



St. Hilda's Newsletter

August 2024 – September 2024

Summer Fete – see page 2



The Barge, Bideford – by Alan Palmer

St Hilda's Summer Fete

Saturday 13th July saw the St Hilda's Summer Fete take place in the church. A wide range of stalls filled the building, along with refreshments and a retrospective exhibition of artwork by Alan Palmer. Alan was an Ashford based artist and a former member of St Hilda's Church. His family generously donated his artwork to the church, and sales of this helped the fete raise over £1700.



Sara Moggeridge

St Hilda's Entertainers - Scrooge, The Panto

At this time of year, I am sure your thoughts will very naturally be turning towards this year's pantomime, to be performed in December by St Hilda's Entertainers. This year's production is something totally different for all of us. For the first time, providing a very Christmassy theme, your Entertainers will be presenting *Scrooge, The Panto*, written by Dave Crump and directed by Laura Allen.

Although now converted into a pantomime, Charles Dickens' original story is followed, with its recognisable characters such as Scrooge, Bob Cratchett and his family, Jacob Marley, The Ghost of Christmas and many others. Have no fear, all these characters will be woven into a typical St Hilda's pantomime format, with all the well-loved features you look forward to enjoying, good versus evil, romance, fun and laughter, music, songs and dance and, of course, audience participation.

I do hope I have whetted your appetite. Performances, at St Hilda's Church Hall, will be in December on:

Friday 6th at 7.45pm,

Saturday 7th at 2.30pm and 7.00pm,

Friday 13th at 7.45pm, and

Saturday 14th at 2.30pm and 7.00pm.

Tickets, at an extremely reasonable £12 (concessions, senior citizens and children, £10) can be booked via the Entertainers' website:

www.sthildasentertainers.com

or by phoning the box office on 0333 666 3366

The Entertainers' aim, as with all their pantomimes, is to provide top quality entertainment for all their audiences, whatever their age, so bring along your family, friends and acquaintances for something totally different, and see if the grumpy miser, Scrooge, can get away with his Humbugs.

Mike Davenport

Mothers' Union London Diocesan Festival Eucharist

On 12th June Jane, Khadejah and I travelled up to St Paul's Cathedral to attend this special service.

The celebrant was the Bishop of London Dame Sarah Mullally and the sermon was preached by Dr Emma Ineson, our own Bishop of Kensington. The service was sung by the boys' choir of Lochinver House School. They were all trebles with just a few adult additions and they sang their hearts out. They were a delight to watch and produced a wonderfully pure sound. The service ended as always with a moving procession of M.U. banners from churches across the Diocese and we were sad that we couldn't manage to take ours up on the train and bus.

Pre Covid we always went to this service by coach with other members from the Deanery but sadly we and St Matthew's are the only churches in Spelthorne Deanery who still have a branch. In those days there would have been almost standing room only in the body of the Cathedral, where now the area under the dome is used and even that was far from full. The procession of banners used to be endless where this was not much more than a dozen.

The photo was taken after the service and may give the impression of a warm June evening but it certainly was not! It was a bit of an effort to get there but it was well worthwhile.



Joyce Rouse

My Rural Journey Continued

‘n boer maak ‘n plan

The idiom above is written in Afrikaans and sums up how I got to grips with solving pressing problems facing me as a teacher at PI. It means ‘a farmer makes a plan’.

My teaching environment was so uninspiring and there was no money forthcoming from the school finances to change it. I realised that the students did have a little disposable income that they spent at the village shops on a Saturday. I stocked up on cheap ‘penny’ sweets and opened a tuckshop on Wednesdays, after school. In time, I was able to expand the range to include pens and pencils too. I made sufficient money to purchase Bison board, (made from eucalyptus and poplar wood fibres) from a factory in Pietermaritzburg. Now to get it onto the walls. Pliobond! By the tube full, did the job, and 13 years later was still doing the job. Together with all the other resources I had found in the storeroom, I had also found posters of the Plant and Animal kingdom. A good learning environment started to take shape.

All the students under the South African Nationalist Government were given all the textbooks and stationery required to complete the prescribed syllabus. Pholela was no exception. All textbooks were numbered and recorded against a student’s name. Don was in charge of this. He controlled the handing out and taking in of each and every book. Being considered a Zulu elder in our school, very few students dared to defy the rules. The books were always returned!

It soon became apparent that about half of the senior students I taught had not travelled far from their homes. We would talk about going to Durban to see the sea, the harbour and the aquarium. The seed was sown and I set about making it happen. 70 students, the boarding master, Mr Jaca, the senior Zulu language teacher, A H Dladla and I set off in Maharaj’s bus to Durban, at 7am, on a school day. We had cardboard boxes of sandwiches, an 8 gallon milk can of water, a second one filled with unpasteurised farm milk, and a box of oranges. The distance was 170km and was estimated to take 2.5 hours. Perfect!

Bulwer



A Sangoma is a traditional Zulu healer who is a well respected member of the community.

About 30 mins into the trip, at the bottom of Lundy's Hill, the bus started to splutter and groan and die. Not to be daunted by such a minor mishap, I hitched a ride with a passing taxi back to Lundy's Hill Supply Store to telephone Maharaj's Buses in Ixopo. AH was very concerned that I was climbing into an overcrowded taxi, filled with Sangomas on the way to shop in town. The one I was squashed next to was in her traditional Sangoma clothing, including an air-filled goat's bladder in her headdress. When I entered the store, I was quickly ushered behind the burglar bars separating the customers from the staff. They helped me get through telephonically, a party line, to Maharaj's buses and they assured me they had another bus to send to replace this one and would be there within an hour. They duly arrived and we restarted our journey to Durban!

First stop was the Durban beach front. We parked on the Marine Parade, close to the aquarium. Socks and shoes off, the students ran onto the sand and felt the sea water, many for the first time. A daring move in the 70's as all the beaches in this area were for Whites only.

After something to drink, we headed for the Aquarium. The students all looked very smart in their uniforms and were ushered into the reception area. They had a guided tour of the Aquarium, asked many questions and had a lot to say to each other about the wonders of the ocean. The highlight was to watch a show with Purdy and Gambit the dolphins, the Cape fur seals and a couple of penguins. AH and Mr Jaca took the boys to the Men's and I went with the girls. Sounds like an unremarkable excursion, doesn't it? The truth was I had written, telephoned, pleaded and promised that the students would behave impeccably and leave the rest rooms in perfect condition. History was made! This was the first ever group of Black students to be allowed into the Durban Aquarium.

Next stop was the Durban Harbour. I had booked an educational trip on a tourist boat. Another first for the students. Some were very scared to board and had to be helped to a bench. Then the rocking and rolling in the swell was frightening as well. However, the trip was absorbing as we learnt about cruise liners, the draining of the mangrove swamps to form a harbour, the old whaling station, and the dawn of containerisation. The South African Navy had a Naval College based in the harbour and we were able to see the sailors marching in formation. Perhaps the highlight was the visit to the sugar terminal and witness tons of sugar being poured into a ship's hold, for export.

Back on land, we walked back to the bus which was parked next to a large green park on the edge of the bay. Lunch time, albeit a bit past lunch time by then! I stood in the bus and announced to the students that they could pick up their sandwich, and orange, and then collect their drink outside in the park, and we'll all sit on the grass under the trees and have lunch. My very respectful students, in one voice, said NO. I turned for help from AH and he said to me that they wanted to eat on the bus. OK by me! AH and I took our lunch and walked to sit on a Whites only bench to eat our lunch. After chatting for a bit, I asked why the students refused to eat lunch outside the bus. He politely told me that only labourers sit on the grass to eat lunch, and they were not labourers. Another cultural lesson learnt!

Final stop of the day was a preplanned visit to Radio Zulu. The students met with the DJ of a chat show. The students were able to request music to be played and to send messages to family and friends, and of course, to the students at PI. (The students in Bulwer were waiting to listen too.)

After a very long and overwhelming learning experience, we set off home. Sitting writing this now, it was another world, and so enriching for all of us.



Wendy Grantham

Just In Time

I've done it again
Nearly missed that date
Those contributions are due!
Once again I've thought and thought
Without a rhyme in time!
So I'll just send my thoughts
If I can assemble them in line
I thought I'd write about the fair
Fantastic as it was!
With plants and tombolas
Pimms and ploughmans
And those amazing toasties
of dates and cheese and walnuts!
Well what can I say?
Please tell me the date of the next one!

Bernice Ross

When you enter this church, it may be possible that you hear “the call of God”.
However, it is unlikely that He will call you on your mobile.
Thank you for turning off your phones.
If you want to talk to God, enter, choose a quiet place, and talk to Him.
If you want to see Him, send Him a text while driving.

Translation of a poster found in a church in France.

Submitted by Bernice Ross

The Adventures of Mr. Walo Part 2: Tic-Tac-Turmoil



(Narrator's comment: Mr. Walo was ready for anything...almost anything)

The once bustling kitchen now looked like a confectionary battlefield, with cotton candy sticking to walls and bits of cake scattered across the floor. Mr. Walo, ever the optimist, wiped a dollop of cream from his brow and turned to the team trying to wipe the stickiness out of their faces. "Alright everyone" he sighs, "we may be in a sticky situation, but let's at least not embarrass ourselves".

"Let's get this place cleaned up and make sure at least something edible is ready for the event, maybe try and call Tesco or something, order a cake or some sweets. I'll keep the crowd entertained outside." With hurried nods, the team sprang into action. Mr. Walo dashed outside to the park, where a restless crowd was growing increasingly impatient.

He stepped onto the stage, his smile a bit forced but hopeful, and grabbed the microphone. "Good afternoon, ladies and gentlemen! Thank you all for your patience. The Jubilee is just about to start. How about a few jokes to lighten the mood?"



He launched into his repertoire of old-fashioned jokes, “Why did the bicycle fall over? Because it was two-tired!”, but the audience's lukewarm reaction made it clear that his humour was missing the mark.

Just as he was about to try another, a deafening explosion rocked the community centre behind him. Gasps and shrieks filled the air as cotton candy, cakes, sweets, and ice cream soared through the sky, cascading down on the park and its inhabitants like a sugary rainstorm.

Behind the stage, covered in confectionary chaos, the guests stood in stunned silence. Mr. Walo, ever the entertainer, plastered on his trademark smile. "Well, folks, it seems we've got a surprise treat for you all!" he said, trying to maintain his usual cheerfulness. "But don't worry, we'll have everything back on track in no time!"

As the crowd began to murmur and children started to giggle at the absurdity of the situation, Mr. Walo's confidence started to waver. He noticed a group of distinguished guests, including the mayor and several town council members, approaching with less-than-amused expressions, “Mr. Walo, can we have a word please”.



Just as he was about to address them, another loud bang came from the kitchen. This time, it was followed by a plume of smoke and the unmistakable smell of burning sugar. Panic began to set in among the crowd.

Mr. Walo's heart raced as he tried to think of a way to salvage the event. Suddenly, an idea struck him. He turned to the audience, raising his voice to be heard over the chaos. "Ladies and gentlemen, I invite you all to join us for a special surprise in the park's courtyard! Please, follow me!"

He led the crowd towards the courtyard, praying that his team could pull off a miracle in his absence. As they rounded the corner, a massive, ornate tent came into view, its flaps billowing in the breeze. Walo had no idea who set it up, but it was his only hope.

He hurried inside to find the team frantically preparing a makeshift buffet with whatever edible items they could find. Just as the first guests entered, a sudden, powerful gust of wind lifted the tent's entrance flaps, revealing the chaotic scene within.

Before he could react, a mysterious figure emerged from the shadows, cloaked in a long, dark coat and hat. The figure approached Mr. Walo and handed him a note before vanishing back into the crowd.

Walo unfolded the note, his hands trembling. The message read: "The real show is just beginning. Meet me at the old mill after sunset if you want to save the Jubilee."

He glanced around, trying to spot the mysterious figure again, but they were gone. Torn between managing the current disaster and the cryptic message, Mr. Walo knew he had no choice and the crowd was getting louder and louder.

With the crowd growing restless and the mayor's stern gaze fixed on him, he took a deep breath and addressed the guests. "Ladies and gentlemen, I promise you, the Jubilee will go on. Please, enjoy the refreshments, and stay tuned for a special surprise later tonight!"

As the sun began to set and the festive lights flickered to life, Mr. Walo slipped away from the crowd, heading towards the old mill with the note clutched tightly in his hand, hoping that the answer to all his problems lay just ahead.

To be continued...

Words – Nima, Images - AI

Editor's Note

As the editor of St Hilda's Church Newsletter there is always the worry that not enough articles will come in to fill an edition, and this was one of the main drivers in moving to a bi-monthly publication.

Recently, more writers have been contributing with a wider range of articles, which is fantastic. Wherever possible I try to include submissions in the edition which they are aimed for, but sometimes deadlines or the length of articles means that they get pushed to the next publication.

The following article was initially submitted hand-written and was kindly typed up by Rosemary Greenwood. Due to its length, I have decided to serialise it, otherwise it would take up a whole newsletter!

MYK's RAMBLINGS - Thanks for the memories pt1

Of late - I have been musing on the Magic of Memory!

I suppose it is received wisdom that the longer one lives in this challenging world the more one's mind turns back to the moments of your past! Through memories to relive those special events (minutes - days - years) to happenings happy, revealing or sad. That makes you what you are today.

And what triggers those moments of relived, emotive experiences (REE)? A smell? A sound? A sight? A touch? For memories can be locked or stored in many ways by life's sensory experiences until unlocked - remembered - with a synaptic spark.

What then is memory? We all think we know by personal example and recall.

[O.E.D. / Collins: Wikipedia]

"Memory is often understood to be:

- An informational and processing system within the central (cerebral) cortex of your body (the brain).
- It has explicit and implicit (some say exquisite) operational functions.

- The faculty of the mind - by which received information DATA of (sight/sound/smell/taste etc.) is encoded and stored (in "Those Little Grey Cells" as Hercule Poirot has it) and retrieved when needed, over time, for the purpose of current or future actions.

Body Internal Functions: Metabolic = living, breathing minute by minute.

Body External Functions: Daily living and survival: interfacing exponentially with what the world throws at us.

Most scientists believe that there are at least four general types of memory functions:

1. Working memory
2. Sensory memory (operational and control)
3. Short term memory (minute by minute)
4. Long term memory - learned and functional memory (i.e. learning to drive a car)

Somewhere over and around these is the actuality of intelligent cognition - self-awareness - your ego: reasoning of self-belief: rationalisation and faith.

Well, all this is rather dry/clinical and dispassionate, but I look at the wonder of memory as one of - if not the - greatest gifts of God!

That is at the heart of the sheer joy of living without which we could not measure, experience, adjudge and contribute to the true love of life and our Creator!

So - what joy does that life enabling, life enhancing "wonder of memory" bring to us all?

Firstly, the function of duly learned memories, installed and regularly added to from first breath at birth. The basic auto-motive functions of breathing/eating/sleeping. And as we grow physically and mentally, adding and interpreting new and wonderful sensations as we learn to move towards the exciting adventure of self-identity and reliance on others and ourselves: an exciting adventure both physical and spiritual.

Can you recall the joy and warmth of your mother's and father's cuddles? The joys of first breaking away from carpet-crawling to those semi-upright toddles? Then experiencing the outside world: holding onto your parents' hands for extensive trial walks.

The time of semi-independence with that "walker "barrow of bricks" navigating - exploring around the house noisily and proudly; playing with all those lovely colourful bits, and building stacks and towers, pyramids and bridges - creativity! The wonder of first exploring the garden: the blue sky (how was it always so blue and sunny?) when you were young? Ah me!

The excitement of meeting and playing with other children, learning from them new ideas and fun facts - true and false - and games and games. Laughing and TALKING. So so much to do. And running and running!

Oh the joy of learning to ride a bike - the freedom! The worry and terrors of your first day at school - away from Mum! Different spaces, different characters and playmates. The teachers: sort of extra aunts and uncles. Missing the familiar, adapting to the new. Loving - or at least managing - the new challenges, even the falls and scraped knees and fights. Making up and creating that special clique of new friends.

O that special smell and taste of 1940's school dinners - UGH!

What has all this got to do with the 'Joys of Memory'? Well, it's the formative new learning of social structures that are fed to you (taught) in early life, to set up your function as a member of a certain society. Like finding your place and space in the mass-moving assemblies (MMAs). It is when I first was made aware of another world of saints, angels and GOD! Yes, then there were spiritual and religious paths. I will always remember how odd it was that the [Kefalonians? – Ed] separated off to their own room for prayers. And some fewer, different kids called "Jews" would have a separate Spiritual Assembly. I wish I know more then?

Outside of the deeper living/growing/learning/social interactions then - there are those amazing serendipitous moments that create existential happy memories that stay with us for life: enhancing.

Can you recall that awesome experience of first seeing a RAINBOW and learning all those facts and myths behind the sight (especially a double rainbow)? A giant full moon? A Hunter's moon? A blue moon? A red moon? solar eclipses? and very recently, an aurora borealis - wonders of the heavens: set to memories.

Remember you not? That morning when you came out to and autumn misty morning and discovered in the hedge all those beautiful dew-decorated spiders' webs. Or later, after some rain, the beauty of sunlight refracting miniature rainbows through the droplets on the grass.

Or the time when you came into a country field to experience waves of bejewelled butterflies of all species rising up before you like flights of angels.

Or, on holiday trips coming up over the hills and viewing with absolute delight the sparkling mirror of the sea, under the sun and cliffs - still a wonder for me!

Then the grittiness of sand between your toes. Exploring sparkling rock pools; sea anemones, starfish, limpets and pretty seaweeds, scuttling crabs - still wonders for me.

The chill and sheer saltiness of the sea waves as you first tried to swim; playing beach cricket - with water.

On a country walk: first finding that blackbird's nest of beautiful blue eggs. And later as you strolled through another meadow full of beautiful wild flowers, the exquisite song of the rising skylarks as they soared to invisibility in that wonderfully blue sky.

Visiting a country fair: Calypso music, coconut shies, sticky candy floss, giant swings, helter-skelter, and home with a goldfish in a jam jar. Memories to be joyfully and blissfully recalled. Ah me! Ah me!

Myk L

Social and Fundraising Diary Dates

Event	Date	Location
Jumble sale	Saturday 21 st September	Church
Harvest Supper	Saturday 5 th October	Church hall, 7pm
Harvest Festival	Sunday 6 th October	Church, 10 am
Staines Lammas & GUS Bands	Sunday 13 th October	Church, 4 pm
Spelthorne Orchestra	Sunday 27 th October	Church, 3 pm
St Hilda's Day	Sunday 17 th November	Church, 10am
Bring & share lunch	Sunday 17 th November	After 10am service
Frost Fair	Saturday 23 rd November	Church
Pantomime	Friday 6 th December	Church hall
Pantomime	Saturday 7 th December	Church hall
Christingle	Sunday 8 th December	Church, 4 pm
Pantomime	Friday 13 th December	Church hall
Pantomime	Saturday 14 th December	Church hall

Church contact details

If you would like help or to speak to one of the ministry team, please contact the parish office:

Telephone 01784 253525

Email office@sthilda.org

Please email any contributions for the newsletter to editor@sthilda.org