

Kensington

Parish News

Autumn 2013 | Free

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Front Cover: *THE APPARITION OF ST MICHAEL THE ARCHANGEL*

Would readers wishing to submit articles for our next issue Winter2013 or would like to advertise in the KPN (all proceeds to the church) please email kensingtonparishnews@gmail.com

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Heythrop College Public Events Michaelmas Term 2013

Wednesday 23 October, 18.30

From Louvain to London:
Theology on the Hoof
A look at Heythrop's History with
the Heythrop Association of Alumni
& Staff:
Mr Michael Walsh

Thursday 24 October, 11.30

On Religious Freedom
Heythrop Institute Public Lecture:
Professor José Casanova

Monday 28 October, 18.30

*Nisi crederet non caperet. Looking
Back to Post-Modernity with Nicholas
of Cusa*
Inaugural Professorial Lecture:
Professor Johannes Hoff

Monday 11 November, 18.30

*Grey Wisdom: Not Quite the Last
Word on Religious Pluralism*
Inaugural Professorial Lecture:
Professor Michael Barnes SJ

Thursday 14 November, 18.30

*Chaplaincy Loyola Lecture: A Legacy
of Hope - how a tragic murder
inspired hope and a change for good*
Margaret and Barry Mizen

Friday 15 November, 10.00

Heythrop Institute: *An Introduction
to Theological Action Research*

Thursday 28 November, 18.30

Loschert Lecture 2:
Baroness Scotland of Asthal

Friday 29 November, 17.30

*Poetry: the Relationship between
Poetry and Faith*
Dr Elena Buia Rutt, introduced
by Dr Antonio Spadaro SJ

**Full details and how to book
for any of these events are at**

[www.heythrop.ac.uk/
about-us/allevnts.html](http://www.heythrop.ac.uk/about-us/allevnts.html)

November Ethics Lecture Series

Wednesday 6 November, 18.00

*How much is Enough? The love of
money and the case for a good life*
Lord Robert Skidelsky

Wednesday 13 November, 18.00

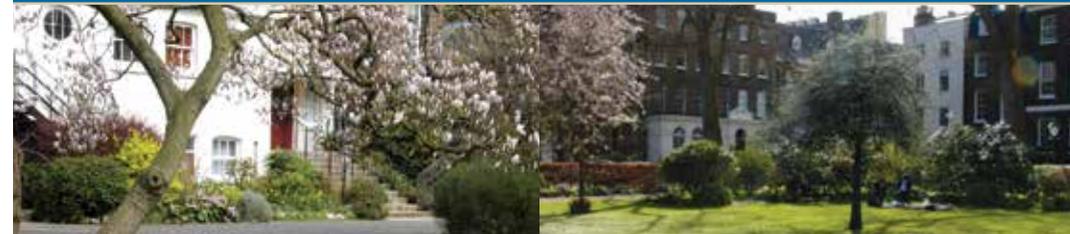
Conscience and its meaning today
Dr Piers Benn

Wednesday 20 November, 18.00

*Ethics in Action: The Challenge of
Implementing Corporate Social
Responsibility*
Mr Russell Sparkes

Wednesday 27 November, 18.00

*Imagination and the Art of Moral
Transformation*
Dr Anna Abram



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VICAR'S VOICE

Revd **Jenny Welsh**

In the weekly school assembly the children are asked who is having a birthday and the child whose birthday it is lights the candle to signal the beginning of the assembly. It's a nice way for a child to feel that their birthday is important. In a way, the date of our birth is a sign that we do exist, and we are an identifiable and identified person.

What's odd, though, is that we don't usually mark the birthdays of saints in the church: what we usually mark is the day that we identify with their death, rather than their birth - the day when they are gathered up to new life with God, if you like.

But Mary, the blessed Virgin is nearly unique, in that the church marks not her death and her birth - just as we mark the birth and death of John the Baptist, and also of course of Jesus himself. Their lives are bound together in the story of salvation, and so it is right that their beginnings and ends should be held together by the church too. Like our own birthdays these festivals of birth remind us that these people were real, born to real human families and lived real lives.

On our patronal feast day at St Mary Abbots it is Mary herself who commands our attention.



Madonna and Child by Guy Reid, St Matthew's, Westminster

My early Christian formation was a solidly protestant one, and the lives of the saints and Mary have only relatively recently become important in my personal spiritual discipline. I found the saints to be sometimes rather distant figures, and the way they are often described in paintings and sculpture can seem rather inhuman in their beauty and perfection.

I would like to offer you two images of Mary that have made her real for me, images which portray her as a real woman and mother, and thus as someone to whom I might direct my own devotion.

The first image of Mary comes from a modern statue, which you can see in St Matthew's in Westminster. Like so many other statues of the Virgin, the figure of Mary is seated with the Christ Child on her lap. But there the similarity ends. In this particular statue, Mary isn't demurely lowering her eyes; nor are there draped robes modestly covering her head and body. Here, the figure of Mary is as naked as the child on her lap. She is an ordinary young woman, not particularly beautiful, quite muscular, and with an intense and fierce look on her face as she rests her chin on the back of the baby's head, with eyes that stare back at us; and the perfectly ordinary baby is clearly very young. Far from being a plaster saint, to be venerated and prayed to, this Mary is in a sense every young mother, as her child is just like every young baby. It's an affectionate, unsentimental image of a real woman and her real child. She isn't someone to be exalted on a plinth, surrounded by candles and flowers but rather someone with her feet firmly on the ground, to be reckoned with and taken seriously.

The other image is even more striking in its humanity: it's a painting by Max Ernst, of Mary and the Christ Child once again on her lap, but in this case, he lies across her knee and getting a smack on his backside from his redfaced and furious mother. Mary's halo,



Max Ernst, *The Virgin punishing Jesus in front of three witnesses*: André Breton, Paul Eluard and the painter, 1926

the only clue as to who she is, is jammed on her head, and immovable, while her son's has been dislodged in the struggle, and lies in the dust on the ground. In the background looking in through the window are witnesses to this scene of real domestic life, just as we are. We wonder whether they are as shocked as we are, to see Our Lady showing her frustration with a naughty Saviour of the World. And we realise that the expression of serenity that we usually see on her face may not have come as naturally to her as we might imagine. Here

Jesus is an all too real child and she is a real mother trying to raise him as best she can. Again, she isn't a woman to be venerated but she is a woman to be reckoned with.

The reason I like these two images is that they remind us that the Mary of the gospel accounts was a real person of flesh and blood, of emotion and passion, just like the rest of us. They remind us, that her Son, though he was God incarnate, he was also flesh and blood like his mother and like us too. This is after all what incarnation means - God being made flesh - being born and dying like the rest of us. As we celebrated the feast of the Mary's nativity, we gave thanks that when God comes into the world to redeem creation, he joins himself not with the unusually holy, or the extraordinarily pure, but with the ordinary and unholy stuff of life - like flesh and blood, like bread and wine, like you and me.

Parish Directory

Clergy, wardens, vestry and office

THE PARISH

Vicar of the Parish	The Rev'd Gillean Craig	020 7937 6032	gillean.craig@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Parochial Church Wardens	David Banks	07732 743 228	dcjb@btinternet.com
	Adrian Weale	020 7937 0765	adrianweale@mac.com
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Electoral Roll Officer:	James Dunford-Wood	07732 842894	er@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Parish Administrator:	Susan Russell	020 7937 2419	susan.russell@stmaryabbotschurch.org



ST MARY ABBOTS

Associate Vicar	The Rev'd Jenny Welsh	020 7937 2364	jennywelsh@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Honorary Priests	The Rev'd Peter Stubbs	020 8868 8296	peter.stubbs@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Deputy Churchwardens for St Mary Abbots Church:			
	Carole-Anne Phillips	020 7937 3448	
	Thomas Williams	07768 166 422	tw@thomaswilliamsfineart.com
	George MacAllan	020 7937 5136	george.macallan@stmaryabbotschurch.org
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St Mary Abbots Centre	Mark Uglow		music@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Director of Music	James Egert	07920 591 553	stewardship@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Stewardship Secretary			
Children on Sunday / Children's Champion	Alexandra Swann		children@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Friends of St Mary Abbots	David Banks (Chairman)	07732 743 228	friends@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Bellringers	David Holdridge (Secretary)		david.holdridge@ntl.world.com
Kensington Parish News	Fiona Braddock (Editor)		kpneditor@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Friday Playgroup	Laura Sylvester	07770 920 085	playgroup@stmaryabbotschurch.org



CHRIST CHURCH

Associate Vicar with Special Responsibility for Christ Church	The Rev'd Mark O'Donoghue	020 7937 2966	mark@christchurchkensington.com
Deputy Wardens:	Adrian Weale	020 7937 0765	adrianweale@mac.com
	Philip Witheridge	020 7937 5184	pip@thewitheridges.com
Administrator	Adele Pye	020 7937 2966	admin@christchurchkensington.com
Director of Music	Rupert Perkins		

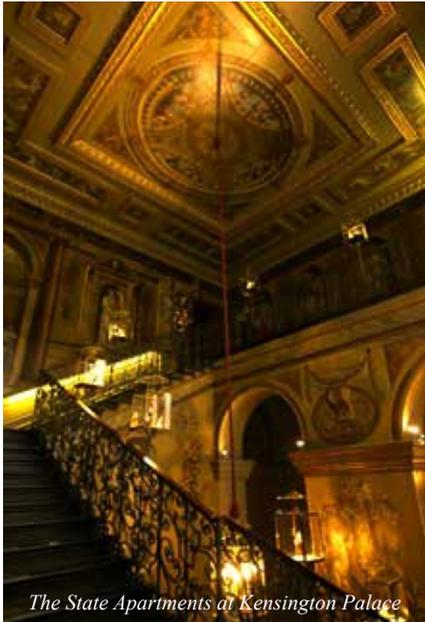


ST PHILIPS

Associate Vicar with Special Responsibility for St Philip	The Rev'd David Walsh	020 7603 4420	vicar@spectr.org
Non-Stipendiary Ministers	The Rev'd Lesley Perry		lesley.perry@spectr.org
	The Rev'd Ijeoma Ajibade		ijeoma.ajibade@spectr.org
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	Callum Stewart	07860 579 838	callum.stewart@spectr.org
	Rupert Steele	020 8747 1556	rupert@spectr.org
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Administrator	Erica Roane		children@spectr.org
Children's Ministry Leader	Chris Luxton	020 7937 4159	chris.luxton@spectr.org
Membership Secretary	Rebecca Taylor		rebecca.taylor@spectr.org
Director of Music			

A NEW ARRIVAL IN THE PARISH

The most influential person in London is about to move to the Royal Borough, **Barbara Want** tells us more about the history of his new home



The State Apartments at Kensington Palace

Kensington Palace will once again be in the spotlight as the Duke and Duchess move into their new apartments around the corner from St Mary Abbots.

Kensington Palace started life as a private country house in around 1605. Kensington was then but a village, known for having ‘very good air’, a fact not lost on King William III who suffered from chronic asthma, exacerbated by his damp dwellings

in Whitehall. He bought Nottingham House - as it was then known - for the princely sum of £20,000 in 1689, and set about making it the seat of the reigning monarch.

Like all good residents of RBKC he and his wife Mary II couldn’t contemplate moving in without an extensive refurbishment programme, which was undertaken by Sir Christopher Wren. Their time there, though, was short-lived. Mary died after just five years at the Palace - of smallpox. She was 32 and hadn’t produced an heir. Six years later William fell from his horse and broke his collar bone. Retreating to Kensington Palace he lay in bed for several weeks before catching pneumonia. He died soon after.

The Palace remained the favoured royal residence and played host to Queen Anne, George I and George II until 1760, when George III moved his court to Buckingham Palace and Kensington Palace ceased to serve as the seat of the reigning monarch.

The only monarch to be born within the walls of Kensington Palace was Queen Victoria, but the many years she spent there as a child were not happy ones. Her father died when she was an infant and her mother – German-born Princess Victoria of Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld, subsequently the Duchess

of Kent - was a controlling woman who set up the ‘Kensington System’ to monitor her daughter’s every move. Victoria learned of her accession at the Palace, but moved almost immediately to Buckingham Palace, though it was at Kensington Palace that she first met her husband to be, Prince Albert.

A statue of Queen Victoria now graces the new public entrance to Kensington Palace.

In recent times the Palace has been associated with the unhappy marriage of Prince Charles and Princess Diana in the shadow of which Prince William grew up. He’ll be moving his family into different apartments, returning to Princess Margaret’s living quarters which have been extensively refurbished. Though not by Sir Christopher Wren.

The State Apartments are now open to the public: you can visit the room where William III played soldiers with his young nephew, Queen Mary II’s bedroom and the room where the 18-year old Victoria awoke to be told she was to be Queen. In The Kings Gallery is a dial connected to a wind-vane on the roof built by William III so he could see which way the wind was blowing and where his navy was likely to be heading. The ‘Sunken Garden’ outside was built by Edward VII to re-create the gardens that existed at the Palace in the 17th century.

You might not catch a glimpse of young Prince George - but perhaps Father Gilleen can persuade him to come round one Sunday for our Family Eucharist.

ST MARY ABBOTS

Sundays

8.00 am Holy Eucharist
9.30 am *SUNG EUCHARIST*
with Creche & Sunday School
11.15 am Choral Matins & Sermon
12.30 pm *HOLY EUCHARIST*
6.30 pm Evensong with Sermon & Holy Eucharist
1st Sunday of month:
Taize Prayer & Holy Eucharist

Mondays

8.30 am Morning Prayer
1.05 pm Sunday on Monday service
5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Tuesdays

8.30 am Morning Prayer
11.30 am *HOLY EUCHARIST*
Book of Common Prayer
5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Wednesdays

7.10 am Morning Prayer
7.30 am *HOLY EUCHARIST*
2.00 pm 3rd Weds in the month: Holy Eucharist
with Laying-on of Hands & Anointing
5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Thursdays

7.10 am Morning Prayer
9.30 am St Mary Abbots School Eucharist
in term time - all welcome
5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Fridays

7.10 am Morning Prayer
7.30 am *HOLY COMMUNION*
5.30 pm Evening Prayer

Saturdays

9.40 am Morning Prayer
10.00 am *HOLY EUCHARIST*
5.30 pm Evening Prayer

On MAJOR FEASTDAYS additional Services also offered: see the Bulletin & Noticeboard.

CHRIST CHURCH

Sundays

8.30 am *HOLY COMMUNION*
11.00 am *1st and 3rd Sundays in the month & on major Feasts:*
BCP HOLY COMMUNION
11.00 am *2nd & 4th Sundays in the month:*
BCP morning prayer
6.30 pm Contemporary Evening Service

ST PHILIP'S

Sundays

8.30 am Holy Communion
10.30 am *SUNG EUCHARIST with Sunday School*
1st Sundays: all age service with Eucharist
9.00 pm Night Prayer

Monday to Friday

9.10 am Morning Prayer

A POTTERED HISTORY

Beatrix Potter was married in St Mary Abbots. **Jane MacAllan** searches the archive to find out more

Piecing together our history and the reasons why certain events have happened, where they occurred or who participated is sometimes like detective work. The sources to hand often provide clues to part of the picture but not always all of it. 2013 marks the centenary of the marriage of the much loved children's author and illustrator, Helen Beatrix Potter to William Heelis, a solicitor, on 15th October 1913. Why did the ceremony take place at St Mary Abbots Church? What do we know about the service from our records?

We are fortunate to have the marriage register for that period, which gives some insight into who was present. There were four witnesses to the solemnisation of the marriage. Beatrix's parents, Rupert Potter, a retired Barrister, who is described as a 'Gentleman' in the register, and Helen Potter both signed. Lelio Stampa, an Oxford don and cousin of William Heelis, seems to have been the only representative of the Heelis family there to support William. The fourth witness was Gertrude M. Woodward.

Linda Lear's biography, *Beatrix Potter: A Life in Nature*, reveals that Gertrude was the daughter of Dr Henry Woodward, Keeper of Geology at the British Museum. Prior to becoming an author, Beatrix aspired to

being a scientific illustrator. In 1895 Caroline Martineau, Principal of Morley Memorial College for Working Men and Women, commissioned her to draw twelve lithographs to illustrate science lectures. Martineau had heard of Beatrix's artistic abilities through her own family, as her cousin, James Martineau, was a Unitarian theologian and mentor to Rupert Potter. It is thought that Beatrix probably consulted Dr Woodward, the leading authority on the Palaeozoic period, for her drawings of fossils. Around this time, Beatrix met his daughter, Gertrude, who was also an artist and scientific illustrator. They became firm friends.

The marriage ceremony was conducted by Rev. Charles Samuel Durham, Assistant Curate. Interestingly part of his ministry focused on children and he was Chaplain to the King's Messengers, a branch of the Children's Guild of Help Union. The parish magazines for the early 1900s tell us that the 'K.M.'s' (as they were known) aimed to support foreign mission work by encouraging 'children attached to our congregations' to become involved 'in various works already in existence for the benefit of others, and to foster in them the spirit of unselfishness, so that they may, in their early lives, learn to live for others and to do acts of kindness'.

Beatrix was born and brought up at 2 Bolton Gardens, South Kensington, this 'unloved birthplace', as Beatrix later referred to it. Yet she was not a parishioner. She was brought up as a Unitarian.

Unitarianism grew out of the Protestant Reformation of the 16th century. During the 17th century the belief in God as one person grew within some parts of the Church of England and spread among dissenters from the Established Church. During the 18th century Unitarianism thinking began to express itself as a movement and it was only legally recognised in 1813. It affirmed the essential unity of humankind and of creation. Today, Unitarianism is still identified with religious liberalism and tolerance. In fact, it was the



first Church in Britain to accept women as ministers in 1904.

It is to William Heelis we must turn for part of the explanation for the choice of church. He came from an extensive family well known in the old counties of Westmorland and Cumbria. His father is noted in the marriage register as 'John Heelis (deceased), Clerk in Holy Orders'. Another John Heelis, a great-nephew of 'Willie' (as he was known to his family), has researched the family background. Willie's father was the first Rector of Dufton on the East Fellside, and later of Kirkby Thore between Appleby and Penrith in Cumbria. His grandfather, Edward, was the Rector of Long Marton, near Appleby, for forty-two years. Thus Willie, the youngest of eleven children, was brought up as an Anglican and, not surprisingly, two of his brothers became parish priests.

Lear describes St Mary Abbots as 'elegant and socially prestigious' with 'a long and distinguished history, dating to medieval times'. She suggests that the choice of church may also have been a concession to Beatrix's parents' social standing. Rupert, a keen amateur photographer (an interest he shared



with Beatrix), was friends with John Everett Millais, artist, who lived in Palace Gate. Rupert used to visit Millais and photographed not only the artist himself in his studio, but also some of his sitters. Millais rated Rupert's photographs so highly that he often used them as the basis for his portraits, including

that of Prime Minister William Gladstone. Rupert photographed Gladstone in 1884 when he sat for his second portrait (of three!) by Millais, which now hangs in Eton College. The following year Gladstone created Millais a baronet. Rupert's photograph, along with some of his others, is now held by the National Portrait Gallery. Two of Millais' children were married in St Mary Abbots Church: his daughter, Alice, in 1886 and his son, Geoffroy, in 1901 – both of which are in the parish marriage registers. Perhaps this influenced the Potters' decision over choice of venue for their only daughter's wedding.

Thus, from the parish records together with other sources, we can begin to build a picture of who, what, why, when and where.

CELEBRATING THE 100 YEAR ANNIVERSARY OF
BEATRIX POTTER MARRYING WILLIAM HEELIS
IN ST. MARY ABBOTS CHURCH, KENSINGTON, LONDON W8

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BEATRIX
POTTER
MOBILE

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BALLET
WORKSHOP

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BEATRIX
POTTER
STORY

COMPETE IN
OUTDOOR
GAMES

DECORATE
CAKES &
BISCUITS



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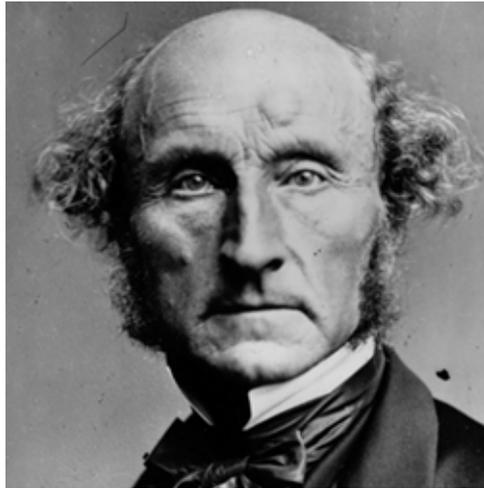
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ON JOHN STUART MILL

Bella Thomas Varouxakis reports on a new book published this month about the great libertarian and thinker

A member of St Mary Abbots congregation, Georgios Varouxakis, has published a new book with Cambridge University Press about one of Kensington's most celebrated former parishioners, John Stuart Mill, the 19th century political philosopher and writer. Mill lived in Kensington Square from his birth in 1806 until 1851 when he married Harriet Taylor. Among many other things, Mill wrote the seminal work *On Liberty* in 1859: it is arguably the most important defence of liberty ever written. This ground-breaking book established standards for the relationship between authority and liberty and continues to serve as the foundation stone of liberal beliefs. But in Britain, Mill's pioneering classics are taken so much for granted that he is little discussed these days, except by scholars and devotees. Georgios' book, *Liberty Abroad: JS Mill on International Relations* looks at Mill's views and activism on the international relations of his time, on how ideas of liberty can best be spread in other countries: what is now a highly topical issue.

Ironically, in other countries, Mill is more readily remembered and cited, perhaps because he remains more necessary. Georgios grew up in a village in Crete. The Greek dictatorship was still in power. When

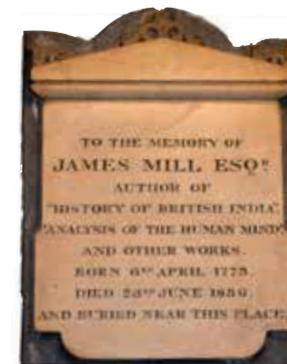


Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974, he was eight years' old, staying with his grandparents in a remote village where he looked after the donkey and collected lemons. The shock that followed his father's sudden call up to the army, led Georgios to begin reading the newspaper every day. This was one of the turning points that drew him into an interest in politics and history. He became known as the "politician" in his village. His family were appalled when later he wanted to study in Athens. They didn't want him to leave the village. They were even more distressed when he decided to do a Masters' degree in History in London, his father sent food

parcels (Cretan style) and money to help him. Gradually, his family came to understand that that would be Georgios' life, and he then became a lecturer and later Reader in History, and the history of political thought, at Queen Mary College, London University.

When Georgios read Mill's works as an undergraduate, he found it a deep political and personal awakening. He explains that when you grow up in a village, you are exposed to countless bossy people telling you what to do. When he came to read Mill, he understood that he could, if necessary ignore them. He could be himself, he could break some customs and expectations. Mill had written that eccentrics were not only to be tolerated but thanked. Oddness and diversity were good for communities because it made them challenge their own assumptions, Mill wrote. Georgios says it was a kind of balm against the influence of the village. Mill's writings spoke directly to him.

And then Mill the man inspired Georgios deeply. He had been educated at home by his father, James Mill, who was also a historian (to whom there is a plaque at the back of St Mary Abbots church). Mill never went to school: he was taught Ancient Greek from the age of three, and Latin at five. He later wrote an autobiography in which he described his "crisis of my early youth", which came about, he thought, because he only learnt rather late in life about the power of emotions - which he considered a chief defect



of much of his education. It is a passage that is often cited by psychotherapists today.

Mill met his wife, Harriet Taylor, through a Unitarian priest. She was already married. She had complained to the priest that though she loved her husband, she was bored by him. The priest said "you must meet my friend, John Stuart Mill: he is so interesting and his conversation makes life so fascinating". The vicar introduced them, and the two quickly became close friends (arousing the disapproval of much of London society). They married when her first husband eventually died, after 21 years of intimate friendship, and Mill claims that his wife had a profound effect on his writing and thinking. She too was a philosopher. Their mutual devotion was inspiring.

Georgios has now written three books about Mill, and organised an international bicentenary conference to mark Mill's birth and his importance to the world. That there are not hordes of tourists flocking to Mill's house, as they do to Marx's grave, is extraordinary. Mill was a far more benign and subtle thinker. But as a conference-goer pointed out, Mill did not aspire to breed Millists or Millians, as Marx did Marxists: to be a follower of Mill, one becomes an individual who might strongly disagree with other individual followers. And Mill would be proud of that.

If Kensington ever needed to promote itself, it might make more of one of its most famous and important sons.

A GLORIOUS RECEPTION

Max Croft reports on the completion of a new classroom and infant playground at St Mary Abbots School

A new term has started at St Mary Abbots School and with it a new era for the infants after the completion of the reorganised reception classroom and revamped playground.

The wonderful new arrangement is the culmination of a lot of hard work, vision and collaborative effort from the governors, the staff, the London Diocese, FOSMAS (the school parents' association), the school architect, Andre Wong of NBF Partnership, and the school's building committee, led by Dominique Andrews.

Dominique told the KPN that over the last few years a masterplan for the whole school has been drawn up, providing a vision for future improvements. In addition, each year a survey is carried out in the school to pinpoint what needs doing most urgently. It was clear from the 2011/2012 survey that the infants' loos and coat block were in desperate need of rebuilding, explains Dominique. Although initial funding was going to be limited, the committee felt it was an ideal opportunity to look at the whole reception class area with a



view to moving it towards the master plan goal – even if it meant not completing all the work in one go.

When extra funding was generously supplied by the Diocese a final scheme was agreed and it was all systems go. The reception class was moved into the old dining hall and even the church was not left unaffected — refreshments between 9.30 Sung Eucharist and 11.15 Choral Matins found a new home in the main school hall.

But it was over the summer term and school holidays in 2013 that the real building work got under way with the daunting deadline of having the work completed by the time the children came back in September — including the newest and youngest members to join the school. “It was finished the week before the children arrived, allowing just enough time

for the teachers to put the furniture in place!” says Dominique.

The transformation has been extraordinary. The classroom is almost twice the size, the doors open directly on to the playground and the classroom is filled with light. “I think it is a great improvement and hope that the newest members of the school benefit from the changes” says Dominique. “From thinking at one point in the early stages that we might just manage to create an empty shell requiring more work at a later date, to getting a finished classroom is fantastic. We owe a huge thank you to the LDBS, the school's architect, and the contractor, for helping us get to this point.”

But, while the architects may have completed their work, FOSMAS is still beavering away. Over the summer, the



wendy house was repainted and repaired, and a host of play equipment is on its way.

Head teacher Nicola Doyle said: “A new boat has just arrived and there are a range of other exciting things to inspire play activities on their way”.

“The new playground will encourage pupils to develop their imagination, be creative and gives them a wider range of opportunities and play experiences. I am sure they will enjoy this revamped space.

“Without all this support from parents, this could not have happened so quickly – A huge ‘thank you’ to those parents, governors and staff who have helped to make this happen.” Meanwhile, the building committee is returning to its masterplan and already thinking about what needs to be done next. “It might be the room above reception,” suggests Dominique, but we will just have to wait and see.

In the meantime, when you are next passing by on your way to church poke your head through the railings and take a look for yourself at the infant playground. You won't be disappointed.



A VERY APPEELING* TRIP

(* WITH APOLOGIES FROM THE EDITOR)

David Holdridge, the secretary of the St Mary Abbots Bellringers, reports from their annual summer ringing tour

Every August, for more years than some of us care to remember, the St Mary Abbots bellringers have spent a week visiting another part of the UK for a mixture of ringing and relaxing. These trips are attended not only by current members of the team, but also by people who previously rang with us but have since moved away, and thus form an ideal opportunity to renew old friendships and catch up on news and gossip.

In 2013, for the 36th of these annual trips, we returned to Cornwall, where we had last

stayed in 2005. The task of organising this mammoth expedition was mainly shared between two of the team, with the business of booking towers where we could ring being undertaken by Simon, while Stephanie arranged the accommodation and made sure that each day the right number of ringers turned up at the right places at the right time – not as easy as it sounds.

As on the previous occasion, we stayed in self-catering student accommodation on Falmouth University's Penryn Campus, a

couple of miles from Falmouth itself, and only a short drive from a supermarket with a well-stocked wine section. Somewhere between 25 and 30 people attended for all or some of the week, including two who came straight to Cornwall from their honeymoon in Italy – such enthusiasm!

As is often the case with Cornwall, the most stressful element was getting there and back, with long periods of driving punctuated by equally long episodes of sitting in traffic jams. Those who travelled by train almost certainly had the most pleasant journey. Once there, this year saw a slightly more relaxed programme than has sometimes been the case, with not quite so much ringing and a bit more time to consume cream teas, visit ancient holes in the ground, or just enjoy the scenery. There was also usually an opportunity to rest and listen to other people doing the hard work of ringing.

Usually, the daily ringing programme consisted of a full three-hour peal in the morning for some of the group, with the others ringing a couple of quarter-peals. After lunch, the two groups combined again for more quarter peals and some general ringing. Many of the churches we visited were in tiny country villages, although we did ring at some larger towns such as Penzance, Bodmin and Redruth, while some people joined the local ringers at Truro Cathedral for their weekly practice.

Wednesday afternoon was kept free of ringing, to give people a chance to do some of the things that normal people come to Cornwall for. Sadly, the carload hoping to

take a dip in the sea found it a trifle too chilly, and stuck to a game of crazy golf and a paddle instead. Rumour has it that at least two people managed full immersion on Friday, however.

St Mary Abbots has 10 bells, and during the week we rang at both of Cornwall's rings of 10 – Carbis Bay and St Keverne. Most of the other towers we visited had six or eight, although for the first time on a Kensington ringing week we visited some places with only three bells - an experience that was enjoyed by some people more than others. We also managed to ring on both England's westernmost bells – at Sennen, close to Land's End – and southernmost - Landewednack, on the tip of the Lizard peninsula.



PATRONAL FESTIVAL

On the 8th September we were 'At Home' to our neighbours in Christ as we invited all the local churches for our Patronal Festival and Solemn Eucharist. The Mayor of our Royal Borough and local councillors were present and we had the great honour of welcoming as our guest preacher the Bishop of Salisbury, The Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam. It was a most joyful and glorious service, with wonderful liturgy and music from our extended professional choir, followed by a reception organised by Alison Steel.



From top left to the right:
*The Mayor and Fr Gillean;
 The Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam
 and Fr Gillean; Revd Azariah
 France-Williams and Sharon Goode;
 Fr Michael Miller, Eliza Low and
 Pippa Currey*



LEAVING ON A JET PLANE

On a balmy evening in July hordes of parishioners gathered in the Vicar's garden to raise a glass of Singapore Sling to bid farewell to the much loved Bessadas. Sally, Will, Joe and Alex are moving to Singapore and will be SORELY missed. Whoever could have given more to our church? Steve Attack masterminded the Bessada Ball with Alison Steel providing wonderful Malaysian delicacies. Entertainment came care of that famous impresario Fr Gillean Craig, singing *On the Road to Mandalay*.





NEW DEACONS FOR THE DIOCESE OF KENSINGTON

In June Lesley Bilinda and Carys Walsh were ordained as Deacons at St Paul's Cathedral, **Jennifer McGrandle** was there to witness the joyous ceremony

A number of us from St Mary Abbots were privileged to be invited to attend the ordination of Lesley Bilinda at St Paul's Cathedral on Saturday 29th June.

Lesley had helped out at St Mary Abbots for a number of years while working at the Desmond Tutu Foundation and was very much part of the St Mary Abbots family. She then was accepted for training for the priesthood and attended Cuddesdon Theological College, Oxfordshire.

By happy coincidence, Carys Walsh, wife of David Walsh, Associate Vicar of St Philips, Earls Court and Area Dean, was also one of the ordination candidates. Carys is based at St Luke's and Christ Church working half time as curate, and still working half time for the Ministry Division, part of the Archbishops' Council of the Church of England.

It was a glorious June day and the cathedral was full to overflowing with family and friends of the 30 or so candidates who were

being licensed by the Bishop of London to serve in parishes throughout London.

The congregation ranged in age from babes in arms to senior citizens in wheelchairs. The candidates themselves came from widely differing backgrounds and age ranges, evidence indeed that the Church of England is alive and well in London.

Amongst the congregation there was a sense of pride mingled with anticipation as the candidates walked down the aisle towards the altar accompanied by their sponsors.

The main part of the ceremony saw the Bishop lay his hands on the heads of the candidates, before they were each vested in a white stole

symbolising the liturgical role of deacons in the Eucharist. At the end of the service they were given the principal symbol of ministry - the New Testament. The office of deacon is a step on the path towards priesthood and follows two to three years of training.

Sponsoring Lesley were her brother and Gareth Wardell who left us at Christmas 2012 to become vicar of All Saints', Hampton. Many of Lesley's friends continued the celebrations in the evening at her new parish, St Andrew's, Fulham Fields, where she will serve as curate and meet the challenges of an inner London parish, challenges which we are sure Lesley will meet with her usual grace, humility and gift for friendship.

KENSINGTON PARISH NEWS ARCHIVE

Last issue we brought you the first in a series of facsimile articles from past issues of the Kensington Parish News. As All Souls' Day is on 2nd November, archivist, Jane MacAllan has selected a profound little extract from 1877. Sadly the copies of the magazine from that year are in such a fragile state that it would be reckless of us to scan from them but we do hope the gentle sentiment gives pause for thought and reflection.

'HA!' AND 'AH'

'HA!' is the interjection of laughter. 'AH!' is the injection of sorrow. The difference betwixt them is very small, as consisting in only the transposition of what is no substantial letter, but a bare aspiration. How quickly – in the age of a minute, in the turning of a breath – is our mirth changed into mourning!

—FULLER, *Mixt Contemplations*

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KENSINGTON GIVES THANKS FOR MARK SHELDON CBE

On Tuesday 21st May, Kensington came together at Christ Church, Victoria Road to give thanks to God for the life of Mark Sheldon CBE, former Senior Partner of Linklaters and President of the Law Society, and to express condolences to his widow, Catherine and his children, Alice and Edward. The service was led by Rev'd Mark O'Donoghue, whose practising certificate was signed by Mark Sheldon while he served as President of the Law Society, and featured some of the Sheldon family's favourite hymns, readings and choral pieces. However, the most heartfelt and poignant memories from that day were the two tributes paid to their father by Alice and Edward Sheldon, edited segments of which are set out below.

Edward prefaced his reading by saying a few words about his father: "Many kind tributes have arrived in recent days from friends and



former colleagues, which paint the picture of a brilliant man with a first class mind. They also reflect upon his distinguished career, and his genuine love and passion for the legal profession. Most of all they highlight his great sense of humour and his qualities as a man - loyal, generous, remarkable, kind - are just some of the words repeatedly used to describe him." Edward went on to speak of his father's work ethic at Linklaters, driven by a desire as he would put it, with typical modesty, "to leave things in a slightly better

state than they had been in when he arrived". Work brought real joy to Mark, not least when he set up the firm's New York office in 1972 - a first for any post-war firm. His personal resilience was evident in the way in which, eight months after a major heart operation, he became President of the Law Society. Edward also spoke warmly of his parents' marriage: "They were devoted to each other and formed a brilliant team - often taking different, but totally complementary roles. When I think about them together it is the love, comfort, companionship and support they gave to each other, most particularly in the difficult periods of recent years, which really shines through." Edward ended his tribute by saying: "I will miss my father deeply. I will miss the stories and jokes told over dinner. I will miss his wisdom and advice. I will miss his love of life which has always inspired me. I will miss him as a friend as well as a father. Most of all I will miss the unfailing support he has shown to me in whatever choices I have made."

Alice said: "If my father were a piece of clothing, he would be the red waistcoat that he wore every year at Christmas. He would be the box of cufflinks I spent hours on his bed as a child sorting and resorting into piles and patterns. He would be the ties that he wore almost every day of his life, some of which Ed may wear and I may smile at. If he were music, he would be Handel, Bach, Purcell, Mozart; Beethoven, Schubert, Britten, Wagner; he'd be Gilbert and Sullivan, Flanders and Swann, Tom Lehrer, Georges Brassens. He

would be Classic FM and Radio 3, played every morning in the bathroom and whistled for the rest of the day under his breath. If he were food and drink, he would be pommes dauphinoise, tarte tatin, and Christmas plums within plums. He would be a kitchen supper of the buttery scrambled eggs that only my mother could cook the way he liked them.

He would be a glass of single malt at bedtime, a bottle of champagne shared with friends at Glyndebourne, or a carafe of red wine on the checked tablecloth of a Paris bistro. He would be a pint of bitter in the Queen Vic at Priddy, the Somerset pub we spent so much time in as a family, and where we'll go to celebrate when we travel with him to Wells, his final resting place. If he were a part of today, he would be a smile of self-recognition and fatherly pride at my correction of semi-colons and extra spaces taking us to draft 16 of today's order of service. He would be surprised and touched that you are all here. He would be reassured that we are well supported. He would love the coincidence of the connection with Mark. He would be moved to rare tears at hearing what my brother has said. And most of all, he would be out in the garden afterwards, filling and refilling glasses, checking that everyone had been introduced to everyone, taking so much pleasure in good company, and encouraging all of us to laughter. If he were an essential quality, he would be kindness, judgment, warmth, generosity. He would be strength and determination. He would be the love and laughter and bigness of life. I adored him."

SUPER GLASS

The Archdeacon of Middlesex, Stephan Welch, visits St Philip's on Sunday 27th October to bless the church's newest feature

Generally speaking, summer is quite a quiet time for St Philip's with many families going away during the holiday. With a smaller congregation, and less demand on the lower hall, this was the perfect opportunity to make a much-needed improvement to the church's fabric.

The pivoting glazed panels that separate the lower hall from the church were installed when the whole church was renovated ten years ago. Although they provided a good physical barrier, they were not effective at sound insulation and this restricted the ability to hold separate events in both lower parts of the building. This in turn restricted St Philip's ability to maximise its income from its lettings business.

New improved sound separation in the upstairs hall was installed a few years ago and means that parishioners in the church are rarely disturbed by sounds from the Sunday School. Using similar technology, the glazed screens at the lower level were replaced over the summer. Jacquie Sands heads up St Philip's Fabric Team, which was responsible for overseeing the project. "The work started at the end of July, when the contractors took out the old track and screens," she said.



Some of the ceiling adjacent to the screens was removed to facilitate the work and to install new lighting and audio-visual cabling. Although the church and lower hall were one large space for a few weeks, services continued as normal. Miraculously, the work went according to schedule and the new screens were in place by the end of August. The initial results are promising: "We expect the new sound separation to be as good as in the upper hall," said Jacquie.

The main aim of installing the new glazed screens is so that both spaces at ground floor level can be used independently, but there have been other benefits. Treasurer Rupert Steele, who among other things is responsible for St Philip's audio-visual system, used the



opportunity to get electrical cabling hidden in the ceiling, speakers and many new sockets installed in the lower hall. All of these changes will make the space more versatile and suitable for holding meetings.

The panels are now electrically sealed and released – a further refinement from the old system that will speed up the process of opening up the space when required.

In addition to improving facilities for the local groups who hire the spaces for their activities, these changes mean that services can take place without being disturbed by events in the lower hall.

There remain plenty of improvements to be made to the building. This one was done first because it was replacing like-for-like, involving no structural changes to the building. So the need for wide consultation was less pressing.

David Walsh says this will change over the next few years. "The vision and objectives for St Philip's agreed a few years ago by the Church Council make very clear the kind of changes we'd like to see in our building. Our stated goals include 'making our building a better environment for worship and meeting' and 'making the church's activities and our building more accessible to the local community'. Our objectives spell that out in more specific ways: 'create more independently useable spaces within the church, including an informal meeting room' and 'reduce the impact of traffic noise inside the building'. These changes," says David, "will need a lot of conversation with church members and the local community, as well as a lot of planning."

But it will all be worth it if our building itself is able to embody the overall vision for St Philip's: that we 'become a more visible sign of God's kingdom in our community'.



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We plan to meet monthly with a group of older men and women to enjoy some good company, for morning coffee, lunch or afternoon tea. We would love to hear from you if you want to join us.

VOLUNTEER!

Please get in touch if you'd like to help with weekly or monthly events in the Senior Moment Scheme. Training can be provided.

A SENIOR MOMENT exists to help alleviate some of the problems of social isolation within Kensington. If you are interested in learning more, do get in touch as we would love to chat to you.

Senior Moment Scheme c/o Christ Church Kensington, Victoria Rd London, W8 5RQ.

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SUMMER CHURCHES

The KPN asked readers to tell us about the churches that they visited whilst on their holidays



St Nicholas-at-Wade, Thanet

St. Nicholas-at-Wade is both a village and civil parish in the Thanet District of Kent. The name derives from its location on the western border of the Isle of Thanet, which was originally separated from the Kent mainland. Before the channels of the River Wantsum and River Stour silted up, it would have been possible to "wade" across from this point over a ford. In the centre of local community life, the church has some interesting historical links. The architecture and situation are listed in "England 1000 Best Churches". The current vicar is Revd Canon James Rosenthal.

By *Christine Peerless*

Harry Durnall, a St. Mary Abbots School alumnus, enjoys visiting St. Nicholas, the 12th century church at Studland. He was christened in this ancient and beautiful country church and last April he met the Bishop of Salisbury, the Rt Revd Nicholas Holtam there, when he was blessing the extension of the burial ground at St. Nicholas!

By *Claire Durnall*



George and Jessie outside St Mary's



Burial Ground extension

George and Jessica Hughes are regular visitors at St Mary's in Guildford. They attend with their father and granny. St Mary's Church in the picturesque village of Shalford near Guildford in Surrey is interesting because of the site's long history. There has been a church here since Saxon times and the present church is at least the fourth to be built. It was built in the Victorian era but in a 13th Century style in honour of its historical roots. The current vicar at St Mary's is the Revd John Cruse.

By *George Hughes*



Harry and Bishop Nicholas



George and Jessie with the Revd John Cruse

IT'S COFFEE, ONLY FAIRER

Eliza Low brings us the official news that we are now a Fairtrade Church



The St Mary Abbots Church Council is delighted to announce that we are now officially a Fairtrade Church.

It seems particularly fitting at this time of year, when, around Harvest Festival, we think about where our food comes from. This is a way of showing our support for farmers and producers in developing countries who we rely on for our everyday needs (tea, coffee, bananas, sugar), but who often struggle to make a decent living. The UN estimates that half the world's hungriest people are farmers.

The Fairtrade Foundation works to ensure that producers, previously trapped in poverty because of low prices and unfair trade rules, are paid a fair, stable price.

It also gives them access to training and skills to develop their businesses.

Most coffee is grown by small scale farmers on their own land. Fairtrade helps these farmers work together to strengthen their co-operatives so that they can compete more effectively. A guaranteed minimum price allows them to plan for the future, and they also receive a Fairtrade premium. They can spend this as they choose, to invest in their businesses and their communities.

In Costa Rica, for example, coffee co-operatives have invested in new ovens which run on environmentally-friendly fuel and can dry their processed coffee beans to a high quality: sustainable farming methods

that earn the farmers a higher price and help raise their standard of living.

Tea, on the other hand, mostly comes from private estates which use hired labour: Fairtrade standards require that estate or plantation owners pay their workers decent wages, promote the right to join trade unions and provide a safe working environment and good housing. A committee of both management and worker representatives must be in place to decide how to invest the Fairtrade premium for the benefit of the workers.

Banana farmers in the Windward Islands use the extra income from Fairtrade to improve roads to transport their crop, to get business training and to help meet the standards supermarkets require for their packing sheds.

Our commitment as a Fairtrade Church is to raise awareness of the need for Fairtrade by using and promoting its products - easily identifiable by the blue and green logo - wherever possible. We have started by providing only Fairtrade tea and coffee as refreshments after our Sunday morning services (and thanks must go to Alison Steel for help in testing the coffees and choosing the most delicious one).

There are over 4500 Fairtrade certified products ranging from coffee to flowers and cotton to dried fruit. By choosing these products we choose to support

better prices, decent working conditions, local sustainability, and fair terms of trade for farmers and workers in the developing world.

Look for the leaflets in church or visit www.fairtrade.org.uk for more information and help us promote Fairtrade during Fairtrade Fortnight 2014 which will take place from Monday 24 February to Sunday 9 March next year. All ideas welcome.

The good news is that as well as the tea, coffee and sugar that we are now providing, there are several more items to come. The vicar is very much looking forward to the forthcoming tasting of Fairtrade communion wine.

'we choose to support decent working conditions, local sustainability and fair terms of trade'



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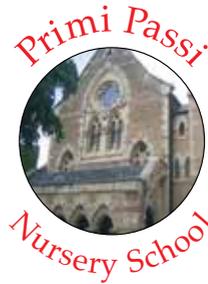


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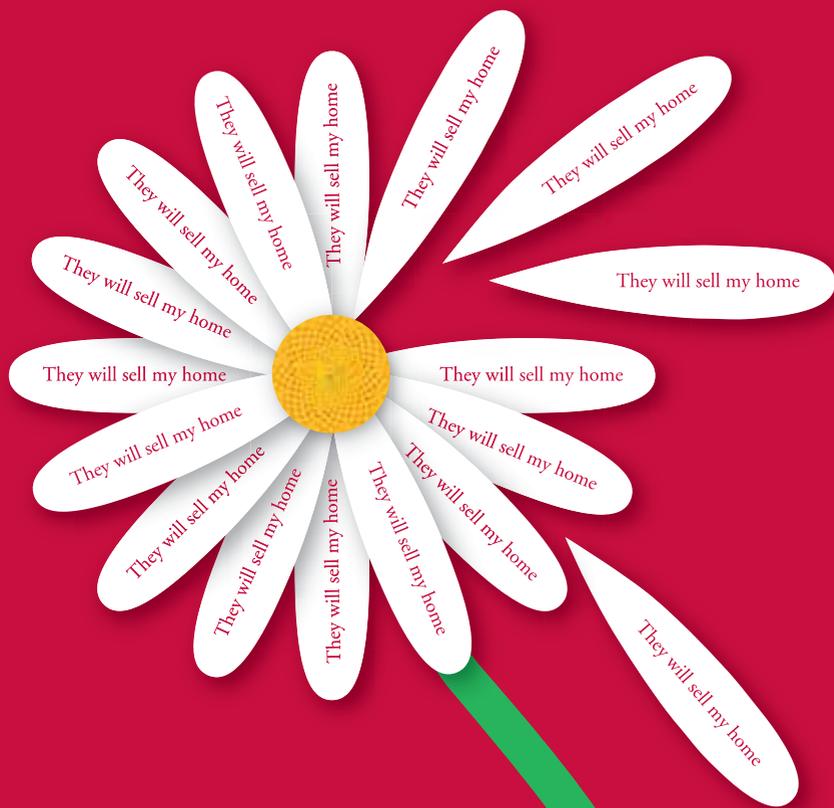
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