

OUR ANNIVERSARY HOLIDAY

Five years ago, to mark the fact that we had been here twenty-one years, the parish, to our great surprise and delight, most generously and graciously offered us the chance to have 'the holiday of a lifetime'. Various circumstances prevented us from taking advantage of this great opportunity until now - and we have just had this wonderful experience. If all goes well, and our amateur attempts at photography come out not too badly, and we have enough exhibits to make it interesting to others, we hope to hold an 'At Home' to our friends who enabled us to have this very special time, so that they may share in some degree the enjoyment and enrichment that came to us. But for the moment, something of the bare bones of what happened.

We went on one of the British India (now part of P&O) Discovery Cruises, in the good ship Uganda, of some 17,000 tons. To reach the ship we flew from Gatwick to Venice, and before we sailed we had time to see something of this amazing place. We were two out of about 300 cabin passengers, and in addition there were 942 'students' (on this cruise children aged from 14 to 16) all from schools in Lincolnshire, with their teachers and some of the 'top brass' of the educational and municipal world of that county. These adults were all, of course, included among the cabin passengers, but some of them had to spend many hours a day with their charges. We privileged cabin passengers could have the best of both worlds - attend the lectures and special programmes provided for the students, visiting their part of the ship - but our part was 'out of bounds' to them, except on one or two occasions, such as that of their fancy-dress competition. The ship's deputy head mistress - appropriately named Miss Breeze - who gave many of the lectures herself, sat at our table in the dining-room whenever she could free herself from her many duties, and our other mess-mates were teachers and an educational inspector from Lincolnshire, a county and people with whom we have a strong sense of kinship having lived for many years in the neighbouring county of Nottingham, and there was another link in the fact that my first vicar, a splendid man, Tony Otter, later became Bishop of Grantham, and though now retired and in his eighties, was known - at least by repute - to many of the Lincolnshire contingent. Three clergymen from this county also acted as the ship's chaplains, so that I could relax and be at the receiving end all the time. At the daily Eucharist the elderly Methodist minister concelebrated with the young Anglican country vicar, and on occasions the new Methodist rite was used - this is very similar to our Series 3, and in some ways an improvement on it.

Not only in spiritual matters were we mainly at the receiving end. Life on the ship is as different from normal daily life in a parish as could be imagined. You are waited on hand and foot by courteous and efficient Asian stewards. The meals are enormous in quantity and of the highest quality - the number of courses making every lunch and dinner seem like a Lord Mayor's Banquet., but there is the snag that the time allotted would not permit one to go through them all even if one had the stomach capacity to do so. The brochure sums up this lush kind of life very well: "Step aboard and at once relax in a private world of comfort and service You inherit standards going back to Queen Victoria's reign. Indeed 'Posh' - a word coined for P&O passengers travelling 'Port Out, Starboard Home' to avoid the Red Sea sun - is now the best word to describe your way of life on board Uganda."

Of course, all this luxury did raise scruples of conscience, especially when seen in contrast to the poverty of some of the places we visited, and in wondering what effect this high standard of Western living had on the minds of those from deprived countries who served us. Indeed a man who had been a Labour Councillor for twenty years challenged us on this point: how could we as churchpeople justify such a trip? We said that we were not habitual cruisers, and that for us it was most likely to be once in a lifetime, and this only through the generosity of others. This did not relieve us from all sense of guilt, but it made us more determined to do our best to work harder for justice in the world on our return. This resolve was strengthened in me by my picking up from the ship's library Dr. Sheila Cassidy's newly-published book 'Audacity to Believe', which I found absorbing, and read whenever I had opportunity: it moves one to the depths to read of the heroism of those who at great risk to themselves are standing firm for human rights and dignity against the terrible oppression and injustice and sheer wickedness now rampant in Latin America.

But life on board ship need not be all relaxation and revelry. There could also be a strenuous side for those who wanted it. We were up every morning at 7.00 a.m. and sometimes when we had a long day ahead an hour earlier than this. On the days we were at sea we joined 15 others for a vigorous 'Keep Fit' session led by the ship's hostess; then after recovering from this we were amongst the very few who took their daily dip in the pool (the temperature of which was said to be 72⁰ F.) And the long visits ashore were sometimes exhausting as well as exhilarating.

We visited Korcula, Crete and Pompeii. (Late one evening, as we sailed past the great mass of Stromboli, dinner was delayed in the hope that he might put on one of his pyrotechnic displays, which he obligingly and thrillingly did, thus compensating us for having to miss the parish fireworks party at Laurel Dene!). But our longest time ashore was spent in Egypt and Israel, where we were both immersed in the past and brought face to face with both the harsh and hopeful realities of the present. In Egypt, for instance, we had to spend far more time than was intended in real desert, and saw something of the struggle that Egypt is beginning to put up against this encroaching barrenness. In Israel we relived the Biblical past in Jerusalem, Bethlehem, Samaria, Nazareth, Capernaum and Tiberias - but then confronted things as they are now at the Golan Heights and not being able to sail right across the Sea of Galilee but only to skirt its shore because of the danger of missiles from Lebanon. We saw the Arab methods of farming during the hours we spent in the region of the West Bank, and were able to compare them with the more successful results achieved by the kibbutzim and cooperative farms. All the time it was borne in upon us how much both Israel and Egypt need peace and relief from the tremendous - almost crippling - burden of armaments on their precarious economies. At the time of writing this we have been gladdened by the news of President Sadat's courageous initiative: we have been thinking about heroes of war at this time of Remembrance, but we now need great heroes of peace if mankind is to survive on this planet.

There is so much more that could be said, and we ourselves will be thinking over our experiences and pondering on what we have seen and learnt for many months to come - but this must suffice for now. Once again, most grateful thanks from both of us, Rupert and Con, to all who made this possible for us.

FIREWORKS PARTY

Despite torrential rain, and the fact the grounds of Laurel Dene resembled a quagmire, the fireworks party was, as usual, a great success. The fireworks, although wet, went off with a loud bang.

The efforts in the kitchen just about kept up with the demand for soup and jacket potatoes, of which vast amounts were consumed. Our thanks, once again, to the staff of Laurel Dene and we hope the residents enjoyed the display as much as we did.

P.S.

ADVERTISING MANAGER URGENTLY NEEDED FOR THIS MAGAZINE NOW

An interesting job for the right person who will work in close conjunction with the treasurer and the printer. Help will be given, if required, by the previous manager for one year.

Please contact the Vicar or Mrs. E. Severn if you would like to offer your services or find out more about what is entailed. Without advertisements there can be no magazine!

AROUND THE SPIRE

We were very pleased to hear of two births in the last few weeks. Graham and Ann (nee Stewart) had an unexpectedly early arrival - little Zoe. Although she has been in an incubator for a few weeks, she is now home - with her parents and sister Fiona.

The second baby was born on September 22 to Richard (an erstwhile bellringer and choirboy) and Sheila Leatherdale, a daughter Julie - making Margaret and Denis proud grandparents! Congratulations to all.

We will be sad to see Penny (nee Maddox), Paul and little Ashley move out of Hampton Hill. The Social Committee and Young Families will be especially sorry to see Penny go as they have found her to be an enthusiastic and invaluable member, but we hope they soon settle in their new home near Farnham.

At the same time we will be welcoming back Hannah Stanton who has been on a tour mainly in Australia for quite a few weeks, a popular place it seems these days.

We were sorry to hear Mrs. Coral McCarthy had another nasty fall and broke her other hip. She is now out of hospital and resting at home but unfortunately will have to go back into hospital for another operation after Christmas - we all wish her well.

Making good progress is David's father, Frederick Dore, who has recently been ill.

BUFFET DANCE

My husband and I, along with two friends, spent a most enjoyable evening at the Parish Hall on Friday November 11. Everyone was dancing to the music of a three-piece band. Half-way through the evening a lovely buffet supper was enjoyed by all.

I think a big "Thank you" is due to all the ladies who provided such a lovely supper and to the gentlemen who looked after the bar. Also to the Knightriders Band and to everyone who helped to make it such a wonderful evening.

We are looking forward to another one in the near future.

Mary Metcalfe

The Social Committee would like to thank George Samuels and Ken Elmes for coming to our assistance and organising and running the bar so cheerfully.

REB

REMEMBRANCE DAY SERVICE

On Sunday November 13 members of the local Royal British Legion, accompanied by the band of the Sea Scouts and their officers, marched to St. James's Church where a wreath was laid on the War Memorial in the churchyard. The Remembrance Service was led by the Vicar, assisted by the Rev. Seymour Harris, and a full choir led the singing of a large congregation. It was a lovely service, with a very good sermon preached by the Vicar, and I would like, on behalf of the members of the Hampton and District Branch of the Royal British Legion, to thank him and the P.C.C. for allowing us to have our Remembrance Service in St. James's Church. There are 22 service personnel from World Wars I and II interred in the churchyard, which really did surprise my friends in the Royal British Legion very much indeed.

It was really nice to see that so many people still care and find the time to attend the Remembrance Service. I know that lots of people say that Remembrance Day should be dispensed with, but if it was not for all the men and women who gave their lives in both World Wars, we would not be enjoying the freedom we know and have in the Western World today.

With sincere thanks,

Ron Metcalfe
(Member of the Royal British Legion')

ST. JAMES'S INFANTS' SUNDAY SCHOOL

As from Sunday, December 4, the Infants' Sunday School will meet at 9.20 a.m. at 71 St. James's Avenue. Mrs. P. Smith has agreed to meet children at the St. James's Road entrance to the Church at 9.15 a.m. should this be necessary.

Parents can meet children from church at the end of Parish Communion, or they can be collected from 71, St. James's Avenue at 10.05 a.m. if parents feel that it will be too much for the younger children to attend part of the Service as well as Sunday School.

Any new children between the ages of 4 - 7 years would be welcome. If you require any further information please telephone Mrs. P. Atkinson on 979 6166.

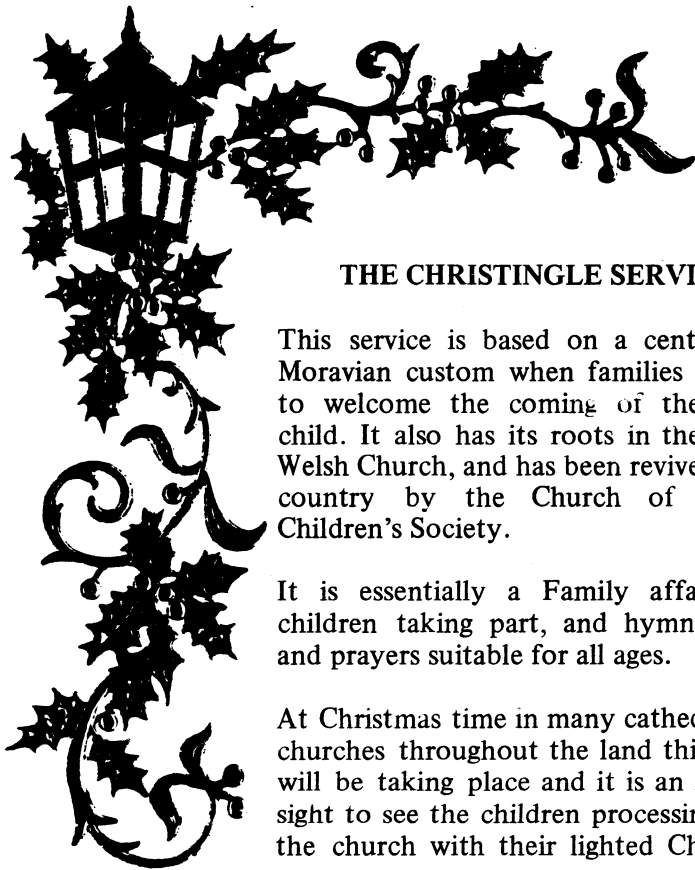
CAROL SINGING

We are hoping to make a bigger impact than usual with our carol singing around the parish this year as we are to be joined by two or three members of the Richmond Band playing their brass instruments. You will know that this band recently presented a concert in our church which was greatly appreciated, and we are very pleased that they are to cooperate with us in this.

We have decided to concentrate our efforts this year in that part of the parish to the Hampton side of Windmill Road. Consequently, instead of assembling at the church, we are to meet at the Parish Hall in School Road - at the usual time of 7.15 p.m. All are welcome, so do join us; and those that stay the course (lasting about 1½ to 2 hours) will be rewarded with a hot drink and a mince-pie when we return to the Hall. Incidentally, if anyone would like to help by making some mince-pies for the occasion, we should be grateful if they would please let Mrs. Severn (Tel: 979-1954) know well beforehand.

We do not aim to collect money, but only to bring some Christmas joy to those parts of the parish within ear-shot. The more we have with us, the wider range we shall cover. And we do hope that those living in the area will come out and swell the volume.
Don't forget - Thursday December 22 is the night.

REB



THE CRISTINGLE SERVICE.

This service is based on a centuries-old Moravian custom when families gathered to welcome the coming of the Christ-child. It also has its roots in the ancient Welsh Church, and has been revived in this country by the Church of England Children's Society.

It is essentially a Family affair, with children taking part, and hymns, carols and prayers suitable for all ages.

At Christmas time in many cathedrals and churches throughout the land this service will be taking place and it is an inspiring sight to see the children processing round the church with their lighted Christingle oranges.

Why an orange some may well ask? The orange represents the world. The candle - the Light of the World. The fruit or holly - the fruits of the earth, and the red ribbon - the Blood of Christ.

We are holding the service in our church at 4.30 p.m. on Christmas Eve and hope many members of our congregation will be inspired to come along. All offerings will be for the Children's Society.

Doris Childs.

NEW YEAR PARTY

The theme for our 1978 Fancy Dress Party - to be held in the Parish Hall at 7.45 p.m. on Saturday January 14 - is to be Nursery Rhymes. As usual, this will be a grand family occasion with games and dancing for all - not to mention substantial refreshments. Tickets (60p for adults and 30p for those who are 16 or under) will be available from members of the Social Committee. So -

Jack and Jill of Hampton Hill,
Do come with son and daughter;
Hair let down, become a clown,
And join us all in laughter!

Sit on the wall, in a corner or on a tuffet; be the big spider, a black sheep or one of 40 and 200 blackbirds (inflation is with us!) and sing a song; be the queen of hearts - or perhaps the knave - or even yourself; but do come!

When we think of the New Year Party we almost instinctively think of Reg. For well over a decade, Reg Thorpe has brought a magic touch to it with his easy and jovial but firm leadership. This year he has asked to be relieved of the task, and so it is appropriate to thank him now for all the effort he has put into organising and running the games and dancing for almost all of them. So, on behalf of the members of the Social Committee over the years and of the hundreds, both young and old, who have enjoyed the parties immensely, we say, very sincerely, thank you, Reg.

REB

DEANERY INTERCESSIONS

December

- 11 The Staff of London Diocesan House
- 18 Homes and Day Centres for the Elderly
- 25 St. Stephen, East Twickenham

SOME DATES TO NOTE

December

- 12 10.30 Editorial Board (21, St. James's Road)
- 14 07.30 Holy Communion
- 15 20.00 Prayer Meeting (69, St. James's Avenue)
- 20 20.00 Prayer Meeting (75, Burton's Road)
- 21 ST. THOMAS'S DAY : 19.15 Holy Communion
- 22 Parish Carol Singing (starting off from Hall at 19.15)
- 24 CHRISTMAS EVE : 16.30 Family Christingle Service (offerings for the Church of England Children's Society); 23.45 Midnight Eucharist (all non-pledged offerings at this service and on Christmas Day for Christian Aid)
- 25 CHRISTMAS DAY : Holy Communion at 08.00 and 12.10; Family and Parish Communion at 09.30, followed by refreshments in church; 16.30 Carols by Candlelight.
- 26 ST. STEPHEN'S DAY : 10.00 Holy Communion; 11.00 Infant Baptism
- 27 ST. JOHN'S DAY : 10.00 Holy Communion
- 28 INNOCENTS' DAY : Holy Communion in church 09.00, and at Laurel Dene 10.00.

January

- 1 THE NAMING OF JESUS : Sunday Services as usual, with the addition of a Family Service and short Nativity Play devised by the Junior Sunday School in church at 11.15

SOME DATES TO NOTE (CONT)

January

- 4 14.30 Mothers' Union : Branch Christmas Meeting (W)
- 6 THE EPIPHANY ; 19.15 Holy Communion
- 8 Sunday services as usual, with the Epiphany Welcome Service at 16.30
- 11 Mothers' Union : Wave of Prayer
- 14 19.45 Parish Christmas Party (Hall)

MARRIAGES

October

- 29 John Graham Jackson to Yoke Lan Tan
Bernard John Hampton to Hilary Whittles

CREMATIONS

November

- 18 Denis Johnson, 20, St. James's Avenue, aged 60 years
(at Randall's Park Crematorium, Leatherhead)
- 21 William Adam Ross, 55, Rectory Grove, aged 65 years
(at Mortlake Crematorium)