

CHRISTMAS ACTIVITIES

As in private homes the Church's celebration of Christmas is preceded by many preparations although these are of a slightly different nature—music rehearsals, catering and entertainment committee meetings, preparations for the various differing types of service and the preparing of sermons. This year, instead of the usual mass cleaning attack the church has been polished week by week methodically. The decorations were effected on Friday, December 23, which unfortunately proved to be the day of Miss Lush's funeral so the arrangements were naturally rather hurried. Nevertheless at midnight Mass the church looked very lovely with the flowers and evergreens and shiny, well-filled pews. The Christmas music reached new heights of excellence—helping so much to express and frame the depth and feeling of our worship.

A moving moment at Midnight Mass came when the Vicar attended by servers bearing cressets with lighted candles, moved into the nave to read the Gospel. As he started to read, the church lights which had been dimmed until this moment, came on in full strength and this year's particularly dainty Christmas tree, as usual the generous gift of Mrs. Thompson, blazed with coloured lights which glinted like jewels on the figures in the crib. Mr. Brunt gave a beautiful address, simple and moving in its message which reached the whole congregation, 'regulars' and newcomers alike, the latter being seen again at the other well attended Christmas services and especially at the delightful Festival Service of Lessons and Carols on Christmas evening.

On the Friday evening before Christmas the highways and byways of the Parish echoed to the sound of carols sung by an enthusiastic group from the Church. Musical backing was provided by Sid Heaford and his mobile broadcasting unit. Chief 'targets' for the group were the old people's homes and the recently occupied flats and maisonettes in the area. An exception to this was a halt underneath a lamp-post outside a well known local hostelry, when the gentlemen of the party showed commendable restraint—by remaining outside! The tour ended at Wayside, where, thanks to the efforts of a willing band of lady helpers, the thirsty singers were refreshed by hot drinks and traditional mince pies.

The Y.P.F. also toured the parish on the previous night and again on Christmas Eve. They sang to various friends and to the parents of Y.P.F. members. Everywhere they were well received and we understand a convivial atmosphere prevailed amongst singers and sung at.

January 1 saw the combined Sunday Schools' and Children's service. The Nativity Tableaux were beautifully costumed and the actors' voices clear and confident—much credit is due to Miss Stewart and Miss Western who took such care in the presentation.

Wayside was filled to capacity by members and friends at the Mothers' Union Carol Concert on January 4. The Vicar started off the proceedings with thoughtfully chosen prayers. The modern carols sung by members of Y.P.F. to Richard Cox's guitar accompaniment were enjoyed by all of us. So too was the duet "Little Donkey" sung by Mrs. Prentice and Mrs. Severn. Mrs. Oliver's Brownie Pack were heartily applauded for their short Nativity Play "The Naughty Angel." The children of members made a big contribution to the

programme as Roger Severn, John, Philip and Rosemary Oliver all sang very sweetly, and Noala and Siobhan Bellingham entertained with pianoforte solos. Corinne Severn read the Epiphany Gospel. Mrs. Janet West kindly acted as accompanist for the soloists and for the old favourites in which the audience all joined. Thanks are due to Mrs. Edmonds and to all who provided mince pies and the tea which followed the entertainment.

About 50 "assorted" youngsters enjoyed the Young Wives' Children's Party on January 6 where Father Christmas turned up as usual at the right moment to give out the presents. The St. James's Nursery School very kindly loaned their play equipment and the youngest guests were able to enjoy these in roped-off seclusion from the more boisterously active element.

The Parish Hall presented a gay, colourful scene on Saturday, January 7, on the occasion of our "International" Fancy Dress New Year Party. There was ample scope for "letting one's hair down" although some of us menfolk might find this hard! As usual, children were much in evidence, the variety of attire reflecting great credit on some ingenious mothers, no doubt.

At the door we were met with a goblet of mulled wine and the appetising interval refreshments with drinks "on the house" afterwards were much appreciated.

The M.C.'s, Reg, Ron and George were at their stations from the word "Go" and provided us with no rest but a succession of games and novelty dances appealing to young and not-so-young alike. The motto for the games was evidently "play fair if you cheat all the while." In an elimination dance some of the men were even transformed to "mummies"!

At 11 p.m. we were only too sorry to hear that it was time for the last dance followed by "Auld Lang Syne." Would it be breaking Church rules to apply for a short extension next year? Undoubtedly the Social Committee has scored yet another success and we wish to thank them and everyone both "on stage" and "off" for a most enjoyable evening.

Defying superstition Friday, January 13, was selected for what turned out to be a most successful and lively party exclusively for Choir members and their invited guests. The most realistic noises for cows, pigs, cats and dogs used as a means to form four teams, must have made the residents above Wayside think that Market Day was in progress and proved that choir members obviously had talents other than singing.

Energetic games involved everybody, followed by a welcome interval for refreshments, contributed by all and admirably served by Ruth Gostling and Joyce Jackson.

The highlight of the evening was the series of entertaining turns comprising Ian Brooks as a prospective political candidate, Tracy and Kendal Kirkland who sang a charming duet in German, Jack and John Gostling decidedly in harmony in a delightful and original recipe for jam making (psalterised), Rosalind Pyne and Shirley Dafforne calling themselves the "Ros-shirl Coalition" singing much applauded duets

with guitar accompaniment, and finally Michael Jackson and Roger West as gendarmes with appropriate actions.

The games were cleverly devised by Jennifer Makepeace, conducted by Michael Jackson and enjoyed by all.

Apart from all these communal activities there was the private entertaining of overseas students in the homes of those who had wished to extend hospitality as part of their Time and Talents offering. There was much mutual enjoyment to both hosts and their guests. Thanks are due to those in the Emergency Car Service who turned out on Christmas Day to meet the needs occasioned by the "no public transport" edict of the L.P.T.B.

The forty days of Christmas came to a fitting end on the afternoon of Candlemas, when at the childrens' service the church, darkened for the Vicar's address, gradually became a blaze of candlelight as the children and their parents processed round it each holding a lighted candle. When finally all the candles were massed together at the chancel steps, and the lights on the tree shone out for the last time this year, the call to 'let your light so shine . . .' came home with new force to us all. Then amid the gay decorations of Wayside, where the children ate a party tea, we finished off in appropriate manner our celebration of the last day of Christmas.

Altogether, a busy and happy family Christmas was enjoyed by the fellowship of St. James's.

L.M., A.H.M., I.V.R.,
R.J.C.D., D.E.N., M.O., etc.

STEPHEN FORROW: A MAN FOR OTHERS

The funeral of Mr. S. V. J. Forrow on Friday, January 13, showed the high esteem and deep affection in which he was held. There was a very large congregation in church—the largest on any one occasion for many years. It was a cross-section of the local community—or rather, three or four local communities, for his life, though centred in Teddington and Hampton Hill, had influenced many beyond. There were civic dignitaries, representatives of different churches and old people's organisations, of the British Legion and many other bodies; there were personal friends and neighbours; and perhaps most fittingly of all, there were the old people themselves, some hobbling painfully on two sticks, others pushed in wheel-chairs by equally elderly companions, but determined to be there whatever the trouble and effort. Then another massive crowd standing in deep silence lining the paths of the cemetery, and grouped ten deep near the grave. What manner of man was this, a stranger may well have asked, that so many came to thank God for him and to mourn his passing? The Vicar attempted to give part of the answer in his address, and the substance of what he said is given below.

.....

We commend to God to-day, that the mighty powers of life and resurrection might work fully in him, and that God's will for his good might come to perfection, a personality nourished and built up by the

Christian Faith, and as a consequence of great charm of character, and also of much-tested strength of character.

For many years the background of his life was a costly and valiant battle against physical Disability and pain: a daunting battle that would have been a far heavy enough burden for most people in itself. But despite this, he voluntarily took upon himself many additional burdens which few persons even in the most robust state of health would have been willing to tackle. What he did for the old people of Teddington and their welfare was outstanding both in its range and quality. It involved a great amount of paper-work and correspondence late into the night, as well as daily personal interviews with the many individual people who came to him for help and advice. His table was always piled high with papers and documents, but never in disorder. Everything was always under control; however great the pressure, he never allowed this mountain of work—and it was a mountain!—to get on top of him or dismay him—as it would have done most of us. All he did he did very thoroughly, and with patience and perseverance.

He served a long stint of fifteen years as secretary of St. James's Church Council, and many of the matters we undertook in the early fifties—I think of such things as the purchase of Wayside, the selling of various pieces of Church land and property, the setting up of the Old People's Welfare Committee in Hampton Hill—involved much correspondence, some of it highly complicated: but he took it all calmly, and with great competence.

In his dealings with people he was always gentle and courteous and most understanding, giving his callers all his attention. He would go to the greatest pains, write innumerable letters, see various officials, to get things straightened out for them. The number of problems he solved for people must be enormous.

Though he will no doubt be remembered chiefly for the great work which he did for the happiness and well-being of old people, the range of his interest and concern was very wide. The cause of Church unity, for instance, was always close to his heart, and for years he was secretary and then treasurer of the Hampton Council of Churches, fully committed to its work and rarely missing a meeting. He took an active part in all spheres of parochial life, from study and prayer groups to pastoral visiting. He was always ready for something new, as when he sportingly turned out during our Renovation Fund Drive years ago to take his share in trundling a barrel-organ through the streets of the parish—I well remember the enjoyable evening he and I spent as partners in this pursuit.

He was the first member of St. James's Church I ever met—one cold and rainy day in November just over 16 years ago he turned up at the church bright and smiling, to show me something of the parish to which I had been invited to come—and after an afternoon spent in his pleasant company, I thought 'If many of St. James's people are like him, it must be a great church.' Ever since that day I have held him in the greatest esteem and affection—as you all have also done.

And so now we give thanks to God for all that He wrought in and through His servant during his life on earth. We thank God for one who, because of his deep fellowship with God and response to

His grace, became the great and lovely soul he was: one who was indeed 'a man for others.' because first and foremost a man of God and for God. And we pray that He Who began this good work in him will bring it to perfection in the life beyond the grave, where 'His servants shall serve Him, and they shall see His face.'

IN MEMORIAM — AMY ELIZABETH LUSH

The concluding portion of this short biography will appear in the next issue.

A FORMER STALWART

In the passing of Mr. Cornish we have lost another of those who were prominent in the church during the Rev. F. P. P. Harvey's time. Mr. Cornish followed Mr. Charles Barratt as Vicar's Warden in 1947 and reigned in 1950. During his period as Churchwarden he threw himself whole-heartedly and unstintingly into the work of the Church, particularly with the Annual Summer Fete which in those days meant so much to the church's finances. Before becoming one of the Churchwardens, Mr. Cornish served on the Church Council and audited the annual church accounts for some years. He leaves a son and daughter to whom every sympathy is extended.

W.F.W.

THE HAMPTON HILL OLD PEOPLE'S WELFARE COMMITTEE

Thanks are extended to all those people who have supplied wool for the old ladies to use for their various requirements. It is good for them to have something they like to do. The Committee would be pleased to have more odd pieces. If YOU can spare some, Mrs. Newman of 172 Uxbridge Road will be pleased to accept them.

The Committee also wish to thank the many people who have helped to make the Old People's Christmas happy in various ways — from visiting and carol singing to purchasing, wrapping and delivering so many acceptable gifts.

L.M.

PART OF A LETTER FROM THE ORGANISERS OF THE SPONSORED WALK

On behalf of the Hampton Junior Council of Churches, we would like to thank you very much indeed for the part you played in making the sponsored walk on January 8, for the Feed the Minds Campaign, such a success.

We would like to write to everyone individually but so many people became involved — in typing, stencilling, making signs, manning check points, publicising, providing first aid, feeding the walkers, and certainly in acting as sponsors — that we feel we must send one letter to all.

For those who were not there in person on the day, we would like to tell you that a hundred young people started from Hampton Court around 9.00 a.m. on a bright, crisp morning. The afternoon was cold, grey with snow flurries but over eighty finished the walk and no one fell out until 12½ miles had been completed. The first walkers arrived at 3.40 p.m. and as everyone came to the Methodist Church in Guildford they received a wonderful welcome, salve for their blisters, soup for their stomachs and a great deal of good cheer. Those manning the checkpoints often had a long cold wait but were encouraged by the steady stream of determined walkers.

The same determination is now being shown as the money is collected. Unfortunately we cannot yet give you the final total. We can only say that so far it is obvious that parents, friends, and congregations have been more than generous and we hope they feel that their money has been well-spent. (Stop-Press: The total now to hand is £320—of which our own young people and their sponsors are responsible for £90. Well done!)

CONFIRMATION

At the Confirmation and Parish Communion on the occasion of our Dedication Festival, December 11, the following were confirmed by the Bishop of Kensington, and then received their first Communion: Francis James Brunt, Graham David Heaford, Nicholas John Howard, Peter Leonard Orton, Elizabeth Kendal Kirkland, Lesley Stella Pease, Rosalind Mary Pyne, Janet Mary Sly, Hilary Whittles, Lynda Whittles. (We were two short—one candidate was ill, and another had to attend an important university interview: we hope to present them at the next Confirmation to be held in the Deanery).

At the Confirmation held in St. Anne's Chapel at the Lady Eleanor Holles School on November 18, Jane Madeline Mary Sykes from our parish was one of the ten girls confirmed.

SOME DATES TO NOTE

- Feb. 19.—3.0 p.m. Hampton District Girl Guide Association Thinking Day Service.
.. 22.—7.0 p.m. Coach leaves church for visit to Richmond Theatre—the play is “The Severed Head.” Tickets 10/- (outing arranged by the Young Wives' Group).
Mar. 1.—2.30 p.m. Mothers' Union: Mr. Gilder gives his second talk (W); 8.00 p.m. Parochial Church Council (W).
.. 10-21.—EXHIBITION “TASK 6” (St. Matthew's Church, Fulham).
.. 15.—8.15 p.m. ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, preceded by social gathering from 7.30 p.m. onwards (Hall).
Sept. 15-18.—PARISH WEEKEND (Hildenborough Hall).
N.B.—THE PEOPLE NEXT DOOR: Inter-Church house groups continue to meet as arranged. Joint session of all groups provisionally arranged for March 13, 8.0 p.m., at St. Mary's Hall, Twickenham.

BAPTISMS

At the Parish Communion on January 15:

Peter Austin Brittain and Philip George Brittain, 23, Cranmer Road.

On January 22:

Stephen John Childs, 678, Hanworth Road, Hounslow.

Michaela Caroline Pearce, 186, Uxbridge Road.

Robert Tunstall, 23, Gordon Road, Shepperton.

BURIALS

On January 12:

Evelyn Hannah Fenn, 17, Ormond Drive, aged 76 years (at Hampton Cemetery).

On January 13:

Stephen Victor James Forrow, 68, Sunnyside Road, aged 67 years (at Teddington Cemetery).