

Do you remember Lot's wife? She looked back over the plains and the town she had just left. The story tells us, that as a result of looking back, she was turned into a pillar of salt.

This month, July 1993, we celebrate 130 years of our parish's existence - and more than existence - we celebrate the vision and endeavour of those who founded and built the church, those men, women and children whose ministry and vibrancy gave life to our parish. We celebrate those who have prayed here, those who have served here, those whose care and compassion have been exercised here. In this sense it is good to look back.

An early description of Hampton Hill's Church of St. James was 'a barn of a church in a wilderness of a parish'. There is certainly very little wilderness remaining 130 years on. But in 1863 the church stood alone and distant. St. James's Road didn't exist as such, Park Road was a muddy track and Windmill Road and Uxbridge Road not much better. New Hampton, as it was then called, was a motley collection of streets and alleys, without sanitation or public hygiene, without schools, doctors or public transport. It was a village without access to Bushy Park. In proclamation, in care and service, in teaching and living out the Gospel, the Kingdom of God has been, is and will continue to be grasped in our parish.

And here of course is the nub of the issue. Lot's wife looked back, not wishing to go on, fearing the future. She looked back wanting the security of how things used to be. It can't be like that for us. Of course it is right and proper to look back thankfully for the last 130 years, but we are called to the future: to proclaim, to care, to serve, to teach and to heal for the Kingdom of God today and tomorrow. Part of our commitment to the future is the new Church Hall which will give us space and opportunity to carry out the work of being the Body of Christ in this place well into the next 130 years. The Foundation Stone will be laid by the Bishop of London at the Parish Communion on July 4th.

July 1993 is a great month of celebration. We invite all our parishioners, friends and neighbours to take part in any of the activities detailed on the Yellow Festival Programme which is included in this magazine. Like Lot's wife we dare look back - not for security or nostalgia, but to give thanks. We also dare to look forward into the future confident of God's presence.

For all that has been - Thanks.

For all that will be - Yes.

(Dag Hammerskjold)

Brian Leathard

The Ordination of Women to the Priesthood

The Bishop of London has unveiled plans for implementing the legislation to ordain women to be priested. Bishop David and the Bishops of Kensington, Edmonton and Stepney are unwilling to ordain women as priests. However the plan may well be a blueprint for future developments in the matter.

The London Plan emphasises that the Bishop of London remains Bishop of the whole diocese, the focus of our common life throughout the Diocese. Women who are to be priested will be ordained by a commissary of the Archbishop of Canterbury acting for any of the Bishops in the London Diocese. The Bishop of Willesden is the only one in our Diocese willing to ordain women as priests.

Those who feel they cannot accept the position of an Area Bishop, who will ordain women, can, with majority PCC approval, seek the pastoral oversight of the Bishop of Fulham whose jurisdiction is not geographically fixed, but is across the whole Diocese.

Let us work and pray for the success of the London Plan in its search for integrity on both sides of the issue.

Brian Leathard

Cartoons for serious thought -

I was amused by the Times Diary item figuring the two-strip cartoon reproduced below and couldn't resist adding to it the third for our own more parochial Diary. For those not familiar with symbols other than the cross, a uniquely Christian identity, a further explanation follows. The biological symbol for a female is the circle with the downward cross and the Ordinance Survey symbol on maps for a church with a spire, a circle with an upward cross. This simple cartoon, the original two reproduced with my third addition, led me to some further thoughts presented here because these three topics will be very important to us in the year to come.

How effective the unique and simple logo for a Christian is, unambiguous, easily reproduced in any language, by any who don't even need to be able to write! The message is direct and clear, the way to God, through the empty cross. It represents the uniquely given, risen and now eternally available Christ, and the temporal wooden cross. The cross is reproduced in a multitude of forms and found in every corner of the world, shared and proudly worn from first communicant to city business man. We have a message to share in our programme for 'Faith in Action' to carry forward and offer our love and insight to others who may need our pastoral care. *A focus for action through The Spire.*

I hope the first cartoon did not mean the priest rejecting His church but rather adding his cross to support the church at the centre of God. The cartoon was accompanying an article on women priests in the Anglican church, and hence the second symbol, a topic close to our hearts and welcomed by most in this parish. We have an uneasy time ahead with divisions over this issue in the Diocese of London, and hope sincerely to preserve our churches without the fragmentation that threatens to disrupt if many priests decide to leave. We encourage and support Betty Stewart from our own

congregation as she prepares to go forward with her ordination in Southwark, and offer her our prayers and encouragement. *A focus for prayer through The Spire.*

The third symbol is for an issue that is just as important and will be a focus for much debate; the project for the new church hall and enhancement of the south wall of the church. Few are in any doubt that we should support this exciting new venture, but the financial implications will need to be clearly understood. A commitment that may be a tremendous drain on our resources unless managed with restraint and within our budget. *A focus for debate through The Spire.*

Communication - however we do it, through cartoons, prose or talking is important. We need to share our views on issues that are vital to us all. Perhaps we can use The Spire to keep alive these issues that should concern us all.

Moya Meredith-Smith



Building Work Update

'Mighty oaks from little acorns grow' - so runs the proverb! 'The acorns' are becoming increasingly clear around the church and vicarage. Stakes marking the driveway have been put in and the garage conversion has begun. Further work will be done at the rear entrance to the Vicarage and a new boundary wall and fence between the Vicarage and new church hall site will be erected.

A master craftsman is engaged on cutting and engraving a Foundation Stone for the Hall, which at over a ton, will certainly be 'a stone to trip over'. The Quantity Surveyor has finished his preparatory work and the contract will be out to tender during July. The steel fabricator has been appointed and building regulations approval has been sought by the Borough. Watch for more 'acorns'.

Brian Leathard

My Confirmation

We started our confirmation course on March 2nd. When we got to the vicarage we went into Brian's study. He gave us some books to read and write in. He gave us a piece of paper to pass along and put our full name, address and where we were baptised.

We looked at the books and at the end Brian gave us some things to do in them for homework.

We had several lessons and then it came to the confirmation and I was a tiny bit nervous, but my friend Kate was a lot. When I actually got confirmed, I felt more a part of the Church.

It was nice that there were a lot of people there to support us and I really enjoyed the party afterwards.

My Mum and Dad got me a big cake and afterwards we went home with our friends and shared it.

Suzanne Nunn

The Jays

In September there will be some changes in the Jays teaching personnel. Deborah Tucker is returning to Australia and Violet Clark has decided to retire after many years service. Very many thanks to them both for their time and support and we wish them well in the future.

I shall also be stepping down now that Suzanne is leaving the Jays. It's about 12 years since Prill and Gill (that well-known double act!) asked me to help with the Sunday School 'occasionally' and I have enjoyed my time with the children very much.

Lou Basdell (Coaker) has very kindly agreed to take on the organisation of the Jays and for that I am very grateful.

With three people leaving, we need more volunteers to help with the teaching. It's not difficult and you need not be there every week. It is in fact great fun and very rewarding. Please contact me or Brian if you are at all interested, eve if it would be on an occasional basis.

Thank you to ALL the people who have given me their support over the years.

Debbie Nunn

News from the Brownies

'Can you write a few lines for the Parish magazine?' Brian asks as he makes a quick exit through the door. 'Just let everyone know what the Brownies have been doing and make that ever important plea for help'.

When I sit down and think about what to write it is so difficult actually to think about what we have done. Every week we work towards the 8 point plan, promise and law. All our activities are aimed at helping the Brownies learn new skills, make new friends and most importantly of all to have fun!

Evenings are spent on badge work, drama, singing, playing rounders (when we've agreed which version we are playing), debating, swimming and any other activity that comes to mind. Being Brown Owl means that it is my decision as to what we will do and when. I have to admit it can be difficult sometimes to think up new ideas, but often it is the things you dream up at the last minute that the children appreciate the most. So, unless it is something that you need to be well prepared for, being a Brown Owl can take as little or as much time as you are prepared to give. Obviously there are the out of hours meetings, activities and church parades that need attending but with a supportive family and a bit of re-scheduling these are rarely a hardship.

In Hampton Brownie Guiders are nearly an endangered species! This makes things very difficult for those of us who remain, waiting lists grow longer and the number of disappointed children increase (any 7 year old applying to join my pack stands no chance of getting in in the next year to 18 months!), all for the sake of a few hours of someone's time. Could you be the one to change all this?

Hampton would like a rainbow pack for girls aged 5 - 7 but it seems no-one is willing to come forward. When I see the Brownies having such fun I wonder why no-one wants to be part of the Guiding movement. The days of the 'Toadstool' are long gone. I believe we have to provide a place where girls can be themselves, learn new skills, communicate with each other and yet have fun. This can be done within the boundaries of the Brownie law and promise. Why don't you come along and try it and see?

Lesley Brough



THEOLOGY AND DEVELOPMENT; OUR VISIT TO ST. JAMES'

Thank you for all your hospitality during our visit. We particularly appreciated the openness and community life of the parish. Thank you for the welcome we received. It was so good to worship with you. Such occasions serve to highlight what it means to be part of the worldwide body of Christ. We all enjoyed being able to participate in the services and it was great to have the chance to talk more deeply over lunch (and to enjoy the sunshine!). The forum in the evening was a good opportunity for dialogue - to share our experiences and to hear of your concerns in the parish.

We are also grateful for the individual hospitality that we received and for all that was done to make us individually welcome. As students living in university accommodation we experience a very artificial view of life. The opportunity to stay with people in their homes is a very important dimension of our experience of life here in Britain.

We have learnt a great deal from our time with you and we hope you also have learnt from us; that you will better be able to understand our situations when you think about the work of Christian Aid and when you hear news of Kenya, Nigeria, Tanzania, Malawi, India, Costa Rica, the Philippines and Barbados and also the countries that were not represented.

The weekend was in itself a good celebration of Christian Aid week but the question is, what now? We believe the weekend presented us all with challenges. Through our sharing we each pushed further our ideas of what it means to be a follower of Christ today, to respond to the needs of those who are marginalised throughout the world; to be true participants in the eucharist.

We also experience tensions between looking inward to the survival of our church and looking outward to the needs of our communities. There are tensions because the church does not exist for itself but is for mission, in the world. To be church in the world is to be concerned with the issues of the wider community.

This is where Christian Aid presents us with both a channel and a challenge. It is a channel for our charitable giving which is used effectively to reach the poor in the South. However it also challenges us to do more, because funding projects alone is not enough. We need to be aware of how our lifestyles are perpetuating poverty and we must change them. Christian Aid presents suggestions as to how we can start this, for example by buying fairly traded goods, and lobbying our MPs and the banks.

Individual actions may seem too small to make a difference but by increasing our awareness of the issues we will also get to know of more group initiatives. This solidarity is encouraging and highlights the fact that our apparently insignificant actions are not in isolation.

The problems seem insurmountable but to know, globally, that we are working together is a source of great hope and strength. We struggle together despite the distances which separate us. Thank you for your part in making us aware of this.

THE EARLY CHURCH.

The earliest churches instituted by Paul had a body of doctrine, but no real organisation; Paul believed in the Spirit working through him and others. The two noblest gifts were prophecy and teaching. Worship was subject to no special control. Despite various collections made for specific purposes, there was no special organisation to handle funds; there was no distinction between a clerical class and the laity. In the Judaic christian church there were religious officials, but not in Paul's new convert congregations. The atmosphere was of a loosely organised revivalist movement - all expected the Second Coming soon, so clerical control seemed needless and inappropriate.

But something soon needed to be done. At Corinth, Paul came across well-educated christians who had reduced Jesus to myth (as some of our present-day church intellectuals perhaps have done!). Among the Colossians he found christians who worshipped spirits and angels. One of the earliest sects were the Docetists, who taught that Jesus had never really been a man - His body was a mere semblance. By the start of the second century there were masses of christian texts which had no precise status - there was no universally approved 'New Testament'.

An early example of the young church seeking to organise itself can be found in Paul's first letter to the Corinthians Ch. 16 v.1 onwards: 'Now, as far as the fund for christians in need is concerned, I should like you to follow the same rule that I gave to the Galatian church - on the first day of the week let everyone put by a sum according to his financial ability, so there will be no need for collections when I come. Then, on my arrival, I will send whomever you approve to take your gift, with my recommendation, to Jerusalem.'

In chapter two, verse 41 of Act:s, it is recorded that on the day of Pentecost Peter addressed a large crowd, and that about 3000 were baptised, who 'sold their possessions and divided the proceeds among the fellowship according to individual need.' In chapter six, the first problems of organisation are mentioned: 'About this time, when the number of disciples was continually increasing, the Greeks complained that in the daily distribution of food, the Hebrew widows were given preferential treatment'. Seven men of good reputation, both practical and spiritually minded, were appointed - the first time we hear mention of officials whose job it was to see to the day-to-day running of the growing church.

To be continued.

STUART WARD

Around The Spire

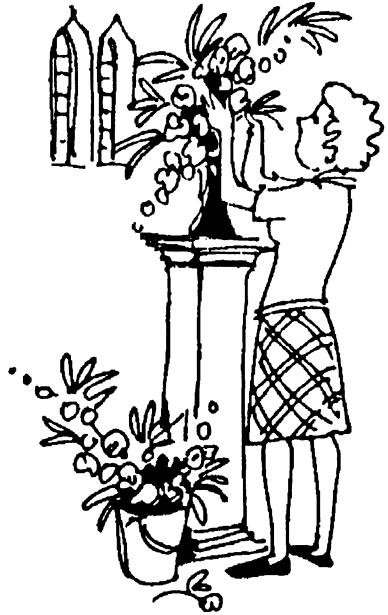
This month's ATS should read like a wild west 'WANTED' poster. What is wanted - well, to quote another well-known poster, the answer is 'YOU!'. Your time and efforts are needed for a variety of tasks, helping with the Sunday School or Brownies (details elsewhere) or as a Church cleaner or Flower arranger (You don't have to be an expert in any of these jobs - as the adverts say these days - training will be given)

We must here give a heartfelt 'Thank You' to all the people who do these things at present, and to those who feel it is time to move on, Debbie Nunn, Debbie Tucker and Violet Clark - all Sunday School helpers. Many, many thanks to them for all their efforts over the years.

The new Mothers' and Toddlers group is called 'Noah's Ark' and has started meeting regularly on alternate Mondays from 1.45pm to 3pm. Details from Sue Blay.

The Hampton Hill Old Peoples Welfare Committee AGM will take place on Thursday July 15th at 8pm in the Greenwood Centre. Everyone is welcome, come along and see what the committee do. Refreshments will be served. Marie Martin is the Honorary Secretary.

An Unusual wedding held recently at St. James was that of Muneaki and Chiyo, both Japanese. The bride looked radiant in beautiful dress and as she and her new husband walked down the aisle they looked slightly awed by the occasion and a little apprehensive. Once out in the sunshine, everyone relaxed and enjoyed the day. Good wishes to them and to all our other newly married couples.



From the Registers for May

Baptisms

9	Camilla Alice de Garston Webb	64 Sixth Cross Road, Twickenham
	Adam Harry Sansom	44 York Road, Teddington
	Paul James Clay	34 Uxbridge Road
	Andrew Charles Clay	" "
	Sarah Ann Clay	" "

Funerals

12	Maisie Alice Webb	Flat 15, 11 Strawberry Hill Road, Twickenham	aged 80
20	Ernest Dowsett	13 Deacons Walk	aged 76
21	Evelyn Florence Skinner	36 Wolsey Road	aged 70

Interment of Ashes

16	Owen McEvoy	36 St. James's Avenue
25	Margaret Jones	26 Sommerville House, 1 Rodney Road, Whitton

Dates to Note

July	3	St. Thomas the Apostle
	4	09.30 David, Bishop of London, to preside at Parish Communion and the Blessing of the Foundation Stone of our new Church Hall
		14.30 Dress Rehearsal for The Song of the Hill, Church
	5	14.00 Editorial Board, 19 St. James's Road
	7	14.00 Women's Forum Invitation Service and Tea
	8	19.00 Hampton Hill Junior School Summer Concert
	9	19.30 The Song of the Hill, Church
	10	Parish Treasure Hunt
	11	15.00 The Song of the Hill, Church



St. Thomas the Apostle writes in India

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| 14 | 18.00 | Cricket Match |
| 16 | 20.00 | Concert, Church |
| 17 | | Open Day at Church and Pig Roast |
| 19 | 20.00 | The History of Hampton Hill, talk with slides, Church |
| 20 | | Quiz Night, Hampton Hill Junior School |
| 21 | | Women's Forum Celebration of 130 years of St. James's |
| 22 | | St. Mary Magdalen |
| 24 | | Parish Splash, Hampton Pool |
| 25 | | St. James's the Apostle |
| | 11.00 | Parish Communion with the Archdeacon of Middlesex,
followed by Lunch in Church |

Advance Notices

Aug. 6 **The Transfiguration of our Lord**



COPY DATE FOR AUGUST ISSUE: 11 JULY