

Addresses

## Contents

### *Feet in the clouds*

Among preachers the running gag is that the task of preaching on Trinity Sunday is always given to the person who runs away the slowest, on the grounds that it's supposed to be

the hardest sermon of the year to preach. It's not true, of course, especially since the last 30 years have seen an explosion of interest in the subtleties and nuances of this uniquely Christian doctrine. Ascension Day, though, is something else....

It's not that it's a hard thing to preach about – it's rather that the image (seen in more than one church) of a pair of feet sticking out of the ceiling can sweep all before it and before you know it everyone believes that Christians think if you go far enough 'up there' you'll find heaven. Yuri Gagarin said of his historic spaceflight, 'I looked and looked but I didn't see God' and in some circles the discussion's never moved on from that caricature.

I don't want to start muttering about How People Should Know Better, though: no, what's troubling me is the way that such dull literalism is infecting how human beings perceive the world around them.

Somewhere in the last half-century or so, something's happened to language. Whether it's Common Sense or a mistrust of speech-makers or the rise of scientism (not to be confused with scientific thinking) – it feels as though there's only one language with any authority and that's the language which CS Lewis once described as 'My Boots' language. It's a take on the world which is content with the obvious, the immediate, the Plain Meaning, a world where Ascended means 'Travelled from A to B in a vertical direction' and no more, a culture which has no place for poetry, for paradox, for silence or mystery or unknowing.

That sort of world's bad news for religion, except in its most fundamentalist forms, because the language of religion is usually poetic, symbolic and subtle. But it's bad news, too, for the human experiment, where human relationships become contracts and where music becomes background accompaniment to help us shop more recklessly. It's a culture which has little place for love, or beauty or anything else which cannot be taken apart like a Lego kit and it impoverishes our very humanity.

So as Ascension (and Trinity for that matter) beckon, celebrate the mystical, the -beyond-the-wit-of-accountancy, the not-my-speciality of the lawyer. Let us learn to rejoice in mystery, in things which draw us in even if we can't explain why, which move us and change us but can't be charted in an advertising slogan. Isn't that, the strange and the unknowable, and yet the profoundly real, the very stuff which makes us humans and not calculators made of meat?

Fr David.

### **Lent Lunches**

Well, once again the 'gremlins' stole the article I wrote for the April Parish News! Anyway, we had varying numbers attending, partly due to adverse weather. However, those who joined us enjoyed delicious soups, always two different ones being available and the crusty bread, as always, was very tasty.

So, many thanks to those who cooked and served their soup, those who prepared the room and helped to clear up afterwards and to those who produced cakes, plants and cards for the Bring and But stall (and those who bought them!!). Lastly, I would like to thank Brenda Skinner for all the help she gave to me in organising the whole 6 weeks.

The total sum raised, so far, for Christian Aid will be just over £850 (when they collect the Gift Aid). Some people who were unable to attend the Lunches have given donations and there is still time to do so, if you wish, up to the end of May.

Many thanks, Val Dukes

[Sincere apologies to Val for not including some of this article in last month's edition. Ed]

## *Cuckoo*

Grey impostor  
Harbinger of a softer clime,  
No longer garlanded  
In Hawthorn frame.  
Summer is a coming in  
Silently, weeping  
In your memory.

*Carol Jacklin 2015*

The cuckoo population in the UK has declined by 65 percent over the last 30 years.

## *From the Bishop of Grantham*

Dear Friends,

Many of us will have experienced moments of awful isolation in our lives, or of panic, or of sheer joy. The range of situations, and of emotions, to which we can be exposed is huge. These things help to form the richness of human living. But in themselves they can sometimes be immensely difficult to handle.

Jesus' promise was to be with his friends. Although they experienced the crushing sadness of his death, and the huge sense of betrayal that most of them felt in terms of their own abandonment of him, they also experienced the joy of his resurrection and the happiness of new times spent with him. They would naturally have understood that his promise to 'be with them' meant that he would not physically leave them.

However, what Jesus meant when he said that they would not be left on their own was that the Holy Spirit would always be with them. It is the Spirit, the third Person of the Holy Trinity, that we celebrate during the month of May. Jesus is taken from us, body and all, but the Holy Spirit is poured out for us and on to us.

The Feast of the Holy Spirit is Pentecost. It happens at the end of Eastertide, and thus marks the very last transition that began weeks before when, on Ash Wednesday, we entered the wilderness in preparation for Holy Week and Eastertide to come.

Coming 'at the end of things' Pentecost can sometimes seem to be almost an afterthought – a last gasp of celebration before the year turns fully green and 'normal time' resumes. I suggest that we should, however, try to see it as another moment of real transition, when, gifted with the Holy Spirit, God's people realise that they have all that they need in order to live their lives fully and without fear in the world.

The Holy Spirit is described in scripture as 'advocate' and 'guide'. He is the Person of the Trinity who is always there. No matter what our particular emotions may be in any moment, God is with us.

As we continue to grapple with population movement, with continuing unrest in so many parts of the world, and with the serious issue of the Referendum in our own country, to name but three things, I hope that we may draw strength, confidence and joy from the presence of the Spirit.

Our gracious God does equip us with all that we need to live our lives as disciples in the world today.

May God bless you this Pentecost and always,

Bishop Nicholas

### **St. Mary's Ladies' Group**

Outing to Lincoln 30th April

We were very lucky again with the weather as it was a gloriously sunny day for our excursion to Lincoln. The coach dropped us at the Eastgate Hotel and several ladies proceeded to the castle for their visit to see the Magna Carta. Included in the tour was a visit to the prison where an enactment of a prisoner's story was taking place. Also included was a visit to the prisoners' chapel. Some of the ladies also walked part of the newly renovated walls but it was rather cold and blustery. There was also a chocolate demonstration taking place in the old washhouse.

After lunch a visit to the Cathedral had been organised. We all met back at the Eastgate Hotel at 4 p.m. for our journey home.

It was a most enjoyable day and I would like to thank Kath Smith for her excellent organisation also Radley's for transporting us safely.

J F

Our speaker in April was Canon Rodney Nicholson who spoke about the Church of England Children's Society which helps all children of every faith or none, and is not in competition with any other group as it strives for Christian social justice and a happy, secure and fulfilled childhood for all. The work is divided in two, projects and campaigns.

Edward Rudolph began in the 1880s, helping children who were begging to support their families, and he opened the first children's home. By 1918 there were 113 homes, much smaller by today's standards. The Society was also involved with fostering and adoptions but this had ceased by 1972. The Society now works with Local Authorities running projects to help runaway children and also young carers. Emotional help is given particularly to young girls where sexual abuse is, or may be involved, and the police are helped to secure prosecutions. Asylum seekers too are helped, to try to give them some semblance of a normal childhood.

With the force of the Church of England behind it the Society campaigns in Parliament and has achieved over forty policy changes in central and local government, 57 MPs were mobilised against cuts to the Local Welfare Assistance Scheme and thirteen organisations supported them. Further campaigns are ongoing to protect 16-17 year olds who are not classed as children or adults and have problems with housing.

Canon Nicholson was thanked by Margaret Searle (St. Mary's Children's Society representative) for a very interesting talk and a donation was given to the Society.

GD

[Margaret would be only too pleased to give out collection boxes for the Children's Society – please contact her!]

### **May theatre at Roperly Hall**

Theatre lovers have a treat in store in May with not one but two productions on stage at Roperly Hall.

European Arts returns on Saturday, May 7, with Beau Brummell – An Elegant Madness is a brilliant, comic two-hander telling the story of George Bryan Brummell, the most stylish man of his day, who died in a madhouse in Calais. Performed in the West End by Peter Bowles and Richard McCabe in 2001, the play is set in Calais in the winter of 1819 where Brummell lives with his valet in a madhouse. He is determined to relive past glories and when he hears the now King George IV is coming to Calais he is convinced he will be restored to his former glory and position in court.

Later in the month, on Friday, May 20, Superbolt Theatre comes to Barton with Dinosaur Park\*, a theatrical celebration of cinematic nostalgia that promises to be the perfect spoof for those anxiously awaiting news of the next film – and for everyone else an enjoyable evening at the theatre! Set in Lyme Regis Community Centre, this is an epic adventure of show-stopping, spine-tingling theatrics and megalithic mayhem.

Both performances start at 7.30pm and tickets cost £13 in advance or £15 on the door.

\*Just like the film that inspired it, Dinosaur Park is rated PG and is unsuitable for under 8s.

### **Medieval Monuments in St Mary's church continued1**

Part Two – the three Purbeck marble slabs [See diagram – centre pages.]

Three of the St Mary's monuments are of Purbeck marble quarried on the Isle of Purbeck in Dorset (see them marked 'P' on the accompanying plan of the church). Each of these slabs was originally inlaid with a brass memorial. Like the Tournai/Namur stone Purbeck is not a true marble but a fossiliferous limestone which was extensively used in English medieval cathedrals. Most famously in Lincolnshire the shafts which surround the columns in Hugh's choir at Lincoln Cathedral are of Purbeck marble. Presumably the shafts surrounding the columns in the south arcade at St Mary's church might have been of Purbeck if the parishioners could have afforded it!

1. The most important and well-known of these Purbeck slabs is to be found immediately to the west of the altar rail on the north side of the St Mary's chancel. It has inlaid in it the superb London-made, almost life-size brass of Simon Seman a citizen, vintner and alderman of London. Seman made his fortune in London but presumably requested that following his death (on 11 August 1433) his executors carry his body back to Barton for burial in the parish of his birth.<sup>2</sup> His brass shows him with his hands closed in prayer whilst he stands on two wine barrels, the contents of which barrels would appear to have produced most of his wealth and part of which wealth presumably paid for his burial in the chancel of St Mary's church and in payment for his associated brass. It seems likely that his grave was initially located in the very centre of the chancel but in 1884 the slab (but probably not his skeleton, if it was still there) was moved to the north where less feet would trample over and damage it. The symbols of the four Evangelists appear in each corner of the brass whilst a scroll round Seman's head reads: 'I know that my redeemer liveth, and in the last day I am to stand upon the earth, and in my flesh I shall see God my Saviour'. The inscription around the sides of the slab reads: 'In the grace and mercy of God here lies Simon Seman, formerly Citizen and Vintner, also Alderman, of London, who died on the 11th day of the month of August in the year of the Lord 1433. On whose soul and on [the souls] of all the faithful Departed may God look in mercy. Amen, amen.'

During the 14th century but less so in the 15th century the vintners were a very prominent London trading company that held a monopoly of the English trade with Gascony along with considerable powers over the wine trade in London. The available evidence indicates that Barton was in decline in the 15th century and those presumably like Simon who were really keen to get on would have been obliged to flee for the prosperous south. Seman seems to have conducted his business from premises and a wharf near to London Bridge whilst the house in which he lived with his wife Agnes was somewhat to the north-east but all in the parish of St Botolph Bishopgate in which parish he became an alderman. The union of Simon and Agnes appears to have produced no children.

The extent of Simon's trading was indicated in the London customs accounts which tell us that in 1431 he landed 13 tuns (i.e. barrels; 1 tun = 252 gallons) of wine, a bundle of cloth and 30 pairs of quernstones, the latter probably brought with wine from the Rhineland. Seman almost certainly would have travelled to Europe to further his business interests.

It is something of a pleasure to note that after a busy and prosperous career 'down south' Seman chose to return to his sleepy roots in Barton for his burial.

2. Another brass, this one the demi-effigy of an unknown lady holding a heart, was made in York c. 1380 and was again set in a Purbeck marble slab. It seems likely that the lady's body and limbs would have been incised into the slab which lies at the western end of the St Mary's nave. The brass is damaged and its accompanying inscription is lost.

3. A third Purbeck marble slab can be seen in the centre of the north aisle. On top can be seen indistinct evidence for two incised figures, presumably a gentleman and his lady. Rodwell and Atkins saw evidence for a lost 14th century Flemish brass with 'heads, hands, marginal inscription with corner quatrefoils and two tiny figures, presumably of saints, at the top of the slab ...'.

#### Footnotes

1. First an apology. In Part One of this series (see April Magazine pp. 13 – 14) I wrote that there were 12 surviving slabs of Tournai marble in Barton's two medieval churches – three in St Mary's and nine in St Peter's. More correctly I should have stated that the nine surviving slabs are in St. Mary's church whilst other less numerous pieces were excavated in St Peter's church, these latter consist of four slabs, one incomplete and another in fragments, made of the 'more robust' Namur stone which originated on the River Meuse somewhat to the east of Tournai but is also in Belgium. See Sally Badham in Rodwell and Atkins, *St Peter's Barton-upon-Humber A Parish Church and its Community*, pp. 657 – 660) and Nigel Saul's article 'The Medieval Monuments of St Mary's, Barton on Humber' which appears in Davies, M and Prescott, A. (eds), *London and the Kingdom. Essays in Honour of Carilone M. Barron*, Proceedings of the 2004 Harlaxton Symposium (Donnington 2008) along with Jessica Freeman's article 'Simon Seman, Citizen and Vintner of London'.

2. Further descriptions of the Seman brass can be found in Ball's *Social History and Antiquities of Barton-upon-Humber* (Barton 1856, pp. 50 – 51 – the drawing is not good) and by Bryant in the forthcoming 2016 Barton Civic Society Newsletter). Further information on all three Purbeck slabs can be found in Sally Badham's piece in Rodwell and Atkins, p. 661).

Geoff Bryant

#### **Go Team Teddy!**

Our Teddy Bear Challenge is progressing well... Teddy HQ is already home to approximately 3000 bears - with your continued support and new support arriving weekly we are currently on target to achieve that World Record....Come on Team Teddy, together we can do it!

If you'd like to help with our monthly collection our May items are Felt Tips, Pencil Crayons and Wax Crayons. We are also collecting plastic bottle tops (e.g. milk and drinks), as well as all the usual shoebox items, wool and fabric.

Our next fundraising event is Bingo on Saturday 4th June starting at 2:00 in the Church Hall... suitable for all ages!

Our Shoebox Group meets again on Tuesday 3rd May at 1:30, as always the kettle will be on ready to greet you.

Thank you for continuing to support our work through your prayers, donations and talents, they are very much appreciated.

Julia Wilson

#### **Wilderspin School Museum**

The Museum is open on the Early May Bank Holiday 2 May and on the Spring Bank Holiday 30 May, 10am – 4pm. We'll be celebrating the national Museums at Night festival in May with a daytime (!) public opening of our new childhood display and reminiscence classroom from 12 May (postponed from April).

If you haven't tried The Old School Canteen yet, our new coffee shop, why not do so during Museums at Night Week (12 – 14 May) or on one of the Bank Holidays. Afternoon teas are the menu and can be booked by 'phone on 636053.

How will remaining in or leaving the European Union affect us? Come along to our "Question Time" style debate, In or Out? on Friday 6 May at 7.30pm in the Joseph Wright Hall adjacent to the museum. Our panel of speakers includes our MP Martin Vickers, and representatives of business, politics and first time voters. Tickets are £5 and available by telephone (635172) or at the museum, Thursday- Sunday.

Join us for coffee and a chat on Wednesday 11 May (10am – 12 noon) as part of Dying Matters Awareness Week. Dying Matters is a coalition of 32,000 members across England and Wales which aims to help people talk more openly about dying, death and bereavement, and to make plans for the end of life. Members of the coalition include organisations from across the NHS, voluntary and independent health and care sectors (including hospices, care homes, charities supporting old people, children and bereavement); social care and housing sectors; a wide range of faith organisations; community organisations; schools and colleges; academic bodies; trade unions; the legal profession and the funeral sector.

### **Yarborough Deanery - The Church's Year**

An Introduction to Seasons, Celebration, Readings and Prayers in the Church's Year

7 pm, Tuesday 17th May 2016 at

St John's Church Hall, Brigg

For any person who may be interested in knowing more about how the church sets out its year, how "ministry" isn't confined to those of us with collars; what resources are available to help people. Alan.

### **Barton upon Humber Civic Society**

Fame & Fortune on Friday 20 May includes three talks about significant figures that left their mark on the town: Geoff Bryant uses the Probate Inventory of John Nelthorpe who died in 1692 to paint a picture of Baysgarth House and what it might have been like to live there in the seventeenth century.

Philip Pape was an accomplished stonemason and a great sculptor. He was also a tutor at the Grimsby Art School in the 1960s, and a choirmaster. Nigel Land updates what we know about Pape following an exhibition at Baysgarth Museum in 2015 and an appeal for more information about him. Monty Martin has written about Barton author Ted Lewis and has co-produced a trail touring sites in the town associated with Lewis. For those unable to follow the trail, this talk is the next best thing. We meet at the Assembly Rooms starting at 7.30pm. Non-members £2.

### **FROM THE REGISTERS:**

#### **Baptisms:-**

Apr 24 Stevie & Michael Jack BARLEY daughter & son of Louise & Oliver Richard BARLEY  
Elisabeth Esther Louise BRANNON daughter of Trudi-Louise & Daniel Paul BRANNON

#### **Funerals:-**

Apr 1 Diana Margaret STOW  
Apr 13 John Robert Crichton HILL  
Apr 14 Janet Olive SKELTON  
Apr 15 Sheila May GOSSOP  
Apr 21 Elsie Stella RENNISON  
Apr 22 Margaret Constance SMITH

Donations for Church flowers have been received in loving memory of:-

Mr. G. and Mrs E. Muriel Bell  
Bob Griffiths  
Jeremy Griffiths  
Roy Shepherd

Thank you

Mothers' Union

For our April meeting we joined with groups from other churches in the town to attend the Trinity Annual Rally. The service was presided over by The Reverend Enid Knowles. Eleanor Fuller sang two beautiful solos," Christopher Robin is saying his Prayers"(it being the 90th year of A.A. Milne) and "I the Lord of sea and sky" with us all joining in the chorus.

The talk was given by Captain Althea Bawden from the Salvation Army, she used a selection of mugs of all different shapes and sizes to help emphasise what she was saying. "Who am I" is how she started to explain about life and how being a Christian and letting Jesus into your life helps us all throughout our lives in good times and in bad. She also used quotes from the scriptures to help see how God is there for us always. Her words gave us all food for thought!

The afternoon finished with a scrumptious tea provided by the Trinity Ladies. This was a great afternoon of worship and fellowship, and meeting with friends old and new. A big thank you to the Trinity Ladies for their hospitality and friendship.

B.S.

May 4 Corporate Communion 9.30am  
May 18 Afternoon meeting 2pm Speaker Mavis Nutbrown

Flower Rota:-  
May 8 Brenda Skinner  
May 22 Janet Petch

Over to you.....

It is quite unusual to be riding on a Humber Flyer coach and see a poem as a poster on the inside of the bus! Perhaps it was in preparation for the alleged City of Culture !

However I thought it was very thought provoking and so I would share it with you.

*Days - Philip Larkin*

What are days for?

Days are where we live.

They come, they wake us

Time and time over.

They are to be happy in:

Where can we live but days?

Ah, solving that question

Brings the priest and the doctor

In their long coats

Running over the fields.

One interpretation goes as follows:

‘With great humour, Philip Larkin addresses the rather serious question of what happens when we die? What happens when we are quite literally out of time? Not out of time just in the sense of being dead, but being outside of time, outside of days. As Larkin says, where *can* we live but days? Days are all we have. What's outside of them? Well, the doctor will rush over to see if you are indeed out of days, and the priest will come to pray over you and see that your time outside of days is blessed.

These are big questions to be sure, but Larkin doesn't seem terribly concerned with them. That's not for him to figure out, and it's not for us to worry about, so much. Days are there "to be happy in." Concerning ourselves too much with what's next is somewhat futile, if endlessly fascinating. I like that the phrase "solving that question" is used to mean dying. It's a funny if grim way to think about life, as if it's a question that needs answering. Inescapably, the only answer to life is death. That's just a fact, but why worry so much? Days are where we live.’

A lot of food for thought but in the end it means make the most of each day as we will never revisit it- what is the saying often quoted- Carpe diem –seize the day. After all, we have been told recently the more active we are each day the longer we will live and the more days we will get!

So next time you are on the bus see if you can be inspired! Have a good month.

SW

Coffee Morning to include a  
CAKE COMPETITION

Open to all who would like to demonstrate their baking skills and enter a cake for the competition to be judged by Mrs. Sandra Bright (finalist of the Big Allotment Challenge)

A prize of 'Afternoon Tea' kindly donated by Forest Pines.

The Wilderspin School  
Queen Street,  
Barton upon Humber  
Wednesday 11th May 2016, 10 am to 12 noon

Cakes to arrive by 9.30 am and to be judged at 10 am (all cakes will be used for the coffee morning)

For more details please contact Phil Spicksley 07783323324

In conjunction with the event mentioned in the Wilderspin article above - DYING MATTERS AIMS TO RAISE PUBLIC AWARENESS ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF TALKING MORE OPENLY ABOUT DYING, DEATH, BEREAVEMENT AND OF PLANNING AHEAD.

Sunday 1st May		Easter 6	
	8.00 am		Said Eucharist
	9.30 am		Parish Eucharist
	2.30 pm		Service at The Willows

	6.00 pm		Choral Evensong
Mon 2nd	Bank holiday	Philip and James Apostles	NO Toddler Time
Tues 3rd	1.30 pm		Shoebox working party (Hall)
Wed 4th	9.30 am		Said Eucharist (MU Corporate)
	10.15 am		Diary meeting (Vicarage)
	2.00 pm		Service at Beech House
	7.30 pm		Ladies' Group
Thurs 5th	2.00 pm	Ascension Day	Service at Eagle House
	7.00pm		Sung Eucharist
Fri 6th	6.00 pm		Prayer before the Blessed Sacrament
Sat 7th	11.30 am		Wedding
	2.30 pm		Wedding
Sunday 8th May		Easter 7	
	8.00 am		Said Eucharist
	9.30 am		Parish Eucharist
	4.00 pm		Baptisms

	6.00 pm		Said Evening Prayer
Mon 9th	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	7.00 pm		Eucharist and PCC
Wed 11th	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
	2.00 pm		Service at Westbridge House
Sat 14th	10.30 am	Matthias, Apostle	Said Eucharist
	11.00 am		Lectio divina
Sunday 15th May		Pentecost	
	8.00 am		Said Eucharist
	9.30 am		Parish Eucharist
	6.00 pm		Sung Evensong
Mon 16th	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	Home	Communions	this week
Tues 17th	7.00 pm		Said Eucharist
	7.00 pm		Local Ministry Evening (Brigg)
Wed 18th	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
	2.00 pm		Mothers' Union meeting

	7.30 pm		Ladies' Group meeting
Fri 20th	Parish	News	Deadline
Sat 21st	11.00 am		Lectio divina
Sunday 22nd May		Trinity Sunday	
	8.00 am		Said Eucharist
	9.30 am		Parish Eucharist
	11.30 am		Baptisms
	6.00 pm		Said Eucharist with hymns
Mon 23rd	9.30 am		Toddler Time
	9.30 am		Deanery Chapter (Ulceby)
Wed 25th	9.30 am		Said Eucharist
Thurs 26th	12 noon	Corpus Christi	Said Eucharist
Fri 27th	pm		Visiting Bell Ringers
Sat 28th	11.00 am		Lectio divina
Sunday 29th May		Trinity 1	
	8.00 am		Said Eucharist

	9.30 am		Parish Eucharist
	6.30 pm		Said Evening Prayer
Mon 30th	Bank holiday		NO Toddler Time
	7.00 pm		40s-50s evening (Hall)
Tues 31st	7.00 pm	Visit of the BVM to Elizabeth	Said Eucharist
Wed 1st June	9.30 am		Said Eucharist (MU Corp)
	7.30 pm		Ladies' Group AGM



Time for reflection – a view of St. Mary's from beyond the Beck (photo: G. Plumb)

Opposite: the floor plan referred to in Geoff Bryant's article.



