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Parish News

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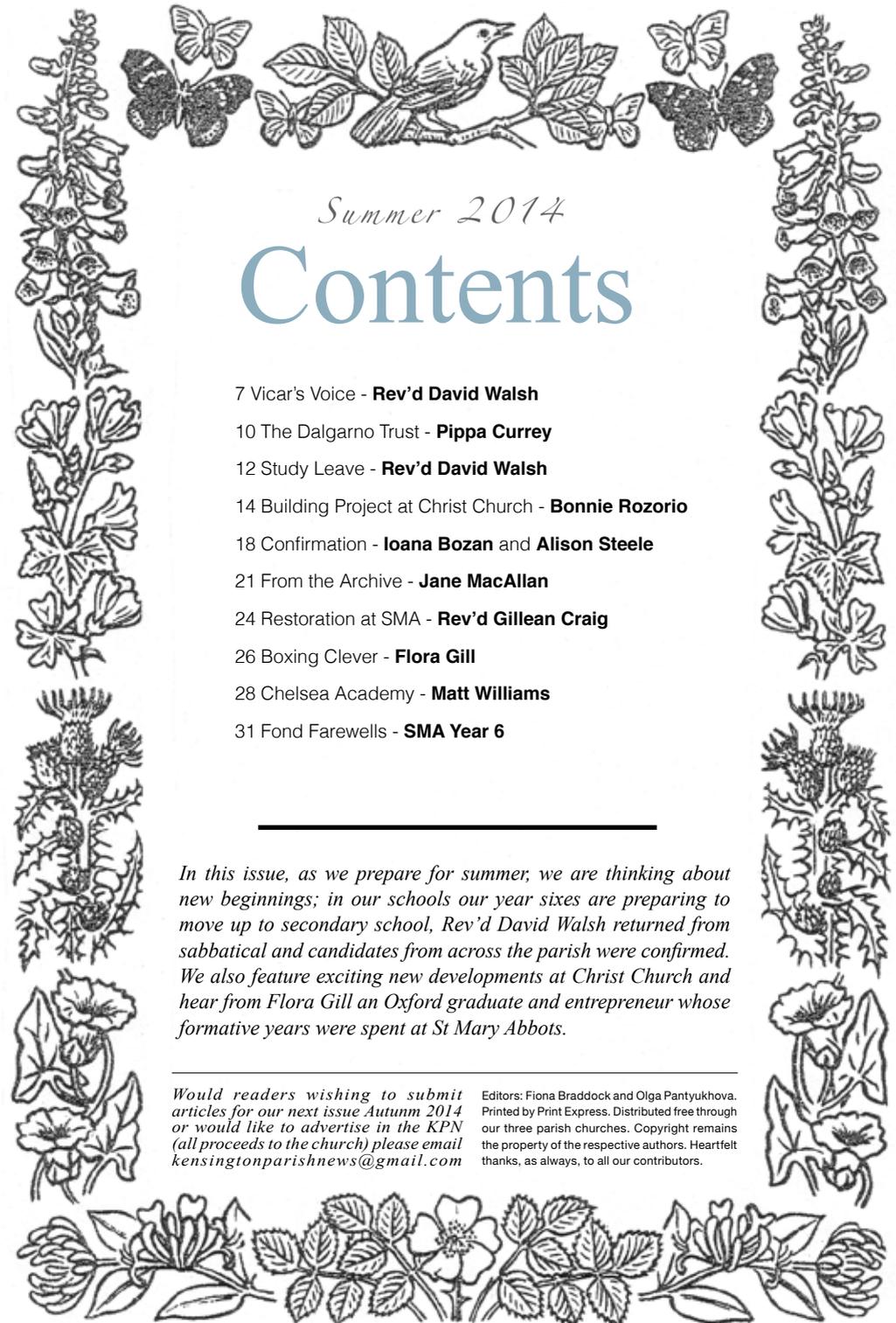
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Summer 2014

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In this issue, as we prepare for summer, we are thinking about new beginnings; in our schools our year sixes are preparing to move up to secondary school, Rev'd David Walsh returned from sabbatical and candidates from across the parish were confirmed. We also feature exciting new developments at Christ Church and hear from Flora Gill an Oxford graduate and entrepreneur whose formative years were spent at St Mary Abbots.

Would readers wishing to submit articles for our next issue Autumn 2014 or would like to advertise in the KPN (all proceeds to the church) please email kensingtonparishnews@gmail.com

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VICAR'S VOICE

After three months' study leave in Berlin we welcome **Rev'd David Walsh** back to the parish

I've been delighted to return to St Philip's and discover how many people stepped forward in my absence to lead new initiatives.

There is a place for absence in Christian ministry. It concerns me how often assessment of parish ministry these days echoes the language and criteria of our contemporary neurotic, driven culture.

How much have we done? How busy are we?

Yet there are times in Christian ministry when the wisest thing to do is to stand back and wait. And see what happens.

Back in the first century, the apostle Paul, describing the growth in the church at Corinth, wrote:

***'I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the growth.'* (1 Cor 3.6)**



Christian ministry - which isn't just for people with dog collars - is like gardening. Possibly a bit like cooking. Sometimes we have to step back and wait.

It's understandable how anxious we are to bring absence to an end, how uncomfortable it can make us feel.

So many difficult experiences in our lives are tied up with absence. Those early absences we only dimly remember from our childhoods, hours spent wondering if someone was returning. The absences after the failure of a friendship, of a marriage. The absence left when children finally leave home. The absence brought about by death.

And yet some absences are necessary to allow new things to happen.

The Church has now entered Ordinary Time. Now that Ascension and Pentecost have passed, we move from the story of Jesus to that of the early Church. This moment in the story - when Jesus becomes absent - echoes the absences we experience when there are changes in the Christian ministry on which we rely. More profoundly, it echoes the moments when God Himself appears to be absent from our lives.

I don't think it's any coincidence that the one Gospel writer (Luke) who focuses on the moment when Jesus becomes absent is also the one who tells the story of the early Church (in the Acts of the Apostles).

Luke understood - perhaps like no one else at the time - that the remarkable growth in the early church would not have been possible without the absence of Jesus, without the Ascension. The absence of Jesus makes possible an entirely new way of experiencing his presence.

None of this changes the reality that absence is often painful. Many absences are damaging and hurtful. Some absences are plain wrong. But sometimes out of them something new and unexpected can happen. And sometimes an absence is the only way in which things can move forward, in which the genuinely new can find a space to happen. ■

REGULAR WORSHIP

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
 3rd Sunday: all age service with Eucharist

Monday to Friday

9.10 am Morning Prayer

Parish Directory

Clergy, wardens, vestry and office

THE PARISH

Vicar of the Parish	The Rev'd Gilleen Craig	020 7937 6032	gilleen.craig@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Associate Vicar	The Rev'd Jenny Welsh	020 7937 2364	jenny.welsh@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Honorary Assistant Priest	The Rev'd Julia Hedley	020 3686 1513	julia.hedley@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Parochial Church Wardens	David Banks	07732 743 228	dcjb@btinternet.com
	Adrian Weale	020 7937 0765	adrianweale@mac.com
Children's Safeguarding Officer:	Samantha Giles	07702 829859	safeguardingofficer@stmaryabbotschurch.org
Electoral Roll Officer:	James Dunford-Wood	07732 842894	er@stmaryabbotschurch.org

ST MARY ABBOTS

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CHRIST CHURCH

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Director of Music	Rupert Perkins		



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	Peter Burney		peter.burney@specr.org
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Administrator	Liz Christie	020 7938 1367	admin@specr.org
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Electoral Roll Officer	Chris Luxton	020 7937 4159	chris.luxton@specr.org
Director of Music	Rebecca Taylor		rebecca.taylor@specr.org



‘YOU SAW ME HUNGRY AND FED ME...’

Pippa Currey tells us more about an important new initiative at St Mary Abbots

In the past month, regular attenders at St Mary Abbots on Sundays or Thursday mornings will have noticed the plastic crates

placed in the centre of the church and near the west door: these bins represent a new way in which our church is getting involved with our Kensington community.

The economic downturn of the past few years has undoubtedly had a life changing effect on many vulnerable people across the country; newcomers to the apparently prosperous area around St Mary Abbots might be surprised to know that in the north of the borough there are areas where life could not be more different, where many are living in extreme poverty. One such area is the residents around the Dalgarno Trust Community Centre. Established in 2004, the Trust is “a community anchor, dedicated to enriching the lives of the local people.” They work with a vastly diverse collection of community groups of all ages who use their services and extensive facilities to support their activities.



They started a food bank in 2012 on an ad hoc basis because they recognised that some of the most needing people who were using their community

facilities were genuinely struggling to feed themselves and their families. Over time the operation has become more structured, so in order to understand more clearly how it works and how best we can help Jenny Welsh and I paid a visit a few weeks ago.

Unlike the Trussell Trust foodbanks (www.trusselltrust.org) where clients can access food only up to three times in a year, using vouchers issued by other agencies, the Dalgarno Trust offers food to any local people who need it, on a weekly basis. The service is free, but clients are asked to make a small donation for what they receive if possible. The six or seven volunteers working under their fabulously energetic and cheerful leader Pam Bardouille are crucial; they arrive at around 1pm, followed shortly by a vanload of food which they unload and organize. The van is driven by staff from

another local charity, Upper Room (another old friend of St Mary Abbots’ – our Harvest Donations have been going there for many years) and contains fresh food donated by our neighbour Wholefoods, including vegetables, bread and ready meals, depending on what is available. A room is set up with the perishable food (about a third), tins and packets organized in food groups on tables. On a weekly basis there are dried foods such as pasta and rice plus tinned soups, baked beans and other preserved goods. Tea, coffee, cleaning products etc are offered less regularly, because the reality is that many of the most vulnerable are using this service most Thursdays, and do not need cleaning products every week.

While the room is being organised, tickets are given out from 2pm in the reception area of the Trust centre, where there is also a community café. When we were there, a couple of women from St Francis’ Church nearby were inviting people to have a go at doing some drawing—a number of lovely still lifes of flowers were being produced by people waiting. At 2.30 groups start coming in, about five people at a time; they are told how many packets or tins they can take from each area, and most of them leave with two full plastic bags. Once they have selected and left, the next group comes in, and in this way the Trust feeds between thirty and fifty people in the community in a very short thirty minutes. The non perishable goods we and others contribute are crucial. The fresh food varies enormously in amount and

content so the tins and packets represent a vital staple to ensure the Trust can regularly feed all those who rely on their help.

What we hadn’t realised before our visit is that the SMA deliveries now account for between 80 and 100% of non perishable goods the Trust receives every week. It was also impressed upon us when we were there that the van delivering the Wholefoods donations has a cost implication, and if the Trust cannot pay for it, then they cannot get the fresh food. So to all those who live and work around St Mary Abbots the message is very clear: please continue to bring in your food donations— the bins are in church on Sunday mornings and on Thursdays until 10.45am, and we welcome contributions from locals who do not attend our church! In addition if anyone feels they could secure deliveries for a week or longer (or even part of a week) by making a financial contribution – you may not have the time to shop or want to carry bags around – then this too contributes to the vital work that the Dalgarno Trust is doing for people suffering from, or on the brink of food poverty. Please help if you can.

For more information see www.dalgarnotrust.org.uk. If you would like to join the church’s merry band of people who deliver our donations on Thursdays, or want more information please contact Jenny Welsh, our curate. ■



MAKING TIME FOR SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL RENEWAL

The Church of England encourages its ministers to go on study leave at regular intervals but this is not just a time for rest, as Rev'd David Walsh found out recently.

By **Lesley Raymond**

“The Church’s policy varies from diocese to diocese, but in London we can take up to three months’ study leave every 10 years except in exceptional circumstances – for instance, if we have just arrived at a new church,” David explains. “I was ordained 12 years ago, so I was actually overdue my study leave. Financial help is available from the diocese but there is a waiting list of up to three years.”

The benefit to the Anglican Church is that their ministers come back refreshed, with new skills and a broadened and deepened outlook that can enhance their parish ministry. At the same time, it helps members of the parish to become less dependent on the minister and to take more personal responsibility for their church.

Unlike sabbaticals, this time off is not based on the idea of rest but on doing something constructive during time away. David’s main aim was to study German and, although this was mainly for his own enrichment, there are potential benefits for the Church. For instance, there is a link between the

dioceses of London and Berlin. Clergy from the two cities meet up every two years and David has been part of this group for some time. “Our next visit to Berlin will take place in September,” David says. “All the conversations are conducted in English, but it would be nice to think that in future some of them could be held in German.”

“I was on an eight-week intensive German course at the Goethe Institute in Berlin,” he continues, “and staying in a flat where the landlady was an opera singer in the former East Berlin. The whole experience of going back to the classroom and flat-sharing was very different from my normal life in London. It gave me time not only to master the basics of German but also to get fit and to spend time in the sort of reflection that isn’t possible in my roles as Associate Vicar of St Philips and Area Dean for Kensington.”

David had visited Berlin a number of times before, but living there and getting to know the city in depth was a very different experience. “My main motivation for learning German was not so much to speak

it but to understand more,” says David. “Most of the great theology of the past century is in German and, although I am nowhere near being at the stage where I could attempt this, I would like eventually to be able to read it in the original. New languages do not come easily to me, so I learned a lot about myself in the process. It was like being back at school in some respects, learning lists of words. It was hard work and one day when I was sitting in class I found that my brain had literally seized up and I couldn’t take in any more. Fortunately, that soon passed!

“The course has given me a foundation in German that I can build on. Most days I listen to French radio and read French newspapers, but I am able to do this because I took French O Level at school. I’d love to be able to do the same in German eventually, but at the moment my level is very basic – I am currently reading a children’s book. However, I did address the

congregation in the Berlin church I attended in German, and I am hoping to maintain my German by having conversations with the German-speaking members of the congregation at St Philip’s.”

So how will St Philip’s (and the wider parish) benefit from David’s time away? We are certainly getting a refreshed, fitter and more rested priest. The study leave also gave David a chance to reflect on how he lives and works and how he can make changes to his normal routine to achieve a better balance.

A less obvious and unplanned benefit is that some of his insights and reflections during the time away became an important part in David’s spiritual journey: “I think at some level your soul moves when there’s space for that to happen, and I guess that’s one of the possible outcomes from upsetting your normal pattern of living and working.” ■



RESTORATION AND REGENERATION

Bonnie Rozorio reports from a glamorous evening of fundraising and a new beginning for Christ Church

Christ Church Kensington is about to begin an exciting building project, which we hope will breathe new life into our church building and make it even more useful for the church and our local community.

Christ Church has become one of the few community spaces available in the neighbourhood and each week we see local schools and colleges, a Montessori nursery, children's choirs, English language classes, a ballet school, the local branch of Alcoholics Anonymous, residents' associations and many others community groups use the building for their activities.

Wonderfully, Christ Church's congregation has grown by about 250% in the last two years. Our Sunday School can sometimes feel as if it is bursting at the seams, and our older children's group have to meet off-site in a local home as there simply isn't space to house them in the church.

Our evening congregation, established in 2013, shares supper after the service.

However, without adequate kitchen facilities in the building, food for 80 people is often cooked in local homes and carried in to church. Over the last few years, the church council identified the need for additional meeting spaces, as well as increased open space, a new kitchen and sufficient lavatories, heating, lighting and storage capacity to accommodate multiple ministry and community requirements.

Through our restoration and regeneration project, we hope to provide a venue for worship in West London, as well as a hub for community activity that will be fit for purpose for generations to come. If you would like to know more about the project, we've set up a website: www.christchurchcommunityappeal.com where you can read details about each element of the project and how it will benefit our church and community.

With support from the local community and an enthusiastic Appeals Committee we began fundraising in July 2013, envisaging that it would take three



Jazzbomb take to the stage to wow the crowd



The competition was raging as the silent action happened on tablets throughout the night.





Dan Farrant, the magician, turns £20 notes into £50's



Church and local community members enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with friends and neighbours.



years to raise our target of £750,000. Wonderfully, in the past nine months we have raised just over £650,000 through our community appeal, and applications to grant-making trusts and charities. We hope to close out the gap of £200,000 by the end of 2014, enabling us to create these vital new facilities in the second half of 2014, and early 2015.

On Friday 6th June, we hosted a Community Ball at Boodle's private members club. It received widespread community support and many people who live on the streets surrounding Christ Church bought tickets. It was a wonderful evening, which commenced with a champagne reception and music provided by a jazz band. Then the delicious meal inspired by summer flavours and seasonal produce was followed by the live auction and the close of the silent auction. Bidding was fierce for prizes such as a day's fishing and accommodation for two people at Haddon Hall, and two seats in the member's enclosure for the men's finals at Wimbledon! Once the auctions were complete, there was more music from the jazz band, dancing and a DJ. We have been especially pleased at the feedback from members of the local community who really appreciated the opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours.

We set ourselves an ambitious target of raising £50,000 through the ball and, wonderfully, the evening raised just over £50,000 in ticket sales, donations and proceeds from the live and silent auctions.

We have also renewed the lighting at Christ Church - replacing large, glaring and energy-inefficient lights with discreet LED spotlights and the refurbished and rewired original chandeliers. Now that they are completed, Christ Church is much brighter and more attractive inside, and we look forward to lower energy bills and a reduced carbon footprint. They also enable us to set a number of different tailor-made lighting schemes for services, events and concerts.

Our west-end building project commences in July, in order to minimize the negative impact of the building works on both on the church and the community groups who use the building. We hope to achieve much of the dirty and noisy groundworks before September, such as reinforcing the foundations, installing drainage, etc. This will allow us to push on with fitting out the kitchen, large community space and toilets on the ground floor, as well as creating a gallery to house meeting rooms on the first floor. We anticipate that this will be completed in early 2015.

Spring and Summer 2015 will see us install a much-needed new heating system to make our building warmer and more welcoming. We will also be applying for a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to complete the repairs to our roof, ensuring Christ Church is weatherproof, warm and ready to serve the Kensington community for many more generations. ■

CLASS OF 2014

On Thursday 22nd May 33 candidates were confirmed into the Eucharistic fellowship of Christ's church by Bishop Paul Williams. Here **Ioana Bozan** tells us how her pregnancy brought her back to the Church and led her to be confirmed. Meanwhile St Mary Abbots stalwart, **Alison Steele** explains why she decided to join the group on the course

by **Ioana Bozan**



Having been baptised a couple of decades ago, I spent many years as a teenager exploring various sides of spiritual life, including philosophy, history of religion and sacred practices. My favourite writer back then, Mircea Eliade, happened to also be a bright philosopher and historian and with him I embarked on 4 years of beautiful discoveries in high school. Quite abruptly after high school though, the fast pace of modern life caught up with me.

That is until 2012. Pregnancy is a wonderful time in somebody's life. A great time to breathe and go back to basics, an intense time for profound prayer, an essential time

to thank for the gift of life. St Mary Abbots, with its warm hospitality and openness, started to be then my regular retreat. The evening prayers started being a magic time for reflection, meditation and spiritual comfort.

Thereafter, in 2014, with its great new beginnings, felt so right for confirmation. We commenced in February a graceful passage through the Christian meanings, with many delightful conversations and spiritual wonders. Our guides could not have been better or kinder. Over cakes and dinner, every Tuesday night we embarked on different passages in the life of Christ and meanings. Again and again, so reassuringly

to listen and observe our Vicars; they addressed our queries profoundly, and frequently from many different perspectives.

Every person and every need is individual. I am a Greek Orthodox by parents' choice and explorer by nature, so I have encountered a number of priests from various orders, monks, nuns and Roman Catholic practicers. And after years and much consideration, St Mary Abbots is by far the closest, most human, relevant and reflective of our society's huge diversity and backgrounds. A place where I feel at ease and I can call home, a beautiful institution, allowing us to sail gracefully on our unique spiritual

journeys and come to rescue or support whenever needed.

Empathic and down to earth, Jenny, Julia and Fr Gillean offered so much more than standard preaching; throughout the confirmation classes they guided us generously and with a fabulous sense of humour and then encouraged us to find the answers within ourselves. And every so often when words felt redundant, they greeted us with a hug.

Each Tuesday evening, things fell into place, we rediscovered so many other meanings in bible readings and stories, we got to know

each other, we left each night elated and enlightened. There were so many special moments – from the gourmet pancakes prepared personally by Fr Gillean to the evenings at the Church which felt so intimate, from getting to meet Mary and being a guest at her amazing house to the very emotional moment of hearing the children’s reasons for being confirmed at the Ceremony.



resolved to ask if I might sit in on this year’s confirmation explanatory course. It proved to be one of my life’s most important decisions.

For decades I have enjoyed Church of England Services and have striven to keep the promises of my own Laying on of

Hands way back when I was

a troubled seventeen year old. But asked specific questions about church fabric, biblical stories, service order and rotation of formalities there was too often only a dismaying blankness. (Think quiz night.)

The weekly meetings were built, like a sermon, around a Bible reading. Great freedom of discussion was provided. During Lent we were asked to read a modern language gospel between meetings. To my enormous surprise, a diligent reading of this rewarded me with an instant, unlooked for and unforgettable, spiritual peace ‘beyond understanding’. Consequently, reading unfamiliar parts of the Bible has become an interesting and enjoyable foray for me.

Length of life affords time; time to hone in on unseen help forever at hand and ever ready to help change fear to love. The confirmation course is a tangible tool toward enhanced clarity for Christians who remember little of their own preparation period. ■

A great spiritual journey, feeling blessed to be part of such wonderful community and share it with its very special people. Something very unique in our lives, that we are keen to continue exploring, living and being part of.

Jenny, Julia and Fr Gillean’s voices appear every so often in my mind – ‘May God’s light always shine upon you’ – I pray it will and look forward to it.

by **Alison Steele**

Increasingly as I organised the annual after Confirmation Service celebration a surprising sense of something missing has been occurring, soon to be dismissed in the hurly burly of more urgent everyday lay life. Last year I had had enough of this picking up an illuminating truth here and there from various candidates, and

SET ME AS A SEAL

St Mary Abbots’ archivist **Jane MacAllan** investigates the origins of William Walton’s famous anthem

The anthem, ‘Set me as a seal upon thine heart’, composed by William Walton (1902-1983), is a popular choice for weddings but perhaps less well-known is its connection with St Mary Abbots Church.

Walton composed the piece in 1938 for unaccompanied four-part choir using harmonies to accentuate the allegorical meanings of the words, which were taken from The Song of Solomon (8:6-7):

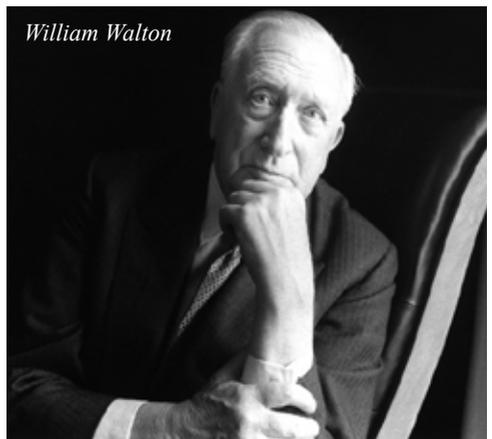
*‘Set me as a seal upon thine heart,
as a seal upon thy arm;
For love is as strong as death;
Many waters cannot quench love;
neither can the floods drown it.’*

The rich imagery and sensuous language express a passionate and devout love, one that is inviolable. Moreover, it affirms the blessed union of the bridegroom and his bride, which is celebrated during the marriage ceremony.

Walton composed this anthem as a wedding present for The Hon. Ivor Grosvenor Guest and Lady Mabel Edith Fox-Strangways. From the parish service registers, we know that the couple were married at St Mary Abbots Church at 2.30pm on November 22nd, 1938. The bride was the younger daughter of the Earl and Countess of

Ilchester and the bridegroom was the only son of Viscount and Viscountess Wimborne.

Giles Stephen Holland Fox-Strangways, 6th Earl of Ilchester (1874-1959) succeeded to the title and estates, including Holland House, Kensington, in 1905. With its 54 acres of park, Holland House was one of the last great country estates in London. Lord Ilchester was fascinated with the history of his family and published several works, in particular, in 1937, *The Home of the Hollands, 1605-1820* and *Chronicles of Holland House, 1820-1900*, which drew largely on the extensive family archives. His father, Henry Edward Fox-Strangways (1847-1905), had renovated Holland House and added the Swannery ballroom as well



William Walton



Wedding still from British Pathe News

as improving the grounds. Many grand entertainments were held there over the years and, in 1938, the happy couple had their wedding reception there too before they left for their honeymoon on the Continent. Little did anyone suspect, that less than two years later, in September 1940, Holland House would be devastated by incendiary bombs.

The marriage ceremony was presided over by the Very Rev. John Morgan, Bishop of Swansea and Brecon. It is likely that he was there at the behest of the bridegroom, who had been MP for Brecon and Radnor since 1935. The Bishop was assisted by Prebendary Arthur E. Smith, then Vicar of St Mary Abbots (1937-1948) and Rev. F. L. Blathwayt, who had been Rector of Melbury, Lord Ilchester's Dorset home.

But what was Walton's connection with the bride and groom? Alice, Lady Wimborne had become Walton's patron in the mid-1930s. Indeed, Walton was a self-confessed scrounger and philanderer and it was known within certain circles that Walton was intimately acquainted with the groom's mother. Indeed, their relationship lasted for thirteen years until the death of Lady Wimborne in 1948 and Walton had even moved in with her after his house was destroyed in an air raid in May 1941. Apparently, the Viscount and Viscountess Wimborne had what today would be regarded as an 'open' marriage and they led contentedly separate lives. Yet it must have been somewhat disquieting for the groom to have his mother's lover, a man almost the same age as himself, compose music for his wedding.

In the 1930s Walton's career flourished. He had experienced early success in 1923 with *Façade*, his orchestral setting for Edith Sitwell's poems. He had met the Sitwell siblings at Christ Church, Oxford and they had taken him under their wing, introducing him to their artistic and cultural circles. In the 1920s Walton was also supported by a social set that became known as the 'Bright Young People'. Indeed, their frivolous and debauched living inspired Evelyn Waugh's novel, *Vile Bodies*. It must be remembered, however, that this generation grew up under the shadow of the Great War. None of them could have escaped being affected by it in one way or another. Perhaps this partially accounted for their behaviour and attitude to life.

After the success of his oratorio, *Belshazzar's Feast*, Walton was commissioned to write his first symphony in 1932 but due to his turbulent personal life he was only inspired to finish it in 1935 following the start of his association with Alice, Lady Wimborne. Walton's liaison, however, was disapproved of by Osbert Sitwell and he was no longer

welcome at Sitwell's home in Carlyle Square. In 1937 Walton wrote the Crown Imperial march for the coronation of King George VI and later, he was to compose music for the coronation of Queen Elizabeth II. Writing to his librettist for *Troilus and Cressida*, Christopher Hassall, in 1952, whilst struggling with his compositions for the coronation, Walton commented that: "After a spot of bother with the "Virgin's Womb" (the kind of trouble I always seem to get into – don't tell the Archbishop!) the Te Deum is complete ..."

The Guest - Fox-Strangways wedding was such an important, high society occasion that it merited coverage by *The Times* and British Pathé News. A short video of the bride and groom emerging from the church and the crowds waiting eagerly outside for a glimpse of them can still be seen at <http://www.britishpathe.com/video/kensington-wedding/query/Honourable>. Despite the entangled web of relationships surrounding the origins of the anthem, 'Set me as a seal upon thine heart' must be one of the most beautiful and enduring wedding gifts ever received. ■

No.	Date	Name and Address	Age	Condition	Rank or Profession	Address at the time of Marriage	Father's Name and Address	Witnesses
415	1937	Peter & Alice Norton	19	Spinster		22 Abingdon Street, Kensington W.8.	General Post Office, Abingdon Street, Kensington W.8.	Walter & Gladys
Maided in the Parish Church, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, by the Rev. John Morgan, Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, assisted by Arthur E. Smith, Prebendary of St Mary Abbots, and F. L. Blathwayt, Rector of Melbury.								
416	1938	John & Alice Strangways	26	Spinster		Holland House, Kensington W.8.	111, Abingdon Street, Kensington W.8.	Walter & Gladys
Maided in the Parish Church, according to the Rites and Ceremonies of the Church of England, by the Rev. John Morgan, Bishop of Swansea and Brecon, assisted by Arthur E. Smith, Prebendary of St Mary Abbots, and F. L. Blathwayt, Rector of Melbury.								

The Marriage Register

EXPERT REPAIRS

Fr Gillean Craig reports on the restoration of the high altar reredos at St Mary Abbots

For many years now there have been ominous – and developing – signs of cracking and subsidence in the lower part of the splendid marble and mosaic reredos that towers above the high altar. It was agreed that this had reached a critical moment and a comprehensive campaign of repair and restoration has just been completed. We found that the lower section, the ‘wall’ of alabaster blocks, had not been pinned back to the main East wall of the church, or even set against anything solid – just a series of rough brick pillars that were no longer performing any functional purpose.

Victorian jerry building! Everything has been dismantled, cleaned and polished; a substructure of stainless steel beams pinned back to the main wall inserted, to avoid any further settlement; mosaic tesserae regilded, everything replaced securely and finally waxed. The altar, which had perforce to be used as a workbench, will be reconsecrated on Sunday 29 June. We think that the whole ensemble, now as fresh as the day it was made, looks absolutely magnificent, fitting backdrop to the mystery of the Holy Eucharist. We hope that you agree. ■



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BOXING CLEVER

Flora Gill tells us about her exciting new business and how her early years at St Mary Abbots informed her decision to study Theology and Philosophy at Oxford



This is the first year I've been out of education; no teachers telling me what to do, no syllabus telling me where to go. It's scary. New beginnings can be frightening, which is one of the reasons I founded Tuck in the Box. I set up a company called Tuck in the Box that sells care packages for relatives and friends to send to students: revision boxes, celebration boxes, or starting school/uni' boxes. (www.tuckinthebox.co.uk)

St Mary Abbots was the first place that I loved school - Sunday school. I remember chanting back to the teacher David Banks, 'the body wasn't there' as he rolled away an imaginary stone. It was the stories that fascinated me, the parables and miracles. As I grew up my interest evolved and I wanted to know more. I remember a particular sermon by Fr Gillian talking about the logos (the word) at the beginning of John's Gospel and realizing that there was so much more depth that I wanted to understand. It was then that I decided I wanted to study Theology and Philosophy at University.

I didn't think I was smart enough to get into any of the good ones but it was my grandma Ethne Rudd who really encouraged me to go for Oxford, to really push myself. Through my life she gave me confidence and encouraged me. In church she'd turn up early to go through readings with me or practice lines for the Nativity play. One year I spent all day with her baking a cake to donate to the church bazaar, which she then bought back for me because it was too pretty to let anyone else eat! Sadly granny passed away shortly before I found out I'd got accepted to Oxford, but in truth she didn't need a letter, she was so confident that I'd get in, far more so than me.

Starting Oxford was daunting, I was worried I wouldn't be able to cope, that everyone would see through me as not bright, that I wouldn't understand the complicated vocabulary of the 'dons'. In reality they were the best years of my life. I loved the academics, and the extra curricular. I ran a college ball, acted, and started an online magazine. But there were still moments where I'd miss home or where work started to weigh on me. Occasionally mum would send me a package and immediately my spirits would be lifted. It was as a result of this I decided to start Tuck in the Box. Knowing how happy receiving post made me at school and Uni' made me want to make it easier for others to do the same. At Tuck in the Box we created several boxes designed just for students. We've made them for every occasion, especially the times you need to hear from a loved one most, such as exams or starting school, and having just left



uni' myself, I knew exactly what should go in them. We launched a few months ago and have had parents, grandparents and godparents sending our revision boxes to nervous students. The nicest thing about running the company is sending the messages of love and support sent in the free greeting

cards with our boxes. It always make me particularly smile when I see one from a Grandmother. Beginnings can be scary but with family and friends supporting you it's a lot easier. It's so nice to act as a middleman and witness first hand people sending our boxes with their loving encouragement. ■



Flora with her grandmother Ethne Rudd

MADE IN CHELSEA

At this time of year, parents of year 6 and year 11 children are preparing for their new beginnings in September while year 5 parents are starting to think about their secondary school choices. Five years since opening, Chelsea Academy are also preparing for exciting new times. KPN editor **Fiona Braddock** talks to their new Principal Matt Williams



Matt Williams - new principal

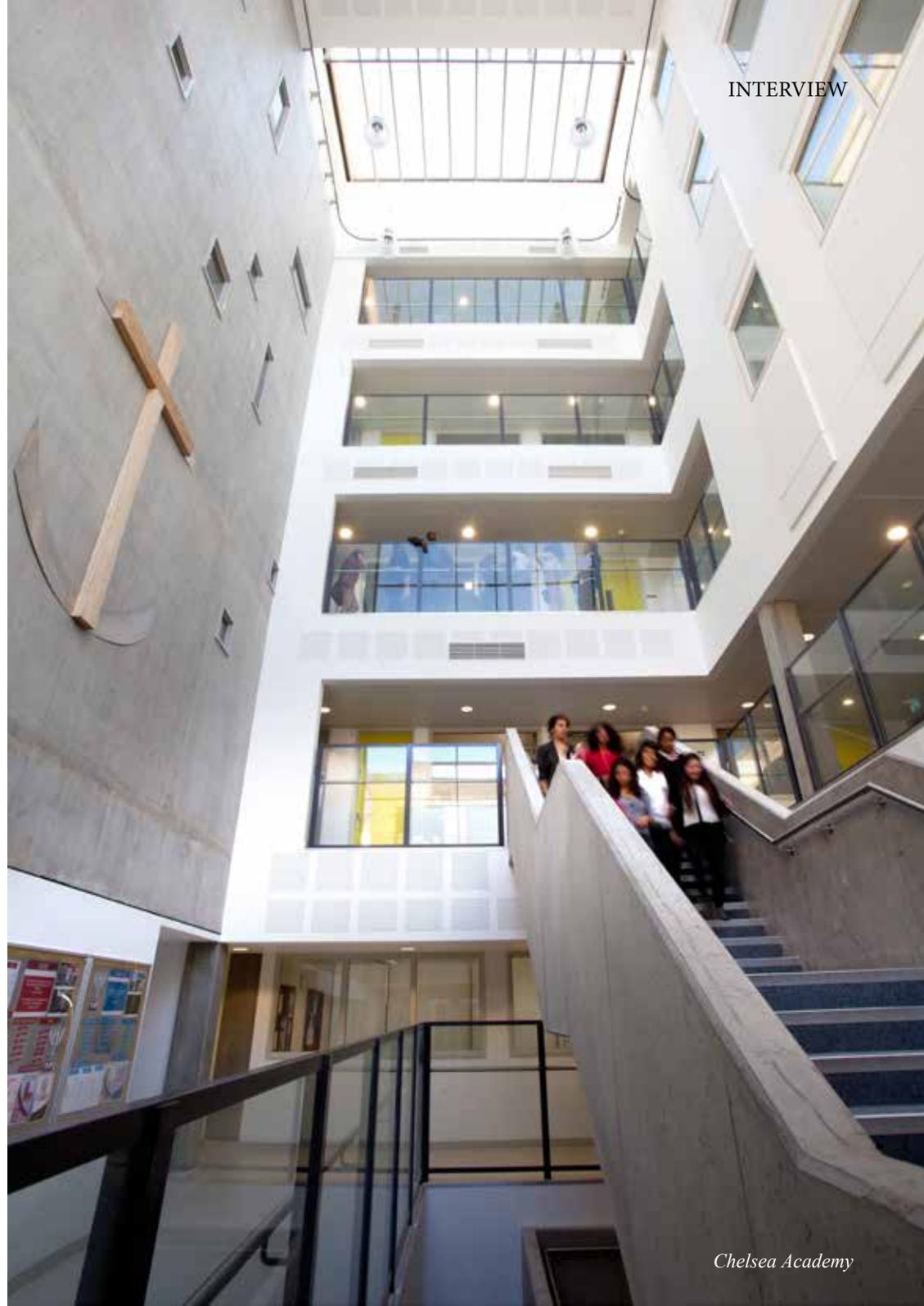
Matt, you have come to Chelsea Academy from Quintin Kynaston Academy in St John's Wood how do you feel about the prospect of leading Chelsea Academy?

I am thrilled to be joining Chelsea Academy at this exciting time and look forward to

continuing the great work that has been done over the past 5 years in setting up and developing Chelsea Academy as an outstanding, local, church school. I have already spent a few days in the Academy and have been impressed by the dedication of the staff, the calm and purposeful learning environment and a commitment from everyone to be the best they can.

The academy is outstanding (Ofsted and SIAS 2012) and oversubscribed in year 7 and the sixth form. How has this been achieved in such a short time?

Chelsea Academy combines traditional values and high standards with an innovative approach to learning and teaching and a strong commitment to student leadership and co-construction. Visitors to the Academy have consistently commented on the ethos and high standards of behaviour, enthusiasm for learning and confidence of our students, as well as the Academy's £43m building. I am keen to ensure that Chelsea Academy remains at the heart of the community, with students



taking an active role locally as well as having the opportunity to visit and experience other parts of the world without losing the focus on academic excellence in the Academy.

How important is Christian ethos to the Academy?

The Academy has a strong Christian ethos throughout that underpins the work across both the taught and non-taught curriculum. The daily life of the Academy presents opportunities for students to learn about Christian beliefs and engage in acts of worship, under the leadership of senior staff and our full-time Chaplain. There is a chapel for prayer, small services and personal reflection within the Academy building. The Academy has close relationships with local church leaders; students visit churches nearby

as part of the Religious Education syllabus and to celebrate the major festivals in the Christian calendar. I am looking forward to meeting both present and prospective parents and strengthening the bond the Academy has with local churches and primary schools.

How can prospective parents find out more?

If prospective parents would like to visit Chelsea Academy and meet staff and students, they are welcome to come to the Open Evening for year 7 entry on Thursday 25th September from 6pm to 9pm; the Sixth Form Open Evening is on Thursday 16th October. You can also get more information about Chelsea Academy and our supplementary application forms for Foundation (church) and Music aptitude places on our website www.chelsea-academy.org/admissions by emailing admissions@chelsea-academy.org ■

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EXCITING TIMES AND FOND FAREWELLS

This September, the current Year 6 pupils at St Mary Abbots School will move off to start a new phase in their lives at secondary school. We asked some of the pupils to tell us about how they feel about this new beginning

Jayden Moore

Leaving primary school is going to be hard, but it's all part of life. I will miss a lot of people, and it will be sad to leave St Mary Abbots School, but at the same time I am really looking forward to secondary.

The last day of school will definitely be a day to remember, thinking back to all the times we had together and all the funny things that happened over the past seven years. As well as feeling excited about secondary school I'm not exactly confident, it will be a bit weird having to find all the classrooms since it's such a big school which makes it very easy to get lost.

Lucky for me my school is new so we'll be the first year group - I guess you could say we're at the top and bottom of the school!

Life is definitely not going to be the same after the big transition, but it's time for me to



Jayden with the Bishop of Kensington

move on with my life. I guarantee this will not be the last big step in my life and it will be the same for some of you.



Iris Taylor

When I found out that I had got into the school I wanted, I was thrilled. A new school! This meant a new beginning, a fresh start, a chance to extend a smaller circle of friends to a larger one, and new opportunities. I am particularly excited about science (at my new school we will have separate lessons in biology, physics and chemistry), sport (I'm looking forward to playing hockey, netball, cricket and tennis), and the orchestra (to play my flute in).

Now the thought of actually leaving is beginning to sink in. I have been puzzled in the past by the tears of other leavers from St Mary Abbots, but now I completely understand why they are sad at moving on. A joyful, exciting seven years are coming to an end, like all great things, but I am sure the next seven will be just as fun.

Edward Vaughan-Hughes

Q.U.A.D for me is an abbreviation of how I feel about the transition to secondary school. Quad means four and I have four main feelings.

The Q in Quad means questioning. I am questioning the fact that the academic subjects will be more difficult and there will be more to learn and conquer. I am questioning whether I will make new friends, be in the sports teams and so much more. I think the answer is to keep an open mind and go with the flow. Then what could go wrong? You just have to be optimistic.

The U means unusual. I don't know a single person going to my new school. This is a peculiar feeling. It's very hard to describe.



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Kitty Croft

I'm very excited about going to secondary school. I'm looking forward to starting a new life. I love my current friends but I feel that I'm ready to move on and make new friends too. A big thing that I'll miss when I go to secondary school is St Mary Abbots. I have thoroughly enjoyed my full seven years at the school so it'll be very sad to leave.

I really like my new school and I can't wait to start. However, there are several things that I'm slightly nervous about, such as getting a lot of homework. Also, I am worried that I might not get in on time and therefore get in trouble and have to have detention.

I really hope that I won't find it hard making new friends. Hopefully there will be so many new girls, one will be like me. ■

Yet, I think this is a good feeling. I'll just be myself, be confident and trust myself and my ability to make friends.

The A stands for amazing or aspiring. As these schools are so big, I think we should try and aspire to anything we want, because really there is no shortage of clubs and things to do. We should aim to do our best in whatever we do. So overall secondary school should be an amazing experience.

Finally the D is for the utter disbelief about how my time at St Mary Abbots School has flown by so quickly. I will always cherish my time there and remember it forever.



Kitty in reception and in Year 6



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