

NEWS & VIEWS

The Free Church Hampstead Garden Suburb



JULY 2020

PLEASE TAKE ONE

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB FREE CHURCH

(United Reformed and Baptist)
Central Square, London, NW11 7AG
www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk

Sunday Services: *(When services resume) 11 a.m. (and 6.30 p.m. when announced)*
Holy Communion is celebrated at Morning Worship on the first Sunday of every month.
The Junior Church meets at 11am every Sunday

Minister: **Revd Dr Ian Tutton**
The Manse, Central Square, NW11 7AG
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itutton@aol.com

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Treasurer Derek Lindfield
07803 953483

Director of Music Peter Hopkins

Children's Advocates Lilian Coumbe
coumbe_lilian@yahoo.com

Stephan Praetorius
Stephan@acceleration.biz

Safeguarding Statement

Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church believes that safeguarding is the responsibility of everyone and is committed to safeguarding and promoting the welfare of all those who are vulnerable (children, young people and vulnerable adults). We expect all of our leaders, volunteers and those who use our premises to share this commitment and value the support of those who worship here in achieving this.

***The Elders (Trustees), Hampstead Garden Suburb Free Church
January 2016***

NEWS & VIEWS

HAMPSTEAD GARDEN SUBURB
FREE CHURCH
Central Square,
London NW11 7AG



NO 761

JULY 2020

Dear **F**riends,

I am sure you all have heard of the ‘Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone’ – (ITCZ) – a belt around the earth extending 5 degrees north and 5 degrees south of the Equator. It is where the weather patterns of the Northern and Southern Hemispheres collide. As a result, at sea level there is very little wind, hence the more popular name for this area – ‘The Doldrums’...

...I have to admit that this is how I am feeling at this time; totally becalmed, in the Doldrums. It is as if I am just ‘marking time’, waiting for something to happen – hoping for the best, yet fearing the worst. I find it very difficult to imagine what the future might contain. Even the gradual easing of lock down restrictions brings with it a continuous reminder to be extra vigilant so as not to put at risk the ‘progress’ that has made in combatting the initial effects of Covid-19...

...It may be that I am quite naturally a ‘glass half-empty’ person. It may be that some, if not all of you, have a far more positive outlook on what will happen, and I guess we need each other: Optimistic + Pessimistic = Realistic...

...On this we can agree; nothing can be as it was. And that for so many of us – and I include me in this – for so many of us that is what really worries us. I know that I had created for myself a comfort blanket under which I was perfectly content. I had acknowledged my limitations, I had set boundaries for myself, I had ring-fenced both opportunities and obligations, I was due to grow

old gracefully as I took on the persona of the archetypal 'grumpy oldish man'. But that is enough about me – and maybe you as well...

...The Church, and in particular the local church congregation such as the Free Church will be confronted by a similar challenge. For now, we too are 'marking time',



Helmut Thielicke (1908-1986)

becalmed in the Doldrums. We know that we cannot go back to how it was; circumstances will not allow it. We will have to accommodate our activities – especially with regard to our buildings – to what is happening around us. That will not be easy for us. Why? Because if we are honest with ourselves, we too have wrapped ourselves in an ecclesiological 'comfort blanket' and are loath to come out from under it...

...But we are not the first or only Christians who have had to grapple with this question. In Germany, immediately after the end of World War Two, there was a crisis of faith and it took the inspired genius of a new generation of visionary preachers to reignite the faithful in their service of God – within and beyond the church. One such was Helmut Thielicke who between 1946 and 1948, occupied the pulpit of St Mark's Church in Stuttgart...

... *'When we live in the name of his last homecoming, prepared for us by Jesus Christ, and when in the name of this last homecoming we look upon every pain and every joy that may come to us as a visitation and a preparation for that day, then we know that every storm can only drive us toward that haven and that even the darkest roads through the valley of the shadow can lead only to the gates of the Father's House. And this means we can withstand any storm, simply because we are upheld by him who abides for ever, the Alpha and the Omega, and from whose hand nothing can snatch us...'* It may not answer the particular question or solve the particular problem which confronts us, but it reminds us that with God, every question has an answer, and every problem has a solution.

Ian Tutton

Bible Study

Joshua chapter 9 continues the account of the conquest of the 'promised land'. It follows on from the devastation inflicted upon the city of Ai and its inhabitants as described in chapter 8, verses 1 – 29. When the news of what had happened spread further afield it provoked the expected reaction. '*... And the Kings of the Hittites, Amorites, Canaanites, Perizzites, Hivites, and Jebusites agreed to join forces and fight against Joshua and Israel...*' (Josh 9, 1b – 2). The city of Gibeon was the next obstacle in the way of the advancing Israelites, but rather than face destruction, its leaders resorted to trickery in an attempt to avoid the inevitable, preferring to submit themselves as slaves to the Israelites rather than risk death for themselves and their people. '*... But when the inhabitants of Gibeon heard what Joshua had done to Jericho and Ai, they worked craftily, and went and pretended to be ambassadors. And they took old sacks on their donkeys, old wineskins torn and mended, old and patched sandals on their feet, and old garments on themselves; and all the bread of their provision was dry and mouldy. And they went to Joshua, to the camp at Gilgal, and said to him and to the men of Israel, "We have come from a far country; now therefore, make a covenant with us." Then the men of Israel said to the Hivites, "Perhaps you dwell among us; so how can we make a covenant with you?" But they said to Joshua, "We are your servants."*' (Josh. 9, 3 – 8). They presented what seemed to be convincing evidence that they were who they claimed to be; sufficiently convincing so that '*... Joshua received them peaceably and granted them a treaty, promising to spare their lives, and the leaders ratified it on oath...*' (Josh. 9, 15). But the plan unravelled almost immediately; their scam was exposed within three days. Even so, when the Israelites arrived at Gibeon and the surrounding towns – Kephirah, Beeroth, & Kiriath-Jearim – Joshua felt bound by the oath which he been tricked into making. However, the people of the area were themselves angry with their leaders, the ones whose seeming ingenuity had tricked Joshua into sparing them. One cannot but feel for them, caught between the proverbial 'rock & a hard place', doing what they thought best only to be criticised by those whose best interests they had sought to serve. Anyway, the upshot of the whole episode was that from then onwards, the Gibeonites, or Hivites as they were otherwise known, would become slaves to the Israelites. '*... Then Joshua called for them, and he spoke to them, saying, "Why have you deceived us, saying, 'We are very far from you,' when you dwell near us? Now therefore, you are cursed, and none of you shall be freed from being slaves—woodcutters and water carriers for the*

house of my God.” So they answered Joshua and said, “Because your servants were clearly told that the LORD your God commanded His servant Moses to give you all the land, and to destroy all the inhabitants of the land from before you; therefore we were very much afraid for our lives because of you, and have done this thing. And now, here we are, in your hands; do with us as it seems good and right to do to us.” So, he did to them, and delivered them out of the hand of the children of Israel, so that they did not kill them. And that day Joshua made them woodcutters and water carriers for the congregation and for the altar of the LORD, in the place which He would choose, even to this day... ’ (Josh. 9, 22 – 26)...

...And so ends a fairly innocuous episode in the account of the conquest of the land. It begs the question as to why it was afforded so much detail. The clue lies in the words used at end the chapter. ‘even to this day’. It is worth reminding ourselves that the account of the events described in the Book of Joshua is not the product of a contemporaneous diary, but rather it came to be written down probably at least 500 years afterwards, a period during which the actual historical detail had been passed down through the generations by story tellers each filtering the facts through their own immediate theological, political, social and cultural foci. Therefore, it makes sense to work backwards rather than forwards through time in order to understand the underlying significance of the events described for us in Joshua chapter 9...

...And so, we fast forward to the time of Solomon. It was the time of his accession to the throne following the death of his father, David. ‘...*The King [Solomon] went to Gibeon to offer a sacrifice for that was the chief shrine, where he used to offer a thousand whole offerings on the altar...*’ (1 Kings 3, 4). Whilst at Gibeon, God appeared to Solomon in a dream and promised to grant him whatever he would ask of God. Solomon answered, ‘...*Grant your servant, therefore, a heart with skill to listen, so that he may govern your people justly and distinguish good from evil...*’ (1 Kings 3, 9). This account is paralleled in 2 Chronicles 1, 1 – 13. From this account it is obvious that by the time the history had come to be written, Gibeon was an important location as far as the worship life of the people was concerned – remembering that up until that point no central focus for worship had existed within Israel – Solomon was yet to build his temple. So why Gibeon? In Joshua 21, verse 17 Gibeon is listed as one of the towns given over to the Levites, the priestly tribe, one of numerous cities designated as worship centres. During the period of the border wars between the Israelites and the Philistines, after the capture of the Ark of the Covenant, other sacred relics were said to have been removed from Shiloh to the ‘great high

place' in Gibeon (1 Chronicles 21, 29, - based on the account in 1 Samuel 4, 1 – 22). But there was also a sinister side to events that unfolded at Gibeon, events that are referenced in hindsight in 2 Samuel 21, the upshot of which was that, '*... blood-guilt rests on Saul and on his family because he put the Gibeonites to death. (The Gibeonites were not of Israelite descent; they were a remnant of Amorite stock whom the Israelites had sworn that they would spare, [Joshua 9], Saul, however, in his zeal for Israel and Judah had sought to exterminate them.)...*' (2 Samuel 21, 1b – 2). The result of this was that the blood-guilt could only be expiated by the shedding of blood. David handed over seven of his own men, '*... he handed them over to the Gibeonites, and they flung them down from the mountain before the Lord; the seven of them fell together...*' (2 Samuel 21, 9a). These admittedly fragmentary references allow us to build something of a picture that suggests that Gibeon had acquired a status within Israel as a Holy Place, and the story as told in Joshua concerning how it came to be spared from destruction is likely to have been told as a way of legitimising such a claim in later years. That does not necessarily cast doubt on the historical integrity of the account provided in Joshua 9, but it does at least provide an indication as to why the story was regarded as sufficiently important for it to be included in the final, redacted text.

Ian Tutton

THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

Two connections between flowers and grace:

Everything that slows us down and forces patience, everything that sets us back into the slow circles of nature, is a help. Gardening is an instrument of grace.

(May Sarton - the pen name of Eleanor Sarton, American poet)

Wherever life plants you, bloom with grace. *French proverb*

Sourced by Rosemary Birch



‘DEAR LORD AND FATHER OF MANKIND’ – A Reflection on the hymn by Brian Stonhold

For me this is a special hymn because I can’t remember a time when I have not sung it at both regular services and special services such as weddings and funerals. Last year in a BBC Songs of Praise poll, it was voted the UK’s fourth favourite hymn after ‘Jerusalem’, ‘How Great Thou Art’ and ‘In Christ Alone’.

I love the perfect matching of the words with the tune ‘Repton’, particularly the repetition of the last line of each verse which gives its meaning extra emphasis:

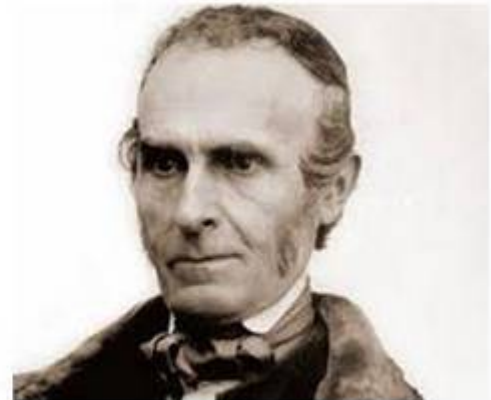
‘In deeper reverence, praise’
‘Rise up and follow thee’
‘Interpreted by love’
‘The beauty of Thy peace’
‘O still small voice of calm’

(Some versions include an extra verse ‘With thy deep hush subduing all’ where the last line is ‘As fell thy manna down’).

The 3rd and 4th line of each verse are on a rising musical path before the climax is reached on the fifth line (top E) and then the tune ends on an octave below. The strength of the melody is emphasised by the unison arrangement normally used.

The words of the hymn come from the latter half of a poem written by John Greenleaf Whittier in 1872. He was an American Quaker and supported the abolition of slavery in the USA. The poem is called ‘The Brewing of Soma’. Soma was a sacred ritual drink in Vedic religion going back to Proto-Indo-Iranian times (2000 BC). The Vedic priests brewed and drank Soma in an attempt to experience divinity. Soma had hallucinogenic properties as well as making people drunk! The poem compares this to some Christians’ use of “music, incense, vigils drear, and trance, to bring the skies more near, or lift men up to heaven!” But all is in vain – it is mere intoxication.

Whittier ends by describing the true method for contact with the divine, as practised by Quakers: sober lives dedicated to doing God’s will, seeking silence and selflessness in order to hear the “still, small voice”, described in



Greenleaf Whittier (1807-1892)



Hubert Parry (1848-1918)

I Kings 19: 11-12 as the authentic voice of God, rather than earthquake, wind or fire. This is the King James Bible account of Elijah's encounter with God:

“And He said, Go forth, and stand upon the mount before the Lord. And, behold, the Lord passed by and a great and strong wind rent the mountains, and brake in pieces the rocks before the Lord; but the Lord was not in the wind: and after the wind an earthquake; but the Lord was not in the earthquake: And after the earthquake a fire; but the Lord was not in the fire: and after

the fire a still small voice.”

There are two main tunes used for ‘Dear Lord and Father of mankind’. In the USA it is ‘Rest’. The tune used in the UK is ‘Repton’. Hubert Parry originally wrote the music, for what became Repton, in 1888 for the contralto aria ‘Long since in Egypt’s plenteous land’ in his oratorio ‘Judith’. In 1924 George Gilbert Stocks, director of music at Repton School, set it to ‘Dear Lord and Father of mankind’ in a supplement of tunes for use in the school chapel. Parry had been Stocks’ tutor at Oxford University, hence the links between the words and the music. Fifty two years had elapsed between the writing of the words by Whittier in 1872 and the musical setting chosen by Stocks in 1924. We have had this wonderful hymn in our repertory for almost 100 years:

Dear Lord and Father of mankind,
forgive our foolish ways!
Re-clothe us in our rightful mind,
in purer lives thy service find,
in deeper reverence, praise; (repeat)

In simple trust like theirs who heard,
beside the Syrian sea,
the gracious calling of the Lord,
let us, like them, without a word,
rise up and follow thee; (repeat)

○ Sabbath rest by Galilee!
○ calm of hills above,
where Jesus knelt to share with thee
the silence of eternity
interpreted by love! (repeat)

Breathe through the heats of our desire
thy coolness and thy balm;
let sense be dumb, let flesh retire;
speak through the earthquake, wind, and fire,
O still, small voice of calm; (repeat)

Brian Stonhold

PRAISE MY SOUL THE KING OF HEAVEN

It was August 1950. My two brothers and I went to Bude in Cornwall for a holiday together. David had just finished his degree course at Oxford, having served in the Royal Navy during and after the War. Peter had just finished three years at the London School of Printing and was about to go into the Army to do his National Service. I had just finished my first year of teaching. We stayed in a guest house where we had bed, breakfast and an evening meal.

Bude is a lovely seaside town facing west across the Atlantic. There is nothing between Bude and Newfoundland, (although there is, of course, the Gulf Stream to keep us warm). One day it was blowing a gale and a half, though the wind was warm. We went down to the beach. Enormous waves, Atlantic rollers, were crashing into the shore. The tide was well out, and foam blew off the tops of the waves and was spun up the cliffs; it looked like a giant's washing day.

We changed into our bathing things and walked down the rocks, dodging the huge waves as they broke. It was exhilarating. David and Peter were ahead of me when one wave, bigger than the rest, swept me off my feet. I was tossed up the shore, submerged under the water, bumped up the stony beach like a pebble, and I thought my last moments on earth had come. But finally the wave was spent and I could breathe again. David and Peter had been horrified at my disappearance under the ferocious water but heartily relieved when I picked myself up. They continued their exploration of the beach. I went to where we had encamped, rubbed myself dry and had a mug of hot tea from our thermos. I could hear my father saying, "Treat for shock!"

And I sang my grateful thanks to God for saving me. I sang "Praise my soul the King of Heaven" which I knew by heart from singing it at school. My voice was blown away in the wind; I don't suppose anyone else heard me. I could not sit down with any comfort for the next three months but my heart was full of joy. That is why I have chosen this hymn as one of my favourites.

Kay Hassell

LOCKDOWN - THE VIEW FROM FRANCE

This article, published in the magazine "allo-Montrouge", was written by the Church's Pastor Laurence Berlot and her husband Jean-Christophe. It has been translated by Joan Holton.

On Sunday 15 March 2020 we still thought it might be possible to hold the Sunday service as usual. However, during the evening before, we received a message that the congregation could not enter the building, and only the Pastor and her family could be present. But, the service had been prepared, Ando (a tech-savvy member of the congregation) was here, as well as the Pastor's three children Sylvia, Nathalie and Henri. With this tiny congregation assembled Ando was ready with two telephones and a camera. The Church was there, but no people. There was no congregation to fill the Church that morning. The street outside was quiet. Montrouge itself had been cleaned at 5.30 that morning, as usual: the cleaners and their trolleys were leaving the neighbouring apartment buildings.

But the Church building itself was beginning to quiver into life again: Light was there, God had come, the shadows began to carry the Word! The following week we set up the pulpit in front of the organ, nearer to the internet box to provide a better signal. Ando had tested many different software programmes so that every Church member could receive the best sound, by internet or by telephone. After many hours of tests we were able to broadcast the service, by Youtube or Bluejean. We planned to use the same technology for the Bible Study Group, Catechism Classes, Young People's Groups, office work and our connections with the wider Church.

Alas! A week later the outside operator had reduced the waveband loop from the box, and the quality dropped dramatically. (Some readers may understand that the "Ping was uploaded at 12: this was 0.64"). Ando said this was a catastrophe - he would need twice the power to broadcast effectively.

More research, more tests and retests. Ando found a mobile with a silicon chip 4G, more powerful. The upload worked when put against the balcony on the mezzanine floor and also in the centre of the Church itself. So.....the service could be broadcast via a mobile!!

A new camera greatly improved the image. But it was not always possible to broadcast music. For Easter, Ando had found a new solution: a shared screen, and the result was an excellent music sound. Even better: we were able to broadcast the sound and music without having to pay royalties. Google tried to block the broadcast, but once again Ando came up with a

solution, and every service from then was a miracle!

From now on our services will be broadcast, the Good News will be proclaimed, all members will be able to take part, and we shall be able to sing together in groups by videolink. We shall decorate the Church with flowers once florists can again sell their wares. We have honeysuckle in the courtyard, in front of the windows, in the Minister's house. Pansies have been planted. Birds are singing in the tranquillity of the neighbourhood, even swallows have come back. The plane tree has been preparing its greenest summer dress for us during the time of confinement.

Ando's knowledge of technology, his expertise and perseverance, and the cooperation and togetherness of all our congregation, have together maintained our fraternal bonds and our communion. The Word of God, and the springtime have come together. *Translated by Joan Holton*

PRAYER

If someone asks you for a fish,
Feel free to give him your fishing rod.
If someone asks you for a well reasoned explanation,
Feel free to give him a smile which gives nothing away.
If someone asks you for a cure,
Feel free to give him a word which matches his wound.
If someone asks you to get rid of his boredom,
Feel free to give him God's silence which curbs desire.
If someone asks you to keep your hands closed to hold on to your belongings,
Feel free to give him a chance to lose them, whilst opening your hands to sow.
If someone asks you to listen to his fear of others,
Feel free to give him your fear for others.
If someone asks you to give.....

By Cyrille Payot

Quoted in "Allo-Montrouge", May 2011 edition.

Translated, with apologies, by Joan Holton.

BUT WE HAD HOPED (PART 2).... And the saga of the seeds.

Two weeks have now come and gone but nothing is popping through the soil. The brown surface looks exactly as it was before, no disturbance, no bumps, no sign of green - but I certainly am disturbed!! The 10 pots of different seeds are now outside, but the move appears to have made no difference - But I had hoped!...Did I let them get too dry? (I did water them in the evenings). Did they get too drenched by the very heavy downpour we had? (I did put the pots on their sides afterwards to drain). Was the soil composition wrong? One packet said 'plant in soil-less compost' - even that I did. I had done everything that the gardening expert, Monty Don, appears to do - But I had hoped!.....

Then I thought about all our other hopes during this lock-down and enforced stay at home. All those plans to phone lots of people, to write lots of letters, to do all those odd jobs that have been waiting to be started and completed during the last few months (or years) - no excuse now! But many still have not been started... But we had hoped!...I was also reminded that, although at this strange time our minds keep on orientating back to this pandemic, we are learning that God is much bigger than all this. I hope you have found and felt the care and kindness of complete strangers and neighbours - nothing seems too much to ask. But I find that I am missing those reassuring hugs, that encouraging pat on the shoulder, that caring touch of the hand - an elbow knock can never replace those. I am also finding much more time to think, more time to realize I cannot just exist on my own strength - I must rely on God's strength. Yes, that's what this pandemic has taught me above all else - to rely on His strength and to be more determined to use every moment God gives me to help others in whatever way I can, limited though it be. Not just in a physical sense, but by speaking out about issues we know are not right. I've been so inspired by the footballer, Marcus Rashford, speaking about school lunch vouchers for impoverished families, and by the Swedish young lady Greta Thunberg who recently was outspoken enough to say you can't always "sweep it under the carpet."

But back to my seeds again - in a slightly different context. I get great inspiration from some of the BBC Sunday and daily broadcasts and was listening to a meditation by the Rev. Richard Littledale on the 'Open Church' (18th June 2020). He started by blowing on a piece of grass and watching the seeds scatter on his breath. He likened the situation to that of the churches during this pandemic. The churches have been open all along;

the buildings may have been shut - but the church has been open more than it ever has been - and the scattered seeds have been scattered more than ever and found new places to grow and flourish. Richard said he had been amazed at the many ways the Church of Christ has moved to embrace this time of challenge to stay connected. The scattered seeds had gone in many different directions but gathered in a common calling to serve God – and the Church may now be more open than it ever was because the experience has scattered it beyond its walls, like his grass seed blown by his breathe. As the Apostle Paul writes-‘Hard pressed in on every side but not crushed’.....

In an article in the Times (10 June 2020) entitled ‘Portable Priest carries the light to needy souls’ Kaya Burgess describes the ministry of the Rev. Pat Allerton who mounted speakers on the back of his tricycle in West London - and set off around the streets to preach and sing hymns. One of his videos has been watched more than five million times. He says his online services had proved more popular than those he gave in person at St. Peter’s Notting Hill. “We might have got 80 adults and a dozen children on Sunday morning. We reckon we have up to 200 now.”

As Jane Chapman, 55, from Watford said, ‘I’d been interested in finding out more about becoming a Christian for some time but never done any more about it.’ She continues: “I’d never really had time and always found churches a bit intimidating. I don’t know much about Christianity and wasn’t brought up in a church and don’t know what church etiquette is, so I felt awkward about going. I think of people going to church in their twinsets and pearls from Marks & Spencer, which isn’t really me”. She said, “You just sit on your computer watching them. I can see them without having to go in person and maybe embarrassing myself”

Lord Williams of Oystermouth, a former Archbishop of Canterbury, comments “There were religious revivals of a sort after the Second World War which didn’t necessarily take root and last a long time, so I wouldn’t put my shirt on this being a great turning point. But I don’t want to under-rate the fact that many people, under pressure, have discovered a need for connection and some sort of depth to their lives and a sense of spirituality. It remains to be seen how many of the faces from Facebook will turn up in person when the doors are unlocked.” As Ms Chapman said: “I’ve really been enjoying watching online and have learnt lots of things. I hope once churches re-open, I will find the courage to go.”

So back to the saga of my seeds with many ‘seeds of thought’. We brought some young plants (in small plugs) of lobelia and fuchsia at the same time as when we planted the seeds. They are doing extremely well and look beautiful which made me realize how much easier they are to look after.

“ SORRY IS A MAGIC LITTLE WORD”

I was teaching a class of eleven-year-old boys. As we were about to start the lesson, there was a disturbance in the far corner of the room. Viewed from my desk, it seemed to me that the burly figure of Simon Winter was at the centre of the trouble. Not for the first time ! My patience snapped and I barked out: “Winter, outside !” (In those days, the Sixties, schoolboys in Britain were known by their surnames. Teachers did not use first names, in open class anyway).

Simon’s sense of justice was outraged. Feeling he had been treated most unfairly, he stumped out, slamming the door behind him. It suddenly struck me: that makes two of us giving the class a bad example. My conscience spoke to me in no uncertain terms about over-reaction. I knew Simon was not a major troublemaker and even if he had been guilty on>

Those young plants have survived, beginning as seeds, germinating, and growing into hardy seedlings or plugs, and can now cope with the differences of temperature etc. Perhaps my seeds need far more love and attention than they were getting and I likened them to our work with Junior Church, helping the young people to survive in a world that finds it difficult to go through a church door and actually enter a church. It also makes me realize how much we must take our faith out from our ‘Church building’ vision of Christianity into a Christ-like Christianity - not as Ms. Chapman says, “twin-sets and pearls” but rather Christ’s hands in the community, understanding the fears of many from the pandemic, the impact of job-losses, being an ear to listen and trying to pass on the wonderful peace of God. I had hoped...we had hoped...we are not hopeless - but ‘Our hope is

in the Lord who made Heaven and Earth.

My hope is built on Nothing less
than Jesus’ blood and righteousness,

I dare not trust the sweetest frame
but wholly lean on Jesus’ name.

On Christ the solid Rock I stand.

all other ground is sinking sand;

All other ground is sinking sand.’

(‘Together for the Gospel Live’ from Sovereign Grace Music)

Rosemary Birch

this occasion the punishment was too severe: the classroom was a “pre-fab” and he was standing outside in the open air on a cold day without a coat. I quickly told another boy to fetch him in again. He came back in with alacrity and sat down at his desk.

“I’m sorry, Winter,” I said in the hearing of the whole class, “I lost my temper.” A senior teacher once warned me that you could lose authority by apologizing like that in front of a class. But Simon’s immediate response surprised and heartened me. “That’s all right, sir,” he replied with a warm smile. I felt forgiven! He took no advantage (nor did the class) and I cannot recall any trouble from him again. An apology is after all a mark of respect and it could have helped to give him a better status among his colleagues. He was not a high-flyer and perhaps did not get too much praise for his schoolwork. Incidentally he was one of a number of boys from that school who went with the Head’s permission to the Westminster Theatre and enjoyed Peter Howard’s pantomime “Give a Dog a Bone.” It was a win-win situation.

Julian Simpson was a clever boy, 12 or 13 at the time. He was in the top class of the preparatory school where I was teaching a few years later. This time the boot was on the other foot: *I* had to do the forgiving (in the end!) The staff found him a constant thorn in the flesh. He was unusually tall for his age, somewhat precocious and very much the leader of the pack. He liked to challenge authority and was often rather disruptive, impeding the work of others while thinking only about himself. He was tall, I was short: this meant he could look down on me, literally, and he pushed at the boundaries of impertinence. His questions showed a penetrating intelligence. He declared he couldn’t learn French by the methods I was using: he wanted it done *his* way. I changed some procedures to help him. He had a serious problem with migraine, which seemed to incapacitate him every Monday. The school provided short periods of religious education for all pupils. J.S. became intrigued after a session and asked me privately whether he could *pray* about the problem of learning French, for instance. I replied: “Yes, certainly” and suggested that it might even help with health questions, too. One day when it was my duty to sit with the senior class at lunch, he suddenly apologized to me for his previous behaviour in the hearing of all his colleagues. They were so embarrassed that they all looked down and stared intently at their dinner plates. The latest shocker from J.S. ! It was not hard to forgive him after that courageous move, but the liberating effect on him was more important. The headache problem also improved.

David Hassell

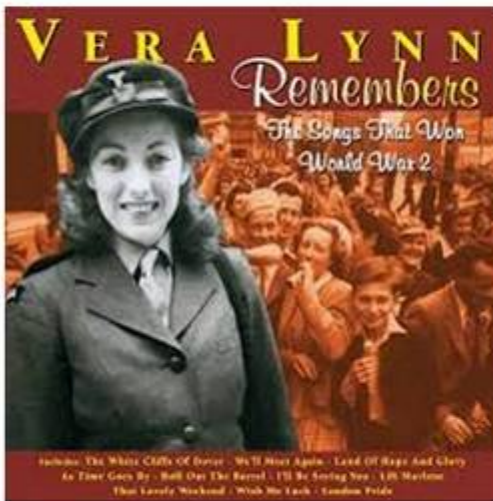
JOHN BIRCH'S DIARY

DfID axed: The Department for International Development is, Boris Johnson has announced, to be scrapped and its job of giving monetary assistance to many of the poorest countries taken back by the Foreign Office. It has worked effectively for nearly 25 years and supported many projects, both specific and ongoing. Critics have maintained that the policy of providing direct financial support has meant that monies have been misused, with parts of payments being siphoned off. In many "third world" countries it is, sad as it may be, a way of life for some part to be diverted for personal use. There is however an undeniable "plus" in direct payments rather than, as will now be the case, the Foreign Office distributing through Embassies and the High Commissions directly to Government Departments - there will certainly be no guarantee that siphoning funds will cease. Save the Children called it "a flawed deeply damaging move" with Oxfam commenting "the new policy puts politics above the needs of the poorest people." David Cameron said the move is "a mistake". The commitment is to keep to the target of spending 0.7% of gross national income on overseas aid but the method of distribution is all important and the fears expressed are very real. The experience of millions of the world's poorest, will tell.

Every Life Matters: This point had already been made in the latest e-mail from Ian - it is not just "Black Lives Matter" - it is, indeed, *every life*. Although events, affecting at the time, are routinely quickly forgotten, I hope that the image of a knee being firmly applied, for over eight minutes, to a person's neck, will



remain and lead to a change in attitudes and policies in the US and other countries. This may be the catalyst required. If so, George Floyd's death, tragic though it was, could in that sense, be worthwhile. The marches and meetings of support in London were a genuine outpouring of feeling, people getting together, not organised by a specific group or faction. This was emphasized to me on my way to Westminster Station. I walk through Parliament Square. The whole Square was crowded, nearly all of them young people, mainly women. They were well behaved, almost solemn. The sheer brutality of the Police Officers action has separated this from other



similar situations. The words “I can’t breathe” will remain with us always. These three words will, I hope, stay with millions, not forgotten as time passes and have an on-going effect: think before you react and withdraw if you’ve got it wrong.

“We’ll meet again”: I was aware of the great age of Dame Vera Lynn but her death still brought back memories – and a feeling of thanks for what she did during the War. It seems from the coverage on TV and in the

papers – “The Times” produced a supplement headed “Goodnight Sweetheart” - that many people, including those not then born, realize the extent of the effect of her songs and her visits, including to Burma. The words may be trite but the effect, in boosting the morale and hopefulness of the whole population, was beyond measure. This was not the only reason for her popularity. She was always “one of the people”, a true star but not one to be overtaken by her popularity. She remained very much the same person who emerged in 1940. Vera Lynn not only became a Dame but also a CH - Companion of Honour. There are only a limited number – no more than thirty at any time - appointed directly by the Queen and on the basis that that each shows through what he or she had achieved in their lives so far, that they can be of help in considering and advising on a number of matters: a very British but very worthwhile institution.

Connections with slavery. There has been a focus in the last few weeks on important British historical characters who have, it’s been suggested, had connections with slavery. One of those was Edward Colston in Bristol in the 17th Century and another, Sir Thomas Picton of Cardiff, the highest ranking British officer to die at Waterloo. In a different context – he is included because of his ‘service’ overseas - is Robert Clive, known as Clive of India. He was a Salopian, a Shropshire Lad (like myself) and his statue is in a prominent location in Shrewsbury with another statue outside the Foreign and Commonwealth Office in London. He was ‘difficult’ as a young



Clive outside the FCO



man, was sent away from home (18th Century) joined the Army and ended up in India, where he rose rapidly through the ranks and became a general at the age of 27, he was praised by the Prime Minister, William Pitt. He was, on behalf of the British Government, very successful in re-directing much of the wealth of Bengal into Great Britain's coffers. This happened when he was Governor and was accused of having helped bring about the famine which killed many thousands. When he returned to Britain, having amassed immense wealth, he was denounced as "corrupt and morally bankrupt". It was alleged that he took about £2.5 million, in present day terms just under £275 million, giving £250 million to the East India Company and keeping £25 million for himself. He was subjected to a

Parliamentary Enquiry but in the end most of the accusations were withdrawn. He told the enquiry that he was "astonished" at his own moderation given the opportunities in the Sub-continent. By the time of his death at the age of 49 he had a fortune of £500,000 (now £33million). He 'lives on' today in the village of Clive in Shropshire, named to honour him during his lifetime. His behaviour in India was probably not much different from others who featured prominently in various parts of the British Empire but present day perceptions mean that he is now regarded as a person who accepted the concept of slavery. As a footnote, Britain continued in India right up to 1948: in the 19th Century, when new territories were being brought under British rule - and the Governors were mainly well-connected and well-educated people - one sent a telegram to Queen Victoria confirming the annexation of the province of Sind; the one word message read "Pecavi", translating as 'I have sinned'. It is still apparently the shortest telegram ever sent. As I write, no decision had been made about the easing of the lock-down although one is expected. At the moment there is no rush-hour, the tubes being relatively empty as I go into London and return. Perhaps we'll know more of the future by the time of the next Diary.

John Birch

From the Archive

July 1940

It is moving to read Frank Ballard's words about the ordination of a minister in our church in the dark days of 1940 after the tragedy of Dunkirk.

From Hampstead Garden Suburb NEWS LETTER



I hope that everyone who can do so will be in Church on Sunday morning, July 7th, when one of our members, John Millar Craig BA, is to be ordained to the Christian ministry and set apart for work with HM Forces under the auspices of the YMCA. Many of you have probably never attended such a service. I think I am right in saying that it is the first one of its kind to be held in our own Church. It is a most solemn and searching occasion, especially for the ordinand, and I have no doubt that we shall all participate in a spirit of Christian friendship and sympathy. There is no family in the congregation more respected than the Millar Craig family and everyone of us will be anxious to join our prayers

with theirs.

The Ordination will be conducted by the Rev R.J.Evans, Moderator of the London Congregational Union; the charge to the young minister will be delivered by Dr John Whale, under whom John Millar Craig has studied for five years at Cambridge; and the sphere of service will be described by Mr Ernest Barker, secretary of the YMCA. It will be my privilege to offer the Ordination Prayer, and the Rev Hugh Martin will also take part. It is the third member of the Church to be ordained in recent years, but the first to be ordained in the presence of our own congregation.

The following words were written by Frank Ballard just after the evacuation of Dunkirk. He welcomed back many of the young congregation in the Forces



who had been in the huge evacuation and who had 'stories too unpleasant to tell' about Dunkirk. More and more of the Church's young people were joining up day by day.

Whatever may happen during the coming month, let us do all in our power to help one another in spiritual fellowship and to spread all around us the spirit of confidence that rises from Christian conviction. "Now abideth faith, hope, love, these three and the greatest of these is love." Your friend and minister, Frank H Ballard

July 1935

On a lighter note, between the two world wars, the magazine invites the Sunday School children and friends on a trip to the Hertfordshire countryside. The prices now seem impossibly low!



From the Free Church Magazine

On Saturday, July 13, the Sunday School will visit Aldbury Common. Aldbury Common is situated in the

beautiful county of Hertfordshire, and adjoins the National Trust estate of Ashbridge Park. For many years past we have been blessed with fine weather for our outing and we hope that this year will prove no exception.

Once again, the school, and those friends who can, are travelling by special omnibus, leaving the Church Hall at 9.30am. Other friends who wish to join us later can easily reach Berkhamsted by train or Green Line coach. Trains leave Euston at 12.50, 1.5, 1.35, 1.56 and 2.5pm and coaches leave Eccleston Road, Victoria, at 5 minutes to each hour. The return fares are 3/6 (17p) and 3/- (15p) respectively.

Aldbury Common can be reached by omnibus (No 352) which leaves Berkhamsted Station at 40 minutes after each hour and runs past the Common (the Monument). The trains from Euston will link up with this bus.

Tea will be served at 4 o'clock in the King's Hall, behind the King's Arms Hotel, Berkhamsted.

The inclusive charges for those who go on the school omnibus are: Scholars and Helpers under 16, 1/6 (7p), Scholars and Helpers over 16 and Teachers 3/- (15p). Other adults 4/6 (22p). The charge for tea only is 1/3 (6p). We hope that a good number of friends will take this opportunity of spending a day in the country. We look forward to having you with us and we can promise you an enjoyable time.

Anne Lowe

TEARFUND

Many of you will, I hope, remember the visit we had from two workers representing Tearfund who gave us a small insight into the valuable work they did. They help people world-wide who are struggling to survive poverty, hardship and challenging situations. Often some of the hardship can be removed with a very simple solution and this was the case in Sasajila, a small village in the Manyoni district of rural Tanzania which had no electricity. Power lines connected to the national grid ran high above them alongside their community. But it was not for them, the cables supplied electricity to nearby cities. No power means no light and, being near the equator there is consistently 12 hours of darkness from about 6pm. The alternative to darkness is to use candles, charcoal or kerosene lamps—all expensive and a great risk to their dry wood-framed and thatched-roofed homes. (Recent reports suggest that the country has already lost 40% of its forest cover!)

Tanzania is still a very poor country, with a population of about 50 million, 73% of people live in rural areas. In the evenings, when the sun sets, almost everything stops. No cooking, no time to sew and make things to sell, no opportunity for children to read or do their homework. Thieves would come in the night and steal goats and chickens; natural hazards such as hyenas, leopards, lions and scorpions can emerge. Alongside the 12 hours of darkness there is also 12 hours of consistent sunshine - a natural energy source to be tapped! Tearfund's partner Anglican church Diocese of Rift Valley came up with a simple solution - a solar light. But to get to that point it was important to get the whole village aiming for something and thus Tearfund invested time in this poor community to run Bible studies, to be a catalyst for a whole life-transformation, to see the needs in the community, setting up small groups to collectively save together for projects and essentials. Group members saved up to pay for half the cost of a solar lighting system. They were then given a solar panel, lamp and battery and as their income and opportunities started to increase, they continued to pay back the cost of the light. By doing it this way the villagers not only brought the light themselves but felt ownership of the equipment. In fact solar is lighting up the whole village. Nearby villages have started to notice the lights at night, calling the community 'Little Dodoma' (the bright capital of Tanzania). They can now hold services at night and believe the solar lights will bring more people into church. *Rosemary Birch*

GROWING OLD: WHERE ARE THE SNOWS OF YESTERYEAR?

Once again, the grandsons - bored with their Ipads, PS4s and mobile phones - have been pestering me to tell them about my memories and the lessons I have learnt in life. In the face of such enthusiasm, it is difficult to refuse. So I think hard and say that probably the most important change there has been in my lifetime is climate change. "Oh yes, we have done that at school," they say, "it's



terrible because it will affect many countries and peoples worldwide, many of them poor and unable to absorb such changes. It will make many areas uninhabitable because human beings can only operate efficiently within certain temperature limits. Many thousands of plant and animal species are already threatened with extinction - not because of pollution (though that is important) but because the world is already becoming too hot for them. And we are fully aware that the worst is yet to come, because feedback mechanisms are transforming the rate of change from a linear one to an exponential one." I am impressed by how well they have been working at their lockdown lessons. I tell them that if they want a world fit enough to hand on to their children, then they are going to have to work very hard indeed at trying to change the way society works. "Of course, Grandad" they say and run off to discuss ways this might be achieved.

Later, however, I find myself thinking about climate change in more personal terms - a more selfish perspective perhaps - but valid nevertheless. For climatologically speaking, one of the biggest changes there has been in my life is the disappearance of 'winter', at least cold winters - ie 'proper winters' - in the traditional sense. We are all very much aware of how much warmer spring and summer have become (we have just had the hottest and sunniest May ever) but more ominous perhaps has been the disappearance of 'proper' winters.

Going back to early childhood, there were a series of particularly cold winters during the 1940s (1940, 1942, 1944, 1947). To be honest, I don't really remember much about these winters except perhaps parents talking



about queuing for coal during 1947 and how the coal got frozen in the depots and had to be pick-axed out. And in 1944 the Allied advance in Europe was slowed by the severe cold. The 1950s were not as severe but even so one could rely on one or two periods when there would

be snow on the ground sufficiently deep and long-lasting for slides to be built, snowballs to be thrown, icicles to be sucked, frost to be cleared from bedroom windows, ice to be tested on the odd stream or pond. And I remember how at junior school, the headmaster would put water on the playground overnight so that it froze and provided the base of a slide the next day. (Health and Safety were nowhere then of course). And slides would be built on roads (no traffic then) and pavements as well, along which you would hurtle and gradually extend until a sensible adult decided enough was enough and poured cinders all over it.

These winters of youth finished with the great winter of 62/63 - one of the ten coldest ever recorded. It was as though winter was determined to go out with an almighty last display, a great flourish to bring down the curtain and be remembered by. And it wasn't just in the UK but all over the northern hemisphere. In fact 1962 had been a coolish year - there had even been snow in Texas in September! The cold set in in mid December, there was heavy snow on Boxing Day in the South of England and just before the New Year a blizzard swept through South West and Southern England. I remember this well for a number of reasons - chiefly because I had to get to a New Year's Party in Croydon. No taxis or buses were running (although the ice-cream van managed to put in an appearance) but I managed to somehow flounder my way down to the railway station. The train was there and left on time and arrived on time. This was well before electrification and it is difficult to imagine how the railways now - with their minimum maintenance, reduced capacity and susceptible power lines - could cope so effectively. I got to Croydon, found the house and saw that someone had built a large snowman on the front lawn. Of course, no one imagined that it would still be there two months later! Shortly afterwards I had to take a train down to Cornwall. The south west had been badly hit by the blizzard and I remember at one point the train was plunged into semi darkness as we



made our way slowly through a cutting which had just been made through huge drifts of snow! And then the cold set in! January was the coldest month in central England since January 1814. The sea started to freeze in many places as did the upper reaches of the Thames; only the warming effects of power stations and the long since removal of the old London

Bridge stopped the lower reaches from freezing. Otherwise a frost fair could have been held as in earlier times. The canals all froze and put a final end to their use for transporting goods. The snow and cold lasted through February and it was not until 6th March that the first frost-free morning arrived.

Since then, winters have been on an upward average temperature curve (with just a few hiccups) and rarely amount to little more than a depressing muddy interlude between autumn and spring (both of which can be fairly muddy as well). And if snow comes, then it rarely lasts for more than a day or two. The winter of 1962/63 will never be repeated - the planet no longer has enough cold to produce such winters.

Does any of this really matter? Obviously it does in the global sense mentioned above, but does it matter in the personal sense? After all, a majority of people in the UK are probably quite happy to have warmer winters - there is no intrinsic merit in putting up with cold beds and frost-covered windows (not to mention the odd chilblain). And it makes for smaller heating bills! On the other hand, it seems a pity that children will no longer be able make and throw themselves along a slide, or flounder their way to school or build snowmen or have duels with melting icicles. But perhaps it's more complicated than that. The seasons, as well as nature generally, provide a backdrop to the living out of our lives. They help provide a rhythm to things which, in itself, helps to give our lives a certain sense of security. Something that was always there has suddenly gone. It's like the scenery on a stage. The play still goes on, it still makes sense, but suddenly the actors (and audience) find a basic point of reference has gone. And like so many other things in life, you only discover how important it is once it's gone. Only one thing is certain - winter will never come back!

John Ditchfield

LIVING WITH AN IMPERFECT PAST

I remember how years ago, on my way to a conference in Innsbruck, I stood in the main railway station in Munich aghast because I had just spotted Dachau as a station on the departure board. And then I reminded myself that in the post-war period the German people had shown great maturity and courage in



their attitude to their twelve years of Nazi thralldom and the atrocities committed in that time. Unlike other nations, they made no effort to hide the heinous crimes of that period, opting instead to display them openly. James Joyce referred to “the burden of history” and in Germany they settled for bearing this load. In this way they differ from, say, the Russians. I am not referring only to St Petersburg which became Petrograd during World War I, only to be changed again to Leningrad after Lenin’s death and then to revert to its original name after the USSR became Russia once more in 1991. There is also the case of Stalingrad which was renamed Volgograd (rather like calling London Thames City) after the end of the Great Patriotic War and when Stalin’s name had become a source of shame to many Russian citizens. However, understandably in my view, there is a movement in Volgograd to drop this insipid name and return to the original: the siege of Stalingrad and the crushing defeat of the German forces there in January of 1943 is what gives the city its historical heft and is the reason why most foreigners are aware of this city on the Volga. Good luck to the group who like their history unvarnished and authentic in their effort to recover their original name.

There is also the case of Japan which refuses, so as to avoid being publicly shamed, to apologize formally to the Chinese for the atrocities inflicted on them during the Japanese occupation in the 1930s, first of Manchuria and later of China itself. And then we could turn to our own royal family, magically transmuted into the sanitized House of Windsor while the Battenberg family discreetly turned itself into the Mountbattens, leaving the original name to survive only as a rather lurid-looking cake!

After century upon century of increasingly bloody warfare from empires in the ascent, descent or at their peak, Europe finally fought itself to a halt in

1945. The Germans refer to it as “year Zero,” and it came close to that for the other combatants. But we have had that greatest of political gifts since that time which is peace. Now, though, our societies have become much more complex over a short period of time owing to a considerable influx of people from other parts of the world. They may be people from former colonies who have returned to the heart of a previous empire in search of a higher standard of living; they may be political refugees or refugees from the consequences of climate change in their homeland. In our country now, people of other races constitute about 14% of the UK’s population, and a much larger percentage in London and some other major cities. They have a right to be treated with dignity and an aspect of this is not to be insulted through an insensitive treatment of our colonial past which, like all empires, has many grim pages. They have a right to that period being studied from their perspective as “natives” whose countries were invaded by the British without any by your leave. School students here should know that the British wiped out the aboriginal population of Tasmania and that we fought the Chinese in the Opium Wars of 1839 and 1853 because we wanted to dump opium grown in India and present-day Afghanistan on this large market much closer to India than the British Isles.

The largest stain on the map of the former British Empire (as of other European empires) was the creation of slave societies in the Caribbean – and elsewhere -- through the development of “sugar islands.” This long period of enslavement has led to a movement in our former Caribbean possessions demanding reparation for the centuries of enslavement to the British in the colonial period. Such reparation from the British (and presumably also the French, the Dutch, etc.) would be a nightmare to administer granted the racially mixed nature of European societies now. And what is particularly sad is that virtually from the moment these slave societies were established, those with principles and a moral conscience strongly objected to them. For a long time, though, their voices went unheard.

In the English-speaking world, the first group to take action against slavery were the Quakers. In Pennsylvania, which they founded, it had become an act of misconduct by 1758 to engage in slave-trading. In the United Kingdom also, Quakers figured very prominently in the work of abolitionists who included William Wilberforce and Josiah Wedgwood. Their efforts led to the abolition of the slave trade in 1807. This was followed by the abolition of slavery in our Caribbean possessions in 1834, and throughout the British empire by 1838. We were the first of the European empires to abolish slavery and having done so we also policed the

north Atlantic to prevent slavers from landing their human cargo in the southern states of America.

So far so good because it looks as though this is that rare thing: a moral cause of the utmost importance fought for by a few who were finally victorious. Unfortunately for us all, this is not a fairy tale because it involves human beings and human greed. Only recently have we been able to learn in detail of the vast sums given to slave-owners to compensate them for the loss of their slaves. It was a sum of £20 million which in today's money amounts to some £16.5 billion. The total borrowed by our government, represented 40% of the Treasury's annual spending budget and was not totally repaid until 2015. Do not think



George Orwell (1903-1950)

that the slave-owners were a minority of ruthless merchants and aloof aristocrats because the total number of those who applied for compensation was a staggering 46,000. Among these were the Blair family, the same family as Eric Blair's, someone better known to us as George Orwell. With devastating irony, it was Orwell who authored texts such as **Burmese Days**, a novel set in what was then a British colony, which together with his famous essay, "Shooting an Elephant," constitute a testimonial indictment of British imperialism. Orwell, it should be recalled, served in Burma, in the Indian Imperial Police in the 1920s.

What I would love to hear or see now is a debate on this matter, that is on how we represent the past in a mature multicultural society, by some of our distinguished historians: Simon Schama, William Dalrymple, David Olusoga and Margaret Macmillan would be my choice, to help us to hammer out a policy for our schools and our streets. The lingering effects of the Covid 19 virus will at least provide us with the leisure to contemplate this vast, complex and thorny matter, one which is to be taken up in London by its mayor, Sadiq Khan. What we will need in order to make appropriate changes is a level head and not a hot one: we should not allow our present emphasis on statues, graffiti, etc. to obscure the pressing need to focus on equal rights and opportunities. Above all, we should not allow a Europe which has not known war since 1945, to fall again into a period of protracted strife.

Verity Smith

Thoughts on Racial Discrimination

Recent events, such as the Grenfell disaster, the Windrush scandal, and the large numbers of BAME medical and care workers dying of Covid 19, (not to mention the toppling of statues and the Black Lives Matter protests) have brought out in many of us an awareness and a questioning of the underlying racism which seems to underlie so many of our problems. As James Baldwin, a black American writer, wrote “racism isn’t just a problem for black Americans, but a destructive force that undermines America as a moral idea.” So too perhaps in Britain.

However, I have to admit that my own youthful experiences in this regard were very limited. My schooling was exclusively among white British girls and my teaching career was the sole opportunity to work with Black and Asian colleagues as well as children. Because it was the Primary age group, racism among the pupils was actually as rare as hen’s teeth, even in the multi-cultural borough of Brent. My one memory of racism there was the taunting of a black pupil by her classmates about her colour. On impulse, I said that she was like ‘black chocolate’, her Asian friends were ‘milk chocolate’ and us white people were ‘white chocolate’. The whole class of six-year-olds collapsed in laughter at the idea of themselves being as appetising as chocolate, and the grievance was forgotten. More seriously I was aware that considerable efforts were being made at the time - the 70s and 80s - to introduce more BAME history into the educational curriculum. Sadly, a lot of these initiatives were ‘rowed back’ by various



William Cuffay

administrations in the years that followed - a warning perhaps that any steps forward can often be followed by steps backwards.

The Guardian also recently published a list of six eminent black people in British history. Of these, sad to say, I had heard of only two - Mary Seacole who, with her own money, nursed and helped wounded and dying soldiers in the Crimean War (at the same time as Florence Nightingale) and Samuel Coleridge-Taylor, a black classical composer (1875-1912). The others were Olive Morris (1952-1979), a leading black rights activist in the 60s and 70s, Claudia Jones (1915-1964), who launched the Notting Hill Carnival from 1959 onwards, Jack Leslie (1901-1988) an early professional black footballer and William Cuffay (1788-1870). As

nineteenth century social history was a special interest of mine, I felt I should at least have heard of William Cuffay who was a militant leader of the Chartist movement for electoral reform, Chartism being referred to by a contemporary reporter in the Times as "the black man and his party". Cuffay was transported to Tasmania for 'conspiracy against the Queen' but managed to live to the age of 82.

The more I read now about our history, the more I feel that the legacy of colonialism, and the

underpinning of wealth from past black slavery, is a regrettable part of the British psyche. Much has been 'whitewashed' from our so-called island story. For example, until recently, I was only vaguely aware that the whole underpinning of the industrial revolution (rightly noted as the first in the world), as well as our banking system, was the wealth of the slave trade itself, and the income generated by slave labour on the plantations of the Caribbean and elsewhere.

And go anywhere in Britain and you sooner or later come across a 'Great House', or country mansion run by the National Trust or English Heritage (or still in private ownership). In fact, a large proportion of these Great Houses - possibly a majority - were built in the 18th Century and were also founded on the fortunes made by this trade. In fairness, many of these houses now acknowledge these origins. For example, the owners of Harewood House, recently put out this statement: "The North Leeds estate is owned by the Lascelles family and was built in 1759 using the wealth from the family's involvement in the Barbados sugar trade plantation. Sugar trade plantations used slave labour from Africa until the British abolished slavery in 1833." David Lascelles, who is the Chair of the Trustees at the Harewood House Trust, issued a statement "recognising the colonial past" of the Grade-II listed house and said although they "cannot change its past", they can "use it as a stark, unequivocal truth to build a fairer, equal future." The Lascelles family have also financed the West Indian archives at York University and the Barbados museum.

One of the problems in dealing with our history, particularly colonial history, is that we are very good at burying unpleasant facts while



Harewood House, Yorkshire

emphasizing the positives. Again, one might be familiar with the Indian mutiny and the famine in World War Two, but how many of us are familiar with the full history of our more recent involvements in Kenya, Malaysia and the Yemen? For example, with regard to Kenya, a recent article by George Monbiot about the treatment of Kikuyu tribesmen during the Mau Mau troubles in the 1950s, describes how some of them brought a successful case against the British Government in 2012 about their torture and mutilation. The article notes that the documents that came to light in 2012 were part of a larger archive, most of which was systematically destroyed during decolonization. Special Branch oversaw what it called “a thorough purge” of the Kenyan archives. “The very existence” of the deleted files, one memo insisted, “should never be revealed.” Where there were too many files to burn easily, an order proposed that they “be packed in weighted crates and dumped in very deep and current free water at maximum practicable distance from the coast.” Which means that if we want to really familiarize ourselves with the facts of the past, then we might have to go deep sea diving!



Mau Mau suspects in Kenya in the 1950s

Marion Ditchfield



JOHN BIRCH'S COMPETITION

Competition No 27 Places of Interest UK Part 9

1. Birthplace of Robert Burns.
2. Located in Kent on an Estuary with castle and Cathedral.
3. Home of the Royal Mint museum.
4. Seaside setting for this Royal Pavilion.
5. Location of the Royal Pump Room museum.
6. A London Gallery funded by an advertising business.
7. Just North of London, Cathedral city and Roman remains.
8. Cardiff's Natural History Museum.
9. Cathedral in the City of London.
10. Royal East Anglian Estate.
11. Tallest mountain in the Lake District.
12. Shakespeare's birthplace.
13. "Robin Hood's hideaway"



The answers to Competition no 26 (Places of interest in the UK Part 8)

1. Mousehole 2. Museum of Childhood 3. Newmarket 4. North Yorkshire Moors Railway 5. Nottingham 6. Holyrood 7. Osborne House. 8. Pembroke 9. Petworth 10. Cosford 11. Hendon 12. Wisley 13. Romney Hythe and Dymchurch Light Railway

Entries received from the Suburb and Somerset.

Have a go; jbirch1821@gmail.com or post to 26 Holden Road N12 8HT



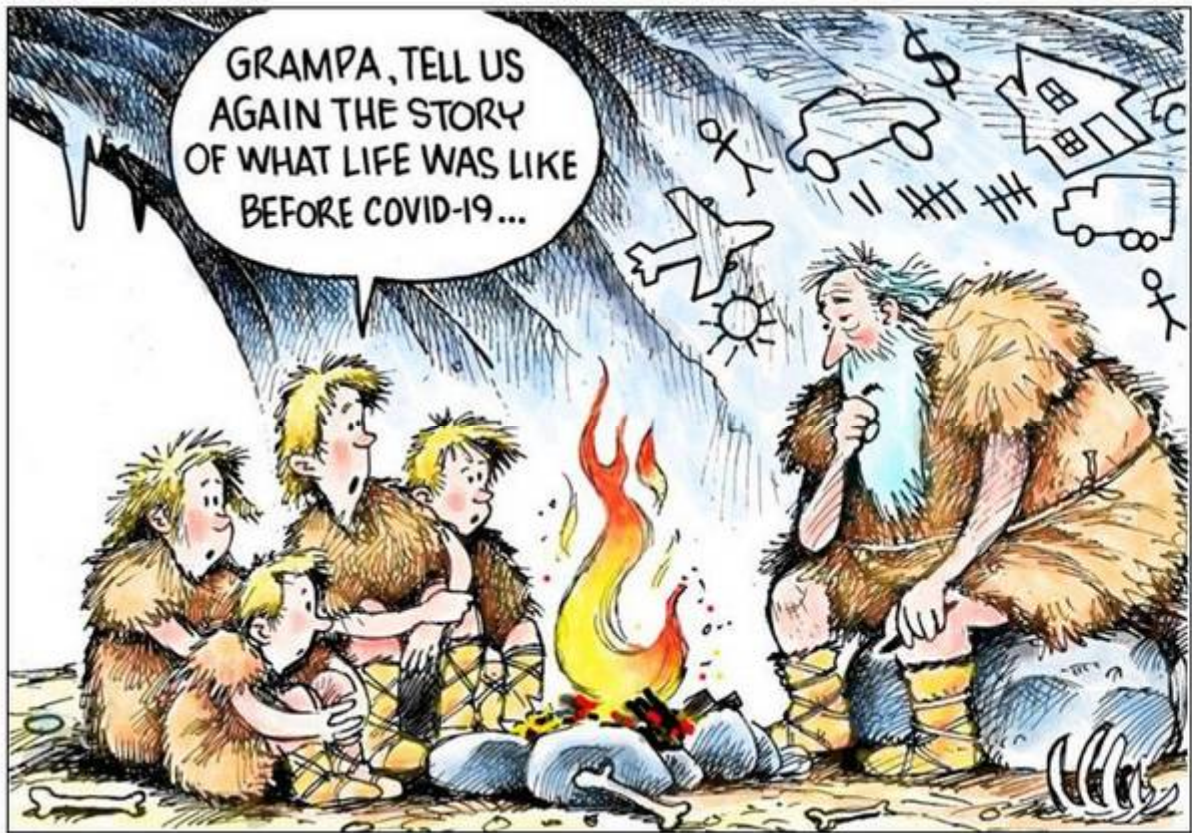
WORDSEARCH: SUMMER FLOWERS

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A	S				D	L	L	O	L	N	I			X	L	R
S	C	O	M	S		I	A	O	N	A	P	M	O	N	F	U
T	B	U	T	T	A	E	H	S	D	A	R	O	C	U	N	T
O	P	O		M	A	I	K	R	A	L	C		P		U	S
C	C		S	R	E	W	O	L	F	L	L	A	W	P	S	A
K	L	A	D	I	E	S	B	O	N	N	E	T			Y	N

CALIFORNIAN-POPPY CANDY-TUFT CLARKIA
 CORNFLOWERS COSMOS CRANESBILL DAISY HOLLYHOCK
 LADIES BONNET LOBELIA LOVE-IN-A-MIST LUPIN
 NASTURTIUM NIGHT-SCENTED-STOCK PANSY POPPY
 SCARLET-FLAX SUNFLAX SUNFLOWER SWEET-ALYSSUM
 SWEET-PEAS SWEET-WILLIAMS VIOLAS VIRGINIA-STOCK
 WALL-FLOWERS ZINNIAS (Put the remaining letters together to
 make the name of a bright yellow wild flower)

DIARY

Once again, it is unclear when we can meet again as a normal congregation. In the meanwhile a few more cartoons:





NEWS AND VIEWS



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John Ditchfield
Jill Purdie and others
Joan Holton and Marion Ditchfield
John Ditchfield
Marion Ditchfield

The August/September double edition of News and Views will be published on Sunday 9th August. Articles should therefore be delivered to the editor, Joan Holton or the typesetter, John Ditchfield, (john_ditchfield@hotmail.com) by Sunday 12th July.

We welcome articles, as well as reviews of books, films, plays etc. from members and friends. These will not always represent the views of the editorial panel or of the Church. Publication is at the discretion of the Editors.

Remember - we are on line at www.hgsfreechurch.org.uk where you will find past issues of News and Views.

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