

LIFE

June 2022

Christ Church
Ecclestone
magazine

Church to 'ring in' the Jubilee

For most of Christ Church's long history, those living in Ecclestone will have been well used to the distinctive sound of the church bell (pictured below) peeling regularly, whether to announce each Sunday service or mark a special occasion such as wedding. In recent years however, the bell has remained largely still and silent. All of that is about to change, however, thanks to a lovely idea from congregation member, Mike Horton.

With the Queen's Platinum Jubilee taking place in early June, Mike and the rest of PCC were wondering what we could do as a Church to mark such a momentous occasion. And that's when Mike was struck (pun very much intended!) with inspiration! The resulting idea was that we should ring in the Jubilee with the Church Bell - and in a big way, too.

Plans were soon agreed, and we are very pleased to announce that to mark the Queens Platinum Jubilee, the Church bell at Christ Church will be rung on the 2 - 5th June at 11 o'clock each morning - with 70 tolls each time to commemorate each year of Her Majesty's reign. The final day - Sunday 5th - will coincide with the congregation leaving Church and if the weather allows on that day, we are hoping to serve refreshments outside church to welcome members of the community to see the bell being rung.

Mike will be on the rope each time ringing the bell, with David Parr there to assist. Announcements have gone out on social media - as well as in Church and here in the magazine - so that local

residents are aware and know to expect the now unusual sound! But that isn't all Christ Church is doing to mark the event. Jennie Platt is organising for the Lych gate to be decorated in red, white and blue, ensuring our celebrations are visible - as well as audible.

And it is only fitting that as a Church we do mark the occasion, to recognise the tireless dedication, devotion and faith of Her Majesty, as Supreme Governor of the Church of England, since her inauguration in 1952.

As Mike says, we hope the local residents enjoy hearing the bell to mark such a momentous occasion, and if people would like to come and listen to the peel close-up, feel free to congregate at Christ Church on Sunday 5th as mentioned. On behalf of everyone at Christ Church, we issue our warmest congratulations to Her Majesty on her Platinum Jubilee, and our gratitude for her devoted service.



SUMMER FAIR - Christ Church is holding a small Summer Fair on Saturday June 18th from 1.30 to 3.30 pm. In case the Orchard is not finished a few stalls will be set up in front of church. There will be refreshments and a cake stall. We hope you can supply some cakes and items for tombola. A craft stall is planned and a duck hunt for children. We hope to see you there. Please spread the word.

Annual Church Meeting (APCM)

Christ Church held its APCM in May, at which a number of important announcements were made. Firstly it was announced that after numerous years of dedicated and faithful service, our Church Wardens, Phil Larsen and Chris Hoyle, were to retire from their roles. A vote of thanks was paid to them both on behalf of the congregation by Jeff Rimmer, who chaired the meeting in Rev Sonya Doragh's absence. I am sure everyone would wish to echo these sentiments, and pass on our sincere and heartfelt thanks to Chris and Phil, who have been wonderful in the role and whose hard work has been appreciated by all.

Happily, congregation member Jean Middlehurst came forward to offer her services as a new Church Warden. Jean's nomination was unanimously accepted, and so we welcome Jean in her new role as Church Warden. All church members are encouraged to prayerfully consider taking up the vacancy of second churchwarden to work alongside Jean.

In the Electoral Roll Officers report it was announced that there are currently 116 people on the electoral role, a reduction of 14 from last year. We still do not have an Electoral Role Officer, and it would be appreciated if someone felt able to step forward and take on this relatively small role.

In the Treasurer's Report it was announced that we are maintaining a monthly loss, and members who are not currently using the Parish Giving scheme to support the Church with a regular donation are please encouraged to join if you feel able. Jeff Rimmer also led those present in prayers for Rev Sonya, who continues in her bereavement absence.

The consecration of Christ Church

Prompted by Gratten Williams' talk for Thursday Fellowship in May, this month we thought we would look at little closer at the history of our beautiful Church. David Parr has found this fascinating article which dates from Christ Church's consecration in 1838 - and appeared in *The Gentleman's Magazine* (note the spelling of Magazine!). Below is the full content of the article. As David points out - £80 is £9,440 in today's money! The reference to 600 persons is remarkable too. Many thanks David.

THE GENTLEMAN'S MAGAZINE.

BY SYLVANUS URBAN, GENT. - VOLUME X.

NEW SERIES. MDCCCXXXVIII.

JULY TO DECEMBER INCLUSIVE.

From Page 653

Oct. 10. The consecration took place of Christ Church, at Eccleston, in the parish of Prescot, built solely at the expense of Samuel Taylor, Esq. of Eccleston Hall. It is a neat Gothic edifice, adapted for the accommodation of 600 persons, and is fitted up in the interior in a manner much superior to the great majority of modern churches. The ceiling is entirely of oak, in panel-work, and the principal timbers which are left open to the sight are enriched with

carvings and pendants. The front of the gallery, the enclosure of the altar, and the holy table itself, as well as the panels of the doors, are all of ancient carved oak, descriptive of sacred subjects. The pulpit and reading-pew are also of carved oak—the former a very ancient one removed from St. Saviour's, Southwark, during the recent alterations. Mr. Taylor has been his own architect; and every portion of the building seemed to indicate not only a correct acquaintance with the principles of the noble art, but a most judicious application of them to the devout purpose for which the building is designed. A collection, which amounted to upwards of £80 was afterwards made for the purpose of building a school, to be attached to the church.



A guided tour of Christ Church with Gratten Williams

To people who have been attending Christ Church for many years, Gratten Williams will be a familiar figure. And although Gratten now works - and worships - at Liverpool Cathedral, he remains a font of knowledge when it comes to the architecture and historical features of Christ Church.

Following his fascinating talk for Thursday Fellowship in May, we asked Gratten to write up some of his insights for the benefit of readers. Here, Gratten tells us a little bit about himself, and a whole lot more about the Church at the heart of our community. Over to Gratten...

"I have lived in Eccleston and Windle for most of my life so you can call me a local lad. I joined the "small" Sunday school in 1951 and when, at the age of seven, I was tall enough to see over the music desks I joined the choir. I joined BB (Boys Brigade) in 1960 and became an officer in my late teens. I was also in the pipe band. I helped to run and organise the large youth club meeting on Saturdays and Sundays. I had the opportunity to be a Lay Clerk in the Cathedral choir and with Jim Hamilton's blessing I moved to worship at the Cathedral for about 5 years, returning to Christ Church in 1981 when our second daughter was born. I then became organist and Choir master, only relinquishing these posts when I trained for Reader Ministry. Some 20 years ago, for reason I will not go into here, I sadly left Christ Church and continued my Reader Ministry at the Cathedral where my wife Diane and I have worshipped ever since.

To return back to Christ Church, to stand on the chancel step and to chat to faces I have known for years, and to faces new to my eyes was indeed a real treat. It is now 70 years since I first sat in the front pews listening to the Reverend W A Nagington and, even at that early age, I marvelled at the sound of the Walker organ as played by Mr Sydney Pover Smith. On leaving Christ Church to go to the Cathedral one former incumbent wrote "Gratten leaves us to go to his spiritual home...." How wrong he was. Christ Church is, and always will be, my spiritual home; and the people of its congregation were, to us a modern expression, my "Spiritual Mentors". I owe them a great deal of thanks as, day by day and year by year, they both taught me, and showed me the love of Christ through their lives.

I think that it was Mr Nagington, that's what we always called him, who taught me the importance of a place of worship. He explained that God was indeed everywhere and that we could talk to him whenever and wherever we wished, but when we were in His house then we had the real opportunity to listen for the "still small voice of God". That is why we should always treat the House of God as a special place and give it the reverence due to it. Churches were designed, furnished and decorated,

to inspire us to find God through Prayer, through the Word, through Worship and through Music. Mr Nagington said that we are fortunate to have such a beautiful church with both windows and carvings that spoke to us from both Old and New Testament.

With this background I suppose that it was only natural that I should always be asking questions about the church, why is this here? What does that carving depict? What does that window tell us? Many of my questions were aimed at Mr Crosby senior, Gordon's father, who thankfully was a patient man. My knowledge of the windows came from spending many hours with my friend David Martlew who was an acknowledged expert on Stained Glass and on Victorian Stained glass in particular. He described the windows in Christ Church as probably the best collection of Victorian stained glass in the North of England. David was a fellow chorister at Christ Church and he became my trainer for my Reader Ministry. Many of the words ...cont'd overleaf



I used in my talk relating to the windows were in fact the words of David. Although I did get carried away when talking about other parts of the church and I take responsibility for those particular words!

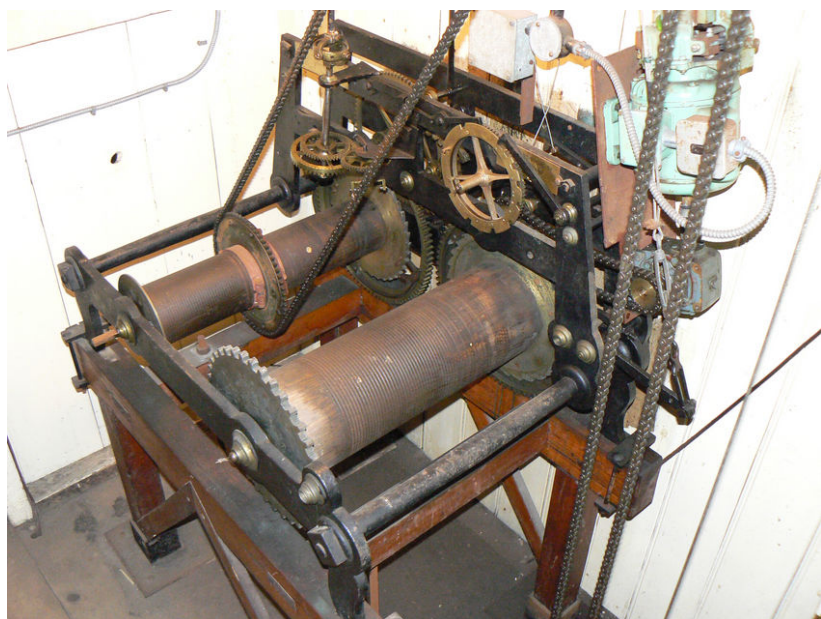
As hinted at earlier Christ Church is unusually fortunate to possess a fine collection of Victorian stained glass. Few churches in the area are so completely glazed, and few can boast glass of such high quality. [Next month we will cover Gratten's knowledge of our stained glass in a dedicated article as space doesn't allow this month. We jump now to his knowledge of the Church's carvings]. Our wonderful "Holy Table" dates from 1665, and for many years this was covered but now can be seen in all its beauty. The carvings at the front of the sanctuary come from the Netherlands. The one moved to the choir stalls depicts The Ark of The Covenant, the Feeding of the Israelites in the desert and Jesus taking water from the Samaritan woman. And on the vestry doors we have carvings of the Nativity Scene and the Presentation of Christ at the Temple.

The mosaic [floor] tiles were fitted by a master of the art from Italy. The pulpit (pictured below) came from St Saviours Church Southwark and is reputed to have been carved by the great Grinling Gibbons. We certainly have furniture fit for the House of God.

Simple memorials pay tribute to the famous such as Richard Seddon the longest serving Prime Minister of New Zealand and a man of Eccleston; and to a less famous worker from Ravenhead much loved by his work colleagues. We turn west to see the gallery supported by two wooden columns from the Pro Cathedral of St Peter in Liverpool and on the gallery the 1912 organ by JW Walker of London at the cost of £510. This instrument was so well built that it is still working having had only one major restoration in its 110 years of service.

I could not finish my talk without mentioning the "out of site" and I am sorry to say "out of mind" marvel hidden in the tower of our church, the clock (workings pictured below). Made by Thomas Harrison of Finney Lane, Liverpool in 1795. A clock that is probably the oldest turret clock in the North West of England. It also came from the Pro Cathedral of St Peter in Liverpool. It was damaged by vandals some 25 or so years ago; it's great pendulum has never swung or it's hammer never struck the church bell since then. As a child I would stay awake to hear and to count the chime of the bell as the sound travelled across from the church to Clarkes Crescent. To the relief of my parents I never got beyond nine o'clock!

The purpose of stained glass windows is to teach, to admonish, and remind us of the Gospel of Salvation and of the God to whose glory we are made. The other furnishings are there to do the same thing but to my mind they are there to help and uplift our worship. Christ Church stands in the parish as a beacon to our faith; it stands and says today "Christians worship here" and have done so for 184 years. May we never take our church building for granted and may it's bell call the people of Eccleston to worship for many years to come. Gratten Williams.



Bowls of fun

An update from Judith Johnson

Back in April this magazine very kindly printed a copy of our club's Bowl for Health poster. This was part of an initiative from the Merseyside Sports Foundation aimed at encouraging people to give crown green bowling a try, hoping that they would like what they found and join a club. We were not the only club taking part in this drive to find new members - many others in the Merseyside area were also involved. I say "were" but I should really say "are", as the six-week course that we offered is still going on. A team of our members are coaching over a dozen people who have come along as a result of seeing the publicity to find out what it's all about, and whether they would like to play more regularly. They meet on our green, just off Burrows Lane, every Wednesday and lessons are supposed to last an hour, but I am told everyone is enjoying themselves so much that some stay on longer. Bowling is a brilliant way for people, especially older ones, to have fresh air and exercise, and to socialise with others. We have a lovely green, looked after by a small team of our own men who work very hard to produce a first-class playing surface, and over 40 members who take advantage of their membership to play whenever they want.

For years a group have met on Tuesday and Thursday afternoons to play among themselves, drink tea and chat, but once you join and have a key you can go along and play whenever you want. A great way to get out and enjoy the sunshine in the company of like-minded people! If I am whetting anyone's appetite and they are wishing they had signed up for the lessons, do just come along on either of those afternoons and someone will help you get started.

Over the years a large proportion of the club's members have been people from Christ Church. Not many at present, just Gill and Jeff, Helen and myself. But not long ago there were many more and I hope there will be again. You may recognise some of us on the photos I have added!

Judith Johnson (Chairman)



The Orchard: an update

As our picture on the right shows there are definite signs of progress at The Orchard, but it hasn't been plain sailing of late. Those of you who follow Christ Church's Facebook page will have seen the less than happy announcement regarding vandalism taking place around the site, and on a number of occasions police and the fire service have had to attend site as several fires have been started in the skip. More recently, some of the new brick work that had been erected as part of the building process has also been pulled down.

To try to counter the problem builders have had to recruit a night watchman to ensure the site is manned 24 hours a day. Here's Rev Sonya's message from her Facebook announcement:

"May I ask your help please? Over the last few days we have needed to call the fire brigade or police every afternoon or evening as arsonists and vandals seem to be targeting the building work the church is carrying out on Church Lane.

If you are out and near the site would you look and listen for anyone inside the fencing and call the police if there is. If you see a fire in the skip or elsewhere on the site please call the firebrigade straight away. Duplicate calls are preferable to the building burning down. Please do not intervene with an incident, fire or people, your safety is more important.

Our hope is that The Orchard will be a gift to our whole community, gathering those of all ages, of any faith or none. It has taken years to get this far and it is heartbreaking to see something being built from love and generosity being treated so carelessly."



Funerals

Molly Davies
Pam Dickinson
Brenda Owen

Special Moments with Jennie Platt

I appreciate the brightly coloured flowers that signal more sunshine but I am disappointed that the hedgehogs have not returned to the garden. Thankfully, one has been spotted in the church field. I have warned the gardening group to be careful as they battle with new growth especially the garlic. Hopefully, the hedgehogs survived the mowing of the field which left an amazing view and lingering smell of newly mown grass. Sadly, only one cygnet this year but I did capture a picture when it was very young.

I have recently visited Kirby Lonsdale in Cumbria. It is a lovely market town on the edge of the Yorkshire Dales. An interesting variety of independent shops and stalls cluster around a distinctive memorial. The surrounding countryside is stunning. Spanning the River Lune is the notorious Devil's Bridge which is said to date back to the 13th century. Like many ancient bridges of the same name, it features a legend that the Devil appeared to an old woman. The story goes that the Devil promised to build a bridge in exchange for the first soul to cross over it. When the bridge was finished the woman threw bread over the bridge and her dog chased it and outwitted the Devil. If you look closely, you can see an impression in the stone known locally as the Devil's handprint.

On a lighter note, I have been looking for items to make you smile. I came across a happy bride and groom outside a wedding venue and a painted log in the woods. Hopefully, we can have more pleasant times as we gather together to hear the church bell ring for the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and visit the stalls at the small fair planned for June 18th.

Best wishes

N.B. For our final Platinum Jubilee Bell Peel on Sunday 5th June, we hope to provide refreshments outside Church for the congregation and any community members who wish to hear the bell being rung. Decorated cakes would be welcome to offer as part of these refreshments if any of you would be able to bring some. Many thanks.





Fathers Day

P	R	S	K	N	I	L	F	F	U	C	O	F	P
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P	P	O	I	E	T	I	V	I	Z	R	C	H	N
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A	E	E	S	H	H	T	O	L	R	A	C	E	N
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- HERO
- PARENT
- WATCH
- CUFF LINKS
- STRONG
- FATHER
- JACKET
- UNCLE
- HAT
- FISHING
- PHONE
- MAN CAVE
- FOOTBALL
- DADDY
- SPORTSCAR
- RESPECT
- BEER
- WALLET
- RAZOR
- LOVE

Play this puzzle online at : <https://thewordsearch.com/puzzle/220634/>

This month we're celebrating Father's Day, so why not colour in the letters on our Father's Day message and see if you can find the missing letters in the grid. Happy Fathers Day to all our wonderful Dads!

