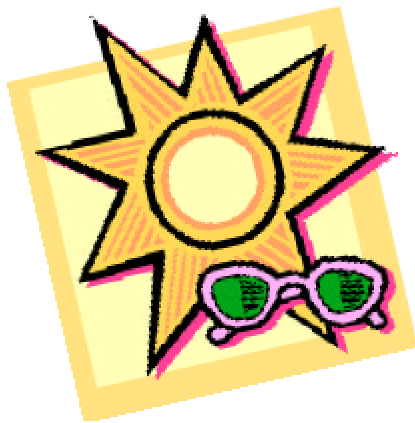


Impact

Church and community magazine
St Hilda with St Cyprian, Crofton Park



Summer 2003

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Africa to fight HIV and AIDS

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www.croftonpark.com

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CHURCH OF ENGLAND**

VICAR: Fr S G Bates

The Vicarage, 35 Buckthorne Road, Crofton Park, SE4 2DG
Tel: 020 8699 1277

CHURCH WARDENS

Mrs Irene Griffiths 07747 723 378
Mrs Ida Buss 020 8699 5061

READER

Mr Doug Whitfield 020 8699 4497

SERVICE TIMES

Sundays:

8am Holy Communion

In Lady Chapel: entry via main church entrance on Courtrai Road

10am Solemn Eucharist

Followed by tea, coffee and biscuits in the Parish Room
Entry via main entrance on Courtrai Road

10am Sunday School

In St Cyprian's Chapel: entry via Crypt door on Brockley Road

10am Third Sunday of the month: Children's Service

Weekday Masses:

10am Wednesday

In the Lady Chapel: entry via Crucifix Door on Courtrai Road

Weddings and Baptisms

To arrange banns of marriage, weddings or baptisms please come to the church on Saturdays between 11am and 12 noon, or telephone the vicar.

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Impact Editorial

We serve the wider parish and local community through Impact. If you have an item of local interest which you would like to see published, please write to the Editor c/o The Vicarage, or e-mail impact@croftonpark.com.

FR BATES WRITES

"You're too hot to hold, too hot to handle" runs the line of a well known song for dancing the quickstep. And the last month has certainly been too hot for many to handle - though sales of cold drinks have soared. The latest debacle over sexuality has been too hot to handle for the Church of England, and the Vatican has decided to have a go at gay people again. The Archbishop seems to be heading for the paracetamol. No doubt the small but vociferous minority claiming bible truth are sitting smugly in their new found seats of power. Perhaps a cool drink and chilling out would do some good. I heartily wish the church would shut up about sex altogether for a while and do itself a favour.

It is said that congregations at ground level are more understanding of peoples' lives than the institution as a whole. The congregation is the human face of the church, after all - just as Jesus is the human face of God meeting human beings in humanity and grace. This is what the Church should major on - it's a good one.

St Hilda's has a mix of people and most are very human. When the issue of the gay Bishop designate was discussed, the church council felt that focusing on his sexuality was an inappropriate distraction. Human personal qualities were more important.

Whatever your position on these matters it is safe to come to St Hilda's. We have a policy that members must be happy to see others in church just as they are. People who are progressive must accept and try to understand the conservatives too. There must be room for everyone. There is no inquisition at the door, nor any sneaky corrective process about people's sex lives, race, cultural background, class etc. We do expect relationships to be adult, consenting and respectful. All of us have a growing edge in response to others' differences - but there is no excuse for using religion or politics as an excuse for our fear.

I believe the church has lots of good things to say about human relationships, but in its preference for always knowing best it has ballsed things up over the last 40 years. However, many religious people do go alongside others on their journey with humility and acceptance. Many are now martialling their forces in the church to prevent the extremists ruling the day.

The summer has been hot and the temperature brings sexy feeling to the surface amongst other things - thank God for that! God made us with 'umph' for life. We have just got to deal with it well. And we will never agree exactly how.

Parish Roundabout: news and minor incidents

By Arthur D Holmesley

The much patched up roundabout at Brockley Road corner has been tarmaced over. It's now much easier to drive across. I suppose the granite sets are all buried underneath...

The rumbly speed ramps on Brockley Road have kept residents awake at night and cost the authorities a lot to be removed.

A ram-raid style getaway over the Eddystone Road footbridge saw the end of the gates on our side. The hastily abandoned vehicle crashed into the pedestrian barriers with the police in hot pursuit!

Local shop keepers have been annoyed by the move of a Brockley Road bus stop near the bridge, which has also restricted parking.

Stondon Park homeowners have renewed front walls in the style of the original with brick piers *à la* 1910 - congratulations! Very nice.

The shop by Crofton Park station is being renovated - hooray! I hear it's to be a Co-op. It's a good sized property and needs to be used well.

The derelict shop on the corner of Hazeldon Road is still a mess (though the junk has been removed). Does anyone know what's going to happen there?

The actor Hugh Laurie was recently at the Rivoli Ballroom where the BBC were making a short film based on a true story called "1880".

The new coffee shop at Brockley Rise/Honor Oak cheerfully serves good coffee and has seen a good breakfast clientele.

Editor's note: our roving reporters hope shortly to make a visit to the new coffee shop, and they'll let you know all about it in the next issue of Impact. As for the Rivoli Ballroom, please see the advertisement on the back page of this issue, along with ads from many local businesses worthy of your support.

International Supper Evening

A date for your diary!



On 6th September in St Hilda's Church Hall, a veritable feast of foods from around the world, carefully prepared by members of St Hilda's. Join us for what has become a regular event. Tickets cost £10, and include as much food as you want.

Hospital Chaplaincy

How you can give and receive help in hospital

If you have ever been admitted to hospital, or you have ever visited a friend or relative there, you will know that it can be a daunting place. Despite the best efforts of busy staff, many things can combine to cause you stress and unhappiness: fears and worries about health, concerns about being away from home and family, and the simple fact of being in unfamiliar surroundings. Equally, if you spend any time confined to bed in a hospital, you may miss the opportunity to engage in regular worship or religious observance.

Most reasonably sized hospitals have a chaplaincy team to help you with all of these things and more, whatever your faith and even if you have none. The Department of Health recognises that the hospital chaplain's role can make a significant contribution to the well-being of patients, staff and relatives.

Due to recent changes in the way the NHS interprets the Data Protection Act, hospital chaplains are not automatically informed of new admissions. In this light, the Chaplaincy Team at University Hospital Lewisham have asked us to publish the information below, and we are happy to do so.

1. If ever you, a relative or a friend are admitted to Hospital and would like a Chaplain to visit the Ward, would you please ask? The Hospital is now such a big, busy place that it's impossible for Chaplains to do a daily trawl of all the beds - but once we know where we're wanted, we endeavour to respond ASAP!

So, if you would like a chat, or someone with whom to pray, or anything at all - just let us know. In the first instance, please do give us your full name, because that will be what the Hospital uses for its computer and records - otherwise it may take some time to track you down.

The Chaplaincy Team consists of Rev Annie Shaw and Rev Ben Rhodes (Church of England), Fr Clive Ross (Roman Catholic Church), and Rev Wesley Cooke (Methodist/Free Church). We have an office in the Hospital:

Chaplains' Office
University Hospital Lewisham
London
SE13 6HL
Telephone: 020 8333 3299 (with voicemail)
020 8333 3000 (main switchboard)
E-mail: chaplaincy@uhl.nhs.uk

continued...

Hospital Chaplaincy

...continued

We also have a small team of Voluntary Ward Visitors - which brings us neatly to our second point...

2. Would you be willing and able to become a member of the Chaplaincy Team?

What would I do?

Visit a Ward or two on a regular basis.

How often?

Ideally once a week.

For how long?

Between one and two hours.

Do I need experience?

Not necessarily; we can arrange training and support for you.

What now?

If you would like to know more, please contact either Annie or Ben, for an informal chat.

In the meantime, please remember the healing work of the Hospital and the Chaplaincy in your prayers.

News from Crofton Park Community Link

One of the first fruits of Crofton Park Community Link (CPCL), St Hilda's community project, has been the renovation of under-used facilities within the church grounds. We now have a large, well-lit Community Room and a number of other associated amenities. Profits from room hire will ultimately be ploughed back into the development of CPCL premises and community work.

In July we welcomed on board a major user of the Community Room, Renaissance Theatre. Throughout the month Renaissance Theatre performed an inaugural play, *Garvey's Last Soldier*, a studio

production with projection, sound and drums to accompany the action.

Performances attracted a good mix of people and there is every sign that this will become a popular project in Crofton Park. As things progress so the room will be better kitted out for future productions.

Renaissance Theatre is a black theatre company. Led by Mr David Simon, its members write and produce drama drawing on the experience of black people, and they do so in a way which emphasises the human perspective for people of every race.

London Wildlife

A poem

Looking out of the window
As every morning after awakening,
We spotted a fox in our garden.
Welcomed, as we had missed it,
Not seen it for more than four weeks.
But - it was not "our" fox,
Was smaller, greyer - surprised
It dawned on me, it was a cub!
Sitting in the early morning sun
Watching, ears pricked, head turning.

Moments later, in a neighbour's garden,
Close to the old wooden fence -
I could not believe it -
Another cub, slipping through the fence.
Off went the two,
Playfully chasing each other,
Around the little pond,
Through the fence.

Suddenly, below the forsythias,
A bigger head appeared,
Mother Fox, checking on her offspring.
Obviously satisfied she disappeared,
Below the garden shed
Into the hole we had seen for weeks,
But never thought it
To be the entrance
To the breeding earth.

Surprise, surprise -
another snout, eyes and ears
Appeared in the hole.
No, not the vixen again,
No, it's cub number three!
Through the fence it slipped,
All three little ones united
In joyful mingled play.

How touched we are by this encounter.
Had hoped for "our" fox to stay with us
But afraid a family might harm our
garden.
Do they know? How well behaved
guests -
Friends in soul - so much appreciation.
We are all part of nature, of Mother Earth.

*Wulf Steinvorth, 13 May 2003
for Rosemarie & Fee*



Christian Aid Week... thank you

Christian Aid Week is the UK charity's main fundraising event. Over 40 denominations of UK churches participate each year - everyone from the Salvation Army to the Russian Orthodox Church. Part of the Week includes door-to-door collections which are carried out by volunteers at each individual church.

Thank you to everyone in the Crofton Park area who was able to contribute this year. Your thoughtfulness and generosity are much appreciated. We collected nearly £750, which will be used by Christian Aid to support its work in over 60 countries worldwide enabling poor people, regardless of their religion, to help themselves.

More information on Christian Aid can be found at www.christianaid.org.uk.

What is the value of church?

Members of St Hilda's have asked themselves some searching questions

This magazine is published by St Hilda's Church, which sits on the corner of Brockley Road and Courtrai Road. St Hilda's is part of the Church of England - "in the Anglican Communion", to put it another way. It performs all the functions you would expect: there is regular weekly worship on Sundays and Wednesdays; the church is available for marriages, baptisms and funerals; the vicar and his team provide pastoral care for those living in the parish; we support a number of charities and community activities; and church members enjoy one another's company (mostly!) through a range of social events.

We have recently been thinking long and hard about the value we place on our church, and we have had to face up to the fact that like the Church of England as a whole St Hilda's too is facing something of a financial crisis. The heating system may not manage another winter and the roof will soon be in need of significant repair - yet it's difficult even to support our day-to-day operations, let alone to fund our plans for supporting the wider community.

We understand very well that there's no point pumping money into something which is not worthwhile. In a recent drive in which congregation members reviewed their financial support for St Hilda's, we have been asking ourselves some searching questions. In particular, given that the average attendance at a Sunday service is fewer than 60 people, is there any point in trying to maintain the church at all?

The answer from the congregation was a firm "yes", after a planned campaign of reflection over two or three weeks. Here's how one congregation member put it:

I may not always feel like attending church on a Sunday. However, whenever I go I find the vicar's sermon contains a message that strikes a chord with me. Moreover I feel uplifted by the singing, the organ playing, the liturgy, the incense, and the socialising with other members of the congregation. I give a helping hand with cleaning, distributing *Impact* and doing the odd job. I get something, I give something.

St Hilda's is not a club which exists to make its members happy, nor a place through which people try to "reserve a place in heaven"! It is a place (physical and metaphysical) in which we can grow spiritually, support one another, worship God, learn how to be a positive influence in the community and - particularly through Crofton Park Community Link - make a practical difference to life in the area.

Church life is hardly the be-all and the end-all. There are plenty of other ways in which many of these good things can happen, and plenty of good people who never set foot in any church. But because we are Christians, or are at least seeking to understand more about life's purpose, church is the place in which we choose to start. To paraphrase a recent National Lottery slogan, "you don't make a difference unless you try".

If you live near St Hilda's and don't usually go to church, it would be great to see you there one Sunday.

Red Cross Trek: fighting HIV and AIDS in South Africa

Some of you may have seen the recent press release in the South East London Mercury with a cheesy photo of Julia Davies (of Perry Rise Baptist Church) and myself, Irene Griffiths. Our picture was gracing an article about our efforts to raise money for the British Red Cross by walking 118 kilometres (75 miles) in the Cederberg Mountains in South Africa. With the funds raised, the Red Cross will educate and inform people about the dangers of HIV/AIDS.

One way or another, this terrible disease touches nearly every family living in Africa. It can cause tremendous suffering to those directly affected. Because of it, a whole generation of parents, teachers, doctors and skilled professionals are lost - and the very old and very young are left to try to survive.

To take part, we have had to raise £5,500 between us - and it has to be said that we have had a great deal of fun doing so! The fact that we have no friends left is beside the point. (Actually, that isn't true). We have done sponsored walks, activity days for children (sheer hell, that one!), cooked lunches for work colleagues, run tuck shops at work, held murder-mystery dinner parties, sold raffle tickets, spent long evenings making crafty things to sell at fairs, ironed piles of clothes for friends, and typed documents in return for donations. Our latest venture was taking over the Tai Wu restaurant in Brockley Rise for a night. Thanks to Steven the owner and chef, we had a wonderful evening and crawled out late in the evening too fat to move! Steve was generosity itself and cooked a magnificent feast for our guests. Many thanks to him once again!

Julia and I are training for our ordeal, though we have to do a lot more. We're due out in October, and the time feels as though it is approaching fast. Short walks followed by an hour to recover in a pub isn't ideal training, I feel. Several of our ex-friends are getting a sweepstake up on which one of us is the first to be air lifted off the mountain by air ambulance!

If anyone would like to donate some money to help us with this cause, please feel free to do so. Cheques made payable to the British Red Cross can be sent to The Editor c/o 35 Buckthorne Road, Crofton Park, London SE4 2DG. Please help in any way you can to alleviate the terrible suffering caused by HIV and AIDS.

Irene Griffiths

More details from the British Red Cross at www.redcross.org.uk/trek2003.

The Mothers' Union

The editors of Impact have been slightly remiss when it comes to advertising the activities of the Mothers' Union, so before we dive into telling you about their forthcoming programme we want to describe a few of the things they have so far got up to in 2003.

There have already been talks on such diverse subjects as Canada, the Ronald McDonald House (about life in a home from home for families of sick children) and the significance of world religions in a multi-faith society. There have been quizzes and beetle drives, and plant and cake sales to raise money for the Mothers' Union's Leprosy charity, LEPRa. The MU ran a Lent course in March and April (look out for next year's) with guest speakers grappling with deep topics in the Christian faith. Finally, St. Hilda's fairs and fêtes would be nothing without the Mothers' Union refreshments and cakes.

If you are interested in finding out more about the Mothers' Union why not turn up to one of the meetings listed below? The meetings all begin at 2pm and are held in St. Hilda's Church, with entrance by the main church door in Courtrai Road. Expect a warm welcome and an interesting afternoon.

Remaining events for the year:

9th September	Service and news
23rd September	Fish & chips supper and social evening
14th October	Service and news
28th October	Bring and Buy auction in aid of LEPRa

There will also be meetings on 11 November and 25 November, with topics to be arranged.

Family news		Forthcoming events	
Funerals	Lily Martin Dave Roberts Stanley Wayman	30th Aug	Table sale, 10am to 2pm
		13th Sept	International Supper Evening

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