



Canterbury, Belvedere

## 'GUS'S GOSSIP' September 2020

### *Parish Prayer – St Augustine of Canterbury Belvedere*

*Almighty God, who of your tender mercy did send your servant Augustine to preach the Gospel to our forebears; grant to us their children, both to follow the holy doctrine which he taught and with courage and love to declare your name to those who know you not.*

*Through Jesus Christ our Lord who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit,  
ever one God, world without end. Amen*

Welcome to the September edition of Gus's Gossip, our monthly newsletter.

### **Gloria Joy Simmonds**

I was the third child of my parents, born in the countryside in Jamaica, and educated at the local Church of England Primary School. Having passed the national examination I was awarded a place at Teacher Training College for a 3 year course and enrolled at Shortwood Teachers' College in January 1952.

Having graduated with honours, I was given a post in the village's primary school and taught there for a year. A very good friend of mine was awarded a scholarship to an English university and I travelled with him to England, arriving here in January 1956.

When the Department of Education checked my certificates I was given permission to teach in primary schools, but the salary was so low that I did not accept the offer, but joined the Post Office and worked for that organisation for 30 years. In this country my previous parishes were St Michael and All Angels, High Wycombe and St John's Hillingdon. When I came to live in Belvedere in 1977 I registered at St Augustine's.

I was soon voted onto the Parochial Church Council and became a member of the Deanery Synod in 1982 and was a member of the Rochester Diocesan Synod from 1988 to 1991. I also served as a member of the Council for Social Responsibility in the dioceses of Rochester and Canterbury. I must admit that I thoroughly enjoyed the various memberships, as they were not only serving but a source of learning and these include membership of The Church Union and The National Retreat Association. I was also the link person in the Rochester diocese on the Committee for Black Anglican churches.

Apart from these responsibilities I found support and comfort in retreats spending several retreats at Stacklands Retreat House and various pilgrimages including Iona, Lindisfarne, Lourdes, Israel and Walsingham (35 times!). They were all very interesting and inspiring but the one with the most lasting impact was to Israel; to get dipped in the River Jordan and to join in mass on a boat on the Sea of Galilee.

As the years roll on I no longer travel long distances. I was looking forward with interest and inspiration to the Royal Maundy Service in St George's Chapel on August 9<sup>th</sup> which had to be cancelled because of Covid-19. I am truly grateful to Her Majesty The Queen for her letter and Maundy Purse.

My thoughts and prayers are for a gradual return to church life and a more intense participation in all that implies.

## My Faith Journey - Jo Whittle

My earliest memories of going to church were attending a local Baptist Church in Belvedere. Every Sunday afternoon my sister and I would put on our "best dresses" and then go to Sunday School. I can remember singing, "The Wise Man built his house upon a rock", (based upon the Parable that appears at the end of the Sermon on the Mount in the Gospel of Matthew). Each week we were given a pictorial biblical text sticker to place in a special book. Once a year, prizes were issued for attendance in the form of Christian books - I still have a Bible and a story book that were presented to me.

Another memory of church is going to the Church Parades, once a month, at the Pantiles Methodist Church as I was a Brownie (part of the Imp's pack!). I enjoyed the services so much that I asked my Mum if I could start attending there on a regular basis. Throughout my teenage years this was the church I attended. I was asked to help run the Sunday School lessons when I reached my late teens. My friend and I used to teach the very young children so there was a lot of messy painting and collages being made - it was usually me who ended up covered in paint!

When I became pregnant with my son I started to attend St Peter's in Bexleyheath. My son was born in 1990, and sadly when he was 1 ½ years old, his Dad / my husband died in a Road Traffic Accident. Although this was a devastating event and a very difficult time for me I can honestly say that the Lord took care of me and provided every type of practical support I needed. The members of St. Peter's church were very supportive; they would prepare meals for me, help with the shopping and even dog walking duties. I also became a member of a very supportive house group. As part of my spiritual development I was asked to help run the Junior Church and it was suggested that maybe I should look into studying for a theological degree. The outcome was after three years of studying at Greenwich University I was awarded my degree.

It was towards the end of my first year of study, through a mutual friend, I met Mark. After I finished studying, we married, and whilst we were living in Dartford I went to St John's church in Erith. The vicar at the time was a good friend of mine and he asked me if I would prepare / present the talk for the Church Parade Service once a month as well as help out in Junior Church and run a small house group. To begin with I was very nervous of doing the monthly Children's Services but I found my faith gave me confidence to do this. I was also invited to one of the local Primary Schools to lead their assemblies once a month. Once again, I was terrified at the thought of speaking to so many children, but once again my faith got me through and it worked out well.

When Val and Keith renewed their marriage vows at St Augustine's Mark and I were invited to the service. Mark really liked the Catholic aspect of the services and said that he would enjoy becoming a member of this church, and so you have been stuck with us ever since!

To sum up: although at times life has been very challenging, overall I feel very blessed and it has been God's love, guidance, and strength that has pulled me through. My faith journey is by no means complete and each day with the Lord's help I hope to learn something new.

Jo's favourite hymns are: 'As the deer pants for the water', 'Shine Jesus Shine', 'Make me a channel of your peace' and 'Lord of all hopefulness'.

*Please let us know your favourite hymns and why so they can be included in future newsletters.*

## A Dream Lived - Margaret Raymond

Some people say that if you follow your dreams, you may be disappointed when you get to live it.

In the late 1950s, while at school, I read a book written by Neville Shute called 'A Town like Alice'. This book led me to become hooked on anything regarding Australia. I went on to read several other books written by him. All this did was feed my interest further, assisted by the fact that I achieved plentiful house points by knowing all the words to Waltzing Matilda and knowing what a 'jumbuck' was. At 13 years old, this was apparently quite an achievement.

As I grew up, I followed the actor Peter Finch. I had pictures of him all over my bedroom walls. Originally born in London, he was often cast as a native Australian. I watched most of the films he starred in. My interests in anything antipodean never really wavered.

I began working in 1959, aged 15. I spent many a lunch time wandering close to Australia House in The Strand. When I retired in 2004, my husband Tom and I had one of our, what could best be described as an 'in depth conversation' resulting in him asking me, "Well! Where DO you want to go?" I replied, "Australia." It was the first time on our lives where we had the money, the opportunity and the time to go. He told me simply to book it and four weeks later we left Heathrow, Australia bound however, not without incident!

We flew out with Qantas and Tom, always being mechanically minded and very cautious, heard the pilot announce a defect with one of the engines on the aircraft. He commented that it was "Bloody typical. Just my luck, All the way to Oz with three engines and a kangaroo in the front!" None the less the mechanics managed to fill the engine with oil and we set off.

We spent six glorious weeks travelling through Australia, New Zealand and Singapore. It was one of the most wonderful times of my life. Sharing my experiences with Tom and catching up with long lost friends in the process. Seeing the places that I had read about and dreamt of visiting. Tom even managed to get me into a jet powered boat in New Zealand.

My enmity with local wildlife is well known. I did my research before I went and understood that most of the wildlife there either bit you, ate you, beat you up, stung you or killed you in some nasty way. It was while visiting the Daintree Forest in Queensland that I managed to step across a Brown snake. Apparently one of the most dangerous snakes in Oz. I was clueless.

We sent regular updates home of our progress to Edward and Claire. It was via text message however, having just picked up a new Nokia mobile phone, I didn't realise that it was auto correcting my spelling and sending, what my son in law described as 'encrypted messages', to family members. When we returned, we asked them if they had received any of the messages, and Bill told us that his mobile phone was still at GCHQ being decoded. We shared the pictures with them when we got home.

We had many other wonderful trips, usually on what we termed 'cheapo tours'. They were always good for the unexpected. Now I am alone and no longer fully mobile, I am so glad that I can look back on those times with Tom and know that I finally accomplished something that I had waited fifty years to do, and most importantly, was not disappointed.

## The Holy Rosary - William Bulley

Sometime before the pandemic and shut of the church Father Clive distributed a rosary with a little note about *how to say the rosary*, which I kept save in the drawer of my bedside table.

One Sunday morning I stumbled on this Rosary which I had inserted into the little book *A Simple Prayer Book*. This brought back memories many years ago when I was in Roman Catholic Middle School where it was mandatory to say the Holy Rosary every afternoon after every lunch break. I must admit it was not fun to say fifty-three "Hail Marys" every afternoon.

But this Sunday as there is no service at St Augustine's I decided to have a go at saying the Rosary as a replacement for the Sunday service. It was an overwhelming experience and I decided to continue every morning. I was elated a few days later when scanning through YouTube I came across the documentary of the Aspiration of Our Lady at Fatima in Portugal the 1923 or thereabout.

I have since come across many interesting modern-day stories about the Rosary like the rosary that turned into a spiritual sword - see YouTube *Fr Don Galloway the Rosary that turned into a Spiritual Sword*.  
The Holy Rosary *A simple religious item with great miraculous powers*.

## Fr Michael's Memoirs 4 - Beginning at Grammar School

Early in 1951 (late because I'd been ill at the end of the previous year) I sat the 'Eleven Plus', and, to delight in the family, was awarded a Surrey County Minor Scholarship at Kingston Grammar School (a 'Direct Grant' school), which had been founded by Queen Elizabeth I with the endowments of the Lovekyn Chantry, suppressed under Edward VI. The Chantry Chapel itself has survived - the only free-standing Chantry remaining in England.

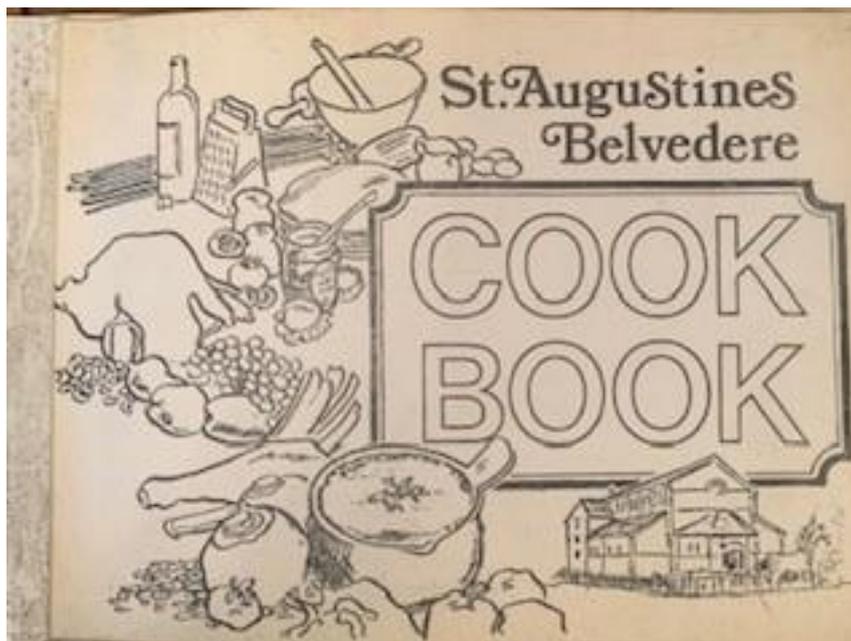
So in the September I set off on the 418 bus for Kingston in grey shorts, cap, and red and grey striped blazer, bought for me by Granny Rudd (our mother's mother) at Bentall's in Kingston. It was a major change of life - every face a new one, being called by my surname, masters in gowns, prefects, compulsory sports, and new subjects - notably Latin and French.

I was ill again in the winter of 51 / 52 - and so I was at home on February 6<sup>th</sup>, listening to the BBC 'Home Service', when the programme was interrupted, and a solemn voice announced the death of King George VI. From then until the Queen returned from the Commonwealth Tour in May 1954, I kept a series of scrapbooks made from the newspapers supplied by our neighbours. My interest in royal history developed during that time, with its high point being a visit, on my own, to Westminster Abbey (I suppose in the summer of 1953) to see the church and the specially built annexe laid out as it had been for the Coronation on June 2nd. In time for that day our family had acquired its first television set - black-and white, of course, and with a nine-inch screen. Our sitting room was packed with neighbours and friends - some thirty I think, including some of mine from church. And there were all sorts of celebrations - among them a street party for the children of the twelve houses in our street, and a trip to the Kingston Empire to see *Merrie England*.

The school was, it now seems to me, distinctly old-fashioned. At the end of the first year we had to be put in groups to study either Physics and Chemistry or Greek. My Latin was not good enough for me to be put in the Greek class, so I did one lesson each of Physics and Chemistry; but then my mother persuaded the headmaster to let me change to Greek - because I had already decided that I wanted to be priest. It was a bit of a struggle - but it made life easier later on, when I came to study the New Testament in Greek. But that was nine years in the future.

## A Blast from the Past

Fr Clive has been having a clear out in the vicarage and came across this little gem.



The introduction by Fr Len Stapleton.

*'I commend this little Cook Book to you with its wide variety of recipes, from soups to main dishes, from savouries to sweets. Our thank go to those who shared their recipes with us, to Monica Stapleton and Mavis Stagg who collated and printed the booklet and to Don Drew who designed the cover and to Neville Smith who kindly printed it.*

*The proceeds of the sale of the book will go to the New Church Hall Fund. I hope you have an enjoyable time in the kitchen.'*

The book includes such 1970s delights as Pilchard and Mushroom Flan, Egg and Cheese ring, Darwin Steaks - a mince and mash concoction, Devilled Chicken and Cheese Crusted Beef Roll.

One recipe that delighted me was contributed by a certain 'Winnie Vousden' and called Lemon Duchess. That packet of Royal Lemon Pie filling took me right back to my childhood!

*1 packet Royal Lemon Pie Filling, 1 egg,  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint water.*

*Sponge Mixture: 2oz margarine, 2oz caster sugar, 4oz SR flour, 1 egg, 1 tablespoon water.*

*Method: Pour lemon pie filling into a small saucepan and mix with 1 egg to a smooth paste. Put on a low heat and stirring continuously slowly add  $\frac{1}{2}$  pint water. Stir until the mixture is thick and boils. Cream margarine and sugar, beat in egg, fold in flour and mix to a soft consistency with a tablespoon of warm water. Spread evenly over the lemon filling and bake for 30 mins at 190c.*

A recipe that horrified me was in the Party Drink section and consisted of cutting up a pineapple and putting it in a punch bowl with a  $\frac{1}{4}$  pint sugar syrup. When cool you added 1 bottle of white wine and left it to stand for an hour. You then added another bottle of white wine and a bottle of sparkling wine. What a waste of wine!! And pineapple come to that!

And on the subject of pineapple, one last little gem - Pineapple Cream Fluff.

*Medium size tin of sliced pineapple, 6oz can double cream, 1 egg white, 1-2 tablespoons caster sugar, few drops of almond essence.*

*Drain pineapple and put in oven proof dish. Whisk the egg whites until stiff and whip the cream lightly in a separate bowl. Fold egg white, cream together with almond essence. Pre-heat the grill. Spread the cream over the pineapple, sprinkle with the sugar and brown under the grill for 1-2 minutes.*

Contributors included Eunice Stagg, Loretta Ramswell, Margaret Lawrence, Elizabeth Sellick, Freda Barnes, Daphne Morris, Renee Law & Winnie Vousden but most recipes were not accredited to anyone.

Donna

## TRUSTED TRADERS....

In a new regular back page we recommend local traders who have given good service to members of the church. If you have a recommendation please let Fr Clive or Donna know.

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### Window Cleaning

Fr Clive recently engaged Scott Dillnutt who he met many years ago when chaplain of Trinity School. He did a great job on the vicarage windows 07780 439436 email: [scottdillnutt@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:scottdillnutt@yahoo.co.uk)

### Garage

Gilbert Rd Service Station (opposite church) has re-opened for servicing and MOTs...they sponsor our mass sheet so do support them. They service Fr Clive's car and have always proved efficient and reliable. Phone 020 8311 4465.

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If you would like to contribute to the next edition of Gus's Gossip, which will be published the first week in October please email Fr Clive at [frclive@tiscali.co.uk](mailto:frclive@tiscali.co.uk) or Donna at [staugustineofcanterburypa@gmail.com](mailto:staugustineofcanterburypa@gmail.com) .