

After the Olympic adrenalin

THE COLLECTIVE sense of achievement after the winning of an Olympic medal is a strange phenomenon. Despite the obviously individual nature of the triumphs, often in disciplines or crafts hardly ever seen by the general public, let alone participated in by them, there was none-the-less a resurgence of national pride as each of "our" medals was won. Such pride nowadays attaches to little other than sporting events, and that only rarely. The emotion was partly disinterested, as spectators cheered young athletes who strove to do the best they could. But the same strength of feeling was not directed towards weightlifters from Belarus, for example. This suggests that another motivation was a desire to feel part of the national team, albeit at a considerable

distance from Beijing.

This has a beneficial side to it. The justification for so much investment in élite sport is the ability of athletes to inspire others to become involved.

This includes not just potential Olympic hopefuls, still in their childhood or early teens, but adults, too, for whom a body that works marginally better than before is reward enough. The eagerness of commercial firms to buy the endorsement of medal-holders is testament to the draw of successful sportsmen and women. The athletes spoke repeatedly about being inspired by predecessors. They will, in turn, inspire others. In this way sporting prowess is built, almost generation by generation.

And there is one sense in which each victory is a communal act, and

that is in the matter of funding. The extraordinary successes of the cycling team, for example, would not have been possible without the Manchester velodrome to practise in and the £22 million Lottery grant with which to hone the bikes and the riders. The athletes provide the innate talent and commitment; the public provides the conditions in which that talent can be shaped into something unbeatable. The result is that the athletes, certainly, have expressed a strong sense of competing for their country, not for themselves.

There must always be an ambivalence about competitiveness. The Olympic Games are sold as a great unifying event; but when hockey players are upended, and footballers are hacked down, the

winner-takes-all environment needs occasionally to be questioned. It is hard to see Olympic boxing, for example, as an encouragement to universal peace and harmony. Christ was born into a people with more national pride than any. His decision to spend time with losers, therefore, and his habit of telling tales about virtuous foreigners, were even more radical than they appear today. There is no adrenalin-rush associated with following Christ's example and helping the poor, but the influence for good that grows from such acts is more powerful — and often more demanding — than anything seen in Beijing during the past summer.

*From an article in the Church Times
22/8/08*

Serving for the match!



A tennis evening, organised by club members Peter Stotesbury and Julie Fox, was recently held at Park Langley Tennis Club.

Twelve players enjoyed an evening of three games each and discovered how much tennis talent there is in the church community.

Although rain brought a premature end to proceedings, it was only a few paces from the three splendid grass courts to the bar where a congenial evening was spent discussing the details of the games!

In the photo (far left) is Graham Smedley with his 30 year old racket!!

Harvest Lunch

The Harvest Lunch will take place in the Church Hall after the 10.30am Family & Parade Service on Sunday, 5 October.

Tickets (adults-£10, children-£5, family of 4-£28) are available from the Parish Office or at the back of the Church after Sunday Services.

St. Mary's, Shortlands Advent Dinner and Dance

Friday, 28 November, 7.30pm for 7.45pm
in the Garden Suite of the Bromley Court Hotel
Black Tie or Lounge Suit

Tickets £30, inclusive of three course dinner with coffee and all age Dance/Disco, available from the Parish Office (8460 5682) or from Churchwardens.

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More details are available and can be found on the website www.goodnightandgodbless.com



From the Registers

Holy Baptism

We welcome into God's family:

3 Aug T'yanna Stone

Holy Matrimony

We congratulate:

6 Sept Matthew Barnett and
Victoria Lewis

At Rest

We extend our sympathy to those who loved:

21 Jul James Roberts, aged 60



Remembering

James Roberts

James was born in Wales, the only child of Marcel and Marie. They moved to Beckenham when he was 11 and he attended what was then called Beckenham and Penge Grammar School. He was a member of Beckenham Swimming Club and Old Beckehamian Rugby Club which he continued to support as a parent in a refereeing capacity.

His entire career was in banking. He joined the National Provincial when he left school and his last post was as Manager of National Westminster Bank in Sidcup.

He had been a Scout leader at the 7th Bromley Scouts in Shortlands and was currently the Quartermaster. His passion was model aircraft and he was a member of the Bickley Model Aircraft Flying Club. He had been School Governor at both Highfield Infants' and Junior Schools and Chairman of Governors of the latter.

A large congregation attended his Service of Thanksgiving at Beckenham Crematorium and to support his wife, Sheila, his sons, Paul, Mark and Adam and his parents. The Service was conducted by Canon Paul Miller.

SPAN THANKS

We record our thanks for donations during recent months of £42.50

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Alison Newman to move



The Reverend Alison Newman has been appointed to be the next Associate Rector of Farnborough. The Parish of Farnborough has two churches and Alison will have responsibility for St. Nicholas Church.

Writing to Canon Paul Miller with the news of her appointment, Alison says: I have enjoyed my time at St. Mary's and I am very grateful for all the help and support you have given me over the last few years. However I feel it is time to experience running my own church'.

'I am sure we will want to congratulate Alison on her

appointment. She has made a significant contribution whilst she has been at Shortlands and we shall miss her and her family' commented Canon Paul Miller.

Her last Sunday at Shortlands will be on 16 November and Alison will preside and preach at the 8.00am and 10.30am services.

If you would like to be associated with a presentation to Alison at the 10.30am service please send any contributions to the presentation to the Parish Office. Cheques should be made payable to St. Mary's Shortlands PCC.

"Dear Vicar...

- I liked your sermon on Sunday. Especially when it was finished. Ralph, Age 11

- How does God know the good people from the bad people? Do you tell Him or does He read about it in the newspapers? Sincerely, Marie. Age 9.

- I would like to go to heaven someday because I know my brother won't be there. Stephen. Age 8.

- Are there any devils on earth? I think there may be one in my class. Carla. Age 10.

Friends of St. Mary's Wine Tasting

on

Friday, 10 October
at 8.00pm
in the Church Hall.

Tickets £10 each, available from
the Friends Committee or
from the Parish Office.



PILGRIMAGE RETREAT TO IONA

Bishop David Hope, former Archbishop of York, is leading a Pilgrimage Retreat to Iona:

27 April - 1 May 2009

This is a unique opportunity to spend a few days relaxing on the beautiful Island of Iona with a series of services and retreat addresses offered by Bishop David. There are limited places on this pilgrimage.

The cost will be £465 including accommodation, half board, train, ferries, coach and boat.

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Special Services for the weeks to come

Sunday, 5 October - Harvest Festival
10.30am - Family and Parade Service
followed by the Harvest Lunch in the Church Hall

Sunday, 12 October - Pet Service
4.00pm - Bring your pets (or toy pets!) along!

Sunday, 19 October
6.30pm - Choral Evensong

Responses: William Smith. Canticles: Wood in D.

Anthem: Locus Iste - Bruckner

Sunday, 2 November
4.00pm - Service to Remember Departed Loved Ones

A book will be placed in the church porch for you to enter the names of those you would like to be especially remembered at this service. Candles will be lit during the service in memory of our departed loved ones.

Sunday, 9 November - Remembrance Sunday
10.15am - Family Communion and Parade Service

to include the traditional Act of Remembrance, the Two Minutes' Silence and the Laying of Wreaths at the War Memorial.

6.30pm - Choral Evensong

Missions for 2009

Monday, 13 October
8.00pm

in the Choir Vestry

to discuss and agree the
charities to be supported as
Missions for the Month in
2009.

**THIS WILL BE AN OPEN
MEETING**

Anyone who would like to put forward a particular mission should submit their suggestion, with supporting information and details of the person who will be the liaison for this mission, to the Parish Office by Wed., 8 October.

Please note that missions will not automatically be supported in 2009 because they have been in previous years, so it is important to act now or attend this meeting if you would like to have some say in the choice of missions for 2009. We hope to see you there.

Susie Shelton, Mission Chairman

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Summertime fun

Pathfinder Venture

Alison and Mark Newman ran a Pathfinder Venture for fifty 11-14 year olds in Blandford, Dorset in July. One of the leaders, Debbie Speller is pictured (below) with Matthew Clayton from Beckenham as they prepared their team for 'It's a Knockout'. A lot of water was involved in the game but fortunately it was one of the warmest weeks of the summer!



Guide Camp



All set for canoeing on the "Bomb Hole" - 41 girls and 8 adult leaders from both St Mary's Guide units enjoyed a wide range of activities at this year's Summer Camp. Here is what one of the Guides said about it ...

'For summer camp 2008 we went to Gilwell Park, the home of Scouting. The theme this year was The Jungle Book - each patrol was an animal and each leader was a character e.g. Rusty was Baloo and Juliette was Mowgli. I was in the Monkeys patrol.

We did lots of fun activities including Fan Descent, Zip Wire, Medium Ropes, Canoeing, Crate Stacking and the 3G Swing which was terrifying!!!

Thanks to all the Guide leaders who took us to Gilwell, I had a great time even though I felt ill after having too many sweets!!!'

Holiday Club

This year 90 children joined in our Holiday Club Champions' Challenge at St. Mary's. We had a great week with the Shortlands Olympics, lots of craft, cooking, drama, games, Punch and Judy, a magician, St John Ambulance, and a visit from various insects and reptiles including a 10 ft python!!

A huge thank you to all who came to help.



On a recent visit to Bethlehem, Claire Tillotson and Canon Paul Miller took time out to visit Richard Makepeace, the British Consular General in Jerusalem just two days after he had entertained Gordon Brown, the Prime Minister! Also pictured is Layla Kaiskow, the fundraising officer at the SOS Children's Village, Bethlehem. Mr Makepeace has been very supportive of the work in Bethlehem which was the focus of the Bishop of Rochester's Christmas Appeal in 2007. The Appeal has now closed having raised over £16,000 towards the funding of the training of a musician to become the first music therapist in Palestine.



Dean to attend Dinner / Dance

We are delighted to announce that Adrian Newman, Dean of Rochester and his wife Gill have agreed to be our Guests of Honour at the Advent Dinner / Dance on Friday, 28 November at the Bromley Court Hotel.

The P.C.C. decided that the proceeds of the Raffle will go to the Rochester 604 Appeal.

Concert by Opera Nova at St. Mary's, Shortlands in aid of Demelza

Saturday, 1 November at 7.30pm

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10.30 Family Communion, except the first Sunday in the month in term time. During term time there are separate groups in the Church Hall for children aged 2½-14.
10.30 All Age Eucharist or Parade Service (1st Sunday in the month, term time).
18.30 Evening Service

Every Monday

17.00 Evening Prayers

Every Wednesday

10.00 Holy Communion

Further information about all services can be obtained from the Parish Office.

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Distribution	Mr. A. Jones 8460 5437
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Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those supported by the publishers, and no responsibility can be accepted for accuracy. Neither can the publishers accept responsibility for work carried out by advertisers.

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