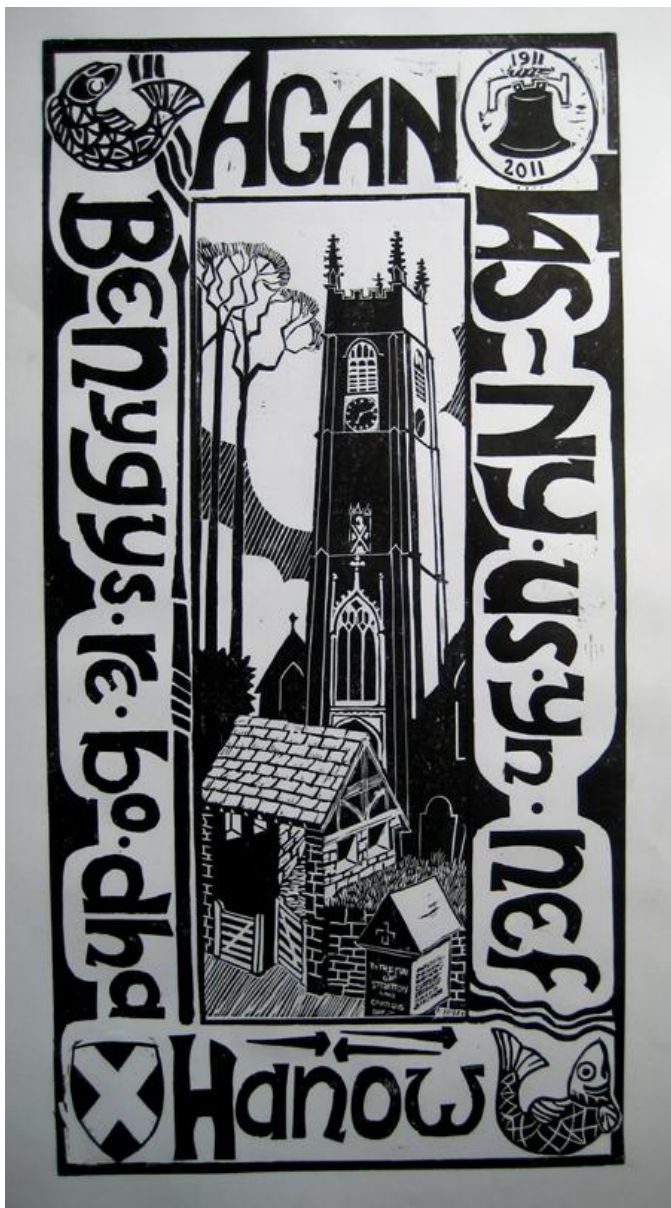


Friends of St Andrew's Church,  
Stratton, Cornwall



## Newsletter Spring 2012

Volume 4, Issue 1



'A Stratton Centenary' a linocut print by  
Jonathan Howlett

Dear Friends,

It's just over two months now since we decamped from the small rural township of Honley (just outside Huddersfield) in West Yorkshire to move down to the South West. When reports say that moving home is right up there with bereavement, divorce etc in causing stress, they are not wrong. The move was a four day haul, Tuesday to pack, Wednesday to load, Thursday to travel and Friday to unpack. The reality is of course we will be unpacking boxes for months to come, but I can say that the worst is over.

The removal also required sorting out of all the junk that I had threatened to throw away for the past few years. It is only then that you find that the small amount of rubbish that you had always wanted to throw away had turned into a huge mountain of unwanted items that required many trips to the local dump to get rid of.

You may well say how does anyone survive these traumatic ventures in life? The simple answer is support and friendship. Friends are an invaluable asset both in good times or in bad. They are the people who go the extra mile, the ones who, to quote a 1990's popular TV programme say, "I'll be there for you." We were very fortunate in having many friends who helped us, pack the boxes, clear the rubbish and helped us to clean the house from top to bottom before we left. Not only that we had many friends who we had never met who prepared the Rectory at Bude for our arrival.

Hospitality and friendship are an important factor in any community life if that community is to grow and survive. The Christian community may be made up of many individuals but it only really becomes the body of Christ when it works as a community.

Since moving into the south west I have been very fortunate in meeting a great number of people associated with St. Andrew's Church both during Sunday and week day worship and also at the various functions that have occurred there. I've enjoyed being invited to "Burns' Night" where haggis, whisky and song was the order of the day, a "Swishing" event that was far better than Noel Edmunds could have organised and a "Book Fest" which even Mariella Frostrup would have been proud of.

All these events had one thing in common; they were run by local people intent on keeping St Andrew's Church alive in the community of Stratton.

St. Andrew's church is a beautiful place of worship where Christians have met for centuries in public worship. Beautiful places of worship can only remain as such if people have a care and a heart for them. In today's present climate when financial support is difficult, it is heartening to know that St. Andrew's Church has friends who care and are prepared to put their money where their heart is.

To all those who continue to show their love care and friendship to St. Andrew's Church, my grateful thanks.

*Fr. David Barnes*

*Parish Priest*

*at St. Andrew's Church, Stratton.*

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## **FoStA needs friends ...**

We all do really, but do you know anybody with a particular interest in St Andrew's, Stratton that might like to join FoStA?

If/when you've finished with this Newsletter why not pass it on – and very shortly a copy (in PDF format) will be available from the web site.

**[www.fosta.org.uk](http://www.fosta.org.uk)**

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## **FoStA FUNDRAISING EVENTS**

*Four items to report ...*

- *Grand prize draw*
- *Burns' night event*
- *Swishing day*
- *Book Fest*

## **St. Andrew's Day 2011 FoStA Grand Prize Draw**

This event proved to be a huge success and the profit amounted to £580.

There was a high percentage uptake of tickets from the membership and everyone returned their counterfoils in time for the draw which was made by Archdeacon Audrey Elkington during the social get-together after the Mass on St. Andrew's Day.

The lucky prize winners were:

- 1st Prize: Jonathan Howlett limited edition print - Ticket No. 00020 Mrs J Tippett.
- 2nd Prize: £75 - Ticket No. 00812 Mrs M Davies.
- 3rd Prize: £50 - Ticket No. 00905 Pat and Jeff.

Very many thanks to Jonathan for his gift and thanks to all of you who took part.

*Ed.*

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## **Burns' Night Supper Party**

Hosted by Anne and Geoff Day on Saturday 28th January 2012, it proved to be a fitting tribute to the Bard with good food, wine and riotous singing.

It was all done in grand style from the Selkirk Grace to the piping in of the haggis and the whisky toast followed by the typical Bill o' Fare.

Then came the speeches and toasts – all taken in good part I might add - and of course, the evening culminated with Auld Lang Syne.

These were the rituals of more than 200 years and as one diner was heard to say, "Not bad for a bunch of Sassenachs!"

Thank you Anne and Geoff for a wonderful evening and for your continuing support.

*Ed.*

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## **Swishing Day**

Saturday 4th February – and St Andrew's third Swish was bigger and better than ever. With over 60 vendors, the variety of items has multiplied and from clothes to state of the art coffee machines, there was something for every taste.

The concept of swapping or swishing is now firmly established in Stratton's calendar and with 22 unworn items in every closet, people are really enjoying sharing their 'guilty pleasures' with others.

Trade was particularly brisk on the tools stall and with snow forecast, gloves and winter accessories literally flew out of the church door!

Thelma Copeland provided some exquisite framed lace and handicraft pictures and only a few now remain. As they make unique presents, if anyone is interested, please let us know.

The champagne raffle was, to coin a phrase, a big draw; as was the opportunity to meet our new Priest-in-charge, Father David Barnes. Probably wondering what sort of place he had come to, he entered into the spirit of the proceedings with great gusto and a warm welcome is extended to him and his family.

Despite the dreadful weather the church was busy all day and a marvellous £553 was raised.

Particular thanks must go to all of the 50:50 vendors who so graciously donated their 'earnings'.

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## Stratton's First Book Fest

Book lovers from all over North Cornwall travelled to St Andrew's at the beginning of March to be part of Stratton's first ever Book Fest.

Not only were there thousands of quality books for sale, all arranged in themed sections – from "Murder at the Vicarage" (Crime) to "Looking for Mr Darcy" (Romance), but also an array of stimulating exhibits.



*[Father David Barnes chatting to Jo Symon]*

Celebrating Diamond Jubilee year, a 1950's style sitting room was recreated in front of St Andrew's Chapel to give a Coronation flavour to the proceedings. Here visitors were thrilled to sit and chat informally to Stratton's poet, Derek Ward, and to discover what inspires him to write.

His third book of poetry was launched at the event and he was delighted to sign copies of 'Inspired by Stratton' for the many visitors, who came from all over the county, as well as Devon and Somerset.



*[Ian Crouch in conversation with poet Derek Ward]*

On display was a folio from a 13th-century Bible, which was written at roughly the same time as the Magna Carta, or for more direct local comparison, in the century that our own Sir Ralph Blanchminster was born. Peter, Peter and Wright

solicitors kindly loaned their large-scale antique maps of the area and facsimiles of St Andrew's Elizabethan Churchwardens' accounts were available for study.

Being a patriotic Olympic year, items marking Stratton's Olympic past caused quite a stir. From Edwardian archery via the Paralympics to the last Olympiad held in London in 1948, there was much admiration for a trio of ladies who had achieved great feats in the days of exclusively amateur status – namely Mrs Cardale, Mrs Margaret Price and Miss Gant. Our thanks go to their families for loaning us their precious mementos.

We were honoured to be visited by the secretary of the Hawker Society, who came on both days to view our Hawker-related exhibition and to discuss Stratton's part in the history of this great Victorian figure.

Not only was Parson Hawker's father, Jacob Hawker, a vicar here but 'Parson' Hawker was married in St Andrew's in 1823. It is a little known fact that Hawker was offered the living at St Andrew's before that of Morwenstow. Had he accepted, then history might well have been very different.

Visitors were equally surprised to learn that Michael Ramsey, the former Archbishop of Canterbury, had a great and lasting passion for Stratton, derived from his lifelong interest in the humble priest of Morwenstow. Such was the success of the event that Father David Barnes, the latest priest to follow in the footsteps of Hawker, is keen to do it all over again! And soon!

Thanks must go to everyone who lent items for exhibition and in particular to Joan Heard and Phillip Jackson for donating their own books for sale. Being part of World Book Day, St Andrew's has achieved wide ranging national publicity, which has resulted in many diverse enquiries.

Should anyone be interested in any of the aforementioned features or wish to purchase either the poetry book, or Joan Heard's marvellous 'Chimney Corner Tales', or the Stratton School history, please contact us.

For further details of the Hawker Society see [robertstephenhawker.co.uk](http://robertstephenhawker.co.uk)

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## ITEMS FOR SALE

St Andrew's Churchyard Survey (Book Form) £10

St Andrew's Churchyard Survey (CD) £5

**Chimney Corner Tales** by Joan Heard £3.50

Stratton School A History 1848 - 1992 and Fond Farewell £2

**Inspired by Stratton** – Poems by Derek Ward £3.50

All these items can be sent by post free of charge to FoStA members but please note that multiple items may incur some costs.

We have also decided to offer the remaining Jonathan Howlett prints for sale. It was a limited edition and Nos. 2, 3, 4 and 6 are available.

They are unframed and would normally retail for around £200 but we are willing to consider any reasonable offer acceptable to the committee. Should there be a lot of interest pictures will go to the highest bidders.

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## FABRIC REPORT

Firstly a few follow up pieces of information.

We are pleased to report that checking the Belfry window louvres for safety found them all to be secure, thus saving considerable expense that we thought might be necessary. This was done while the Tower clock connecting rod was stabilised and the total cost of both jobs was £564. FoStA made a grant to the PCC for the whole of the work.

The removal of the very worn and dirty Chancel carpet revealed such attractive & well preserved tiles that after they had been cleaned it was decided, by the PCC, not to replace the carpet at all.



*[The recently revealed tiles  
between the choir stalls]*

Also, for information, the Vicarage has been let by the Diocese to a local businessman with rental going to the Diocese not to St Andrew's

PCC as is generally believed. We did not in the end get a Curate as was mentioned in a previous newsletter. Our new Priest in Charge, Fr. David Barnes has settled into the Rectory in Bude and is quickly getting to know his way around the neighbourhood.

The more urgent recommendations of the Church Architect in his Quinquennial Report of May 2011 have recently been discussed.

As a result Fabric Committee members are working on some possible areas of woodworm infestation that need treating, clearing vegetation from the cobbles in the church paths and fixing some loose floor tiles inside the church.

The PCC are to be asked to approve work to be undertaken on the mortar between the stones of the merlons at the top of the Tower and loose roof slates and ridge tiles need considerable attention. Patching of the lead roof of the Tower is also required.

It is hoped that this work can be undertaken, as a matter of urgency, over the next few months. The south wall cement mortar needs replacement with lime mortar, also as a priority, so that the wall can dry out and then internal redecoration of the wall can take place.

The report suggests other work over the quinquennium but that is enough for us to be getting on with at present!

The churchyard once again is looking good with daffodils in bloom and neatly cut grass ably done by Mike Yeo. Grenville Martin has trimmed the hedges and the new tap at the top of the churchyard is proving very useful.

We had an urgent problem to rectify in the winter when a large branch fell off a Horse Chestnut tree into the nearby Sanctuary garden during a storm. The remaining branches were leaning towards the east end of the church so, with the county forester's advice, permission to pollard the tree was sought from the County Council as all the trees are in a conservation area.

This tree surgery was also undertaken for Health and Safety reasons and the safety of nearby monuments.

A grant of £330 was given by FoStA to cover the costs.



*[The rather sad looking pollarded chestnut.  
We aim to add another picture of the tree  
when in full leaf!]*

The survey of the monuments completed in 2009 is becoming quite a useful resource for researchers of family history and an extra small income for FoStA.

*Dr Ian Barker, Churchwarden.*

## RECONNECTED

My story starts in Cornwall in the year 1803. This is the year my great-great-grandfather (James Peardon) was born. He grew up as a farm labourer and married Elizabeth with whom he had 5 children.

Times must have been tough and in 1833 he stole and killed a sheep which the police later found cut up and hidden under a bed in their house.

He was tried in Exeter court, found guilty and condemned to life as a convict in Australia.

After arriving in Australia, James was sent to work for a farmer in Wellington, a town west of Sydney. The convicts were required to grow crops to feed the growing population of Sydney and its surrounds.

In 1845 the convicts rioted and burnt all the buildings and therefore had to be sent to other penal colonies. James Peardon was sent to Moreton Bay (now Brisbane). He was finally released in 1848.

His wife Elizabeth left England in 1849 with 4 of her children. William, the eldest, stayed behind and is buried in the cemetery at Bude. James, the

second son, went with the family to Toowoomba, a city west of Brisbane and from there to Millmerran, a small developing rural area. This is where I lived and grew up. I now live in Brisbane with my wife Lesley.

The family tree was something I was always interested in, so in the late 1990's we decided to take a trip to England to find where my ancestors came from.

We arrived in Stratton and on visiting St Andrew's found several headstones showing the Peardon name. For us this was very exciting but better was to come.

Lesley and I went into St Andrew's to pray and look around the church. The vicar came and spoke to us and on hearing our story said that he did not know of any Peardons who still lived in the area. Fortune must have been on our side for just at that moment Val Barker came into the church to do the flower decorations. The vicar introduced us, told Val our story and she said that Mike Worden's mother was a Peardon. The following night we went to dinner with Mike and his late wife Barbara only to discover we were related even though quite distantly.

From that time on we enjoyed a wonderful relationship with Mike and Barbara and other relatives who live in the Cornwall area. Late last year together with Mike we spent a very pleasant evening with Ian and Val. This was a special occasion for us because it was Val who started the whole process which led us to be reconnected to some wonderful people whom we would never have known.

*Colin and Lesley Peardon  
(also Friends of St Andrews)*

## Dates for your diary

**Saturday 2<sup>nd</sup> June**

Party in the Park  
(Jubilee Celebrations)

**Saturday 30<sup>th</sup> June**

Summer Fete

**Friday 28<sup>th</sup> to Sunday 30<sup>th</sup> September**

St Andrew's Flower Festival

## OBITUARY

Celia Martin - who died 20th January 2012

We extend our condolences and offer our prayers to Grenville and the family.

Celia was a much loved and respected member of St Andrew's as well as of the wider community and a loyal Friend. She will be sorely missed by us all.

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### *Val Barker writes...*

As time goes by I have more and more difficulty in saying an adequate thank you to all those who support St Andrew's in so many ways - some of which are obvious from the articles and reports in this edition of the newsletter. There are those who give of their time to help to keep the churchyard tidy; those who serve on the committee; the fundraisers; those who give willingly of their expertise and professional skills - I could go on and on.

It has struck me, most profoundly, that there are many Friends who are seldom seen at St. Andrew's - if at all - but they do an amazing job of supporting all that we try to do despite distance, time or simply opportunity. It makes me think of that well known quotation: "*While I cannot be regarded as a pillar, I must be regarded as a buttress of the church, because I support it from the outside.*" (Attributed to Lord Melbourne 1779 - 1848)

So 'Thank You' all wherever you are - we need you and we are enormously grateful to you all whether you are a buttress or a pillar or like most of us, something in between.



## Rock of Ages

I live next door to Saint Andrew's Church in Stratton, and I never tire of seeing it majestically overlooking the town.

Churches have an atmosphere all their own, a kind of mysterious, magical calm that immediately relaxes you when you enter the door.

Sometimes I just sit in the church and picture all the amazing characters that have been there before me, and how the events and services have affected people's lives over hundreds of years. I think about all the marriages that have taken place, the funerals and the christenings.

You only have to walk around the churchyard and look at all the gravestones to get a real sense of how St. Andrew's has been at the centre of this area. Generations of family buried near each other pay testament to the fact that the church has always been part of village life.

The way the church is used in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century has changed from our ancestors' days, but the building itself is still the centre of the community.

It is a beautiful building with an awe-inspiring, spiritual feel to it.

Let's hope future generations feel the same and make use of its unique way of bringing the community together.

*I am more than just a church  
at the heart of my community  
Proud and strong, in faith and support  
I am all that Stratton asks of me.*

*I am space to think, if you want me  
Somewhere quiet to dream or believe  
A haven from all that hurts you  
I am solace to the lost or bereaved.*

*I am an arm around your shoulder  
When the world's too much to bear  
And if you need someone to listen  
I am here should you choose to share.*

*I am warmth when life has left you cold  
Or you need a friendly face  
Time, I have for everyone  
I am here, be it night or day.*

*I am faith, should you ever falter  
I am light, should you lose your way  
I am strength, should you ever weaken  
I am the future, the past and today.*

Reproduced from **Inspired by Stratton** by permission of Derek Ward.