

**(4) REPORTS:
THE PROPERTIES COMMITTEE**

The past twelve months have been quite uneventful - not that there has not been things to do, but because mainly the lack of voluntary effort to carry out work which arises annually and the results of vandalism.

Few can have failed to notice the wrecking of the wall along the Park Road frontage - early in the year David, Peter and I, in anticipation of some repair work during the year, salvaged most of the bricks and stacked them neatly within the churchyard. However, after a number of discussions within the committee as to what repairs should be done in order to keep costs down to a minimum and subsequent enquiries of local bricklayers, we are regretfully not able to report any progress - have we within the Parish one or two noble supporters who would be willing to help? - if so I should be pleased to hear from them.

The annual Mass Attack on the churchyard took place, and in part owing to the weather, but perhaps more owing to insufficient help, we only managed to clear a third of the ground. Perhaps it is time to reconsider what can be done voluntarily, and what is essential and for which we have to employ paid labour. Many will have noticed the new rose-bushes - Mary Sumner - which an enthusiastic body of mums from the Mothers' Union planted out in the early part of the year and our thanks are due to them and Mr. Gloyns who gave advice, encouragement and help.

Of course, apart from our two major disappointments reported above, a thousand and one other jobs of maintenance and repair have been done in the year - the lawns were again kept nicely cut and trimmed by a rota of volunteers arranged by Denis; the borders and some graves were carefully weeded and cared for; curtains within the church were taken down, repaired, cleaned and replaced. To all who helped us we express our grateful thanks. I must not forget to report that Ron Metcalfe joined the committee after the A.C.M. and he has proved to be a valuable addition.

Do not forget it is your labour and skills we most urgently need - will you not HELP US please?

G.I. Robinson

Chairman - Properties Committee.

(5) ST. JAMES'S LADIES' CHOIR

We have met regularly on alternate Monday afternoons in the vestry, apart from a short spell of weekly practices prior to the Jubilee concert. Our aim is to enjoy singing, and if, in our pursuit of pleasure, we also give pleasure to others we are delighted. During the year we entertained at Laurel Dene, the Jubilee Concert, O.P.W. Christmas Party, M.U. Party, Gifford House and the Parish Party. We also sang at two Welcome Services in church and at the Women's World Day of Prayer service at St. James's.

In order to make our entertainment more varied, we decided to add a little "drama" to our repertoire and with the aid of one or two non-choir members we put on a "pantomime" which we have performed several times. The firemen's strike made our performance a little unseasonal but no-one seemed to mind seeing "Cinderella" in February!

We have a good library of songs now, including several new ones which are always a challenge and cause us a great deal of fun while we try to master them.

Our average membership is about twelve including our pianist, to whom we are most grateful. We are of mixed ability but all enjoy "having a go". Anyone who enjoys singing is welcome to join us, a sense of humour is an advantage!

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THE REV. and MRS. RUPERT BRUNT
REQUEST THE PLEASURE OF YOUR
COMPANY
ON

WEDNESDAY, 19TH APRIL

IN
ST. JAMES'S PARISH HALL
AT 7.15 P.M.
TO AN

AT HOME

(PRECEDING THE A.C.M.)

WHERE THEY WILL SHOW SLIDES
AND DESCRIBE THEIR RECENT
TRIP TO **THE HOLY LAND**
WHICH WAS DONATED BY THE
PEOPLE OF THE PARISH IN 1972.



BIG CLEAN-UP AT ST. JAMES'S!

Not (as you might be conditioned by present day standards of newspaper reporting to expect) - not the prelude to some dramatic expose of shortcomings or peccadilloes on the part of the P.C.C., the Churchwardens, or even the Vicar!

Less excitingly, but still of importance, it is in fact a preliminary announcement of a thorough spring-clean of the church premises which is to be arranged fairly soon.

The weekly dusting, sweeping and polishing which is done by a devoted few needs to be augmented - we need some spring-cleaners to "refresh those parts which the other cleaners cannot reach!"

Specifically, a good wash and brush up of the windows, stonework, carvings, pews, heating-ducts, engravings and so on. It's a big building, and a big task, one that will take a lot of man-and-woman-power.

Shortly now the Properties Committee will be working out how to tackle the job - whether extra equipment will be needed, whether to seek an all-out mass effort such as the Hall clean, or a more gradual approach in sections, spread over a longer, but defined, period.

However it is tackled, we hope to get it all done by the end of April, so the details will be available in March, possibly soon after you read this. If in the meantime you would like to offer to help, please give your name to Bill Robinson.

Incidentally, we shall be turning out all the drawers, shelves, cupboards, etc: if any of the gloves, earrings, gold chains, umbrellas and other articles which we have accumulated **might** be yours, now is the time to claim them, or they will go.

THE CHURCH ROOF

About eighteen months ago it was noticed that rain-water was coming into the north aisle immediately below the outer end of the middle valley, and upon inspection it was found that the copper-cladding of the roof was perforated in two places. Repairs were carried out and for some length of time it appeared that the cause had been located and corrected. However, during the long wet spell of last autumn further seepage appeared from the same place and also from an identical place in the south aisle. Further inspection of the roof was carried out and it was found that further corrosion of the copper-cladding had taken place, in particular it was noted that the copper-skirt immediately below the slates covering the nave was affected the worst.

We called in the help of a microanalytical consultant, who took samples of the copper-cladding and a quantity of the water drained from the upper roof away for analysis. We have now received a report which clearly indicates that the copper is being perforated by a dilute solution of sulphurous/sulphuric acid, which is produced from the residue of the rain water moving over the slates, and gradually evaporating to give a concentration strong enough to cause the attack.

Before deciding upon what action to take we are seeking further advice from the Building Research Station and the Copper Association.

It has been suggested that the dilute concentrate causing the perforation is due to a high sulphur dioxide content in the atmosphere - possibly the outcome of domestic heating conversion to oil-burning boilers and the very large surface area of the roof.

G.I.R.

ST. JAMES'S WOMEN'S TUESDAY CLUB

The Club meets every other Tuesday evening, and the first meeting of the present session was on January 10, when members were asked to bring along their favourite poem, quotation or anecdote. It was an enjoyable and amusing evening and included original poems from some members - the following is a sample.

"AN ODE TO THE MEMBERS"

or

(IF THE CAP FITS WEAR IT!)

We vary in both shapes and sizes,
And lots of us would win no prizes,
When adding up the pro's and con's,
To find which ones would shine as dons.

'Cos some are bright and some are hazy,
Some always busy and others lazy,
Some forever in a hurry,
Others never in a flurry.
Some are always optimistic,
Others simply realistic.
Some can sew and some can cook,
Some like music and some a book.
Some like dogs and some like cats,
Some wear scarves and others hats.
Some of us pray and some of us swear,
Some go through life with never a care.
Some think of others and can't do enough,
Some never helpful, others gruff.
Some are happy, some are sad,
Some are good and some are bad.
Some have sisters and even brothers,
Some just simply don't have others.
Some of us drink and some of us smoke,
Some can sing but others croak.
Some are always taking pills,
Others disregard their ills.
Some are dark and some are fair,
Others even dye their hair.
Some are drivers, some are walkers,
Some are silent, some are talkers.

It seems the list is never ending,
So I'll stop before offending.
But - think how dull it would be,
If I were like you and you were like me!

V.M.P. Jan. 1978.

AN APPRECIATION (NO. 2)

In July 1973 I was privileged to be allowed space in 'The Spire', under the above caption, to express our love and thanks to all our kind friends and neighbours, who visited me in hospital and at home, who supported us with their prayers, and helped in so many other ways after my first accident on May 13. This necessitated an operation and a long stay in hospital. Now, nearly 4½ years later, I hope that the same privilege will be accorded me to reiterate the same love and thanks to all for the kindly concern shown and help given - and continuing to be given - to me and to my two sisters, both of whom became ill while I was in West Middlesex Hospital. I went in on October 6 last year, and this time two operations were needed to set matters right. Words are inadequate to express our gratitude, but we, the 'Three Sisters' (as we are usually called), do say a very warm 'Thank You' and God bless you for everything. I am progressing slowly but surely and my sisters too are now very much better, I am thankful to say.

Coral McCarthy

BARN DANCE

Though St. James's was once described as "a barn of a church", our Barn Dance on Friday April 7th will not be held in the church building but in the Parish Hall. All are welcome, and dress will be immaterial (i.e. decidedly informal). No experience is needed - you just do as you're told (and most of us have experience of doing that!) And to lead us we are very pleased to have our own Janet and David Nunn who are members of the English Folk Dance Society. It will be a friendly and energetic evening, and included in the price (80p) of the tickets (available from members of the Social Committee) will be food and drink - a ploughman's supper - to keep you going until you homeward plod your weary way.

R.E.B.

THE RIGHT SPIRIT

In the report from the Properties Committee printed above, we are reminded that much more could be done if more people, instead of standing on the sidelines, were prepared to muscle in and help. Over the years, many written and verbal criticisms of the state of the churchyard have been received as well as outbursts of sheer abuse. But when it has been suggested to these vituperative critics that perhaps they might do something to help to remedy the situation, like the people in the parable, 'they all alike began to make excuses'. So in the middle of the cold spell in February it was heart-warming to receive a letter in a different vein type-written by a young schoolgirl who lives in Teddington:

Dear Sir,

When I come home from school I often pass your church. I hope I don't sound too rude, but your graveyard looks rather derelict.

I am not sure whether it is allowed, but could I come maybe on some Saturdays and clear it up? The reason I want to do this is because I think that a graveyard can look very beautiful if it is in good condition.

All I would do would consist of getting the long grass down and cleaning up to graves to make them look respectable again and putting flowers on them. It would not look that bad again. Please do not stop me doing this . . . Please write back if you give me permission. I can start on Saturday.

Thank you
J.B.M.

We did write back at some length, and have now met this enthusiastic and stout-hearted young Amazon (aged 12), prepared to tackle the whole churchyard single-handed, and persuaded her that if she could begin with a small area and get it into good order - but wait until less arctic conditions prevailed - this would be very helpful. If others would follow suit, and take on responsibility for a certain number of graves or a definite patch, we could gradually get the whole churchyard resplendent again. Please contact the Vicar, Bill Robinson, or any member of the Properties Committee.

CHILDREN AND CONFIRMATION

In January last year a long article appeared in this magazine on this important subject. The General Synod had been discussing various aspects of Christian Initiation, but no firm guide-lines had been issued - or have since been issued - and there was much confusion. But matters have not stayed still. The Staff have given much time and thought to the question, it has been raised at the Church Council, and the Bishop has been consulted. One main issue concerns the minimum age for Confirmation. As the Bishop of Southwark has emphasised, in our tradition 'Confirmation is associated not only with God's grace, but also with the public commitment of the individual. Fair enough. But at what age is a person sufficiently responsible to make an act of commitment which is even more binding than the commitment made in the marriage service?'

We have now agreed on the principle that, so long as this commitment remains as an integral part of the rite, we will not present any candidate from this parish to the Bishop for Confirmation under the age of 16. This leaves us with the task of formulating a policy for the admission of younger children to Communion before they are confirmed. Our Bishop has expressed his willingness to sanction this in respect of children who come regularly to the Parish Communion with their parents, subject to certain safeguards and provision for adequate instruction. This still leaves the problem of children who may come regularly on their own or as part of the Sunday School, and whose parents are not themselves communicants. We hope to be able to present a policy and programme, accepted and approved by the Bishop and the Church Council and covering these and other issues, which will set out clearly the principles and practice which we intend to follow, by the middle of this year.

As a footnote, we would add this. We have had discussions with parents who want their children confirmed at a younger age, and while not agreeing with them or being willing to compromise our own position, we have assured them that we will not put any obstacles in their way if they want to make provision for the preparation to take place in a parish or a school where our conscientious objections are not felt.

NEED FOR FORGIVENESS

(We reprint here in its entirety a short article from the current issue of 'The Link' - the very interesting magazine of the Bishop Wand School - which certainly provides much food for thought. - Ed.)

The number of parents who attended this year's P.T.A. Supper was disappointingly small; perhaps people were deterred by memories of last year's long cold wait for Mrs. Whitehouse! Those who did come were rewarded with an excellent meal prepared and served by Mrs. Thomas and her helpers. Chicken portions, salad, baked potatoes and cider, followed by a light sweet and coffee, were much appreciated by those present who then went over to the congenial atmosphere of the Sixth Form Library to hear Lord Longford's address. In his opening remarks Mr. Jones spoke of Lord Longford's distinguished career in public life and his active involvement in Education and care of young people. As a leading Roman Catholic layman, his views on these matters should be of great interest to parents in a Church school. Lord Longford spoke for about half an hour, clearly and without notes. He is well-aware of the views of his critics and spoke throughout with self-deprecating charm. He believes that Christians, although leading the way in many moral matters, are not giving a positive lead on the treatment of those convicted of criminal offences. Too often the Old Testament idea of vengeance prevails and Lord Longford wondered whether this would be the approach of Christ, who came to call sinners to Him. We find it difficult to understand the roots of criminality and lack sympathy for the criminal. With the rising Crime Rate the public have in fact become less sympathetic. We feel threatened and the victims are naturally the most vociferous in demanding harsher penalties; but, Lord Longford believes, this should not be the Christian response. Prison, he argued, is a bad answer to the question of what to do. It is admittedly better than hanging, transportation, mutilation and public humiliation in the stocks, but its long-term effects are damaging to the individual prisoner. He quoted Yeats, "too long a sacrifice can make a stone of the heart". Remorse turns to resentment. The alternatives might include some form of community service, cheaper to run but politically unpopular. Lord Longford stressed that he was not opposed to punishment but even the worst criminals should not be cast out of fellowship as though they were no longer members of the human race. They should be punished, but in a spirit of Love.

Questions from the floor afterwards raised the point that many must have been considering; how to react if one's own child was molested or murdered. Lord Longford agreed that it was very difficult to forgive in such circumstances but stressed that it was not right to have a penal policy determined by the victims of crime. The victims must be disqualified from offering an opinion. One speaker drew attention to the positive response of Mrs. Ewart-Biggs, widow of the murdered British Ambassador in Dublin. At the end of the meeting many of us felt that Lord Longford is being wronged by the media. What appears to be an impractical do-gooding approach was shown to be the logical outcome of a deeply held Christian faith in which the doctrine of forgiveness plays a crucial role. Those who pre-judged Lord Longford and chose not to come missed a challenging and stimulating occasion.

Michael Hall.

MAKE SURE THAT YOUR NAME IS ON THE NEW ELECTORAL ROLL!

This year it is not just a question of the revision of the Roll - an entirely new one has to be prepared. This means that everyone who wants his or her name to be on the Roll has to make an application in writing: another form to be filled in, I am afraid, but there is no getting round it - it is a legal requirement. Forms will be in church till nearly the end of March, and then in the week after Easter the new Roll will be prepared and published on Sunday April 2. So if you want your name to appear there, fill in a form not later than Easter Day. And your name should be there, you know, if you are aged 17 and upwards, are baptised, and a regular worshipper at St. James's, whether you live in the parish or not. Yes, it means that you are not ashamed to be known as a Christian and a member of the Church of England, and as such you have certain rights, privileges and responsibilities. We look for a large attendance of those whose names are on the Roll at the Annual Parochial Church meeting on April 19, when amongst other things they have the right to vote for those they wish to represent them on the Parochial Church Council.

LENT, HOLY WEEK AND EASTERTIDE : SERVICES AND MEETINGS

During the remainder of Lent, Holy Communion will continue to be celebrated every Wednesday evening at 19.15 and every Friday morning at 07.30. Lent Study Groups also continues at 20.00 on Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, and the Catechumenat meets as usual on Wednesday and Saturday evenings. The first Lecture in the series arranged by the Hampton Council of Churches will now be on Tuesday March 14 in St. Mary's Hall, Hampton, at 20.00. The subject: 'The Violent Society'.

Palm crosses made by African Christians will be distributed at every Service on PALM SUNDAY, and remember that on this day the time of EVENSONG changes from 16.30 to 18.30.

On Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday in HOLY WEEK, Holy Communion will be celebrated daily at 19.15, and on MAUNDY THURSDAY there will be an evening in commemoration of the institution of The Lord's Supper beginning at 19.45 with Passiontide readings, followed by the Parish Communion, and ending with an Agape of hot-cross buns and coffee. Our friends from the United Reformed Church will be joining us as usual. On the day before, Wednesday March 22, the customary AUSTERITY LUNCH will be held at Wayside from 12.00 to 14.00, and all gifts will be for Christian Aid.

GOOD FRIDAY: 10.00 Children's Service; 12.00 - 15.00 The Three Hours Devotion, divide into 6 periods of half-an-hour each. All offerings for the Church Missionary Society. (The Teddington Christian Council are arranging a Service of Witness followed by a vigil opposite Teddington Hospital beginning at 10.30. Procession of Witness leaves St. Francis de sales at 10.10)

EASTER EVEN: 20.00 Meditation and Vigil. 21.00 The Catechumenate: Celebration of the Liturgy.

EASTER DAY: Holy Communion at 08.00 and 12.10; Parish and Family Communion at 09.30; followed by refreshments in church (we shall celebrate today by restoring coffee to the Parish Breakfast after the long penance of tea!); Children's Service at 11.15; Infant Baptism 16.00; Evensong 18.30

EASTER MONDAY 09.30 Holy Communion

EASTER TUESDAY 19.15 Holy Communion

THE ANNUNCIATION, April 4 Holy Communion at 10.30 (Mothers' Union Corporate Communion, followed by coffee and informal meeting at Wayside) and at 19.15.

OTHER DATES TO NOTE

March

- 13 14.30 Editorial Board (21, St, James's Road)
- 14 20.00 Properties Committee (7, Blandford Road)
- 15 20.00 Social Committee (41, Wellington Road)
- 18 Paper Day
- 29 20.00 Stewardship Committee (106, Park Road)

April

- 7 20.00 Barn Dance (Hall)
- 8 14.30 Mothers' Union Jumble Sale (Hall)
- 17 19.30 Friends of the Maddison Clinic: Social Gathering followed by AGM (Queen's Road Clinic)
- 19 20.30 ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING, preceded at 19.15 by 'AT HOME' (Hall)

LATE DUTY CHEMISTS' ROTA

- March 12 Martin F.G. 28b Priory Rd. Hampton
- March 19 Manley D.G., 122 High St. Teddington
- Good Friday March 24 Moss E., 14 Broad Street, Teddington.
- Easter Mon. March 27 Hall, H., 62 High Street, Teddington.
- April 2 Kirby E.R., 53 High Street, Teddington
- April 9th Boots, 66 Broad Street, Teddington