAGAZINE: 10TH JULY