

**Friends of St Andrew's Church
Stratton, Cornwall**



Newsletter Spring 2011

Volume 3 Issue 1

Dear Friends,

It hardly seems possible that it was six months ago that I last wrote: one of the reasons why time does go so quickly, is that there is so much happening - not just great events, like the Patronal Festival, but also so many little things. Yet, this is as it should be: life is a constant process of 'happenings' by which we and the world are changed, so that we may grow and mature as the people of God.

One major change in our lives has been the addition of two further parishes, which has been coupled with the move of the Parsonage House to Bude. I fully understand that the adding of extra parishes and the moving of the 'Vicar' may not have been ideal and certainly may not have been viewed as ways in which we might grow and mature, but it has become clear that people are seeking to view both things as opportunities for growth.

This was shown clearly in a recent meeting of all the four PCs with the Archdeacon, at which it was decided that the two separate Benefices, that of Stratton & Launcells and that of Bude Haven & Marhamchurch, should unite to form one Benefice of four parishes. This is a significant step for each of the churches, which, within living memory, were single parishes with their own priest. Much of this uniting will be a legal matter, with little effect on the parishes. However, where it will be noticed is in the continued working together and growing together, which has already begun. For we have striven hard over the last eighteen months to pool resources and do things for the good of all four churches and this final legal matter sets the seal on this good work.

One other happening which has been a particular cause of joy in Stratton is a visible sign of the sense of fellowship engendered in all the churches. Jane Bradbury, a member of the choir at St Andrew's for many years and the wife of our former organist, has been testing a vocation to the priesthood and has recently had this vocation affirmed by the church and has been recommended for training for the ordained ministry. How this will all work out remains to be

seen, but this is a credit to the Family of St Andrew's.

As always, we still have so much to be thankful for here in Stratton, despite the changes around us. I continue to pray that things will carry on going from strength to strength as we strive to be a faithful Christian witness in the town.

With the love of Christ

Fr. David Standen

Membership Secretary's Report

The last six months has been a very busy time for FoStA - or so it seems to me - with lots going on and never enough hours in the day to do everything. Despite all the hustle and bustle, it has been an amazingly satisfying and uplifting time with the rewards well beyond expectation. Our membership continues to grow albeit rather slower now but we have a sure foundation with good encouragement and support.

Since I last wrote there have been two deaths of FoStA members both in November 2010: Mr Bill Young who lived for many years at Old Sanctuary in Diddies Road and Mrs Joan Smart (formerly Berry) who will be known from the time she lived at the Malt House in Cot Hill. We remember them with affection and offer our condolences and prayers to both families.

We have been particularly fortunate in that we have had considerable input, from members of FoStA, in ways that have enriched the social and fundraising activities enjoyed since the last newsletter. There was, of course, the Patronal Festival Weekend Dinner and Art Auction - both of which will be reported on elsewhere - but on the Sunday before Christmas, after the Nine Lessons and Carols service at St. Andrew's on an extremely cold evening, the Day family hosted a most enjoyable Supper Party of Festive Fayre and it was a real treat for all those who ventured out - very many thanks to Geoff and Anne.

And then, at the end of January St. Andrew's held its first 'Swishing' Party; another name for Swap Shop and 50:50 Sales or Ethical Shopping, for the more environmentally aware, now a truly global phenomenon. As the organizer was heard to say, "It was the first outing for many people since Christmas, a real meeting and greeting event, after the harsh weather of December, a very welcome diversion." So we enjoyed fellowship, mission and

hospitality, recycled on a grand scale and simply had fun. Thank you Nicola Nartowski and Ian Riddler. Together the two events raised just over £593 all of which will go towards the work on the East Window.

It was wonderful to see so many of you in November and my thanks to those who keep in touch by letter and e-mail and don't forget, if you have any points of view or items for the Newsletter the editor would be delighted to receive them.

St Andrew's Stratton is indeed grateful for your continued support. The financial help from the Friends goes a long way towards making possible the repairs we are able to undertake. The website (www.fosta.org.uk) is kept up-to-date so do take a look. Thank You all.

Val Barker
FoStA Membership Secretary

Do you know someone who might like to become a Friend of St Andrew's Church? Put them in touch with Val Barker!

Report on current Fabric Projects

- **East Window above the Altar.**

The PCC have decided with the Diocesan Advisory Committee's approval to replace the 27 rusted iron tie bars that hold the window together with similar section bronze bars. Interior scaffolding will be needed for access. The total cost is estimated at £6,200 plus VAT at 20% but it is hoped that VAT should be reclaimable.

The glass itself will therefore be stabilised and on-going monitoring, by two voluntary local experts on our PCC, is being done to observe and record any further deterioration in the condition of the glass itself.

The work is planned to be done this summer (2011) by the Wells, Somerset firm of Holy Well Glass and FoStA have agreed to underwrite the cost. The funds achieved in November 2010 from the Auction and Dinner are assigned for this purpose and it is hoped to also receive grants from The Blanchminster Trust in Bude and the William Morris Fund.

- **Churchyard Water Tap.**

The extension of the churchyard 20 years ago has resulted in many graves being at least 100 yards from the nearest tap. With the encouragement of a FoStA member it has been decided to extend the water supply underground alongside the central dividing wall to the north end and create there a further tap for the use of

people placing flowers on graves. FoStA has received a donation to cover the cost of this project that will be installed in the spring of 2011.

- **South Wall and Guttering**

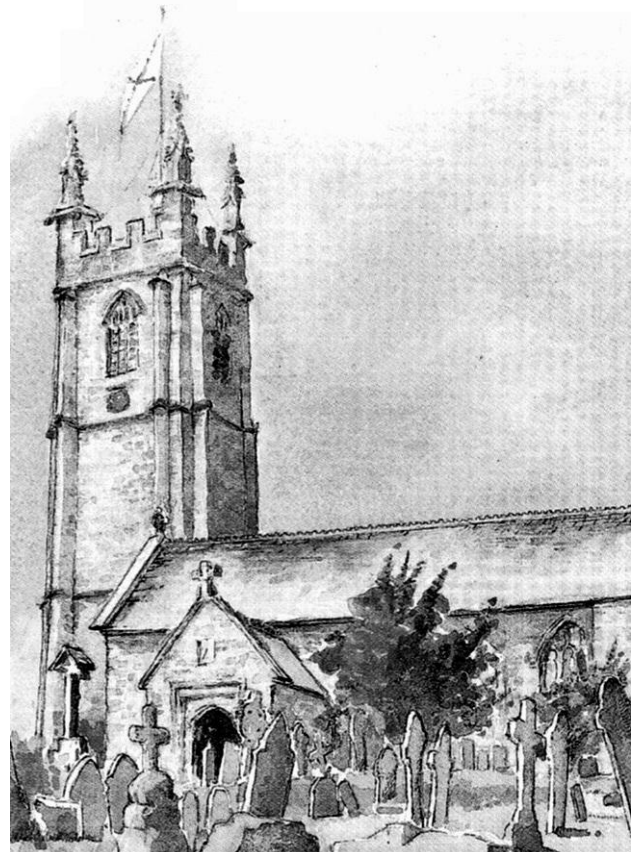
As was mentioned in the last newsletter, the mortar between the stones of the South Wall allows for too much water ingress, causing deterioration to the internal plastering. There have been great efforts made to alleviate some of this problem, by renewing the guttering along this wall, which will more effectively take away the rainwater from the wall itself. However, the problem of the mortar still remains.

One plan is to replace all the mortar below sill level, where the problem is worst and where the wall is less protected by the guttering. This will cost somewhere in the region of £6,000 and has been deferred until funds are available to the PCC to undertake this.

- **East End Gable Cross**

As mentioned in the last newsletter, the East End Gable Cross fell off in the summer. We were fortunate that no-one was underneath at the time and that the break was a reasonably clean one. This meant that it has since been fixed and replaced, and this was paid for through the good offices of FoStA.

Ian Barker, FoStA Committee Member.



To the Church's Shareholders

There is a Firm in this country of ours which has a branch in every town and village. Suppose for a moment that it happened to be a trading Firm what an enormous concern it would be! If it were well managed, what stupendous profits there would be; how keen people would be to obtain shares in it, how eagerly men and women would strive to find employment in it or to secure a footing in it for their children. And the report of the year's trading would be read with intense interest, and the prospects of development discussed in every home. Everyone would know that for success to continue to crown the efforts of that huge business it would have to have loyal employees and satisfied customers.

Amazing as it may seem there is such a trading Firm. It has been trading for over a thousand years, and, mark you, it has been a growing organisation all that time, and still is. Churches have multiplied exceedingly not only in our country but throughout the world. Services, Clubs, Institutes, Schools represent an enormous output of activity. Only when we examine the balance sheet of this colossal firm are we tempted to question whether the "talents" invested in it are producing a satisfactory dividend, and if not, why not? The answer concerns every shareholder.

What is the Firm's business? Surely to produce Christian lives, to maintain the ideals and standards set by Christ. What is hampering that business and wasting its resources? We get more than a hint in the Parable of the Talents - that easy-going fellow whose only fault was that he buried his talent and produced nothing. The sort of excuse he makes to-day is that **he is doing no harm to anyone, that he keeps himself to himself and minds his own business.** Or he is that dreadfully bad advertisement of his religion - a gloomy Christian.

Such a man does not realise that every shareholder must be an active, self-sacrificing partner if he is to justify his connection with the Firm. He must know that a Christian is one who serves God not because he has to, or has been brought up to, but because he wants to with all his heart and mind and strength. I mean the sort of Christian who is always volunteering to undertake the disagreeable, bothersome task like joyfully going two miles instead of, unwillingly, one; who is always ready to occupy back seats, spoken of in the Gospel as sitting down

cheerfully in the lowest room; one who never stands on his rights or dignity or gets huffy over trifles and sees slights and insults where none was intended.

Can anyone be doubtful about the increased trade our Big Firm would do if such men were connected with every branch? Their conduct would be stamped with the Christian mark. And, when one comes to think of it, is it not reasonable to expect Christians to be different, and if not, to question whether the Firm is conducting its business in the best way, or whether there is not something wrong about the Christians who are responsible for the efficiency of the branches?

I recently came across by chance a financial article - I never read financial articles as a rule - but this caught my eye because it was headed "Remarkable Profits". In it I read that there are 444 of a certain store in this country and that for a single year they had shown amazing profits of over £8,000 per store. What we should like to be able to say of our Church's services and organizations is not that they are in themselves flourishing, numerous and well managed, but that they are visibly producing Christ-like men and women; the Christian output is for all to see - not merely moral people, sober, self-reliant, industrious, but that we are always coming across unmistakable examples of the Miracle the Christian Faith has wrought in human lives - people who seem to have made themselves, or rather have been made, as much like Christ in character and conduct as is humanly possible.

I can imagine the result - churches in every corner of England restored spiritually - temples of the living God where we all come to worship in spirit and in truth, to receive the strengthening sacrament of love, to kneel before Him and simply hold up to Him our empty hands, realizing that we are nothing, except what Christ can manage to make of us, and then we would go out into the hustle and bustle to show forth what we are, in the words of our General Thanksgiving, "not only with our lips but in our lives."

The Rev'd C. Leslie-Jones, M.A

Cyril Leslie-Jones was inducted as Vicar of Stratton 100 years ago, in February 1911. This article was written in May 1932, shortly before he died.

Patronal Festival Weekend

With so much going on over this weekend, the church was almost always full of people for one reason or another. This lent itself greatly to the festival atmosphere which we were trying to create and made for a thoroughly enjoyable weekend for all concerned.

On the Friday, Pat Greenwell's art was on display in the Church and there was a great deal of interest, but the important part of this day was the Fund-raising Dinner at the Tree Inn in the evening.

About forty of us gathered for what was an excellent dinner. Our thanks go to Emma and Rob Semple and their staff for making us so welcome and for providing such excellent hospitality. We started with a Champagne Reception and hors d'oeuvre (although the French might quibble with our use of the word Champagne, as we drank the local Camel Valley Brut!) and then followed a wonderful dinner. Over coffee and mints, the dining room was transformed into an 'auditorium' for the main event: the after dinner speaker.

Jonathan Bradshaw did not let us down: he lived up to the build up he had written (in the last issue) and gave us all a fascinating talk about the South Pole. We learnt about the intense cold and how to survive it, the inhospitable nature of the scientist at the South Pole and how we must all have a B-HAG (Big Hairy Audacious Goal) in life to keep us going and seeking to improve ourselves. Jonathan talked well and fluently for well over an hour, but no-one seemed to be flagging at all and all commented afterwards on what an eye-opener the whole thing had been.

The Saturday was a bustle of activity: stalls in church, art-work on display and later in the day, the ringing competition. The piece de resistance of the day was the Auction, which began just after four o'clock. There wasn't a huge crowd, but the church wasn't empty and we had certainly attracted some big spenders to the proceedings. Aply led by James Kendling, a local auctioneer who gave his services free of charge, we proceeded through the lots at a cracking pace. It was amazing to see how keen some people were on some of the pictures and at the end of the auction, everything was sold and all went away very happy.

The weekend ended with two services: the service for Advent Sunday and our Patronal Festival Mass on Tuesday 30th. All who had been involved were, by this stage, tired, but happy, having experienced a great weekend, with lots of activities. It was wonderful over the course of the weekend to have seen a large number of people from FoStA, from the town and from other places,

all there to support the work of St Andrew's and its place in the community.

The weekend raised over £2,000 pounds towards the work of FoStA, an excellent result, and which has enabled us to begin the restoration work on the East Window, as mentioned elsewhere in this issue.

John Standen, FoStA Committee Member

ST. ANDREW'S CHURCH FLOWER FESTIVAL 2011

As usual, the Festival will be held over four days at the end of May and this year the dates are from Friday 27th to Bank Holiday Monday 30th May inclusive. It will be held to mark especially the centenary of the re-hanging and dedication of our fine peal of bells so we have chosen a bell-based theme with the title "Ring the Changes". The committee has lots of exciting ideas so it is hoped it will be up to the usual standard expected at St. Andrew's.

On the Saturday we are hoping to arrange an evening of entertainment along the same theme and there is also to be demonstrations of the Frank Mack Garage Ring on loan from the Guild of Devonshire Ringers. This mini ring has 6 bells weighing from 14ozs to 1lb 9ozs and is used for training and publicity purposes.

Any member of FoStA who would like to help with the Flower Festival would be very welcome or if you do not feel able to undertake an arrangement perhaps you would consider sponsoring someone else to do it on your behalf or simply come along on the day and bring your friends and neighbours. Another possible way of helping is to pass on any information you might have about Stratton church bells; perhaps learning to ring or memories of being part of the Hand-bell ringing team. I know that Colin Mutton, Paddy Poulton, Michael Crowell and Anne Day were involved.

Although, as I always say, a flower festival is a huge undertaking and often a seemingly daunting task, we always end up having lots of fun and I never fail to be amazed that there is so much willing support and, most importantly, it is a wonderful opportunity to give glory to God and to celebrate and communicate our faith through the beauty of flowers.

We hope to make this very special anniversary a huge success.

Val Barker, Flower Festival Co-ordinator