



# St. Hilda's Newsletter

October 2024 – November 2024

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## St Hilda's Jumble Sale

Over £860 was raised at the jumble sale on Saturday September 21<sup>st</sup>



## I am a Christian



When I say, "I am a Christian" I'm not shouting, "I've been saved!"  
I'm whispering, "I get lost sometimes, that's why I chose this way"

When I say, "I am a Christian" I don't speak with human pride, I'm  
confessing that I stumble – needing God to be my guide

When I say, "I am a Christian" I'm not trying to be strong, I'm  
professing that I'm weak and pray for strength to carry on

When I say, "I am a Christian" I'm not bragging of success, I'm  
admitting that I've failed and cannot ever pay the debt

When I say, "I am a Christian" I don't think I know it all, I submit to  
my confusion asking humbly to be taught

When I say, "I am a Christian" I'm not claiming to be perfect. My  
flaws are far too visible, but God believes I'm worth it

When I say, "I am a Christian" I still feel the sting of pain. I have my  
share of heartache which is why I seek God's name

When I say, "I am a Christian" I do not wish to judge. I have no  
authority. I only know I'm loved.

*Submitted by Daphne Tanner*

## **My Rural Journey continued (part 5)**

### **The Halcyon days**

1977 rolled into 1978, '79 and '80. By now I lived on my own in the cottage on the edge of the property, with only the Bushbabies (Galago moholi) and chameleons (Natal Dwarf chameleon) to keep me company. The big trees in the forest next to me included Yellowwoods (Podocarpus latifolius), South Africa's National Tree. There were, and still are, a huge variety of birds in the valleys around Bulwer. My personal favourite bird memory is of a pair of Black eagles soaring around Bulwer mountain, hunting, most days.

My P O Box was 31, and my phone line was 31. This translated into '3 longs and 1 short' when the party line rang my number! The bedroom of the cottage was very cold, so I slept in the lounge. The only warmth came from an open fire which I lit every night when it was cold. M'am Khonyane taught me how to light the fire when all else failed: dried corn cobs or skin of an orange usually got it going. Unfortunately, in the first few winters, with my 'towny' upbringing, I found myself very susceptible to bronchitis. The Dr would book me off sick for 2 weeks so that I could go and stay with my mother in warm Pietermaritzburg, to help me recover. My evenings were spent with a gas lamp/electricity, doing prep and listening to my small transistor radio. I spoke to no one from after sunset until I walked to school in the morning. But I very seldom felt lonely.

It was probably cold for two thirds of the year! I saw my first ever snow at the end of October, one afternoon after lunch. We were well into summer, and everyone was dressed in summer clothes. Most of the pupils had never seen snow either. We sent all the pupils back to hostel to get something, even a blanket, to wrap themselves in, to keep warm while afternoon lessons continued.

The boys wore trousers as part of their uniform, but the girls had to wear gym slippers. Even the women teachers were not allowed to wear trousers at school.

It's time to share some unique and very un-PC activities of which I was part. My life was centred on teaching and pupils from Monday to Friday. My social life during the week was with teachers and pupils.

The afternoons were filled with various sports, Girls and Boys Brigade, and sitting around chatting. I spent many hours teaching the girls to knit, crochet and to embroider. Knitting took off, and it was common to see the girls with their wool tucked under their arm and the needles clicking, as they chatted or walked around. During the course of these informal lessons, I became part of their world. One afternoon we got onto hair, and hairstyles. Most of the girls took great pride in their hair styles, and 'corn rows' of plaits were very popular. One afternoon, a girl asked if they could touch my hair! Of course, this was no problem for me, and a few girls then did. I in turn, touched their hair and a discussion followed about the differences! Next, a bit bolder, they asked if they could plait my hair like theirs. Thin thread and a fine crochet hook were produced, and the task began. It took a couple of hours with both sides of my head being attacked at the same time. It was painless on the top and back of my head, but the temple area was excruciatingly sore. The tears streamed, and I gritted my teeth! The upshot of that activity was that the girls told me that the only thing White about me was my skin, the rest of me was pure Zulu!

My lessons also took me and my pupils into uncharted waters. While studying ecosystems, camouflage and distribution of animals across the world, we looked at why some animals turn white in the winter. And why people living in the jungles around the equator were dark skinned. Inevitably we got onto the

different colours of human skin. One pupil said I could not possibly be called White, as my tea cup was white and I was not that colour! Then they decided they could not be called Black either.

Our next activity was to line up from lightest to darkest and look at all the different shades of brown we actually were! Oh, such innocent, happy days!

Pholela had a Homecraft Teacher Training Department. In 1979 I was seconded to the Cookery/Nutrition side of the course. I shared the department with the Textiles/Laundry teacher, Mrs Xaba. We taught in a wing which was, in its day, purpose built. Her Textiles room was well equipped, as was my kitchen. The stoves were in pairs, back-to-back. There were 4 pairs of stoves. Each had the facility to heat water as well. I was taught by the trainees how to control the heat, clean and blacken the stoves and then buff to a fine shine. The 13 women trainees had left their families at home to better their qualifications. They lived in their own small hostel next to the Girls' hostel. We had more than enough money to do all the required training. Towards the end of the year, we were told that if we did not spend the budget, it would revert to the Education department. Mrs Xaba and I sat around the tables with the trainees and made plans to spend, spend, spend.

We booked a small bus and a tour of the Pietermaritzburg Museum. We specifically asked to see their collection of tribal clothes and bead work. Traditional Zulu beadwork always carries a message. Many 'love letters' were sent as a piece of beadwork. We visited a local history museum, and looked at the red brick buildings built by the British in the late 1890's. The final stop was for a posh meal.

Another apartheid hurdle was to go out for lunch. For a Black person to enter a White hotel, the hotel had to be 5\*. Only one hotel qualified, The Capital Towers Hotel, in Pietermaritzburg. We booked! I had asked for one long table to be prepared for us, and the staff went out of their way to make us feel comfortable. Most of these women had never eaten in a restaurant, never mind a 5\* one. The menu was a challenge, but fillet steak was the most expensive item, so it was a popular choice! After starters, the steaks arrived. Oh, the disappointment! The diners discussed the lack of flavour, and the lack of texture. They asked the waiter for tomato sauce, anything to make it edible! We ended with fancy desserts, after all, we had to spend the money!



Mrs Xaba, in the middle in back row, and our mature students. We are outside the Museum.



Beaded Zulu love letter

*Wendy Grantham*

Further reading!

[https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marutswa\\_Forest](https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marutswa_Forest)

<https://southafrica.co.za/historic-buildings-pietermaritzburg.html>

## For the guys ...

I read the article below and it inspired me to write the poem on the following page ...

# facebook

This is for you ladies!!! I recently ate at a restaurant where a table of girlfriends of a certain age were having a wonderful time, and came home and wrote this. You may recognise somebody, maybe yourself ...

### **Lunch With Girlfriends**

By Kathy O'Malley

Elaine's vertigo has never been worse  
Kelly can't recall where she left her purse  
Rhonda's about to replace her knees  
Linda's breathing is tinged with a wheeze  
Donna's left boob has a troubling lump  
Diane's on her third trip to take a dump  
Lorraine's husband can't remember a thing  
Nine years a widow, Marge still wears her ring  
Marlene is dealing with another UTI  
Sally's giving a hearing aid another try  
Marie has decided she can't drive at night  
Sharon still wears clothes two sizes too tight  
They've been through divorces and babies and wakes  
They do for each other whatever it takes  
They've already buried Marcia and Kate  
And truthfully, Lizzie's not looking too great  
So, whenever they can, they get out to eat  
Open bottles of wine and forget their sore feet  
There's laughing and crying and letting down guards  
And when the bill comes, there's ten credit cards  
So, here's to the waiters who keep orders straight  
And to the places that let lunches run three hours late  
And here's to the girlfriends, those near and those far  
Here's to the girlfriends, you know who you are!!!

## THIS IS FOR THE GUYS!!

I recently sat in a bar and some retired men were having a great time. I came home and wrote this

Kevin's car is back on the fritz  
Mike is concerned about his "bits"  
Doug goes to the loo every other min  
Pulling the chain makes such a din  
Ten years a widow John's new girlfriend is  
young enough to be his daughter.  
The others wonder how on earth he "caught her"  
Dave's not here yet his wife's quite ill  
He'll be there once she's had her pill  
Gavin is walking with a crutch  
Now his knee hurts so much.  
They all raise a glass to say goodbye  
To Pete whose turn had come to die.  
Then they leave the bar all in good cheer  
And agree to meet in less than a year!

*Bernice Ross*

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## Newsletter seeks new editor



As many of you will now know, I am off to pastures new, (quite literally as I will be working at an agricultural college) to live in Dorset with my husband. Therefore, I will be relinquishing my position of editor of St Hilda's Newsletter. If you are interested in the role and want to find out more, please contact me at [editor@sthilda.org](mailto:editor@sthilda.org). or speak to Rosemary Greenwood. 8



## **In Persia's land ...**

*In Persia's land, long long ago, A poet's heart did fiercely glow.  
Ferdowsi was his name so grand, His pen revived a fading land.*

The Shahnameh(book of King), written by the Persian poet Ferdowsi, is an epic masterpiece that chronicles the history of Persia from its mythical origins to the Islamic conquest. Spanning over 50,000 verses, it is one of the longest epic poems ever written. Ferdowsi dedicated three decades of his life to its creation, reflecting the pride and sorrow of his labour. I thought it would be interesting to translate the first few pages

### Page one: Creation and the first King

In the beginning, all was naught, But from the void, a spark was caught. The heavens formed, the earth below, And life began its gentle flow.

From soil and sun, all creatures sprung, And to the sky, their praises sung. Amongst them, man did rise and stand, To rule the beasts upon the land.

The first of kings, Keyumars named, By heaven's hand, his throne was framed. In furs of leopard, he was dressed, With wisdom vast, he led the blessed.

### Page 2: the reign of keyumars

Keyumars ruled with gentle hand, And peace did flourish in the land. His son, the noble Siamak, bold, would one day wear the crown of gold.

But darkness lurked within the shade, Ahriman's spawn, the earth he bade. With malice deep, the demon's brood, sought to end the age of good.

A war was waged, fierce and grand, between the demon's cursed band,  
And Keyumars with warriors brave, to shield the light, the world to save.

Alas, brave Siamak met his fate, in battle dark, with heart so great.  
A nation mourned, a father wept, as in the earth his son was kept.

Yet from the grief, new strength arose, Hushang, the grandson,  
faced their foes. With fire and flint, he brought the light, and demons fled into the night.

### Page 3: Rise of Hushang

Hushang ascended Persia's throne, with wisdom far beyond his own.  
He taught his people skills untold and led them with a heart of gold.

One day, while walking through the land, a serpent crossed his path so grand.  
With stone in hand, he struck a spark, and fire was born from out the dark.

The people marvelled at the sight, A gift from heaven, burning bright.  
They honoured fire, with hearts sincere, a sacred flame, they held it dear.

With Hushang's reign, new crafts were learned, the wheel of progress swiftly turned.  
From iron's strength to plough the fields, to wisdom's light, which knowledge yields.

*Submitted by Nima*

## Junior Church Update

Junior Church commences on 1<sup>st</sup> September. We will begin in Church and the children are asked to bring their school bag or pencil case for our traditional blessing of the school bags. This year we will continue the established pattern of Messy Church on the first Sunday of the month. On the remaining Sundays we will be following the Roots on the Web programme.

On the 15<sup>th</sup> September the theme is thinking about what you say and a suggested activity is a sponsored silence. We hope the children over 7 will take part in a 15minute sponsored silence while the younger children will complete an age-appropriate activity in the small hall. I hope the older children in the silence will draw a picture of themselves or write a letter (no addresses) about themselves, their Schools and Ashford, to send to Holy Cross Murrupula along with any money raised. I will ask the children not to ask the general congregation, but I will place a plate in Church on that day for members of the congregation to contribute if they wish.

The October Messy Church coincides with Harvest, the children will decorate harvest bags the week before to bring in their donations which we will place around our hall altar. After Messy Church we will take their gifts into Church. We will be collecting, tinned and dry foods, and toiletries for the Food bank.

On 8<sup>th</sup> December we have our Christingle Service at 4pm monies raised from donations and the collection will go to the Children's Society to help underprivileged vulnerable children and young people. Collection boxes will be available in Church throughout November, and everyone is welcome to the Service.

Our Crib Service is on December 22<sup>nd</sup> at 10am. We hope EVERYONE will participate by wearing a head dress to represent a character or animal in the Nativity story. Last year we had loads of kings, but tea towels and an old tie are an easy make or if you have time on your hands the animals were very unrepresented.

*Christine Taylor*

## St Hilda's Entertainers - Scrooge, The Panto

Rehearsals are now well under way for this year's pantomime, *Scrooge, The Panto*, to be performed by St Hilda's Entertainers in St Hilda's Church Hall. Scenery is being designed, constructed and painted, props hunted and costumes fitted. All 25 members of the cast are having great fun bringing the very funny script to life and are eagerly looking forward to the day in December when they can share that fun with you.

All the ingredients for a successful show, with its very Christmassy theme, are being polished up: drama, good versus evil, romance, fun, music, songs and dance. As in all of St Hilda's Entertainers pantomimes there's something for every member of the audience, whatever their age.

Bring along your family, friends and acquaintances, and enjoy getting into the Christmas Spirit.

Performances are at St Hilda's Church Hall in **December**:

Friday 6<sup>th</sup> at 7.45pm,

Saturday 7<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm and 7.00pm,

Friday 13<sup>th</sup> at 7.45pm, and

Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> at 2.30pm and 7.00pm.

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

[www.sthildasentertainers.com](http://www.sthildasentertainers.com)

or by phoning the box office on 0333 666 3366

*Mike Davenport*

## **MYK's RAMBLINGS - Thanks for the memories pt2**

SO - how do all of life's wonderments of learnings and discoveries get turned into a personal archive of stored and retrievable information? Languages, emotions, structures, numerical calculus, mind-maps, personal "satnavs", equations, chemical formulae, D.I.Y., methodologies, usage of tools, creative arts, techniques, histories, natural structures, engineering, pottery crafting, plumbing, house building and general maintenance, and on and on and on. How, how can all these skills and abilities and knowledge be accurately stored in just a few pounds of grey matter?

Some magical process of electro-magnetic bio-chemical wizardry transfers micro-data impulses from any of your sensory interfaces by synaptic sparks that travel by a vast biological neural network to the core of your brain, where somehow, they are defined, assessed, qualified and sent to be selectively archived in the neural mass of your memory. How they do this defeats me. If anyone could enlighten me, I would be eternally grateful!

An aspect of advanced memory storage of higher-level recall that for me is so awesome is the abilities of some many minds to store and recite whole scansions of poetry, play back massive speeches and eulogies from plays or play-back a complete instrumental concerto - piano/violin/organ/clarinet - whatever - without having to refer to the printed word or music and with wide repertoires: awesome abilities - envy, envy! (Whoops - a deadly sin!)

So how do all these inputs get sorted out and installed? We don't really know. It's behind closed doors. In fact, in our sleep.

### **SLEEP TIME IS LIFE**

The status and functionality of sleep is often suppressed or seems a nuisance to many minds. Yet apart from the restoration of our physical bodies it is when asleep where all the masses of data from info received during the day is duly processed.

Indications of this processing activity can be externally observed by so-called REM (Rapid Eye Movement) sleep. It can be observed in animals too (dogs/cats/horses/birds etc.). DUNNO ABOUT FISH THOUGH! And it is believed that during this REM period your dreams are experienced.

Now I view dreams (often as exciting as day life experiences) full of actions - stories - and challenges. Often awakening from a sleep period I try hard to catch/recall the last action or thought from my dreams as I come out into the 'real' world. Quite successfully (sometimes nothing). Trying to rebuild and re-scan the dream to rationalise with my inner self. "What's the story - Morning Glory"?

It's a bit like structural meditation in reverse: sometimes I feel I meet with the 'Spirit of Life who has a message for me!

My dreams (Night Time Adventures - NTAs) have always been colourful, challenging, and indeed in colour! See through a sort of telescopic vision which I can voluntary close in upon. (Sometimes involuntary too). But of late the field of view is getting wider: the colours brighter and richer, story-lines more varied, jumping from scene to scene, date to date.

In my dreams I have had the benefit of sounds/noises/times of day/speech/talking. But now I am communicating more directly with the individuals - in the action! What does it all mean?

Whatever qualitative value and breadth of scope of memory we have been gifted I think it is of course obligatory that we exercise, update, and forcibly stimulate the gift through regular exercising of the interfaces. Daily puzzles, crosswords, quizzes.

Always keeping an open mind to new information and experience the latest knowledge. Don't just Google it, live it! I try always to hold a child-like awe of the universe, constantly seeking new answers.

However, it is a fact that tragically as we are all affected by ageing and illnesses (yes, Parkinson's, dementia) et. al, and Covid doesn't help. We all suffer the diseases of modern life and negative interactions. Globally I/we must all constantly be aware; care and pray for family/friends and the community that God will somehow help those less aware than ourselves, with anterograde amnesia.

We all suffer from time to time with that 'half-way up the stairs' scenario and must plan to compensate.

For now: let us all 're-member' each other in our prayers. For we are all of one community; what harms one of us harms us all.

My God, thanks for the memory.

Oh, and bless Radio 3 - they've got the ethos.

*Myk L*

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## **Stamping Out Breast Cancer**

Hello friends at St. Hilda's Church. I am making ongoing collections of used postage stamps, all currencies, coins of all denominations, used print cartridges and bras. The 'ABC' charity, 'Against Breast Cancer' can raise money from all of these unwanted items. The stamps have to have about 1cm of paper left round all sides. You can hand them to me at Church on Sundays, or if you need them collected from your address, I can arrange to do that.



*Many thanks.  
Daphne Tanner  
Tel: 01784 254149*

## Social and Fundraising Diary Dates

Event	Date	Location
Harvest Supper	Saturday 5 <sup>th</sup> October	Church hall, 7pm
Harvest Festival	Sunday 6 <sup>th</sup> October	Church, 10 am
Staines Lammas & GUS Bands	Sunday 13 <sup>th</sup> October	Church, 4 pm
Spelthorne Orchestra	Sunday 27 <sup>th</sup> October	Church, 3 pm
St Hilda's Day	Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Church, 10am
Bring & share lunch	Sunday 17 <sup>th</sup> November	After 10am service
Frost Fair	Saturday 23 <sup>rd</sup> November	Church
Pantomime	Friday 6 <sup>th</sup> December	Church hall
Pantomime	Saturday 7 <sup>th</sup> December	Church hall
Christingle	Sunday 8 <sup>th</sup> December	Church, 4 pm
Pantomime	Friday 13 <sup>th</sup> December	Church hall
Pantomime	Saturday 14 <sup>th</sup> 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](mailto:office@sthilda.org)

Please email any contributions for the newsletter to [editor@sthilda.org](mailto:editor@sthilda.org)