

**The Benefice of St Mary with St Peter and St Jude
West Brompton**

Diocese of London

Deanery of Chelsea

**The Parish Church of
St. Mary The Boltons**

Annual Report

2007

(1 January - 31 December)



Prepared for the Annual Parochial Church Meeting
on Thursday 24th April 2007
at 7.45pm in the Church

Parish Information & Statistics

Address

The Parish Office,
St. Mary's Church House,
The Boltons,
London SW10 9TB
020 7835 1440 Fax 020 7370 6562
www.stmarytheboltons.org.uk

Priest in Charge

The Revd Ginny Thomas, 24 Fawcett Street, London SW10 9EZ

Parish Officers and Elected Representatives

Churchwardens

Mr Arthur Tait, 65 Cheyne Court, Royal Hospital Road, London SW3 5TT
Mr Mark Nichols, 2 Earls Court Gardens, London SW5 0TD

Members of the Parochial Church Council

The Revd Ginny Thomas (Chair), Mr Frederick Batt, Miss Fiona Brown (from November, Mr Matthew Brown (Resigned in the autumn), Mrs June Brudenell, Mr Grahame Challen, Mrs Deborah Challinor, Mr Leo Fraser Mackenzie, Miss Margarete Geier (Deanery Synod Representative), Miss Joanna Hackett (PCC Secretary), Mr Paul Hauff, Mr Mark Nichols, Mrs Carolyn O'Driscoll, Miss Carolyn Stubbs (PCC Treasurer, & Assistant Treasurer to the Redcliffe Gardens Trust), Mr Arthur Tait (Deanery Synod Representative) Lady Helen Trafford.

PCC Treasurer & Assistant Treasurer to the Redcliffe Gardens Trust

Carolyn Stubbs 25k Nevern Square London SW5 9PD

Secretary to the Parochial Church Council

Miss Joanna Hackett, Flat2, 300 Fulham Road, London SW10 9EP

Stewardship Recorder

Mr John Barker, 59 Osterley Views, West Park Road, Southall, Middx. UB2 4AF

Children's Advocate

Ms Verena Tschudin, 26 Cathcart Road, London SW10 9NN

Professional Support

Bankers

Barclays Bank PLC, Kensington & Chelsea Group,
PO Box 469, London SW7 4SU

Independent Financial Examiner

& Reporting Accountant to the Redcliffe Gardens Trust

Mrs Vicky Grazebrook,
Farm Cottage, Colinswood Road, Farnham Common, Slough SL2 3LJ

Inspecting Architect

Mr Michael Staff, Nye Saunders John Deal Practice,
3 Church Street, Godalming, Surrey GU17 1EQ

Insurers

Ecclesiastical Insurance Group,
Beaufort House, Brunswick Road, Gloucester GL1 1JZ

Legal Advisers

Lee Bolton Monier-Williams, 1 The Sanctuary, London SW1P 3JT

Payroll Facilities

Vantis, The White Cottage, 19 West Street, Epsom, Surrey KT18 7BS

Property Management

Stanley Hicks Chartered Surveyors, 52 Bow Lane, London EC4M 9ET

Number on the Electoral Roll 196

Statistics

Communions 2007 (2006, 2005, 2004, 2003)

Easter 152 (134, 109, 140, 140, 142)

Christmas Midnight 98 (94, 95, 80, 106,)

Christmas Morning 125 (113, 162, 175, 108)

Sunday Average 90 (83, 84, 81, 81, 80)

Average Sunday Morning Attendance Including Children

2007 128 (2006 116, 2005 116, 2004 106)

Occasional Offices 2007 (2006, 2005, 2004, 2003)

Baptisms 34 (41, 46, 40, 29, 28, 24, 30)

Confirmations 3 (7, 3, 3, 0, 5, 5, 1)

Weddings 11 (15, 12, 6, 13, 7, 3, 6)

Blessing of Marriage after a Civil Ceremony 4, (2, 1, 1, 1, 0, 4)

Funerals in Church 8 (8, 4, 15, 4, 4, 10, 5)

Memorial Services 4 (0, 0, 3, 3, 2, 0, 3)

Teen Events 0 (0, 2, 1)

Priest in Charge's Report on the Progress of the Parish and the Work of the Parochial Church Council and its Committees

Report by the Priest-in-Charge

As Christians, our faith calls us to grow and so to change more and more into the likeness of Christ, both outwardly and inwardly/spiritually so that our faith is increasingly lived out in our thoughts, words and actions.

During the past year there have been changes at St. Mary's which I believe are signs that we are a growing church, flourishing both outwardly and inwardly/spiritually.

Outwardly the interior of the church changed in 2007 with the construction of an office for the parish administrator on the left-hand side of the entrance, opposite the children's playroom.

The room is a mirror image of the playroom and now looks as though it has been there since the playroom was added during the major renovations of a few years ago. The new office gives much needed space for the parish administrator to work more efficiently and enables the administrator to be aware of those who drop into the church during the week. It also means that the verger now has some desk space on the mezzanine in the vestry.

The other addition to the church's interior has been the gift of a new presidential chair and four stools to be used in the sanctuary. These were a gift from the Roberts family in memory of Genevieve Maw who lived in the parish. The furniture is a pleasing addition to the sanctuary and complements the colour and style of the altar rails.

Last year I reported that the PCC had begun to explore ways in which members of St. Mary's might reach out into the community. Following discussions with St. Cuthbert and St. Matthias Church of England primary school in Warwick Road, volunteers started to go into the school on a regular basis to help children with reading. This has led to a marked improvement in the standard of reading in the school and has proved a very worthwhile activity. Many thanks to Arthur Tait who has co-ordinated the volunteers and carried this project forward.

Following the successful Boxing Day lunch for the Earl's Court Community Project in 2006, the lunch was repeated in 2007 with Margarete Geier again leading a team of helpers. Approximately 170 meals – 20 more than planned – were served thanks to everyone's hard work and to Margarete's ability to conjure up the extra meals.

Margarete was also instrumental in organising volunteers to cook and serve a meal in January for the West London Churches Homeless Project that provides overnight accommodation at St. Jude's church in the winter months. The meal was a great success and it was hoped this might become an annual event.

During the year our Christian formation continued to revolve round our Lent and Advent study programmes. In Lent we spent time 'Exploring Our Values' when we met in small groups, as well as having two plenary meetings in the church hall. Our Advent programme looked at 'Celebrating Christmas in the 21st Century' and Sister Elizabeth CSF was our guest speaker. Both series were well attended.

In November I took three candidates whom I had prepared for confirmation to be confirmed by the Bishop of London, Richard Chartres, at St. Paul's Cathedral: Michele lamori, Ruth Sullivan and Ogale Idudu. It was a wonderful and memorable occasion.

While we are extremely fortunate to have a beautiful church building set in a lovely garden, which is looked after and tended so ably by Audrey Pine and those who help her, it is the people who are most important at St. Mary's. As in previous years there have been people who have left us and others who have joined. While it's always a pleasure to welcome new people to St. Mary's, it's always sad to say goodbye to those who move away.

Among those who left last year was our parish administrator, Rose Wrigley, who resigned in July. Rose had joined us from St. Jude's Church, Courtfield Gardens, where she had held a similar position and her knowledge of that parish was a great asset when the two parishes of St. Mary's and St. Jude's were joined in 2006. Rose left us, among other reasons, in order to find work nearer home and so reduce her long commute to St. Mary's.

Her place was taken by John McVeigh who came to us with experience of the business world, as well as some experience in church administration. With the PCC's agreement the office hours of the administrator were increased from 20 to 25 hours per week. This has enabled John to take on some additional administrative responsibilities, which has helped to reduce my work load. His enthusiasm and commitment to St. Mary's has been palpable and his willingness to take initiatives has been greatly welcomed.

One of the projects John has been able to move forward has been the re-design and up-dating of our website. With the help of Roger Cornwell of Cornwell Associates, the new website is not only more user friendly but also much more informative.

This year we also had to say goodbye to two Sunday school leaders: Linda Fleming, who left in early spring and then Susie Stamford, who left in the summer; both moved with their families out of London. They were long standing and active members of St. Mary's and have been greatly missed. I'm delighted however that Jane Dass has taken over the leadership of Sunday School, helped particularly by Deborah Challinor and Claire Francis. The Sunday School continues to flourish under Jane's commitment and enthusiasm and I am very grateful to her and to all who support her.

The heart of our life at St. Mary's – the reason we are here – is our Sunday and daily worship and I am particularly grateful to Graham Caldbeck, our Director of Music, whose excellent musical leadership continues to enhance our worship throughout the year. The standard of singing continues to rise with the voluntary choir singing twice a month. For some services, such as at Christmas and Easter and Remembrance Sunday the music is augmented by professional soloists, both vocal and instrumental; all have been of a very high standard and their contribution to our worship has been much appreciated. The carol service in December was a musical high point of the year with nearly 300 people in the church listening to the Christmas story unfolding in words and exquisite music.

Guest preachers at our main Sunday service this year have included: the Revd. Rob Gillion, Chelsea Area Dean; the Revd. Matthew Stone, curate at St. Peter's, Black Lion Lane, Hammersmith; the Revd. Susan Groom, Director of the Kensington Area Deanery Licensed Ministry; the Revd. Graham Tomlin, Dean of St. Mellitus College, and General Sir Hugh Beach.

Not only the quality of our worship, but much of what we do would not be possible if the church were not financially viable and I am very grateful to everyone who contributes to the church in this way. Particular thanks must go to those who make sure that our finances are in good order: Carolyn Stubbs our treasurer who is always efficient, good humoured and manages to make the work look effortless; Bill Gallagher the assistant treasurer who is responsible for recording the monies received and banking them; and John Barker who deals with the intricacies of annual giving and gift aid. Without them, my life would be a great deal more stressful.

In closing I would like to thank the PCC for their much valued support and leadership, and the Wardens, Arthur Tait and Mark Nichols, for their wisdom and the work they do behind the scenes. I am extremely fortunate to have such excellent people to work with and whose commitment to St. Mary's is a constant source of gratitude.

I would also like to thank our Verger, David Ireton, who has been with us for over a year now and who, among other things, is responsible for the security and smooth running of the premises. An important part of his work is welcoming visitors both into the church and into the halls and I am grateful for his sensitivity, kindness and humour in carrying out these duties.

In Psalm 122, the psalmist sings, “I was glad when they said to me, ‘Let us go to the house of the Lord!’”. I hope that the psalmist’s words echo in the hearts of all who come to St. Mary’s, both to worship and for other activities, and that our gladness will continue in the years to come.

Ginny Thomas

Worship and Occasional Offices

The Sunday service and Wednesday Eucharist pattern remained unchanged throughout the year.

Many people make the worship special and Ginny would like to thank the following in particular:

The Servers Sylvia Gregory, Janet Mundy, Charlotte O’ Drisscoll, Olivia O Driscoll, Ola Al Mochtar, Masara Al Mochtar, Salam Al Mochtar

Chalice Assistants Venice Cedras, Margarete Geier, Sheila Gibbs, Sylvia Gregory, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Audrey Pine, Philip Bedford-Smith, Arthur Tait and Verena Tschudin.

Readers and Sidespersons Robin Arbuthnot, John Barker, Hugh Beach, Philip Bedford Smith, Fiona Brown, Richard Brudenell, Grahame Challen, Elizabeth Davson, Michael Farr, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Bill Gallagher, Anne Garten, Sheila Gibbs, Betty Greenland, Malcolm Gregory, Elizabeth Lake, Elizabeth Lowry-Corry, Martin Murphy, Mark and Susan Nichols, Dorothy Patrick, Sheila Peers, Audrey Pine, Boo Simpson, Anthea Smith, Samantha Smith, Anne Swift, Ann and Arthur Tait, Patrick Thomas, Verena Tschudin

Intercessors Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Anne Garten, Audrey Pine, Anthea Smith, Ann Tait, Iona Thomas, Verena Tschudin

Rotas Betty Greenland, Dorothy Patrick, Malcolm Gregory.

Sunday Service Sheet Betty Greenland and fabric group.

The Parochial Church Council

During the year the PCC met five times in regular meetings and the standing committee met as required. The PCC fully co-operated with the priest-in-charge in promoting within the parish the whole mission of the church: pastoral, evangelical, social and ecumenical as required under the Parochial Church Councils (Powers) Measure 1956.

At the APCM in April, Maureen Stainton, Heather Richards, Bill Gallagher stood down their three year term of office having been completed. In the summer Susie Stamford resigned from the committee as she and her family moved from London.

New members who were elected onto the PCC at the APCM were: Helen Trafford, Matthew Brown Sheila Gibbs and Leo Fraser-McKenzie. Later in the year Matthew Brown handed in his resignation as he was unable to attend meetings due to business commitments. In November, Fiona Brown, was co-opted onto the PCC.

Sunday School

The Sunday school children were extremely sad to see two teachers leave in 2007. Linda Fleming left in the spring, as she was moving to Wiltshire with her husband Richard. The children loved Linda, she never forgot a face or a name. Linda worked very hard to make every Sunday school lesson memorable and enjoyable; she was unswerving in her devotion to Sunday school, which was remarkable given the physical effort this must have taken.

Her knowledge of the bible was comprehensive, and the children learnt a great deal about what it was to be a good Christian just from spending time with her. Linda was an exceptional Sunday school teacher and a very lovely person and she is sorely missed.

Susie Stamford, who helped Linda, left in the summer to move to Sunningdale with her family. Susie was amazing. She prepared lovely classes that she held with grace, despite the distraction of her two young children Jessica who was her erstwhile assistant, and Luka who wished to cling to his mummy for the whole session. So our thank you to Susie extends to her children, to Jessica who so loved helping her, and to Luka for sharing his mummy with all the other children.

It is daunting to follow in their footsteps and to try to maintain the high, gentle, kind and gracious ladies and we were all terribly sad when Linda and then Susie left. So a huge “thank you” to Linda and Susie.

And additional thank you to all the parents who have come into the hall on Sunday mornings with the children and remained to help and given their much appreciated support.

And finally an especial thank you to Deborah Challinor who, in what appears to be an effortless manner, arranges and co-ordinates all the social and catering elements of Sunday school.

Since I started taking Sunday school, the children have been hearing the leading stories from the book of Genesis (verses 1-45 inclusive)

From The Creation, to the Life of Jacob and finishing with The Story of Joseph.

On 30th September for the harvest festival, all age worship service, the Children’s Presentation was a look back at the summer’s disappointing weather and how it affected and will continue to affect various groups of people in this country.

On Remembrance Sunday, the children thought about how God is the ultimate judge of what we do, and they were taken back into the service earlier than usual so that they could all receive a blessing.

On November 18th we left the old testament and learned from the New Testament (books-Matthew and Luke) the events leading up to the Birth of Jesus. The nativity play was held during the service of December 9th and a traditional nativity play, “written” by myself with 5 Christmas carols included. The children practised very hard learning the songs and their lines, and it was tremendously satisfying to all involved to see how well they performed.

At the church crib services on 24th December we were able to give children who did not normally attend St. Mary’s the chance to dress up as nativity figures and assist Ginny in her telling of the Christmas story.

Jane Dass

Music

Music has continued to thrive and to develop at St Mary's during 2007. The regular contribution from the Parish Choir increased further; the choir sang on some 21 occasions in all (five more Sundays than in 2006), rehearsing either on the preceding Friday evening and for 25 minutes before the service on the day, or just for 45 minutes before the service. A number of potential new members have been welcomed at our practices and a few have even had the courage to move on to the next stage of becoming regular members. The schedule of rehearsals and services for the whole year was published well in advance and quite a wide variety of music has been performed. Choir members have continued to work hard, with increasingly successful results, although, inevitably, a relatively small group is vulnerable to illness and unavoidable absences etc. However, some very pleasing performances have been given. The feedback from the congregation is generally positive, and the choir spirit is buoyant. Ginny and Patrick generously hosted a most enjoyable choir party at the Vicarage in March.

As always, I am grateful to a number of individuals for their assistance: to Ginny for her thoughtful attention to music within the liturgy; to the Cantors in the psalms: Audrey Pine, Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Malcolm Gregory and Samantha Smith, for their singing week-by-week; to John McVeigh for all his help in a wide range of matters, including arranging organ and piano tuning, producing service sheets and material for the choir; to David Ireton for his support and assistance; to the Sunday School for their contributions to All-Age Worship; and to the members of the Parish Choir for their performances and also their encouragement and interest in music generally at the church.

Some less familiar hymns and religious songs have been introduced during the year, and increased attention has given to using well-known/worth learning opening and closing of hymns for the services when a large number of children is likely to be present. It is important to remember that with hymn singing in schools in decline (and in many cases having ceased altogether), children attending Sunday School within our Parish Eucharist will only learn these traditional (and also, new) hymns when given the opportunity so to do. We must hand on this musical legacy, as well as to be open to new musical developments of quality. The Sunday School has several times included music in its presentations, often accompanied by my predecessor, Simon Gibson. This is encouraging, and we look forward to the children's continuing contribution to our worship in the future.

The church has continued to invite professional singers and instrumentalists to perform for major Festivals, Holy Week, special services, as well as for weddings, funerals and memorial services. This is an important side of the musical activity of the church, although perhaps one that is perhaps less well known to many members of the congregation. Such services bring many people into the church, some of whom subsequently retain an association here – not only the congregations, but also the visiting musicians. During 2007 professional musicians from outside the church have contributed to nine services, beyond those professional choirs arranged to perform at weddings, funerals and memorial services. A wide variety of music has been performed by a number of highly gifted performers and it is perhaps worth taking the opportunity again this year to provide some detail.

Music featured strongly during Holy Week. On Palm Sunday Stephanie Allman (mezzo-soprano) sang a movement from Pergolesi's *Stabat Mater* and *He was despised* from Handel's *Messiah*. RCM-trained Stephanie is a member of Nonsuch Singers and has sung with D'Oyly Carte, and Opera North, in addition to being a regular recitalist. On Maundy Thursday, Richard Fallas (bass), who sings regularly with the BBC Singers and top choirs abroad, sang Dvorak's setting of *Psalm 23* from *Biblical Songs* and *The Call* from Vaughan Williams's *Five Mystical Songs*. On Good Friday a wide range of organ works by Bach, Telemann, Allan Bush, Howells, Mathias and Peter Racine Fricker, as well as music from the *Buxheimer Orgelbuch* of c. 1470, were used as the musical meditations within the service, complementing Ginny's homilies on six Crucifixion scenes. On Easter Saturday the *Exultet* was movingly sung by Malcolm Banham (tenor), a regular performer at St Mary's. Bach's music was strongly featured in our Easter Day celebrations when *I follow in gladness to meet Thee (St John Passion)* and *Jesus, Saviour, I am thine (St Matthew Passion)* were performed by the well-known soprano, Ana-Maria Rincon.

On Remembrance Sunday, a highly gifted postgraduate flautist from Trinity College of Music, Fiona Kelly, accompanied by David Patrick on the organ, performed Bach's *Sonata in E major BWV 1035* and Fauré's *Morceau de Concours*. Fiona played the *Sarabande* from Bach's *Partita in A minor for solo flute* during Communion. This continued the series of solo instrumentalists used in recent years for this special service – violin (2004), cello (2005) and oboe (2006).

On 25 November, Patrick kindly donated the cost of hiring a professional octet to sing the Eucharist for Christ the King, as part of the celebrations of his 60th birthday. The music selected included Howells *Psalm-Prelude Set 1 No. 2*, Finzi's

God is gone up, the Gloria, Sanctus & Benedictus from Howells's 'Collegium Regale' Communion Service, Vaughan Williams's setting of *Valiant-for-Truth*, Walton's *March – Crown Imperial* and a couple of home-grown descants by the Director of Music.

At the Carol Service on 16 December, the eclectic choice of music ranged from an Advent plainsong 'O' Antiphon and a Spanish 15th century shepherds' song, through carols by a succession of famous Cambridge musicians: Charles Wood, Boris Ord, Ralph Vaughan Williams, David Willcocks and John Rutter, leavened by an exquisite *Ave Maria* by Stravinsky, John Gardner's most famous carol, *Tomorrow shall be my dancing day* (celebrating the composer's 90th birthday) and *Lux aurumque* by the contemporary American composer, Eric Whitacre. We were very fortunate indeed to have Ian Farrington playing. Ian was Organ Scholar at St. John's College, Cambridge and was a soloist at last summer's BBC Proms. Who will ever forget the premiere of Ian's jazz-inspired and technically demanding *Postlude on Hark the Herald* at the end of the service?

Carols by John Rutter, John Joubert and David Willcocks were sung by a professional choir at the Midnight Mass. Steven Keogh (trumpet) performed Warlock's *Andante tranquillo* before the service and some celebratory movements from Handel's *Music for the Royal Fireworks* afterwards. Unusually this year, our celebrations on Christmas Day were entirely congregational, due to our regular soloists' unavailability.

Members of the congregation are generally very interested and supportive of the music at St Mary's, taking a keen interest in the organ voluntaries and the solo and choral performances. I am very grateful to the four talented organists who have deputised for me when I have been away at various times during the year; Simon Gibson, David Patrick, Richard Pearce and Richard Shepperson.

On 3 November a party of members of the congregation came to hear Nonsuch Singers, the London chamber choir that I conduct, and Naomi Williams (cello) perform Rachmaninov's *Vespers* and music by John Tavener at St. John's, Smith Square. Members of the congregation have also regularly attended other concerts given by the choir elsewhere in London during the year, including a concert in Christ Church, Spitalfields, as part of the Winter Festival in December.

I am grateful to Ginny for allowing me to hold auditions for the choir in church from time to time. A number of singers and instrumentalists who work with me in outside concerts have also now performed in the church and this interconnection is a useful one. So, 2007 was another good year for music at the church and a solid foundation on which to build for the future.

Graham Caldbeck
Director of Music

The Flower Guild

I'm afraid the reports on the flower guild each year are rather similar. In 2007 we arranged flowers for thirteen weddings and a service of celebration, several funerals and of course the Church festivals. So we had quite a busy year.

I am immensely grateful to Anita Dowbiggin who apart from flower arranging also does all the telephoning, also does all the telephoning to get enough people for each wedding, and also for the ordinary Sunday flowers.

My thanks go out also to Mandy Dearan, Doreen Santana and Venice Cedras. Josephine Crickmay and Pauline Stephens who are our main helpers and contribute so much to make the Church look beautiful.

I should also thank members of the congregation for their generous donations towards the flowers for Christmas and Easter.

We make a small profit from the weddings, and the money used for plants for the Church garden, Christmas trees etc. We have a reasonable balance in the bank at the moment and if there is anything that is needed in the Church that we could help towards please let me know.

Boo Simpson

Report of the Prayer Network

The Prayer Network is an important part of our corporate life. There are 24 people, present and former parishioners, constitute the Network. News and information are circulated on a regular basis. The list contains about 70-80 people at any one time.

The distribution of news and information is by e-mail to those with that facility, and by letter, usually handed out on Sundays, to all the others. A monthly Bulletin, with all the updates incorporated, is distributed to everyone. The people on the list are also prayed for in Church at Morning and Evening Prayers, and a rota of about 8-10 people are included in the Sunday intercessions.

Most requests and updates come from the people of the Network itself, but by no means exclusively. Indeed, it would be good if anyone with a concern would let either Ginny, John McVeigh, or me know as we can quickly disseminate any requests. It is important that changes or progress are also noted and passed on, as this keeps the prayers and intercessions relevant, and the intercessors interested.

Verena Tschudin

Groups

Mothers and Toddlers Group on Monday Mornings in Term Time

The Mothers and Toddlers Group continues to thrive. Ann Magalhaes left as coordinator at the end of spring term. A team of four mothers continue to run the playgroup. The group continues to be very popular and well-regarded within the community.

Bible Study Group

The Bible Study Group has been meeting fortnightly throughout the year during term time and we have a regular number of eight, and maximum of ten people. We will be continuing to study "Luke for Everyone" by Tom Wright in the first quarter of 2008.

We would be delighted to welcome new members; please contact Grahame Challen on 020 8222 8394.

Grahame Challen

Monthly Thursday Lunches

Following a successful season in 2006 the popularity of these lunches increased again during 2007.

Average attendance rose from about 20 to high 20s, with a high point of 40 on one occasion. Interesting speakers with interesting topics have contributed greatly to this success.

The menu of soup, bread, cheese, paté and fruit, followed by coffee, perhaps justifies more than the initial title of 'Simple' lunch. The occasion is enjoyed by people of widely varying ages, including some who find it difficult to attend church on Sundays.

Those who wish to do so contribute towards the costs. During the year income has marginally exceeded expenditure: a satisfactory near break-even situation while making a small contribution to other church funds.

We are very grateful to the speakers for their fascinating 20 minute talks, covering a splendidly wide range of topics. Many thanks also to others who have helped with the preparations and clearing up before and after each lunch, including of course David Ireton.

June Brudenell, Ann and Arthur Tait.

Traidcraft

The Traidcraft stall has again been well supported by the congregation. This financial year, we have turned over £956.02 worth of goods to help farmers and suppliers in developing countries.

All products that are sold on the stall can be traced back to a specific supplier; Traidcraft plc. can vouch that the honey, muesli, coffee and other goods, food or paper products meet the Fair Trade criteria all the way down the line from grower/producer to the stall in church.

Meanwhile, as our church is now serving only fairly-traded tea and coffee of various brands, we are applying for our Fair-Trade certificate.

Many thanks to all parishioners who support the stall regularly; special thanks to Philip Bedford-Smith who has joined our selling team; to Ruth, Margarete, Oriol, Joanna, and Elizabeth Graham, for sterling work in helping to pack up at

the end of the session! And of course, to Dave Ireton for his continuing support with receiving, storing and helping us to manage deliveries.

Please don't feel shy about offering to help with selling: one month out of 12 would be so helpful, and would allow more flexibility in our own routines. Your ideas, criticism, suggestions are always welcome.

Mary-G Blanchet and Dorothy Patrick

Communications

The Clarion, our web site and the Sunday service sheet continue to provide information. Many thanks to the fabric group and Betty Greenland who turn up faithfully each week to fold and stuff!

The Clarion

The Clarion is available in Church on every last Sunday before the next month (e.g. the April issue is available on 30 March) and is also sent to many people in the UK and far away who want to keep in touch with what is happening at St Mary's.

The purpose of The Clarion is to inform, educate, stimulate, and occasionally amuse readers and a good mix of all these is my aim. It also contains all the official details from the parish register, readings at services, notices of planned events, and the Parish Directory. A new addition recently has been the inclusion of the names in the Book of Remembrance (Year's Mind) for the month.

John McVeigh, the Parish Administrator, coordinates the collection of material for the monthly issue, and sees to the pagination, depending on how much material is available. John hopes that before long the Clarion can be sent either by e-mail or via the website to the people presently receiving a hard copy. It is also available for view on the website anyway, and everyone on the address list of the parish will in future receive a monthly e-mail to remind them of parish activities and that they can view the Clarion if they want to. In this way much money (and trees) can be saved in having to print fewer copies, yet reaching a wider readership.

The Clarion is the parish 'voice' *par excellence*, and to make as many people's voice heard as possible, everyone is encouraged to send in material, of whatever kind, but ideally by e-mail, either to the Parish Office, or to my e-mail address.

Verena Tschudin

Social Report

Parish Lunches were held regularly throughout the year, usually on the first Sunday of the month.

There are some people (who must always remain incognito to protect them from embarrassment) who are always to the forefront when there is any work to be done. We all know who they are. Thanks to these good-hearted individuals. Everything that needs to be done, is done, year after year.

Our grateful thanks yet again to you all for your help in setting up tables, furnishing them and serving food to the multitude and also to those truly noble individuals – usually the same people – who appear without fail at the conclusion of the lunch to help with the washing up and the dismantling and conveyance of the tables. We couldn't manage without you!

As anticipated last year, the installation of our new dishwasher has made things much easier.

Let us not forget those indispensable public-spirited people who are actually willing to go to the trouble of cooking for thirty, whether the food is prepared at home beforehand or from scratch in the Church Hall kitchen. Without you there would be no lunches. Rest assured that your chefmanship is really valued. It's been great having some new chefs.

Our traditional pancake party took place this year at Ginny's instead of the north transept of the church. Unfortunately I was unable to attend on this occasion, but I understand that everyone had a delightful evening, thanks to Ginny and all those kind people who helped to make the pancakes.

David Ireton, our new verger/caretaker, has already demonstrated his sterling worth by his impressive presence in church, but his assistance behind the scenes in the Church Hall and kitchen continue to be outstanding. Thank you David, we really do appreciate your help.

Sylvia Gregory – Social Secretary

The Summer Fair 2007.

23 June 2007 dawned brightly, but soon turned showery. Despite the showers, an army of helpers was at the church bright and early to help with the setting up. The best minds of the parish were tasked with erecting the rather aged Pimms tent and after a couple of hours (!) it eventually stood proud. The convoy of helpers undertook the huge task of setting up the Bric-à-Brac and Book Stalls efficiently, both of which seem to grow each year. Due to the large amount of toys that had been donated as Bric-à-Brac, we were able to set up a Toy Stall alongside, which proved a great hit. The provision of two bouncy castles and the beauty/gift corner kept the younger visitors to the fair entertained, as did the activities kindly provided and supervised by Pippa Poppins.

The winner of the Guess the Weight of the Rabbit was our very own Rev G Thomas! The Coconut Shy, Quoits and Hook a Duck also proved popular, although we seemed to have an awful lot of coconuts left over, due to alternate prizes being offered! The last minute arrival of a fire engine from Chelsea Fire Station was an added bonus. The fire officers did sterling work in keeping the children entertained with their fire safety colouring books and opportunity to sit in the cab wearing a helmet, while at the same time educating the parents on all aspects of fire safety.

The musicians who were warmly received last year, performed again, strategically placed under a tree in the North Garden to offer protection from the frequent heavy showers. Located just along from the teas and Pimms there was no danger of them going thirsty! The Plant Stall and Tombola proved successful once again and the Barbecue sold out, receiving many compliments on the sausages from A A King, made just that little bit bigger this year! The Cake & Jam Stall was a huge success again, receiving a constant stream of customers. It was also a beneficiary of a new pop up gazebo that offered protection from the sun, and more appropriately for this year, from the rain too! The Silent Auction and Raffle were very popular and raised significant sums of money.

The 2007 Summer Fair raised money for two very different charities; The Arthritis Research Campaign (ARC) and the Al Ahli Hospital in Gaza. **ARC** undertakes research into the causes and treatments of arthritis affecting both juvenile and adult sufferers, with an overall aim of finding a cure for the condition.

Operating in the midst of a war zone, the **Al Ahli Hospital** treats poor, needy and injured people in Gaza irrespective of religion, faith and political allegiance. It is a constant struggle to keep stocks of medicine, blood etc in the hospital and the work they carry out is of vital importance to the community.

The overall sum raised from the 2007 Fair was just short of £6,000 and each charity received a cheque for around £3,000.

Fiona Brown

Church Garden

The garden had an uneventful year on the whole, but overall it was in good heat and came second in the church gardens section of The Brighter Kensington and Chelsea Scheme.

It remains popular with local workmen, residents and visitors alike, and is very well used and appreciated, despite the continuous din from local building works. While it is good to see The Boltons houses being repaired and brought up to date, the price in terms of noise has been such that we have felt that we cannot at this time re-join the Quiet Gardens Trust membership, which includes offering our garden and facilities to churches that haven't got them, for quiet days.

The great need of the garden at the present time - and it will become increasingly urgent as spring moves into summer - is for more helpers. Some experience would be desirable, but help can be given, and the most important thing would be regularity. The gardeners meet on Saturday mornings, to have the garden presentable for Sunday mornings, and also to give people who are at work on weekdays a chance to join in. Do please come and see if you think you might have a little (or a lot of) time to spare

Audrey Pine, Gardening Co-ordinator

Verger's Report

This has been my first full year at St Mary's. We have had 8 funerals and 17 weddings, and as verger I continue to support Ginny in her ministry.

The installation of the new parish office has been a great success. At the end of 2007 we started refurbishment work on the Hall Kitchen and adjacent areas.

It is a great pleasure to work, and help all the group's that use St. Mary's including those from the wider community.

Things have settled down into a regular pattern of verging and caretaking and I feel welcomed at home within the community of St Mary's.

Dave Ireton Verger/Caertaker

The Sacristy

Elizabeth Graham looked after other sacristan duties, such as the preparations for setting up the altar for services. as well a looking after the clergy vestments and supplies for communion. In addition, Sylvia Gregory helps with sacristy duties on Sundays. Margareite washed church linens and Anne Garten ironed them. A very big thank you to all.

Redcliffe Gardens Trust

During 2007, as in previous years, Redcliffe Gardens Trust received income from two sources – ground rent from the property at no. 11 Redcliffe Gardens, and interest on surplus funds deposited at the CBF (Central Board of Finance) Church of England Deposit Fund. This fund is a specialist money market fund managed by CCLA Investment Management Ltd and is intended for funds which are to be available at short notice and with minimal risk of capital loss. It offers flexibility of daily withdrawals / deposits and security in that the funds are pooled and are placed at short notice with a carefully selected list of banks and building societies. In view of the credit crunch following the government support provided to Northern Rock bank it is worth noting that this is a money market fund managed by CCLA so the Trust's risk exposure is to the fund rather than to the underlying business of CCLA. The fund's managers place money in the London inter-bank market so in effect a deposit in this fund provides exposure to many banks rather than a single institution. At the end of December 2007 the fund was triple A rated by Moody's (the highest rating achievable) and at the time of writing this report the size of the fund was just over £962m.

In accordance with established policy the income from ground rents was given away to charitable concerns which are detailed in Note 4 to these Accounts.

During the year there was a change in the tenant at 11 Redcliffe Gardens. The Chemical Dependency Centre who originally took the 99 year lease on the property merged with Clouds and Action on Addiction and the so the operational tenant is now Action ion Addiction (www.actionaddiction.org.uk).

This is a registered charity working the same field as the Chemical Dependency Centre used to : alcohol, drug and other addiction issues. At the same time as this re-organisation took place the leaseholder which is the direct tenant of The Trust became Beaulieu Properties Limited with a licence granted to sub-let to Action in Addiction. Possibly due to these changes the ground rent due in December 2007 was paid a few weeks late. .

Leo Fraser-Mackenzie, Hon Treasurer

Gift-Aid Scheme

By the time you read this, the basic rate of income tax will have dropped (with effect from the start of the 2008/09 tax year) from 22% to 20% and the rate at which registered charities can claim a tax refund in respect of a basic rate taxpayer will have dropped from 22/78ths or 28.205% to 20/80ths or 25% of the net amount received by the charity from the donor.

With basic-rate taxpayers the reduction amounts to more than 11% of the amount claimable. The reduction in the basic rate follows a general trend over a number of years and charities have had to contend with the resulting continuing fall in the tax-refund efficiency of the scheme.

With higher-rate taxpayers the situation is rather different. For every £ donated, a charity has in recent years been able to claim back the above 22/78ths as with standard-rate donors. In addition, however, a higher-rate donor can claim back personally, when submitting an annual tax return, the difference between the basic and higher rates of tax. The result is that the net cost to the donor is only 60% of the benefit accruing to the charity, i.e. the Revenue is passing on to the charity the 40% tax that has been charged to the donor. If 60 parts becomes 100 parts the 'multiplier' is 66.67% instead of 28.205%, a much better deal for the donor and the charity.

It is understood that, essentially, the above mechanism for higher-rate taxpayers will still apply from 6 April onwards. From that date, a cash donation of £80 by a higher-rate taxpayer will be worth £100 to the charity but, when the dust settles, only have cost the donor £60.

John Barker

Fabric of the Building and Ornaments

St Mary's continues to provide an ambience for those who enter the gardens and church that attracts admiration, pleasure and, for many, spiritual resonance.

The fabric of the building remains overall in excellent condition after the refurbishment some years ago. The various ornaments, including (as just two examples) the Pieta and the Treasury cabinet, help to create a reflective and uplifting scene for visitors.

The main change to the building during the year was the creation of an office for the Parish Administrator in the north west corner of the church just inside the west entrance. Structurally this neatly matches the similar room in the south west corner of the church, which is available for parents and carers with small children. Administratively it enables the Priest-in-Charge and the Administrator to work in separate areas near the main entrance and to vacate the previous unsatisfactory base in the vestry. One valuable outcome of this change is our ability to keep the church open for longer hours during the week in line with our Open Door policy.

Huge thanks to the many who help to keep the church in such good condition, including the skilful, meticulous work of the 'Thursday morning group', whose core members are Ann Garten, Malcolm Goddard and Julia Pringle. Many thanks, too, to Trent Jardine who has maintained high standards in his cleaning work while vergers have come and gone around him. We are now very pleased to have the new verger David Ireton in place and the even more recently arrived John McVeigh whose work as Parish Administrator also contributes well to the condition of the building and the hall.

Arthur Tait

Meetings of the Deanery Synod

The Deanery Synod held two meetings during 2007. The first was at Chelsea Old Church on 27 February when the 'public' part of the meeting focused on the activities of the church on the World's End estate. There were presentations by representatives from Holy Trinity Brompton, St Andrew's, Park Walk and St John's, World's End, and the London City Mission, all directly involved in the work. The area has about 7,000 residents, and there are some major social problems. Volunteers would be welcome. (St Mary's subsequently decided to contribute £4,000 towards the housing costs of the London City Mission representative who lives on the estate, to enable his work there).

The second meeting took place on 27 September at Christ Church, Chelsea. We heard about the parish with its two churches at St Luke's and Christ Church and three clergy, its 'bursting-at-the-seams' Church of England Primary

School with 200 children, and the Christ Church organ, dated from 1779 and reputedly played by Handel. The meeting noted various matters raised by the Area Dean, including the renovation of St Luke's, Redcliffe Gardens;

the retirement of Bishop Michael Marshall from Holy Trinity Sloane Square; and the Deanery Licensed Ministry scheme, with at that time three people in training and 27 considering undertaking training. The Dean also led discussion about the London Challenge II.

Both meetings carried out standard duties, such as considering reports from the General and Diocesan Synods, the London Diocesan Board for Schools, the Area Council, School Governorships, and other relevant elections and appointments.

Arthur Tait

Children's Advocate

This has been another year with very little work to do in this capacity, but this is a good sign. I am in the background, but this is an official PCC appointment for the purpose of ensuring that all children on our premises are not only protected in law, but are not harmed in any way.

The Child Protection Policy is reviewed once a year and revised when necessary and is displayed in several places around the Church and Hall and all groups using the premises are asked to comply with it. A few minor changes to the wording (to bring the CPP up to date) were made in 2007.

Verena Tschudin