

SAINT JAMES'S OPEN DAY AND HARVEST WEEK

When the Stewardship Committee considered the possibility of a Floral At Home or Open Day way back in March they had no idea of the scope of the venture or the amount of success it could achieve. Some people wondered what was the use of it, or what was it going to cost, or would it be worth all the hard work. In the event every Body and practically everybody connected with St. James's church became involved in some way or another, from the quiet worker tidying up the rosebeds and cutting the lawn in the churchyard to another "loner" giving up a day's leave to setting fairy-lights in the trees and arranging for light in the marquee (and dismantling it all afterwards!). The Vicar was seen bearing a load of church plate to polish and his wife, as well as organising the Sunday School exhibit, had to vacate her kitchen for the whole day, which she did willingly as usual. Then there were the Groups — the Properties Committee who worked very hard, the regular church cleaning brigade incorporating the brass-polisher and the indefatigable lady in charge of church flowers busily drumming up her flower-suppliers and directing operations; the marquee-erectors (and dismantlers!) hanging grimly on to the guy-ropes and wishing for a third pair of hands; the refreshment-providers and dispensers, the sausage and self-cookers(!); the cheerful on-the-spot washing-up volunteers so thrilled with everything that they wanted to be part of it; the many distributors of all ages who gave out the 2500 invitation leaflets; the poster-drawers and the displayers of same; the publicity department and the printer who kept his charge to a bare minimum. What about the rota of stewards standing ready to give a welcome to our visitors and to answer questions; the bell ringers; the Y.P.F. music makers and their volunteer car which patiently patrolled the village the whole of Saturday morning in a much-placarded way; the church organist both "live" and "taped" who was still playing an hour after "closing time" to about thirty folk who had started an entirely impromptu hymn-singing session?

The lighted model of the church intrigued many children and the blue and white petal cushion with the Mothers' Union initials on it was much admired (and fingered!). The Tuesday Club's lovely decoration of the South Porch made a fitting entrance. The font was really beautiful with its fountain effect of tall blue delphiniums and trailing silver and green ivy. The exhibition of local history which the archivist had prepared provided a corner of quiet interest and what a good idea of the Cub-Scouts was the display of leaves from our churchyard and how well carried out. The Scouts showed surprising skill in flower arrangement and the Brownies delighted with their massed Victorian posies (how many Brownies are there? — for the table was crowded!) and the intricate and imaginative miniature gardens always had a crowd of admiring spectators; whilst the Sunday School puppet theatre and the puppets themselves were such works of art and were so much admired that Mrs. Brunt enlisted five new puppeteers. The pictures and models of the Junior Department, showing the results of modern methods of teaching aroused considerable interest. As for the displays of embroidery and church plate, many of the regular congregation were surprised at the quantity and quality so tastefully displayed to their best advantage.

How can we thank enough the people who ransacked their gardens shrubberies and larders and bought and gave flowers so very generously;

we acknowledge—as we have had cause to do for so many years in the past—the generous gifts and the loan of the dozens of pots of ivy, begonias and coleus from our never-failing friends Messrs. Collins and Thompson. What can be said of the flower arrangers? “It’s got to be seen to be believed,” one Brownie Mother said. If one were to mention one of these skilful artists one would have to mention all because all worked devotedly using their particular talent to make our church beautiful as never before in living memory. Flowery speech perhaps, but those who saw the result will endorse the words. It is hard to express adequate appreciation of those who labour for love but “it is meet and right so to do;” so thank you, all of you, and thank you—although we know you won’t want to be singled out—Margaret Leatherdale and Eila Severn the chief organisers who gave so much time so skilfully, cheerfully and willingly to make the day what it was. Not only was it beautiful visually but happy, and happiness is a lovely and valuable thing, especially when it is to the Glory of God.

And then the Parish in which and for which the Church exists. They came in their hundreds! Many came again to bring their friends and relations—over 600 signed the visitors’ book but we know that many did not—there was a constant queue—so we can only guess that over 1000 people came. Many came for the Harvest Services the next day and little groups of people turned up all through the week. The Harvest Services also involved many people—the Liturgical Committee who planned them, the servers and sidesmen, the augmented choir, and those taking part in the special readings. On Monday a squad of workers turned up to re-arrange the flowers and tidy them up and then came the distribution of the Harvest gifts of groceries, fruit and vegetables and again on Friday the tidiers and sweepers-uppers were there—hard and dirty work cheerfully performed so that the many who came the following Sunday would find the church still beautiful. This involvement of many people embraced the Harvest Supper for 120 people—the organisers, the table-layers, the ones who washed up; the Drama Group—not forgetting The Man With the Bowler Hat!—the scenery makers and shifters—not to mention the many new faces round the tables.

It has been a long report but it was a truly memorable week—like the old times in the village when church and parish were so united. We hope that many who came on September 27, 1969, will remember it as the day they first became united and involved with their church and if this proves to be the result of our labours our sense of happiness will be (temporarily!) complete.

M O.

HARVEST SUPPER THURSDAY, OCTOBER 2

By holding the Harvest Festival Service on Sunday this year it enabled the Supper on Thursday evening to be held at a more leisurely pace with more time being available for meeting new people and welcoming old friends. This probably also aided the digestion although it was not really necessary in view of the excellence of the meal which was even better than usual this year. The only note of complaint I heard was in respect of the beer for which the organisers apologise. It was badly shaken up by the suppliers who were late in delivering it.

The entertainment this year was provided by our own Drama Group who presented an amusing play most competently performed and

produced. It is encouraging to see our local talent flourishing in the Drama Group and we look forward to more of their offerings in the future.

Our thanks to all those responsible for an excellent evening. Whilst the Harvest Festival and Supper serve to remind us of the needs of others they also give us the opportunity of saying thank you for our own good fortunes, not only for the material things we receive but also for the unstinted hard work so freely given by the many cheerful helpers in the parish.

H.S.

TUESDAY CLUB

The Committee have been very happy to welcome several new members since we met in September and we are now a thriving group.

On November 11 we shall have a Quiz Evening and at the meeting on November 25 Miss Burgess, Warden of a Home for Girls in Need of Care will be speaking to us about her work.

At the last meeting before Christmas on December 9, we are to have the Vicar to talk to us and afterwards mince pies and coffee will be served.

M.R.

MENTAL HEALTH ASSOCIATION AUTUMN BAZAAR

Many thanks to all the people who gave costume jewellery and donations for the Jewellery Stall. The result was surprisingly good and the stall was very well stocked and made over £22 towards the total of £179-16-6.

M.O.

AN OPEN CHURCH?

All over the country church authorities are criticised for locking the church door when the building is untended and St. James's has received its share of criticism. Ideally, of course a church should always be open but we have had it borne upon us in the past that people are not ideal either and those churches which have stayed open have suffered loss by theft and desecration, and damage by fire and much more serious — people, often children, have suffered molestation in these quiet places.

Visitors to the "Open" Day will doubtless remember a big placard advertising proudly that St. James's is a Stewardship Church. It was decorated by notes and silver. The notes were taken down after the Open Day but the silver was left — no-one, we thought, could stoop so low as to rob a church and become a thief for 4s. 6d. We were wrong. Someone could and did. So now the notice has token money on it and we are sad that this has been necessary but it does point to the inescapable fact that not everybody visits a church to worship.

And what of unruly behaviour and vandalism in the churchyard? A recent development has been the random (or deliberate) throwing of stones, conkers, fireworks, and other missiles, and several older people have been hit or had narrow escapes. This throwing is not restricted to the churchyard either: recently the Vicar, cycling down Windmill Road to catch the last post, was greeted by a cheery shout "Hello, Vicar" from a group of young lads, to which he suitably replied — but the cheeriness and good-will were on the surface only, for a second later a hard and well-aimed object struck him full on the temple: but better a headache than the loss of the sight of an eye.

A RENEWED CHURCH?

Bishop Dean, as Executive Officer of the Anglican Communion 1964-69, saw a great deal of the Church in actual operation in many parts of the world, and what he saw seems to have filled him with dismay. The Church as it is structured today, he thinks, may have ceased to exist by the end of the next ten years. When asked to give his chief impression of the Church of England in particular, he replied "The appalling dullness of your services and the irrelevance of the preaching." Even if we do not go all the way with him, we cannot but agree that renewal on a vast scale is urgently needed.

The Hampton Council of Churches is becoming increasingly concerned about renewal and mission at a local level, and hopes to form ecumenical groups who will work and plan with all this in mind, and report back to their church councils. As a beginning, a weekend conference is being held — non-residential — at the Methodist Church Hall, Percy Road, November 22/23, and programmes will shortly be available to all interested.

HAMPTON HILL OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE COMMITTEE "MARKET MEDLEY"

(Concluded)

The afternoon went very fast,
Last year's total quickly passed.
Of stalls arrayed, were quite a few.
The effort helped by all of you.
Colourful displays were made
Some in the sun, some in the shade.
While on the green, all lit with logs
A fire was cooking nice hot dogs.
'Twas nice to see some youngsters there
Doing their best to help our fair.
The mingling of the young and old
Cannot be missed, it must be told
That in our district of Hampton Hill
Age and Youth worked with a will,
Doing what they could to help us all
By seeing that interest did not pall,
But by their efforts kept on trying
To keep the busy visitors buying.
The sun, it did their efforts bless,
The day, was a complete success.
That fact was evident a lot
When they added up just what they'd got.
The total at the end was found
To come to two hundred and fifteen pound!
From start to finish it was grand
So thanks to a very willing band
Of helpers, who, though very tired
Had worked as if they were inspired.
I will not name a single one
But to you all just say "WELL DONE!"

F.T.

METHS. DRINKERS AND OTHERS

Sally Trench, author of "Bury Me in My Boots," expelled from school, rejected and rejecting, lived amongst the meths drinkers for three years and was thus well equipped to tell the Ruri-Decanal Conference of this appalling social problem—the problem of the denizens of "Skid Row" the lowest of whose hierarchy, i.e., the LOWEST of the despairingly low—is the Meths. Drinker. These unfortunates are usually the victims of a personality-defect triggered into an incapacitating illness by adverse circumstances. They have no outward manifestation of illness at first, though these come shockingly, but are as crippled as the blind and deaf and dumb. See them huddled in dark corners or derelict buildings, on benches at railway stations, on park seats, newspapers as mattress and blanket; walking all night in winter too frightened to take off their boots—filthy, verminous, basically unable to fit into any disciplined society.

Who are they? How does one sink so low? Some joined the army at 18 and were taught to fight to survive by living off the land. They came back and, being completely untrained for civilian life, were forced to take menial jobs, some on the big building sites where heavy drinking is taken for granted; they became alcoholics and their working capacity impaired they were sacked—no money for gin or whisky so eventually starting down Skid Row from "Wino" to meths. drinker, conning sixpences off the despised "all right Jacks."

Sally Trench lived in a place called The Ramp—just existing from day to day, hour by hour. She said that "The Authorities" which exist to help the ordinary man in the street "don't want to know" about the meths. drinker. She admitted that, owing to the dirt and the vermin and the very make-up of these people; their feelings were understandable, but never-the-less heart-breaking. She found a man dying of pneumonia in a derelict house and knowing no ambulance would want to know she "shopped him" by lighting a fire near him and ringing the police to report the illegal situation of "a vagrant with a fire on a derelict site." "That'll be a meths. drinker," came the reply, "Don't want the Station loused up—I'll send someone down to throw him out," and this was what was done. The fire was stamped out and the man left on the pavement. *To be concluded*

LOCAL CHEMISTS' OUT-OF-HOURS DISPENSING SERVICE

Week commencing	Nov. 3	F. G. Martin, 28B Priory Road, Hampton.
"	"	" 10 Mrs. C. Lea, 193 High Street, Hampton Hill.
"	"	" 17 F. G. Martin, 3 Station Approach, Hampton.
"	"	" 24 Mrs. E. James, 205 High Street, Hampton Hill.

NO LATE SERVICE ON SATURDAYS

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Nov. 4.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union—Mrs. Page, "The Health Visitor and her Work." (W).
" 5.—7.15 p.m. Firework Party at Laurel Dene; admission by ticket 3/6 (N.B. No unaccompanied children).

- .. 10.—2.30 p.m. Editorial Board, followed at 3.30 p.m. by meeting of full Magazine Committee (34, Burton's Road).
- .. 11.—8.00 p.m. Liturgical Committee (90, Ormond Drive); 8.00 p.m., Tuesday Club (W).
- .. 16.—8.00 p.m. Hampton Junior Council of Churches: Evening of Poetry and Music on the theme "Where is God?" (Congregational Church).
- .. 17.—8.00 p.m. Ruridecanal Conference (St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham).
- .. 20.—7.45 p.m. ANNUAL REVIEW OF STEWARDSHIP (Hall): letter of invitation and further details enclosed in this issue of The Spire.
- .. 22-23.—Hampton Council of Churches: WEEKEND RENEWAL CONFERENCE (Methodist Church Hall, Percy Road). The Conference will meet on Saturday from 11.00 a.m. to 4.00 p.m. and on Sunday from 2.30 p.m. to 4.30 p.m.: full details on programme to be made available shortly.
- .. 22.—3.30 p.m. Old People's Party (Hall).
- .. 23.—STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY: Services at usual times, but Publick Baptism will be administered at 4.00 p.m. next Sunday; and Y.P.F. lead service at Laurel Dene at 5.15 p.m.
- .. 24.—8.15 p.m. Properties Committee (21, St. James's Road).
- .. 25.—8.00 p.m. Tuesday Club (W).
- .. 26.—8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
- .. 29.—CHURCHYARD: ALL-DAY MASS ATTACK AND LEAF-CLEARING.
- .. 30.—First Sunday in Advent: 5.15 p.m. St. James's leads service at Laurel Dene.
- Dec. 2.—Saint Andrew's Day: Holy Communion at 9.00 a.m.; 8.00 p.m. Whist Drive (W).
- .. 3.—8.00 p.m. Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road).

BAPTISMS

On September 28:

Robin Philip Brunson, 3, Edward Close.
Jonathan Leslie Clark, 33, Taylor Close.
Karen Anne Hancke, 159, High Street.
Leigh Roberts, 50, High Street.

MARRIAGES

On October 11:

Norman William Page to Beatrice McIsaac.
Barry James George Wright to Madeline Hurst.

BURIALS

On October 2:

Amy Easton, 1, Fairlight, Uxbridge Road, aged 71 years (at Hampton Cemetery).

On October 14:

Susannah Reading Mossman, 11a, Queen's Road, aged 90 years.