

November seems to point both backwards and forwards. Forwards because Christmas goodies already decorate the shops and remind us how few days we have in which to overspend, yet again. Backwards because, not yet the shortest day, we still recall the splendid summer past.

In the Church's life too, there are pointers both forwards and backwards. We call the Sundays at this time of the year the 9th, 8th, 7th, 6th, 5th Sunday before Christmas - a countdown which seems to reinforce the headlong dash into festivities, yet November also bids us look back. All Soul's Day is November 2nd, when at 8pm we will remember in Church, all who have died and all whose funerals have been conducted from St. James'. Then comes Remembrance Sunday when, after Parish Communion, we gather round the War Memorial remembering those who have been killed or injured in war; and tragically, remembering those who even to-day are being killed or injured.

But perhaps looking back is the only way to look forward realistically. We cannot detach ourselves from our pasts - we are now what we have become through our pasts. This is true for individuals, for families, for churches, for nations. We carry our past with us. What is surely crucial is what we do with that past. For the current moment is the time at which the past translates itself into the future. Decisions we take now, based on past experience and knowledge gained, will determine our future. The past leads to the future, the future so easily repeats the past.

So that is why the present moment is so important, why now is crucial both for the past and for the future. What we do with our memories and experiences is crucial to the rest of our lives. If we allow old hurts, old wounds to fester, without examining why those wounds are there, they will simply go on stinking. If we do nothing to build bridges or create reconciled communities or individuals, then we will go on into the future each accusing the other, without hearing the other's fears or hurt.

As I write this, it is literally a minefield which is stopping the gas, electricity and water supply being re-connected in Sarajevo, Bosnia. A physical minefield; but other minefields of the heart and mind, of culture and religion, of language and politics need to be attended to before the life-blood of a reconciled community can begin to course again.

In relationships, in families, at work, at Church, at home minefields exist which need committed clearing now, so that the past can be reconciled and the future created anew. One philosopher says "To hope is to remember the future". I think he means what I mean when I say that the past needs re-working in the present, lest it simply be repeated in the future. And to that end "Remember Jesus Christ, risen from the dead".

Brian Leathard

Confirmation 1995

We are delighted that nine members of our Parish wish to be Confirmed this year.

They are: Rowan Beentje
 Peter Beentj
 Joseph Coaker-Basdell
 David Harris
 Elisabeth Hodges
 Natasha Ighodaro
 Daphne Robey
 Beatrice Taylor
 Jonathan Warrrens



Confirmation will be at St. Paul's Cathedral at 11.30am on Saturday 4th November. We hope that many Parishioners will wish to attend and support our candidates.

On Sunday 19th November they will make their Communion at St. James and we will have a celebration after the service.

Do remember in your prayers all these, our brothers and sisters, at this important time in their lives.

**FOUR AUTUMN
CONVERSATIONS
at St James' Church, St James' Road
6.30pm - 7.30pm
on
LIVING MATTERS**

November

5th **Keith Robinson**, *Secretary of the London Stock Exchange*
 Money makes the world go round

12th **Janet Taylor**, *Consultant Obstetrician & Gynaecologist*
 Life and Health

19th **Alan Baldwin**, *Chairman of London Clerks to the Justices Association*
 Justice for All

26th **Michael Bunce**, *Executive Director of the Royal Television Society*
 TV rules, OK?

YOU ARE WELCOME



To Myanmar and Back

Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) is a very beautiful country, one that has been described as 'The Golden Land, an eastern paradise of untold riches'. This is no exaggeration, especially when one considers that Burma has precious stones in abundance, including gold, rubies, sapphires, jade and diamonds.

The Burmese people are friendly and welcoming towards foreigners - something which is pleasantly surprising considering the military regime's unwillingness to allow the Burmese people to mix with outsiders. Hardly a day went by that we were not invited to a Burmese gathering, to sample traditional food, or taken to see a fascinating cultural show. It soon became apparent that the Burmese people like to enjoy themselves, particularly if their guests follow suit!

80% of the people are Bhuddists. Bhuddism is seen by the Burmese people as a way of life and a philosophy; a means of obtaining enlightenment, rather than a strict religion. There is evidence of Bhuddism almost everywhere one goes. In the Burmese capital, Yangon (formerly called Rangoon), the Shwedagon Pagoda stands on a hill, towering impressively over the city. The pagoda is sacred to the Burmese people, Bhuddists and Christians alike. Its magnificent gold-leafed opulence provides a striking contrast to the buildings surrounding it. New gold-leafed pagodas are still being built by members of the government as a way of trying to obtain some merit to influence their reincarnation!

Just prior to our visit, the Burmese opposition leader, and Nobel Peace prizewinner, Aung San Suu Kyi, was released after years under house arrest. It remains to be seen, however, whether a repressive military regime is willing to surrender power voluntarily in response to international pressure and to return the country to democracy.

The government of Myanmar probably has had a change of heart towards the outside world. It could be that they have bowed to outside pressure, or most probably they are after much needed hard currency, as they have declared 1996 'A visit Myanmar year'. In order to accommodate the expected influx of tourists, hotels are being built all over Myanmar (especially in Yangon).

Having spent such a wonderful time in a beautiful environment, surrounded by kind, gracious and generous people, I would highly recommend that people take this opportunity to go and see things for themselves, whatever the reason for the government's invitation to visit Myanmar in 1996.

M. Hobbs

British Passports for Hong Kong Citizens

Few can be unaware that in June 1977 Hong Kong will revert to Chinese Sovereignty, but how many people have thought about what that means for the people of Hong Kong?

Hong Kong Island was ceded in perpetuity to Britain in 1843 as part of the Treaty of Nanking and augmented in 1898 when Britain negotiated a 99 year lease for the "New Territories". A request in the early 1980's to extend the lease was rejected by the Chinese, which forced the British Government to agree in the Sino-British Joint Declaration to relinquish the entire colony in June 1997.

Under British rule Hong Kong has grown from an uninviting collection of sparsely populated islands into one of the manufacturing, commercial and financial centres of the world with a population of around six million. The majority of its inhabitants are Cantonese speaking Chinese. Many of them were either born with full British Citizenship or were born to parents who had enjoyed full British Citizenship, only to see this eroded by a succession of Nationality Acts designed to stem immigration to this country. Nevertheless they have grown up to expect a civil society granting freedom of expression and association, with a judicial system based upon the premise that an individual is innocent until proven guilty and a humane penal system for those who are convicted. These concepts are completely alien to the mainland Chinese, who despite promises to maintain Hong Kong's Capitalist economy and common law legal system are unlikely to preserve the liberty currently enjoyed by the local population. If this were not bad enough there are substantial ethnic minorities, including a prominent Indian community, who in practice will never be accepted as Chinese nationals.

The call by the Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, to give Hong Kong citizens with British passports a right of abode in the United Kingdom does not merely reiterate the many such requests made to the British Government since the signing of the Joint Declaration. Requests which they have consistently refused to countenance, and in which their stance has been supported by the Labour Party. Both the Conservatives and Labour believe they would lose electoral support if they were to do otherwise, ignoring the moral responsibility we have for these people caught between two radically different cultures, a calculation which presents a very unedifying picture of British attitudes towards outsiders. Chris Patten knows this as well as any of his former colleagues, yet he still felt compelled to make his views known. He has reopened the subject for debate and we believe it is right that we should resist attempts to stifle further discussion of the issue.

People will ask whether millions of Hong Kong residents want to come to this country. If they do not then what is all the fuss about, and if they do how would we cope? We should explain what it means to love our neighbour as oneself, and confront the chauvinistic attitudes which are commonly held. In reality the issue is rather different. Few Hong Kong citizens want to come to Britain, the climate and economy is very unattractive. However the threat of being able to leave the Special Administrative Region (an ominous term - Tibet is an SAR too!) after 1997 will act as a potent constraint on the authorities. They know that Hong Kong is nothing without its very talented and motivated people.

If you wish to add your voice to those calling for a right of abode to be granted to these people, please write to our MP or to the Home Secretary. The PCC will be discussing St James's collective opinion at their next meeting.

John and Elizabeth Gossage

Vivienne Prentice

If in the death of our companion, Vivienne Prentice, we feel a great sense of loss, of a gap in our church family, coupled with rejoicing for her life, for her friendship, for her vitality, we realise how much more deeply these emotions must be affecting Eila, her brothers and all the other members of the extended Prentice family. We offer to Vivienne's children, grand children, great grandchildren and all her many relations our sympathy, prayers and thankfulness; we are grateful to have known 'Mrs. P'.

As Brian reminded us at her funeral service, Vivienne's life embraced both the Victorian, Edwardian eras, two world wars, the development of modern technology as well as great changes in English service life, but one of her gifts was to be able to accept changes, to live in the world as it is and not to remind others constantly of how it used to be!

Talking of Vivienne was not talking of an 'old person' but conversing with an active-minded, interested contemporary.

And what fun, what vivacity, what enjoyment of life and, shining through all, what deep and true Christianity pervaded her life and conversation. How we shall miss her, but how we shall be sustained by the memory of her bright spirit.

Good-bye, Vivienne!

Margaret Taylor

Vivienne Prentice

I always enjoyed going to see my neighbour Vivienne, where I could expect a cup of tea and a biscuit together with an interesting chat. She didn't show her age and kept pretty quiet about anything that was wrong with her.

She touched on her First World War experiences and I got a good impression of the danger and discomfort of driving an ambulance in France at the time. Windscreens were not used, starting on the handle could take three quarters of an hour, and punctures were done like those on a bicycle, except that the tyre levers were ten times the length. She must have been tough. Her experience stood her in good stead during the return from her honeymoon soon after the War when the car had several flat tyres. The visit to Rouen only last summer, organised by her son David, for the first time after 75 years, gave her enormous pleasure. She liked especially sitting in the Captain's seat on the cross channel ferry, going to the old hospital (now an old people's home) and visiting the woods where she and her husband-to-be Jock used to go for walks.

She often mentioned her Christian beliefs and practice, liking to attend Communion frequently and keeping up her daily prayers; she must have sung in the church choir for a few decades, and as well as singing she was a good pianist. The loss of her piano only a year or two ago was upsetting but she consoled herself that extra room was released to display the family photos.

She was pleased that she could overlook her back garden, though she worried about her neighbours' overhanging trees. Weeds in the hardstanding at the front of the house had to go and she paid particular attention to their removal until quite recently.

I hope that I have been able to give some slight impression of my departed friend and I'm so sorry that she's with us no longer.

David Taylor

Vivienne Prentice

It is with sadness I am writing this, as I really began to think my Mother would live for ever! Silly I know, but having had a loving, strong and very independent mother for such a long time, it was hard to imagine life without her. However her time came on a beautiful hot sunny day up in the glorious hills of Scotland, which she loved, at a place called Glen Esk.

Although far from home, all her four children managed to visit her, and we are sure she knew we were there. She died very peacefully. Thank you all for your Prayers and support.

This poem was found at the little restaurant at the top of Glen Esk where she had her stroke, and means a lot to us.

Genesis

They say, when God the Father made the earth,
He rolled between His palms its rocks and clays
Then breathed upon it to give life a birth,
And it is done, and set into place.
But ere he sent it spinning into space
He gave it one last pat in love;
And there the mark remains, upon the face
Of Angus - the thumb the Tay, and then above:
Glen Isla, Prosen, Clova Esk, these four
Gods fingers fashioned, and His palm, Strathmore
Four fair green glens reach far into the west,
And of them all, the loveliest and best
Is Esk - Glen Esk by loving gesture given,
God's little finger left the mark of heaven.

John Angus

Eila Severn

Women's Forum A.G.M.

We assembled in the Upper Room of The Hall after the service on Sunday 8 October for our Annual General Meeting. Brian chaired the meeting for us and opened the proceedings with a prayer. Often A.G.M.'s are rather boring events with few people attending. This particular A.G.M. proved to be interesting and lively with important matters concerning the future of Women's Forum being raised. Chief among these is our desire to open all our meetings to men. We don't think there are subjects which are only of interest to men or women.

The Committee was thanked for its hard work throughout the year. The meetings during the past year had been very varied while reflecting the aims of The Forum, and had taken many forms, with speakers, discussions, demonstrations, videos and parties. Numbers attending meetings had also been variable with afternoon meetings becoming less well attended while the popularity of evening meetings had grown.

The new Committee was formed without the need for "coercion", and some possible additional members were identified. Brian thanked The Forum for organising the Baptismal Party which was appreciated by those who attended.

There was a request for more help with the cleaning of the church and with flower arranging.

The Women's Forum meets on the first Wednesday of each month at 2.30pm and on the third Wednesday of each month at 8pm. The programme for the next six months will shortly be available in church. We would like to see our numbers grow and men are warmly invited to attend the meetings. Do make a note of the meetings in your diaries or on your calendars and come along whenever you are able. The afternoon meeting in November being "All Saints Day" is about "saints" and the evening meeting is an "Any Questions" event, with an invited panel to answer the questions. If you have a question you would like to put to the panel, please let a committee member know and come along to hear the views of the panel, and to support them on that evening.

Flower Festival 28th/29th September

The elegant composition, colour harmony and artistic arrangement of the magnificent floral displays were all that one might hope for at a Church Flower Festival. What gave these displays an extra dimension were the associated ethnic artefact displays from many parts of the world showing human artistic talent in such diverse objects as water jugs and embroidered stoles. It was clear that in addition to great talent many hours of hard work must have gone into the selection and arranging of these lovely exhibits.

Together they provided a beautiful and very fitting Harvest Offering of the natural beauty of God's earth combined with God-given artistic talent.

Our heartfelt thanks go to the Hampton Hill Floral Art Club and to our own Flower Ladies at St. James, and especially to Helen Taylor who make it all happen. Thank you also to all those providing and serving refreshments.

To those of you who did not see the Flower Festival - and numbers were a little disappointing - you missed a treat! Fortunately record numbers in the congregation at the Harvest Festival Service on Sunday will at least have had a glimpse of the magnificent displays throughout the church. It has never looked more beautiful and the sight of so many people laying their 50p's on the trail was a great sign of commitment.

Pip Rowlett

P.S. The money raised over the Flower Festival and Harvest Festival Weekend went to Christian Aid's 50th Anniversary Appeal

From the trail of 50p's	£503
Donations at Flower Festival	£147
Refreshments during weekend	<u>£ 60</u>
Grand Total	<u>£703</u>

ChristianAid



Restoration Work on the Church

For some years now we have been painfully aware of the deteriorating condition of some areas of stonework and brickwork, chiefly on the South and West facades.

We have at long last achieved the happy combination of a satisfactory specification and the necessary Diocesan permission, coupled to an acceptable tender, and work has been put in hand.

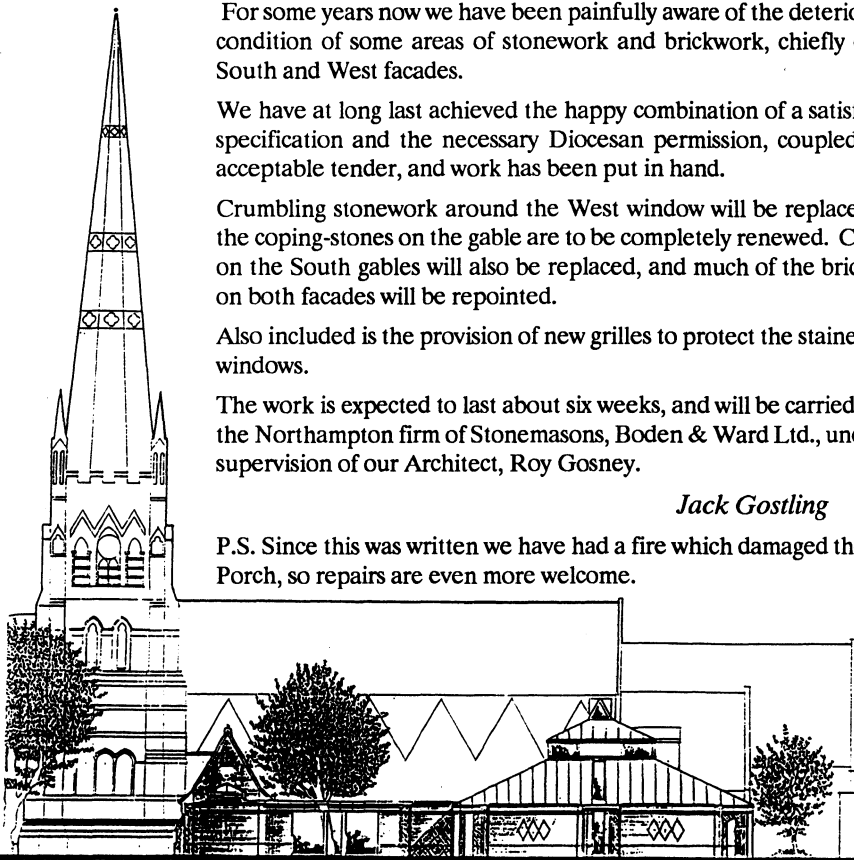
Crumbling stonework around the West window will be replaced, and the coping-stones on the gable are to be completely renewed. Copings on the South gables will also be replaced, and much of the brickwork on both facades will be repointed.

Also included is the provision of new grilles to protect the stained glass windows.

The work is expected to last about six weeks, and will be carried out by the Northampton firm of Stonemasons, Boden & Ward Ltd., under the supervision of our Architect, Roy Gosney.

Jack Gostling

P.S. Since this was written we have had a fire which damaged the West Porch, so repairs are even more welcome.



Around the Spire

On Thursday 12th October there was a very moving and beautiful funeral service for our well-loved Vivienne Prentice. This remarkable lady died on 3rd October. While on a visit to her son in Scotland she was taken ill and admitted to hospital, and after a long while in a coma she passed peacefully away, aged 97 years. Her very large family and numerous friends came together to celebrate her wonderful life.

Roy Brookes and Trevor Parry are both in hospital, remember them and all other sick people in your prayers, and also for the bereaved, there have been many funerals lately. Eva Ross is also back in hospital after a fall. Bill Robinson is back home after black-out and investigation in casualty.

Our prayers and support to all these our parishioners.

Hampton Fuel Allotment Charity Grants for the Year 1996

Shortly stated, the powers of the Charity to dispose of income (limited in the first instance to the Ancient Town of Hampton, namely the present areas of Hampton and Hampton Hill) are:

Category A 1. The Relief generally or individually of persons in need, hardship or distress and those sick, convalescent, disabled, handicapped or infirm.

Category B 2. The education of children and young persons in need.

3. The provision of special benefits not normally provided by the local education authority for maintained schools.

4. The provision of recreation and leisure-time occupation.

5. Other charitable purposes.

Application forms are available from the Vicarage, to which completed forms should be returned.

From the September Registers

Baptisms

17	Lauren Chelsea Appleton Goff	25 Wellington Road
	Scott Howard Lee Holloway	71 Pigeon Lane
	Connor George Williams	14 Stanley Gardens Road
	Henry Francis Wilmot	58a Anlaby Road, Teddington
24	James Leonard Harvey	Flat 1, 39 Wellington Road
	Jessica Ellen Stagg	15 Hotham Close, Hurst Park

Blessing

9 Michael John Elcock and Louise Amanda Campbell

Wedding

9 Mark Graham Hitchens and Martha Mary Stanton

Interment of Ashes

21 Terry Gill Hampton Cemetary 2 Rectory Grove

CHRISTMAS BAZAAR

Saturday November 18th

11am - 2pm

CAKES * PRESERVES * BOOKS * GIFTS
Etc.

Come and support St. James

Find some Gifts and

meet your friends