

THE CHURCHYARD

An eminent Anglican divine, Martin Thornton, recently wrote in *The Observer* (20.8.72) an article attacking the view that diocesan authorities often urge on parishes, that 'a well-kept churchyard is a credit to the parish, an act of witness and an expression of devotion . . .' He maintained, on the contrary, that 'a well-kept churchyard is a headache to the vicar, the seed-bed of the most primitive form of superstition, a wicked waste of land, and an eyesore'. He argued that if there were any tombstones that had aesthetic or historical value, then they should be taken off to museums, and the land ploughed up to grow barley, which makes honest beer, or else used to build houses on.

There is much to be said for this point of view. A small number of people in this parish put in an enormous number of man-hours in keeping our churchyard in some sort of order, an effort grievously hindered by old-fashioned kerbs and gravestones, and we should be very glad to be released from this never-ending drudgery. We have indeed begun to take steps towards this desirable goal. Our Parochial Church Council recently passed the following resolution, which has been published on the church-door and in other places: 'There is only one grave space remaining in the church grounds, and it is resolved that when this has been used, burials may take place only in existing designated family graves if room permits'. We have followed this up by applying to the Department of the Environment for an official closing order, after the granting of which the maintenance of the churchyard would become in due course the responsibility of the Borough, and everything needed would be paid for out of the rates, including the labour involved, which now is *given* by churchpeople, while the equipment and materials used are paid for out of church funds. So the Church would be able to redirect much energy and money to other more worth-while causes, while the local authorities take over the chore and the burden which the Church has carried unaided for so long.

There seems to be only one snag—the obtaining of a closing order is not always plain sailing, and all kinds of legal quibbles and out-dated anomalies can come into it. Legal authorities differ amongst themselves, and we have been given much conflicting advice. Sometimes, it appears, a great issue is made out of the need to establish that there is a risk to public health, which may mean going on having burials until coffins are sticking out above the ground—or threatening to send them round to the local town hall unless action is taken! But we have good hope that nothing so drastic will be needed here!

It is often suggested that sheep or goats should be allowed to graze in the churchyard, to keep down the vegetation. We wonder now whether foxes—or some people suggest coyotes—are living there, or whether they come from Bushy and Fulwell Parks and use our churchyard as a stalking and slaughtering ground. Certainly

some unpleasant sights have been seen there lately—mangled and decapitated bodies of hens, for instance. We now barricade our few remaining hens in at night, and try to stop up the holes which ‘the churchyard children’ continually make in the fence. These children have indeed been more of a hazard this autumn than for some years. Regarding the churchyard and its surroundings as their own special domain, where they can do exactly as they like, free from any kind of restraint, they leave a trail of havoc behind them. If an adult is brave or foolhardy enough to rebuke them for their depredations, he is in danger of having not only insults and abuse hurled at him, but stones—and in season conkers—as well. They know that they are safe, because they can run faster than the old ‘uns!

Dr. Martin Thornton’s solution may seem too extreme—but it would certainly solve many problems, and perhaps bring some much-needed peace and quiet.

PARISH WEEKEND AT HILDENBOROUGH HALL

Programmes giving details will shortly be available to those who have booked, and those who are thinking of booking. If you are in this latter category, do please make up your mind before it is too late. Those who have been on previous weekends have found them to be amongst the most enjoyable and inspiring experiences of their lives, and there is no reason why you should not find this so too.

The only service in church on Sunday November 12 will be the special one for Remembrance Day at 6.30 p.m.

ST. JAMES’S INFANT SUNDAY SCHOOL

This is to give you advance notice of events planned for the future. At Christmas time we hope to be able (with your support) to take the Infant Sunday School to see ‘Jack and the Beanstalk’ at Wimbledon Theatre. We also intend holding a coffee evening for the parents of the children, and for any members of the parish who have children between the ages of 5-7 and would like to find out more about our activities, and possibly let their child join us.

Details of these events will be announced later in church and on the notice-board of Wayside.

G. M. G.

HARVEST THANKSGIVING

Many thanks to all the people who brought flowers, fruit and gifts of groceries to help decorate the church for our Harvest Thanksgiving.

The decorations in the church were much admired by the many people attending the services and on Monday morning over thirty baskets of groceries and fruit were taken to the elderly and sick of the parish and were much appreciated.

YOUNG PEOPLE'S FELLOWSHIP

Thanks to our organisation committee we have enjoyed a very active summer, apart from our regular Sunday and Friday meetings we have had several outings.

The first was on Spring Bank holiday when we walked from Godstone to Guildford camping at Box Hill and Newlands Corner, finishing with a visit to Guildford's marvellous cathedral. Thanks to Andy Wood and his car we did not have to carry our equipment, and Bob Brittain's Dormobile carried twelve weary dirty members home!

Another weekend, which did not have the pleasure of my company, was spent in the Snowdon area where I understand amongst other things they climbed the heights of Cader Idris.

In August we had a one-day trip to Coventry, thanks once again to Bob Brittain and his Dormobile. This was a long and very full day. We had several stops, some for nature and some to visit local beauty spots, Kenilworth Castle being one. Much of the afternoon was spent in Coventry Cathedral. To add a touch of culture to the day we visited the Shakespeare Theatre at Stratford and saw "Coriolanus". After this we all piled into the Dormobile once more and set off home, stopping at Bedford to visit the Lambournes where refreshments were waiting for us. These were very much appreciated.

Our last outing of the season was also to Wales. This time we set off in Alan and Helen Taylor's and Martin Edmond's cars on the Friday evening. We spent our first night as planned at the Royal Oak camp-site, but owing to circumstances beyond our control moved to another site at the foot of the Brecons, which proved to be a better one. We walked up the Brecons to about 3,000 feet, where we found we were swamped in heavy cloud. After a long and exhausting day we all slept well, returning to Hampton Hill on Sunday, as usual dirt, tired, hungry and happy. Thank you Bob, Andy, Martin, Helen and Alan for your help in transporting us on these jaunts.

GODSPELL

R.D.S.

Late in the evening of September 21 a coach arrived back at St. James's Road. A large proportion of its occupants were in very high spirits, enthusiastically dancing about and singing. The remainder were not in such a happy mood—some were even heard to be muttering . . . "rubbish" . . . "waste of money". The coach had left some hours earlier for a performance of "Godspell" at Wyncham's Theatre.

Everyone involved with the trip had been eagerly looking forward to it for some time. The performance, however, soon split the party into two sharply defined groups: those who thoroughly appreciated this modern, fast-moving and very relevant insight into

Christ's life, and those to whom it meant little or nothing and appeared rather insincere.

In such a short space it is impossible to describe the atmosphere created; the moments of complete silence, the musical crescendos (thought by many to be too loud), the way in which the audience's laughter would suddenly be turned into hushed seriousness. The memory of Godspell will be the memory of a captivated audience who on the whole thoroughly enjoyed their night at Wndhams.

R. L. B.

N.B. The Social Committee are hoping to arrange another coach-party to see Godspell about the end of January. Would those who are interested please let it be known to a member of the committee?

CHURCH OF ENGLAND CHILDREN'S SOCIETY

The Area Secretary, Miss O. Wright of 15 School Road, Hampton Hill, would *very* much like to hear of more church members willing to take a box for this worthy cause—the present number of contributors is only 5 in this Parish and they have done very well this last year. Please do let Miss Wright hear—any Sunday morning after Parish Communion, those of you who will take a box: your efforts will be much appreciated.

TUESDAY CLUB

Tuesday Club has now been meeting every other week for four years. Membership is open to ladies of any age, of any denomination, living in Hampton Hill. We meet in Wayside, St. James's Road, at 8 p.m. We have a very varied programme with speakers on different subjects and occasional social evenings.

New members would be very welcome, the yearly subscription is 30p. Our next meeting is on November 14 when Mrs. Parncutt will be telling us about her trip around the world; this will be followed by a talk on Haitian Art given by the Vicar of Hampton Wick, Mr. Carnes, on November 28. Our last meeting before Christmas will be on December 12.

HAMPTON HILL OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE COMMITTEE

We were very glad of a lovely sunny day for our Carnival and Fair on September 2 which was opened by the Rev. A. E. Hunter, our chairman. Mr. Toby Jessell, our Member of Parliament, crowned Mrs. Sally McCartney Forget-me-not-Queen and also with Alderman Harris judged the Carnival Floats. We were happy to have so much support from the people of the Parish, who not only provided goods for the stalls, but also made the occasion a friendly and profitable event, which raised £325 for our funds.

The Holly Road recreation ground looked very gay with well-filled stalls: Hoopla Roundabout, Village Pub, Ice Parlour—and

popular with the children, Races and Punch-and-Judy Show.

We are most grateful to our local tradesmen for their generous help. Money-raising events such as this enabled us, this year in September, to send 31 elderly people to Broadstairs for a week's holiday, where they enjoyed fine weather and the company of their friends.

L.M.

MOTHERS' UNION

An afternoon's search among parish records and back numbers of parish magazines by Mrs. Young and myself revealed that our Branch was inaugurated on Monday, December 6, 1897, when 40 ladies joined the Mothers' Union. Thus our December meeting this year will be a Diamond Jubilee Celebration. There will be Corporate Communion at church in the morning, and a party in the Hall in the evening. Please earmark the date, Wednesday, December 6, as we want a full attendance of members—transport will be arranged for those who need it. More details will be issued later—but this is a *very* special occasion. We are the second oldest Branch in the Deanery, St. Stephen's Branch was formed in 1896. Can you think of any other world-wide organisation in the parish which has functioned for so long and is still going strong?

We want a good attendance at the November meeting when, after Annual Reports have been given (there are no elections this year), we shall be discussing the Commission's Report "New Dimensions". In February one of the Special Panel of Speakers will be coming to explain this more fully to us. There will be no Party in January; instead we shall hold a Carol Service, so rally round and let us know your favourite carols.

We are grateful to the Rev. J. Cranswick for conducting our Opening Service in Church on September 13, and joining us later in a "get-together" in Wayside.

Dates for Diary

Wednesday November 1: Annual Reports. Discussion of "New Dimensions".

Monday November 20: Deanery Committee, 2.15 p.m., St. Mark's, Twickenham.

I.V.R.

FIREWORKS PARTY

Tickets are now available from the Social Committee for the annual fireworks party at Laurel Dene on Saturday 4 November at 6.30 p.m. sharp. The price, 25p, includes hot soup and potatoes. Unfortunately unaccompanied children cannot be admitted. Hurry as tickets are limited.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

October

- 31 8.00 p.m. Tuesday Club: Mrs. Bowes—'Many years of Flying' (W).

November

- 1 ALL SAINTS' DAY: 7.30 a.m. Holy Communion; 2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: A.G.M. and Discussion (W).
2 7.45 p.m. Newcomers' Party—postponed from October 25 (W).
4 6.30 p.m. Fireworks Party at Laurel Dene—admission by ticket only.
6 8.00 p.m. Stewarrship Committee (106 Park Road); 8.15 p.m. Properties Committee (7 Blandford Road).
7 8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
8 8.55 a.m. Holy Communion (St. Anne's Chapel, L.E.H.S.).
10-12 or 13: PARISH WEEKEND AT HILDENBOROUGH HALL. 12 Only service in church: Special Form of Service for Remembrance Day at 6.30 p.m.
14 8.00 p.m. Tuesday Club. Mrs. Parncutt—'Around the World' (W).
26 STEWARDSHIP SUNDAY: Sunday arrangements as usual on the forth Sunday but at Evensong a special play on a Stewardship theme will be presented, and then refreshments will be served in church.

N.B. A Gala Fashion Show by Marks and Spencer in aid of the Church of England Children's Society will be held on Wednesday November 8 at 8.00 p.m. in the Coronation Hall, Kingston. Tickets £1, 75p, 50p, half-price senior citizens, obtainable from 204 Tudor Drive, Kingston (Tel. 546 9226 after 7.00 p.m.).

BAPTISMS

September

- 3 Justine Lloyd, 73 Burton's Road (at Upton Parish Church, Torquay).
24 Kirsty Jane Elizabeth Saunders, 97 Edmunds Road, Banbury.

October

- 8 Mark Richard Bowes-Cavanagh, 27 Clarence Road, Teddington (at the Parish Communion).

MARRIAGES

September

- 23 Kenneth Charles Ayliffe to Susan Helen Wells.

October

- 7 Richard Charles Addy to Linda Maureen Squelch.