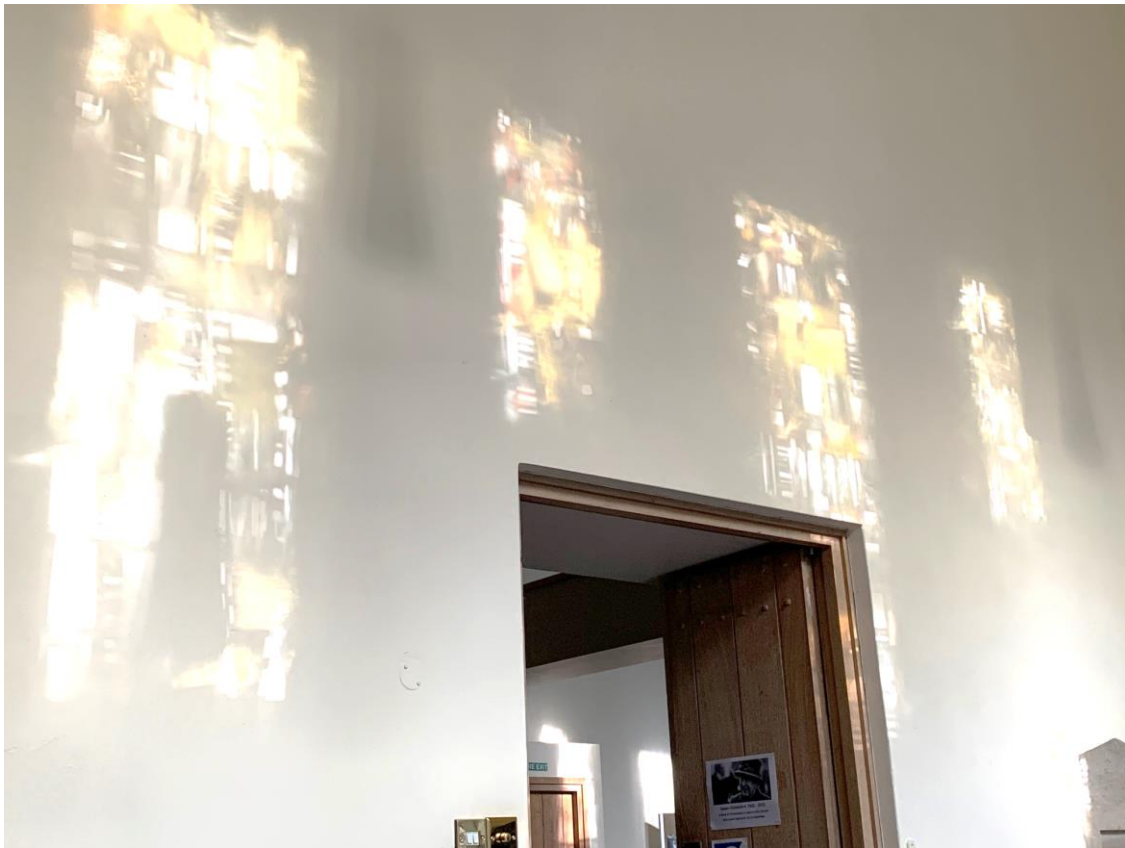




# MARK'S MESSENGER

*The Parish Magazine of  
St Mark's Church, Broomhill and Broomhall, Sheffield*

**October 2022** *Donations welcomed and can be made via the app below*



**REFLECTED LIGHT FROM THE LADY CHAPEL**

*(Photo: John Schofield)*



## CONVERSATIONS ABOUT DEATH



Flowers for the Queen in Green Park – photo by Rosie Richards

In the days after the Queen's death, the country entered a period of national mourning. The rolling news coverage showed the initial shock, followed by growing crowds at Buckingham Palace, and floral tributes at Royal sites around the country. Thousands visited the Queen's coffin in Edinburgh and lined the streets as the procession travelled to London. Many queued for hours to pay their respects in Westminster Hall.

Whilst the Queen's death was not unexpected, many people reported feeling unexpectedly shaken by it. Perhaps the Queen's death was shocking and difficult because she represented continuity and certainty. Someone who had seemingly always been there. In all the change she was the steady and reassuring part of our national life. And as a nation mourned, we mourned for her, but also for the wider loss of change and death that we have felt in recent years.

It seems to be a British trait that we are uncomfortable talking about death. Our rituals of mourning are restrained compared to how death is experienced in other cultures. These rituals, however restrained, can help us to engage with what is happening, and they give us markers to navigate our way through the difficulty of the time. As a priest I have been invited to visit people on their deathbed, and to meet those recently bereaved as they plan the funeral for their loved one. Whilst there are patterns of behaviour and similarities in how people encounter death, I am often aware of how intensely personal each person's journey with death and with grief is.

Our reticence to talk about death or to show our emotions could be described as dignified, and there is value in that, but perhaps there is also something we could learn from others who express their grief more openly. Perhaps where death is understood and experienced as part of the cycle of life, it becomes easier to talk about it, to accept it, and to grieve openly about it.



The Queen's funeral cortège – photo by Rosie Richards

When I was in training, I was placed with a member of clergy who regularly held funeral workshops in his church. I'll admit that at first I felt quite nervous about going; I wondered who would attend and whether I would feel comfortable talking about death. But the experience was very different to what I expected. About twenty

people attended the workshop; most were retired, but with a mix of ages. Some had illnesses which meant they were facing their own death in the next few months, others had no idea when they might die, but wanted to be prepared. The workshop was focused on the practicalities of funeral planning, but it was led in a supportive way, offering pastoral support beyond the workshop. I was surprised at how helpful people found it. Being able to take an active role in planning their own funeral opened up a space to talk about death in a way that broke down some of the normal social barriers to this. Some also found that making a plan helped them to feel more peaceful about what was coming. Others said they felt equipped by the workshop to go and talk to family members about their wishes and to start the conversation with them.

This period of national mourning has reminded us that death is inevitable. It has brought death and grief into the public conversation. That may make us feel uncomfortable, but it can also encourage us to reach out to those around us and to start a conversation about death. Death may feel near, or still far off, but perhaps now is a good time to talk with friends and family about death, how you feel about it, and what wishes you might have.

***Beth Keith***

## **Service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance – November 6th**

Each autumn, St Mark's organises a service of Thanksgiving and Remembrance to which we invite bereaved relatives and friends. It's a gentle service of love and light which includes congregational singing led by a small choir and musicians, hearing the name of loved ones read out and the opportunity to light a candle. We would like to invite you to this years' service at St Mark's Church on the evening of Sunday, November 6th.

### **MEMORIES OF THE QUEEN**

On Thursday 8 September at about 6.30 pm I heard that the Queen had died when I was listening to an Irish radio news programme. I have to say I was very shocked especially as I had seen her on television two days beforehand greeting Liz Truss as her new Prime Minister. Although very frail, she was smiling and appeared fully engaged in this important constitutional duty.

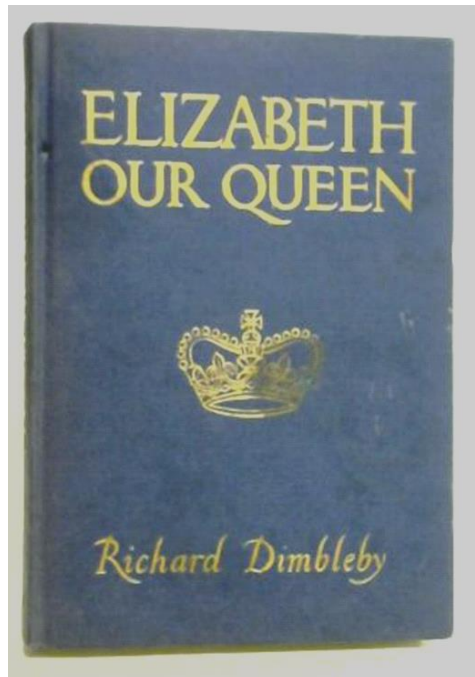
As I live in the Irish Republic it has been difficult for me to talk about the Queen with people my own age and younger as their experiences are completely different. The Irish press and television have been very complimentary about the Queen, especially her 2011 State Visit to the Irish Republic, and she has been praised in both parts of the island of Ireland for her contribution towards the Peace Process.

At the small Church of Ireland Cathedral in Trim on Sunday, 11 September the Dean prayed for the Queen, the Royal Family, the people of the U.K. and the President of the Irish Republic. I was very moved and I thanked him after the service.

Watching the events of the last ten days unfolding on television, I have felt rather 'in exile' and experienced a strong wish to be back in the U.K. which I have not really felt since I arrived in Ireland over two years ago. So I contacted Judith Price by email and we exchanged our memories of the Queen and indeed of the death of her father George VI in 1952.

I was at boarding school when the King died and a member of staff, who was very upset, came and told us the sad news. On reflection, it may actually have been the death of the King's mother, Queen Mary, that I remember. This took place about a year later.

We were given a long weekend holiday from school for the Queen's Coronation in 1953. I went with my family from Leicestershire, where we lived, down to Marlborough in Wiltshire where my Grandmother lived with my two Aunts. Grannie had bought one of those old bulky black and white televisions for the occasion. Neighbours were invited to watch the Coronation and so quite a large gathering of people were present. It was amazing watching such an historic event on television for the first time.



Book issued to school children in 1953

Judith and I discovered that we had both made scrapbooks or albums of photos and newspaper cuttings for the Queen's wedding to the Duke of Edinburgh in 1947. I seem to remember that one of the cuttings said that the Queen would promise 'to obey' when she was affirming her marriage vows. My scrapbook survived for several decades but has since vanished. I think it is probably the scrapbook that I remember rather than the wedding itself.

The only time I saw the Queen in person was when we were living in the North East. The Queen and the Duke of Edinburgh came up the river Tyne at Newcastle in the Royal Yacht Britannia on the occasion of her Silver Jubilee. She got out of a car opposite where we were standing in the crowd. We could see her very clearly but she did not do a 'walkabout'.

***Rosie Richards***

## CHILDREN AT ST MARK'S



Pentecost bubbles

**Hannah Jones** shares pictures from Pentecost and Trinity Sunday and some Land Art pictures from the Creation Story celebration of birds. And finally one which celebrates the recent influx of youngsters into the church community! In July we held the first of what will hopefully become a more regular session on Infant Baptism, creating space for families with very little children to meet and share thoughts about raising children in this faith community.



Trinity



Land Art pictures celebration of birds



A very young church member

## ST MARK'S JAZZ FUNDRAISER



Buenica

On the evening of Saturday, 9 July, St Mark's held a jazz fundraiser to raise money to support the protection, preservation, and insulation of the church's windows. There was a licensed bar to help us all get into the mood and the laid-back music provided by the band *Buenica* was just the ticket for a balmy summer's evening, ranging as it did from classic jazz standards like *Autumn Leaves* and the bluesy *Moanin'*, through the 'cool' jazz *Take Five* to the Beatles' *Yesterday*. The concert was a great success, both artistically and financially, with over £1000 being raised, and a great time was had by all.

We asked *Buenica*\* to tell us a little bit about themselves and this is what they said:



**Graham Jones** is our very accomplished double bassist. Graham has played in many musical contexts – jazz, rock’n’roll, folk, cajun, klezmer. He sings in Hallam Choral Society and is a regular tutor at Sheffield Jazz Workshop.

**Robert Glendenning** is our brilliant vocalist and percussionist. As well as singing in Buenica, Robert is a member of Fomentum, Jet Collective, PLUK and was the singer in former band Boogachaloooga.

**Jez Matthews** is a very experienced pianist who plays in various jazz groups as well as Buenica. Jez runs the jazz club at The Lescar in Sheffield.

**Steve Salfield** is the excellent saxophone player in Buenica. Steve has played in many jazz groups, rock’n’roll bands, classical orchestras, to name but a few. In addition to Buenica, he currently plays with Fomentum, Jet Collective and rock’n’roll band The Back Seat Jivers.



There was a licensed bar.



A great time was had by all.

Many thanks to *Buenica* and everyone who organised or helped at the concert. I, for one, can't wait for the next one!

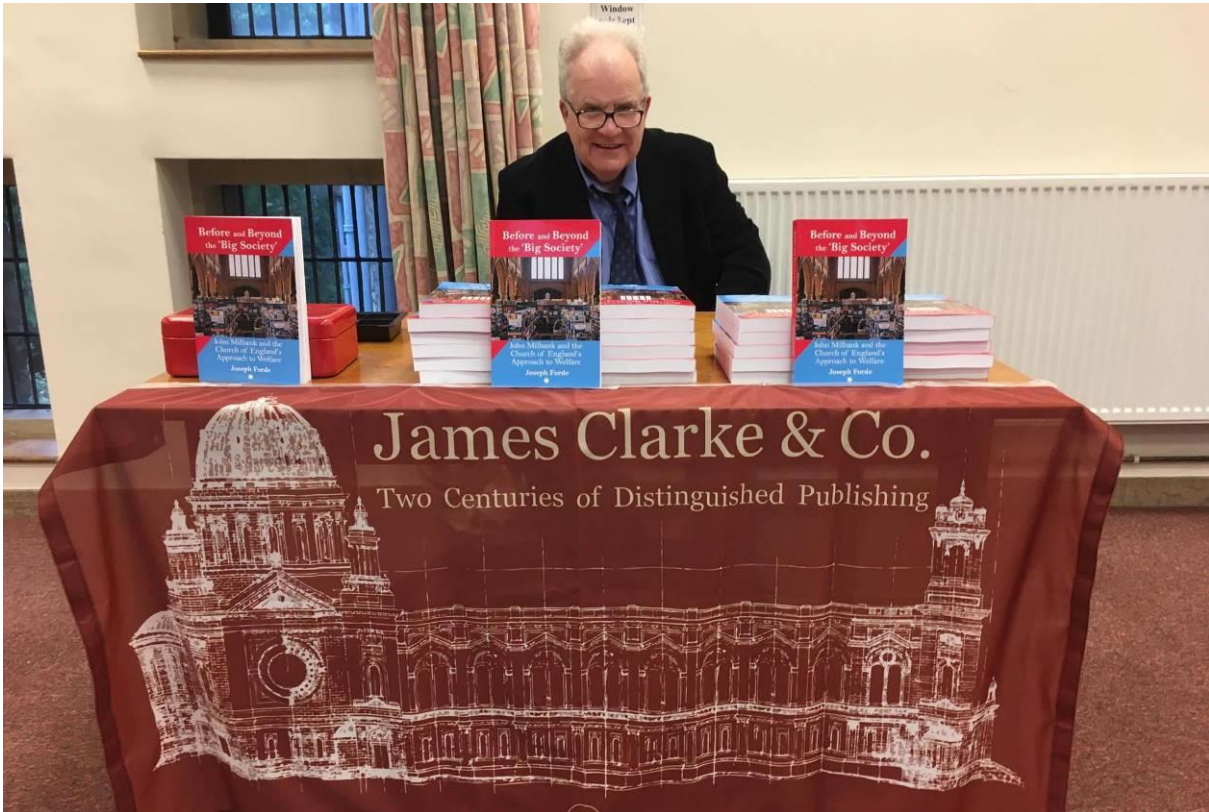
**Dez Martin**  
**Photos by Philip Booth**  
**With thanks to Steve Salfield and Zoë Varcoe**

\*Buenica is available for concerts, functions and other gigs.

Please contact [steve@stevesalfield.com](mailto:steve@stevesalfield.com)  
(07300 132999)

or [robert@glendenning.xyz](mailto:robert@glendenning.xyz) (00 44 7803 163418)

## JOE FORDE BOOK LAUNCH



Regular readers of the *Messenger* will have read David Price's review of Joe Forde's new book *Before and Beyond the 'Big Society': John Millbank and the Church of England's approach to welfare* which appeared in the July/August edition of the magazine. David's description of the book as 'shedding much fascinating light on the role of Church and state in our society today' certainly whetted my appetite to learn more and I was therefore eager to attend the book launch which Joe held in the Upper Room on the evening of 8 February.

The launch event was well attended and went very well. Joe began with an introduction to the book, explaining the ideas of John Milbank and their relationship to the 'Big Society' project embraced by David Cameron. There followed a lively question and answer session and the evening (like the book) certainly gave food for thought and did not disappoint.

Joe says that, for anyone interested in purchasing the book, copies can be obtained directly from him at a reduced price of £15 (they are £25 in the shops!).

**Dez Martin**

## CONGRATULATIONS!



Boyd and James wedding in Wales

*Boyd and James Hackley-Green, two of our newer members, were recently married in Wales (an event lasting three days). St Mark's later offered a blessing, and they celebrated with us by sharing Welsh cakes they'd made. Boyd has parted with this old family recipe.*



## BOYD'S GRAN'S SECRET RECIPE FOR WELSH CAKES

### Ingredients:

**Makes** 10-12 cakes | **Prep** 10 minutes | **Cook** 4-5 minutes each

8 oz self-raising flour

2oz castor sugar

4oz Salted Butter

1 or 2 handfuls of currents

1 free-range egg and some milk depending on mixture

### Method:

**01** Sieve flour into bowl, then add butter and spice; rub in finely together.

**02** Add sugar and currants and mix.

**03** Add 1 egg and mix. The consistency needs to be bound together; if needed add a splash of milk.

**04** Roll out on a floured board, to about a quarter inch thick.

**05** Cut using a 2-inch (approx.) cutter, then cook on a frying pan, or bake stone.

**DONT** Add any oil or butter to cook, cook on a dry pan on a medium heat for about 4 to 5 minutes each side.

**06** The exact cooking length will depend on what you are cooking your Welsh cakes on, but keep a close eye – too short a period and they won't be cooked in middle and cooked for too long and they will be dry. When touched during cooking they should feel springy, but not wet to the touch (no mixture should come out of the middle).

**07** Once cooked dust with castor sugar and enjoy.

There is a long-held debate within my family- some like the cakes hot, smothered in sugar, I and my late grandfather, always preferred them the next day cold after the super has dried off a little. They are also VERY good with cheese as a replacement to biscuits with just the smallest tot of whiskey. Enjoy!

## LET IN THE LIGHT

RECENTLY, several people have asked me why there was scaffolding on the South side of church. The eagle-eyed among you will have noticed that we have actually had two separate lots of scaffolding. The first was to replace some slipped slates, identified last year via a drone survey for the Quinquennial Inspection.

The drone was used again to check the work – only to discover another slate nearby which had also slipped, presumably after the first film was made. (See picture 1.) The second set of scaffolding was used also by a firm who look after solar panels. Our panels were not producing the amount of electricity expected, given the sunny weather we have had. An inspection revealed a damaged connection, which was quickly repaired.

Matters such as these are becoming more common as the church ages. We have been very fortunate hitherto in having a beautifully laid roof of best quality slates. The extension in 1992, giving us rather a lot of flat roofing, presents different problems, as we have had significant leaks into the Upper Room and at the top of the stairs after heavy rain. Tim Moore and David Tayler have taken it upon themselves to waterproof these areas with a couple of layers of black sticky goo, which should enable the damage to the ceilings to be repaired later on.



Picture 1

Ensuring the church is safe, warm and comfortable on a Sunday, and attractive to people looking for rooms to hire during the rest of the week, is a constant challenge. Tim and Zoë are working hard to prepare illustrated literature to show the building at its best, but members of the Finance and Fabric Group are responsible for upgrading the heating and insulation, especially now that costs are rising so dramatically. The PCC has agreed to a first phase of installing double-glazed units into the lower windows of the worship area. These are modest in cost and unobtrusive. (See picture 2.) Try to find the prototypes already in place! Picture 3, taken with a thermal camera, illustrates the heat lost from the windows.

We already have better control of the underfloor heating in the worship area, but last month we were made aware that the gas boiler which serves the radiators on the first floor and provides hot water for the toilets, is at the end of its life and is likely to fail at any time.

Knowing of the challenge to Anglican churches to try and reach a zero net carbon by 2030, we are looking at possible alternatives to gas heating. One possibility may be to install infrared panels, which although expensive, should be economic in the long run, despite the rising prices.

When I floated this idea past one or two church members, they held up their hands in horror, remembering particularly obtrusive heaters which fry people's heads, and which they have come across in other churches. What we are looking at is very different indeed, and will take a lot more preliminary work before we are ready to circulate any proposals more widely.

Many of you will be aware that we have started some fundraising towards double glazing the plain glass and protecting the stained-glass. The Jazz Night held in July made a good start to this. However, if we are to double glaze not just the worship area but also the lounge and the upper room, it will need significant funds. Again, there will be immediate advantages in greater comfort and lower bills for heating.

We benefit hugely from having a number of church members who have professional as well as personal experience to bring to bear on these issues. They give freely of their time and expertise and the task of maintaining and enhancing this striking building would be so much greater without their contributions. In addition, Tim is rather more than a caretaker, and keeps an essential day-to-day critical eye on the state of the church.

Other items currently under consideration include the updating of the exterior noticeboards, improved access to the Green and repairs to the bottom of the south steps. All this may sound rather a chore, but completing a task has its satisfactions, not least in the knowledge that we are helping to preserve and enhance a building of national importance in which we can develop our worship and outreach to the community.



Picture 2: Lower windows with and without double-glazed secondary glazing



Picture 3

**Briony Tayler**

## PLAYING CARDINAL WOLSEY



In August I played Cardinal Thomas Wolsey in Shakespeare's *Henry VIII*, staged at St Dogmaels Abbey, Pembrokeshire. The Abbey Shakespeare Players, the company Linda and I helped to found, has performed there every summer since 1987, with the Covid-affected exception of 2020. The Abbey, built by Robert fitz Martin in the 12th century for Tironensian monks, was dissolved in 1536 by Henry VIII. The ruins form a natural stage. This was the first time the company had performed *Henry VIII*, though every year we thank him for his far-sighted role in our set design.

One of Shakespeare's late plays, *Henry VIII* is a work of probable collaboration with John Fletcher. Known then by its original title, *All Is True*, it played to packed houses and was a great favourite in the nineteenth century. Nowadays it is rarely performed. Perhaps it has lost its appeal because anyone who knows anything about the Tudors – and who doesn't? – will discover that all is far from true, and even downright misleading. If all you knew about King Henry VIII depended on Shakespeare's text, you would think that he had just two wives, Catherine of Aragon and Anne Boleyn. No heads are lost. The drama ends with a political celebration: the baptism of Anne's daughter, the future Queen Elizabeth, by the Archbishop of Canterbury, Thomas Cranmer. There is no hint that he or Anne (or indeed Thomas Cromwell, whose career appears to be well set) would come to a sad end, though in 1613, when the play was written, not long after the death of Good Queen Bess, the audience would have been well aware of it.

The king provides the play's thread, but the show-piece roles are Catherine and Cardinal Wolsey, the greatest cleric in the land and, as Lord Chancellor, Henry's right-hand man. The cardinal is one of Shakespeare's finest creations: a clever, devious man who occasions his own downfall, but whose final redemptive reflections on earthly power and ambition are among the most memorable speeches in the canon. It's a challenge to any actor and doubly so to one whose ageing brain balks at mastering 350 lines.

Wolsey is a political fixer who puts his own interests first. He connives at the execution of the popular Duke of Buckingham by using perjured testimony. Unknown to the king, Wolsey imposes heavy taxes; when Henry orders them revoked, he takes the credit (dark humour of the sort I relished when I played Richard III years ago). To secure the king's divorce, he deceives the loyal Catherine. Eventually Wolsey is the agent of his own downfall: Henry intercepts an inventory of the wealth he has accumulated ('for mine own ends, to gain the popedom and fee my friends in Rome') and discovers his double-dealing over the divorce, by urging the Pope to refuse it until Henry ends his infatuation with Anne Boleyn.

Nothing becomes the fallen Wolsey more than his honest self-examination: 'Farewell, a long farewell to all my greatness! ... My high-blown pride at length broke under me, and now has left me to the mercy of a rude stream that must for ever hide me.' His protégé Cromwell asks how he has taken the devastating news of his ruin. 'Why well,' he replies. 'Never so truly happy... I know myself now, and I feel within me a peace above all earthly dignities, a still and quiet conscience.' This exchange poses a challenge for the actor, since Wolsey has had barely a moment to digest his misfortune. I chose to deliver the lines as a dawning revelation. Wolsey's final speech is rich in grace, generosity, and – in its advice to Cromwell, his possible successor – atonement:

Cromwell, I charge thee, fling away ambition:  
Love thyself last, cherish those hearts that hate thee....  
Let all the ends thou aim'st at be thy country's,  
Thy God's, and truth's.

The thirty-line speech concludes with the heart-wrenching lament:

Had I but served my God with half the zeal  
I served my King, He would not in mine age  
Have left me naked to mine enemies.

Other characters tussle with their consciences, notably Henry, who agonises over the legitimacy of his marriage with his brother's widow; and Cranmer, who seeks to carry England on a scriptural journey so that 'God shall be truly known.' But it is Wolsey's conscience that prompts the most profound transformation. In the words of a sympathetic courtier, his overthrow 'heaped happiness upon him' and, as death approached, he 'found the blessedness of being little.' As must we all. **Richard Carwardine**



## SAMUEL HOLBERRY – HERO OR VILLAIN?



A bust of Samuel Holberry

In Sheffield's Peace Gardens, you will find a plaque in memory of the town's famous Chartist revolutionary, Samuel Holberry. It states that 'He gave his life for what he believed to be the true interests of the people of England – a democratic society that would guarantee freedom, equality and security for all.' This article is about Holberry's story and how we should view him.

Holberry is famous as leader of a violent Chartist plot to seize control of Sheffield in January, 1840. Chartism was a nationwide movement to obtain universal manhood suffrage and other constitutional reforms. It reflected the anger of working class people that in 1832 Parliament had only given the vote to the middle classes. It was a time of severe economic depression and terrible hardship for working class people. The Chartists believed that, given the vote, they could redress the inequalities in society.

In 1839, the Chartists' massive petition was rejected by Parliament. The Chartists were in a great dilemma about what to do next. There was a split between moral force and physical force Chartists.

Samuel Holberry, a former soldier aged 25, became leader of the physical force group among the Sheffield Chartists. He was in touch with Chartists in many other parts of the country and he planned an uprising in Sheffield on the night of 11/12 January 1840. The Chartists would seize two strategic buildings – the Town Hall in Waingate and the Tontine Inn almost opposite. These buildings would become Chartist forts from which revolution could spread. There were also plans to set fire to magistrates' houses and the barracks and even to 'Moscow' the town (ie burn it down).

But a few hours before the uprising, one of Holberry's conspirators, James Allen, a publican from Rotherham, revealed these plans to the Rotherham police chief. The Sheffield police and army officers were alerted. Holberry and many of his colleagues were arrested. Although many strange things happened on the night of 11/12 January, the plot had been frustrated.

Holberry and his colleagues were tried at York Assizes. Holberry was found guilty and sentenced to four years imprisonment. He was sent to Northallerton House of Correction, run by a brutal maverick Governor. Holberry had to walk the treadmill and had inadequate food. He developed TB and died in 1842 in York Castle. The Chartists acclaimed him as a martyr and his funeral was one of the biggest events in Victorian Sheffield.

In the 1840s opinion in and around Sheffield was sharply polarised about Holberry. The middle classes and local aristocrats saw him as a dangerous revolutionary, whereas the working classes saw him as a hero and martyr. In subsequent decades the Chartist agenda was gradually adopted. Universal manhood suffrage was finally achieved in 1918 and by 1928 suffrage was fully extended to women. Moreover, in 1926 the Labour Party took control of Sheffield City Council.



The Holberry Cascades, Peace Gardens

Democracy brought benefits to the working classes without the disastrous consequences feared by the ruling classes in the 1840s. But many on the left wanted a much more socialist society. In the 1970s and early 1980s they were in the ascendancy in Sheffield City Council and they revived the memory of Holberry as a working class hero. A Holberry Society was founded. The cascades in the Peace Gardens were dedicated to him and Holberry Gardens in our parish was named after him.

Holberry's story raises an important ethical dilemma about ends and means. His ends have been vindicated by subsequent British history, but his violent means were condemned not only by the ruling classes at the time but also by moral force Chartists. Personally, I would not rule out violence against the state in all circumstances. For example, I believe that Bonhoeffer was right to support the bomb plot against Hitler in 1944. But the situation facing Holberry was very different. His motley gang of Chartists stood no chance of success against the troops stationed in Sheffield and other Northern towns. There was no sign that the soldiers were going to mutiny. Violence could also have unintended consequences, provoking increased repression and making life even less tolerable for ordinary people.

Holberry said to the police: 'Destitution has driven me to it.' He was right to struggle against the oppression of working people. But his chosen method risked making things worse.

**David Price**

## HOPE, ART & SANCTUARY – *An Exhibition in aid of Assist Sheffield*

The exhibition was held in Highfield Trinity Methodist Church on London Road from Thursday, 6 to Saturday, 8 October culminating on the Saturday evening in an auction of the items which had not been sold already.



The sculpture above is where the idea for this exhibition started. The attractive contorted willow tree in our garden died in the bitterly cold January of 2010. I kept the remains of the tree because the shapes were fascinating. I found this piece especially fascinating and spent about two or three years working on it. I then realised that it looked a lot better if it was mounted. However, by the time it was mounted it stood about 7 feet high and was too large to go anywhere in our house.

This developed into the idea of an exhibition of my carvings over the past 40 years. The whole venture received a major boost when my friend and neighbour Kevin Bonnett accepted my invitation to show some of his superb photographs. It became evident that there is a creative overlap in the approach each of us takes to our work. Kevin says of his work: '(My

primary aspiration is towards creative work where the visual individuality of the image stands for **itself** and stimulates some (implicit) dialogue with the viewer.

Where elements of abstraction or ambiguity dominate the image this aims to provoke a creative response from the viewer in terms of their own emotion or imagination, which may or may not coincide with my own motivation for creating the picture.'

Most of my work is abstract. I find that what I am doing is exploring what seems to be emerging from the wood itself. I probably spend as much time looking and wondering what to do as I do in the actual carving. You will notice that the titles I have given to the pieces are generally designed to make it easy for the viewer to put their own interpretation on it. For example the big carving illustrated at the head of this article is called 'Ascending Willow'. It was the first carving I made from the remains of the contorted willow and people can and do put very different

interpretations on it. I think the exhibition will be richer for having the contrasting media combined with some similarity in our approach.

You can view the items which were on display in the exhibition on our website:

[www.hopeartsanctuary.co.uk](http://www.hopeartsanctuary.co.uk)

We hope that this will be more than just an opportunity to look at and perhaps buy some interesting photographs and carvings. Art has the great advantage that it does not have to use words. It can give expression to our innermost and often incoherent fears, hopes, desires, aspirations. We live in an age which is anxious with good reason about the climate and with refugees being close to the top of that list. Yet human beings continue obstinately to hope for and work for better days and a more just world. This is reflected in the title of the exhibition starting with Hope, finishing with Sanctuary.



Photograph by Kevin Bonnett

This is what led us to decide that all the profits from the exhibition should go to ASSIST Sheffield. ASSIST Sheffield works with people who are seeking sanctuary and who have been refused asylum. They provide accommodation, information and other support. They are a charity and rely on volunteers, grants and the generosity of the people of Sheffield and the surrounding area. People who are refused asylum and, as a result, are made destitute feel dehumanised and degraded by the experience. ASSIST aim to give them the resources, support and dignity they deserve.

The need for them to receive help only increases, as events in Ukraine remind us so agonizingly. There will be the opportunity to learn more about the work of ASSIST at the exhibition. More information about ASSIST can be found at [www.assistsheffield.org.uk](http://www.assistsheffield.org.uk) . I'm sure you will feel that this is an organisation which deserves our generous support.

***Michael Bayley***

## AN ENGINE NAMED 'SINGAPORE'



Whilst on holiday in Oakham, Pauline and I visited the nearby 'Rocks by Rail Museum' which tells the story of mineral railways in the locality. Amongst its miscellaneous collection of other rolling stock is a small team shunting engine named 'Singapore'.

As war began to loom in the 1930's the British government had expanded the naval dockyard in Singapore. A small shunting engine, built by Hawthorn Leslie, was shipped out in 1936 for use on the dockside railway. After the fall of Singapore in February 1942, the captured engine was used by the Japanese forces, alongside the British and Australian prisoners of war, unloading supply ships. Of the 80,000 prisoners of war, some 60,000 were soon taken to work on the 'Railway of Death', the 250-mile Burma railway, as immortalised in the 1957 film *The Bridge on the River Kwai*. Worked hard in appalling conditions, more than 16,000 prisoners of war and 100,000 native labourers died during the construction.

The engine returned to Britain in 1953 and worked in Chatham Naval Dockyard until retirement in 1972. Preserved initially in Kent before coming to the Museum, it had a poignant reunion with former prisoners of war in 1986, before a Heritage Lottery funded overhaul in 1998. 'Singapore' was the first working engine acquired by the Museum and is still sometimes steamed, becoming a working memorial to Far Eastern prisoners of war, of whose veterans' association it is an honorary member.

Meanwhile, after completion of the railway the still living prisoners were returned to Singapore for incarceration in Changi Gaol prison camp. (Approximately 45,000 Allied prisoners died during the Japanese occupation.) Let us not forget two former members of our congregation who were prisoners of the Japanese in Singapore, John Roach and Cliff Padget.

*Michael Miller*



### **The Walking Skeletons of Changi, Singapore**

Managing a post-liberation grin, John Sharpe of Leicester graphically illustrates the dreadful physical condition of the prisoners after 3 years of starvation diet, hard labour, brutal beatings and no medicine to treat disease.

## THREE BIBLICAL BADDIES: (2) JUDAS ISCARIOT



Judas by Giotto

According to John P Meier, Professor of Theology, Notre Dame University, there are only two historical facts that scholars agree about Judas Iscariot:

(1) Jesus chose him as one of his twelve disciples; and

(2) It was Judas who handed over Jesus to the Jerusalem authorities, thus precipitating Jesus' trials and execution.

Both these facts are recorded in all four gospels.

But it is Paul who provides the earliest indirect reference to Judas without

mentioning him by name: 'The Lord Jesus on the night when he was betrayed took a loaf of bread . . .' (1 Corinthians 11, 23-24)

Was Judas one of the twelve disciples? In the earliest gospel of Mark, Judas is on the list of 12 disciples as in Matthew and Luke. John, the latest gospel, fails to include a complete list, but Judas is there.

It is enlightening to read the gospel accounts of the betrayal in order of composition. It soon becomes apparent that the story of the betrayal and its consequences, particularly for Judas, grows in the telling. (Mark 14:10-21; Matthew 27:3-5; Luke 22:3; John 13:27 and the Acts 1:18.) As is Matthew's wont, his narrative is expanded to fulfil an Old Testament prophesy in Zechariah 11:12-13. Matthew, however, is muddled and wrongly attributes the prophesy to Jeremiah. John blackens Judas' character even further by accusing him of financial impropriety, i.e. fiddling the disciples' petty cash.

Why did Judas betray Jesus? Some scholars surmise that Judas was upset with the slow actions of Jesus in bringing about the new society, the 'Kingdom of God'. Handing Jesus over to the authorities would precipitate a crisis, an uprising of the populace at the time of the feast. At Jesus' 'trials' this was the fear of the authorities too.

Did Jesus, by selecting Judas as one of his followers, demonstrate a failure of judgement? Pour out another glass and speculate further!

**Next time:** Pontius Pilate

**Robin Story**

## ‘AMAZING INVENTIONS’



Birley Spa

This was the theme of this year's Heritage Week, and it's one well-suited to helping participants to explore Sheffield's history and industrial heritage. For those who don't know, Heritage Week is a national event, when all sorts of interesting and unusual places that are not normally accessible open their doors to the public and provide the opportunity to hear their stories, all free. (St Mark's has taken part for some years.)

Michael and I have participated for years in different parts of England, but this year we were at home, and decided to fit in as many local events as we could in the 10 days the festival lasted. We began on a Friday afternoon, by visiting Birley Spa, Sheffield's only Victorian bath house, with its spring-fed plunge pool. We learnt of its existence when, during the first lock-down, we had a ride on the 120 bus from Fulwood to Crystal Peaks. On the way we saw the signs to Birley Spa, so were delighted to be able to visit and find out more about its history, and the struggles to restore it.

Next day we walked up to Whitely Wood Hall, once a stately home looking across the Porter Valley, and now a well-used and very valuable outdoor activity centre for Girl Guiding, with groups coming from all over the region to enjoy the facilities. Sadly the house fell into disrepair and was demolished after the war, but the stable block survives and forms the heart of the complex. Walking round





Whiteley Wood Hall

and hearing stories about the people associated with the house and its history was very interesting, famous Sheffield figures like Thomas Bolsover and Samuel Plimsoll having owned the Hall at different times. The next day saw us joining a group to do a walk called 'Drainspotting' which involved examining the street drains on a route around Endcliffe and Ranmoor, and learning to decode what they can tell us about how public water supply and drainage developed in the city, along with other infrastructure such as electricity supply (some of it for the trams), telegrams, telephones, and – bringing the story right up to date – fibre-optic cabling. It was an unusual approach to the social history of Sheffield in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century.

We were glad to have a day off after this, but the next day saw us back on the trail with a complete change of focus, walking in the city centre to see the locations of Sheffield's former and surviving theatres and concert halls. The stories of the stars who performed in them, and the rivalries between the theatre and music-hall owners (and the consequent skulduggery!) made for fascinating listening. And for me there was a nostalgic tinge as I had been taken as a very small child by my grand-parents who then lived in Dore, to see *Toad of Toad Hall*. Our walk guide – a very knowledgeable former manager of Sheffield Theatres – was able to identify where this must have been in the old Sheffield Rep off Trippet Lane.

A walk along the Upper Don Valley Trail followed, again with lots of interest though it was rather a chilly evening and we were tired, cold and hungry by the time we had trekked from Kelham Island to Hillsborough. So an evening lecture on infectious diseases came as welcome relief! It focused on the great Cholera epidemic of 1832, looking at how it arrived in Sheffield, how it spread, how it was treated (or not) and how lessons were learned that helped lower the death rates in subsequent cholera outbreaks. As a grand finale we managed to fit in two events on the second Saturday – going in the morning to Sheffield Cemetery, where there was an extremely interesting self-guided trail leading us to the graves of a number of previously unknown Sheffield innovators such as Simpkins, a grocer who developed a brand of hard-boiled sweets securely packed in round tins, which were used by RAF crews in the war, and also by the Everest expedition. And you can still buy them today – in fact we indulged in a purchase.



The Guild Hall, Fulwood Road

Later that day we joined a local history walk on our home territory of Fulwood, finding how this suburb had grown from the 1840s up to the start of the Second World War. When we first moved there we did a lot of walking around the area during lock-down so it was good for us to learn more about various phases of building and how movement out of the city gradually encroached on what had been mainly open farmland, much like the Mayfield Valley is to this day.

Two things I think stand out after this opportunity to visit and explore so many aspects of the city. One was the enthusiasm and commitment of all the volunteers who give up their time to research, to protect, to enhance and to use the various amenities all year round. The second was that we packed in a good sample, but we could have done at least as much again if we'd had time and energy! But that will wait until next year.

***Pauline Miller***

***Photos: Michael Miller***

## COMMENTS PLEASE!

In August Michael Bayley preached a sermon about prayer discussing this text from Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*. (It's spoken by a dying King Arthur.) A lot of people commented on the sermon afterwards and Michael would love further feedback – if you missed it, the sermon can now be found on the Church website. Do pass on your comments about the poem, about prayer or whatever comes to your mind as you read it.

*The old order changeth, yielding place to new,  
And God fulfils Himself in many ways,  
Lest one good custom should corrupt the world.  
Comfort thyself: what comfort is in me?  
I have lived my life, and that which I have done  
May He within Himself make pure! but thou,  
If thou shouldst never see my face again,  
Pray for my soul. More things are wrought by prayer  
Than this world dreams of. Wherefore, let thy voice  
Rise like a fountain for me night and day.  
For what are men better than sheep or goats  
That nourish a blind life within the brain,  
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer  
Both for themselves and those who call them friend?  
For so the whole round earth is every way  
Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.*



Dying Arthur



Church Action  
on Poverty  
in Sheffield

# 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Pilgrimage

Saturday 22 October 2022  
Starting at 9:30 am



**Gather:** 9:00am, Victoria Quays, Sheffield Canal Basin for a 9:30am start

**Visit:** Emmaus Charity Superstore, The Rock Christian Centre, St Catherine's Church, Pitsmoor Methodist Church

**Length:** 2 miles

**End:** 12:45pm

**Then:** Optional conference with leading specialists on homelessness, food poverty and support services speaking about the Cost of Living and Poverty in Sheffield

**Hear about local issues and responses to them as we walk and pray together**

## Join us and learn about:

- The support the Emmaus Charity Superstore provides for men and women who were once homeless
- The work of Burngreave Food Bank and Christians Against Poverty, the charity providing free, professional advice for people struggling with debt.
- The challenges facing the Burngreave and Pitsmoor communities.
- The 40 year campaign waged by Church Action on Poverty to help those with the least in society
- Help provided by St Wilfrid's Centre for the homeless, vulnerable and socially excluded.
- The drive to provide support and sanctuary for people living in Parson Cross, Southey, Longley and Foxhill.

### Practicalities

- The Canal Basin is a short walk from Sheffield City Centre, the central bus station and Midland Railway Station and Supertram's Fitzalan Square/Ponds Forge stop.
- Please follow stewards' advice, particularly at road crossings.
- Walkers take part at their own risk and anyone under 18 must walk with a responsible adult.
- The event is not suitable for dogs as we enter premises.
- Attendance at the conference is optional. A buffet lunch is available for conference attendees, but provision is for 60 people maximum, including speakers and invited guests.

**Celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the founding of Church Action on Poverty, the national, ecumenical social justice charity, committed to fighting poverty.**

**Come and be open and be challenged and changed by what you see and hear.**

For more information or to register to attend, contact Briony Broome: [briony.broome@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:briony.broome@hotmail.co.uk)

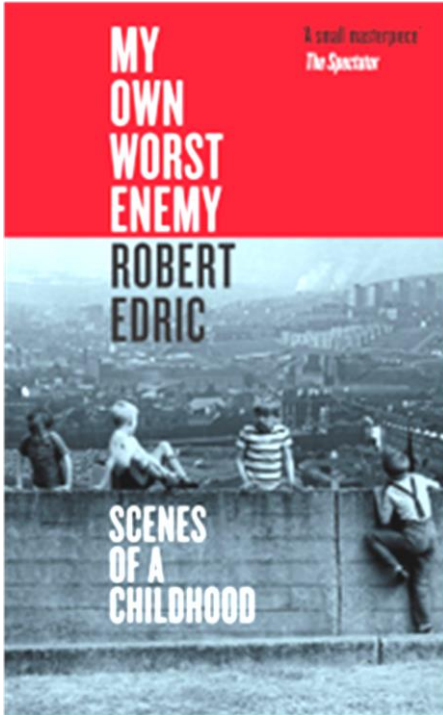
07801 532 954



**LIKE TO EDIT THE MESSENGER? (NO EXPERIENCE NEEDED)  
TRY IT FOR A MONTH! TALK TO FRANCES, DEZ OR MARGOT**

## BOOK REVIEW:

### *My Own Worst Enemy: Scenes of a Sheffield Childhood* by Robert Edric\*



Robert Edric's account of growing up in working-class Sheffield in the late 50s instantly stirred up memories of my own childhood spent, a few years earlier than Edric's, in an industrial town on the other side of the Pennines. Edric has an eye for detail and his unfailingly accurate recollections paint a vivid picture of life at that time – for example, the older generation with their stories of wartime, reminding the young Robert that he hadn't got the first idea of what hard work was ('Digging holes in the desert sand was hard work... emptying latrines was hard work...'). Then there are the more tangible reminders of post war-life: the undeveloped bomb sites, the ration books...

Everyday life is also well documented. His description of Sunday tea reawakened memories for me – the 'ceremoniously opened' tinned salmon which was the 'highlight of the meal,' the tinned fruit

cocktail and evaporated milk, the piles of bread and butter (or was it margarine?) which children were told to fill up on 'if we ever complained of hunger.' Then there's the primary school with its 'ever present Nature Table', school dinners, Sunday School, corner shops, the 'divi points totted up at the Coop', Green Shield stamps, Consulate cigarettes – it's difficult to recall any aspects of life in the 50s that Edric has omitted.

But the book is more than just a trip down memory lane. Edric charts the gradual rise in prosperity over the years, from the poverty of his early years when he remembers that at school 'poorer children arrived with apple or onion sandwiches for their dinner... and some pretended to enjoy sandwiches of dry bread and tomato sauce.' At that point in his life, his family lived in a two-up, two-down with 'a line of three toilets serving a dozen houses' in the courtyard outside but a few years later they were able to move to something slightly bigger with a garden, a bathroom, the family's first hot-water tap and a front room with a bay window. However, along with growing affluence came an increasing need to maintain appearances: 'We were poor and often struggling to keep up, but we must never appear poor and struggling to the world. My mother always insisted on clean

underwear and socks every few days. What would happen if we were to be knocked down by a bus and taken to hospital? And it was always a *bus* waiting to knock us down and force us to reveal our dirty underwear and unwashed necks to the world, never a car.’ Keeping up appearances did not just apply to the material aspects of life – it was also about maintaining a certain standard of morality. The Edrics’ next-door neighbours, ostensibly two sisters, are revealed to be a mother and her daughter, ‘conceived and born out of wedlock.’

Unusually for an autobiography, the protagonist of the book is not so much the young Edric himself as his father – a man whose vanity and bullying make life difficult for his whole family and whose insecurities are hidden behind a mask of boasting, showing-off and belittling people. The opening chapter sets the tone: the 12-year-old Robert arrives home to find his balding father sporting a toupée and the author paints a delightful picture of mother and son walking on egg-shells, telling all sorts of white lies and half-truths to avoid upsetting Edric senior and provoking a scene. The selfishness of his father, who has spent hundreds of pounds on a vanity while the lack of money in the household is ‘a constant and worrying concern to his mother,’ is not lost on the son.

Robert’s deteriorating relationship with his father is a thread which runs throughout the book. His achievement gaining a place at Grammar School separates him from his peers and also heightens his father’s feelings of inferiority and deepens the rift between them. At the age of eighteen, he begins to think about Higher Education – even though, as he says, ‘no one I knew had ever gone to university’ – and things have reached the point where he can write: ‘By then I was past caring about the man or his feelings. Our lives as father and son had long since diverged, and I was determined that they would diverge even further and faster once I left home in a few months’ time.’ By choosing in this way to plough his own furrow and refusing to be browbeaten by a tyrannical parent, Robert increasingly isolates himself from his family and the inward-looking community it belongs to, and in this sense he is ‘his own worst enemy’ as he describes himself in the book’s title. What he doesn’t tell us in the book is that in later life he has been described as ‘the finest and most adventurous writer of historical fiction of his generation’ with the best part of 30 novels to his name.

***Dez Martin***

*\*My Own Worst Enemy: Scenes of a Childhood* by Robert Edric, publ. Swift Press 2022.

## THE PARISH WEEKEND, 16-18 SEPTEMBER



Processing down the aisle the children waved multi-coloured banners, blew soap bubbles and danced with enthusiasm at the front of the congregation, while choir and band performed an arrangement of *What a Wonderful World*. We moved out from the pews to stand round the walls in a giant (irregular) ring and to receive the Blessing. And so the Parish Weekend came to an end.



It had been such an event, a coming-together not possible during Covid and set against the background of the national mourning for the death of the Queen. Our guest speaker Mark Oakley was unable to be with us, called away to duties resulting from the Queen's death. His book *A Splash of Words* gave us the theme for the weekend. In his absence we had recordings of two talks he had given. In the first he showed how poetry is 'the language of the Soul'. Poetry, like stories, (also a theme for the weekend) expresses truths that are not facts, even that don't make sense. The ritual of the Church too can be seen as embodied metaphor, a kind of poem. Because poetry is the language of love, it should therefore be the language of the Church. He quoted Pádraig Ó Tuama (a previous speaker in St Mark's) that language is sacramental,

and it is the language not of doing but of becoming. Poetry is, he said, 'rich in connectivity'. That phrase could be said of our whole weekend. A friend commented that he wished he'd heard that talk when he was preparing for confirmation.



The second talk was away from our theme, having been given at an assembly of preachers. There were some notable quotes: 'God love us just as we are and he loves us so much he doesn't want us to stay like that!' and 'Jesus is the body language of God.' He showed how Jesus' preaching was not a telling, more a dialogue.

That was the Saturday morning and after food (and dialogue) we had a variety of workshops – some for the children, others creative with music or art materials, some on a variety of topics – John Schofield led a new way of doing Bible study, by taking a familiar story from an unfamiliar viewpoint.



After a superb evening meal we were all too tired, too full, for further activities, so the planned games were abandoned. It had been rich.

And we are hoping Mark Oakley will be back with us. In the meantime many thanks to the amazing work put in by so many to enable this weekend to happen.

**John Hillman**  
**Photos: Michael Miller & Shan Rush**



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