

THIS AND THAT (244)

"Hell", said Jean Paul Sartre, "is other people." If so our recent ten day holiday in Scotland was hell. We went to visit and stay with people, as well as to relax and view lochs, firths and mountains.

Rugby, cricket and philistinism

Our rendezvous in Gatehouse of Fleet was with Bunty Love and some of her family. She used to sing in the choir of my father's church in Salisbury, Rhodesia. A fine contralto. I too sang in that choir. It was there that I learned to sing bass. After my fashion.

One of the very few disadvantages of being brought up on an African mission station was to be denied access to the Anglican musical tradition. Nor was there any musical education at my boarding school, Guinea Fowl Boys High. A bush school outside Gwelo. It specialised in rugby, cricket and philistinism. In spite of which it was a good school in many ways. It served me well.

My father left his African mission station to run a Salisbury suburban parish once I left school. In part to help finance my university education. I could stay at home and incidentally join his choir and edit the parish magazine.

So ignorant was I of choral music, it had never occurred to me that basses sang a different tune from sopranos. I sat my A levels at the end of the year and so returned home just before Advent. In the choir I sat next to a magnificent bass called Mike Joughin. A lovely man whose love of beer and cigars had no deleterious effect upon his voice.

The discovery of the running bass line to the tune of the Advent Hymn "Lo he comes with clouds descending" shivered my timbers. I sang, or rather bellowed, the repeated line "with what rapture...." unutterably enraptured.

Bagpipes and Holy Trinity Brompton

At a dinner party at Bunty's she proved to be still sharp of mind and wit. Her memory was good enough to remind me that my siblings called me "Randy Andy" for producing (after marriage of course) four children, to their mere two each. It was a lovely and sometimes hilarious meal. Her daughter and husband, we discovered, have a holiday house in Keyhaven. We are unlikely to entice them to St John's though. They are Roman Catholics. Also present was David Hannay, retired Professor of General Practice at Sheffield University, Chief of Clan Hannay, a player of the bagpipes, recreational sailor and excellent and amusing raconteur. His wife Janet is the daughter of a parson who for many years was Vicar of Holy Trinity Brompton.

Diana's connections

The local connections were not only mine. As a child Diana and her family regularly holidayed just outside Gatehouse of Fleet. They stayed in the beautifully isolated cottage of a friend of her father, just a few yards from the stony beach of the Solway Firth. We discovered that the cottage was owned, and still is, by the Hannay family.

We paid it a visit down a steep embankment and walked the beach upon which Diana, when at university, had done a project all to do with the rising and falling of Solway Firth water levels through the centuries.

John Knox

Whenever we pass through a village with a church spire or tower advertising God's local presence, we are tempted to stop and look it over. Churchyards are lovely places to pause for a sandwich lunch or a coffee break. Many of the churches are beautiful beyond telling.

Their attraction is not quite so great in Scotland. All the lovely little kirks there, when entered, seem faintly alien. The established church, north of the border, is Presbyterian not Anglican. It should make little difference, but does. Primarily because the focal point in Presbyterian churches is not the altar but the pulpit. In thoroughly Protestant churches the preaching of the Word not the celebration of the Eucharist predominates.

The fire brand Calvinist John Knox was most responsible for Scotland's more thorough Reformation than England's. Hence a Scottish kirk's faintly knoxious atmosphere to a sacramentalist Church of England lover of short homilies rather than wordy sermons.

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TODAY: PENTECOST 20 MAY 2018

St Nicholas' Chapel, Pilley: 8.00am Holy Communion BCP
St Mary's South Baddesley: 9.30pm Holy Communion CW
St John's Boldre: 10.30am Family Service & Children's Club
St Luke's Sway: 6.30pm Choral Evensong

For Prayer This Week

The peace of the World. All in authority. Prince William and Bride. The Royal Family. Our confirmation candidates.

Prayer requests: John Arthey, Jean Broomfield, Elizabeth Fancourt, Janet, James, Sarah, Colin Erne, David, Vanessa and Dominic. **Rest in Peace:** John Hudson Davies, Elizabeth Sharp, Colin Walker, Kate Morris.

Activities This Week

Mon 21 May - 7.00pm Vicarage - Adult Confirmation
Tue 22 May - 10.30am Vintage Fitness. Seated exercise to music at St Nicholas' Pilley & refreshment
Wed 23 May - 10.30am Communion St Nicholas' Pilley + coffee
Wed 23 May - 2.30pm St John's Thanksgiving: John Hudson-Davies
Wed 23 May - 3.15pm W Gilpin School - Junior Confirmation
Wed 23 May - Bible Study Ph. 07786194282 for venue & time
Thu 24 May - 10.30am Vintage Fitness. As on Tuesdays
Thu 24 May - 3-4pm Penelope on St John's for Church Guides & all
Fri 25 May - 5.00pm St John's - Wedding Rehearsal
Sat 26 May - 1.30pm St John's - Wedding, John & Kirsty

NEXT WEEK: TRINITY SUNDAY 27 MAY 2018

St Nicholas' Chapel, Pilley: 8.00am Holy Communion BCP
St Mary's South Baddesley: 9.30pm Matins BCP
St John's Boldre: 10.30am Holy Communion & Children's Club
St John's Boldre: 6.30pm Choral Evensong

Dates for the Diary 2018

Thu 31 May - 12.00pm St John's - Funeral: Colin Walker
Fri 1 Jun - 2.00pm St John's - Thanksgiving: Bugs Hughes
Sat 2 Jun - 2.00 - 5.00pm St Mary's Fete, Pylewell
Wed 6 Jun - 6.00pm - Vicarage - Social & Fete Committee
Fri 8 Jun - 12.00pm St John's - Wedding - Dan & Lauren
Sun 10 Jun - 10.30am St John's Thanksgiving Sunday
Sun 10 Jun - 6.00 St Thomas' Lymington Deanery Choral Evensong
Wed 13 Jun - 11.45am St Nicholas' Chapel - Mission Meeting
Fri 15 Jun - 3.00pm St John's - Wedding - Will & Steph
Sat 16 Jun - 11.00am (till 2.00pm) William Gilpin School Fete
Sun 17 Jun - 6.30pm-Sway Vicar's Farewell Evensong, St Luke's
Sat 23 Jun - 2.45pm St John's - Wedding - Tom & Caroline
Sun 24 Jun - 6.30pm St John's - Patronal Festival Evensong

ANNIVERSARY

Today is the second anniversary of Kate Morris death. Her sisters are with us to honour and remember her. May she rest in peace.

SATURDAY 19 MAY 6.30pm BARN DANCE

Many thanks to John James, his fellow Social Committee members and all those who helped in anyway to make the Barn Dance so good an occasion.

THURSDAY 24 MAY 3.00-4.00pm CHURCH GUIDES

Penelope will give a talk on St John's, primarily for Church Guides, but also for anyone else interested on Thurs 24 May from 3.00 to 4.00pm. Our team of 'Church Guides' sit in St John's on Saturday and Sunday afternoons for 2 hours between 2-5pm and offer to guide any visitors around the church. This is most rewarding. We could do with more guides, contact Pam Wearne (01590 679675).

10 JUNE 6.00pm DEANERY CHORAL EVENSONG

Lyndhurst Deanery Choral Evensongs are being revived, and a good thing too. The first is to be in St Thomas' Lymington on Sunday 10 June at 6.00pm. All are welcome. This will replace our normal Group Evensong at St Nicholas' Brockenhurst.