



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

Newsletter Autumn 2015

Volume 7 Issue 2



Dear Friends,

It is incredible how fast the year skips by, the Spring and Summer seasons seem to come and go in the twinkling of an eye. Yet in saying this St. Andrew's church has packed a lot into our Spring and Summer seasons. The Flower Festival was as colourful, brilliant and inventive as ever. It concluded with a Songs of Praise which echoed the mighty works of God's creation. This was backed up by a fantastic Summer Fete which was blessed with great weather and a wonderful turn out of both young and old, locals and visitors alike. It has to be said that both these huge events were well co-ordinated and well planned by excellent teams who worked through the year to ensure that both events were enjoyed by all who came.

The maintenance of St. Andrew's church is a little bit like painting the Forth Bridge, no sooner have you finished one task than a new challenge rears its head. I offer my grateful thanks to all those who work so hard throughout the year and also to The Friends of St. Andrews who enable us to meet these challenges.

Over the next few months we will be reviewing St. Andrew's church (and other churches in our cluster) using the Healthy Churches Handbook. We hope that it will help us on our journey towards the future. It will enable us to explore our various strengths and weaknesses and that should also give us a guide as to what we need to do to grow the church. It will be a

challenging road there is no doubt about that, however I'm sure it will be well worth while.

As we come to the end of the year we will be celebrating our patronal festival on the weekend of 28th/29th of November. On Saturday 28th St. Andrew's will be holding its annual gift day. The whole parish is invited to contribute to the upkeep of St Andrew's Church and help keep the Christian witness present in Stratton. On the Sunday 29th we will be celebrating St. Andrew's Day at our United Benefice service that will take place at 10.30am. You are warmly welcomed to join us as we celebrate our Patronal Festival.

Yours in Christ's service

Fr. David.



Dates for Your Diary

- Sunday 11th October
Harvest Thanksgiving
- Saturday 28th November
Gift Day and Mini Fayre

Although these are not specifically FoStA fundraising events I know there are many who like to put these dates in their diary. More information will be found on our website or on A Church Near You in due course.

Membership News and Comment

Addresses

Please remember to inform the membership secretary if you have a change of postal address or e-mail. Keeping in touch is really important to us.

Standing Orders

Even more of you are now paying by Standing Order – the majority in fact – and that is a great help as it saves on administration costs but please be assured that we are quite happy to continue with all the other means of payment if it's more convenient for you.

Donations

Thanks are due to those who have very kindly made donations this year or who have enhanced their membership subscriptions. It is appreciated.

Membership

There is a need to keep adding new members to FoStA if we are to continue to grow.

There are now several Friends who have become fully paid up Life Members and special thanks are due to them for their support and generosity. Some have very kindly continued with donations. In any event, it is good to know that we keep in touch via the Newsletter if not in any other way.

Contributors

We are genuinely grateful to those who fundraise; those who help find new members; those who write articles for the newsletter; our volunteers and the committee who are forever supportive and especially to all our membership who have made it all possible.

Newsletter

If you would be willing to print your own newsletter or read it from the website instead of receiving a hardcopy in the post, could you kindly let me know.

OBITUARIES R.I.P.

Margaret (Bunty) Davies.

Bunty died on 25th April 2015 after being unwell and becoming increasingly frail. Many will remember her for her love of animals, particularly dogs, and for her gentle kindness to everyone. She was over 90 years of age but had remained very active until her last illness. We offer her son Ian our heartfelt sympathy in his loss.

Tim Blatchford

Tim, a local boy and man, died on 12th May after an illness that was bravely and staunchly borne. He was highly regarded and will be sorely missed by many. Tim was a good Friend of St Andrew's doing lots of work in and around the churchyard until ill health prevented it. We offer Carol and all the family our condolences and prayers.

Alan Greenwell.

We were sad to hear that Alan had passed away on 14th July. He had borne his illness with characteristic patience and fortitude. He was a gentle man and a gentleman. Always supportive of Patricia in her unstinting generosity to St Andrew's – we owe him our gratitude. We send to Pat and all the family our love and prayers. *(FoStA received a donation of £50 in Alan's memory.)*

Our condolences and prayers are offered to all the bereaved.

VB



Report from the Fabric Committee.

Recalling what I reported in the Spring Newsletter I have to tell you that we were unsuccessful in obtaining a grant from the Listed Places of Worship Roof Repair Fund (LPOWRRF) at the end of March. However the government almost immediately announced a further release of £25M in addition to the £15M that had already been distributed and this will be open for applications later this year.

The roof over the Chancel is still a priority as are the ridge tiles which continue to leak in stormy weather. We hope a modified application to the LPOWRRF may yet achieve success.

Meanwhile your committee and the Blanchminster Trust were approached with requests for further funding to add to their previous offers in order that we could still proceed with the north side guttering replacement, the northwest wall re-pointing and internal decoration in the church. This was achieved so work is going ahead this autumn.

In April this year the modified changes at the back of the church were undertaken and are already proving their worth. Small meetings can take place there and local groups are interested in using the space.

Storage space for items used by flower arrangers and at our Fete, along with spare tables and chairs has been available to us for many years at the redundant Vicarage Garage in Diddies Road. Sadly this will be lost when the Vicarage is sold as part of the arrangements of the 4 churches becoming one Benefice, discussed at length over the last 2 years but yet to come to fruition. If any local FoStA member has some spare space for storage of a few church items that will be used only once or twice a year I should be pleased to hear from you. We have some alternative ideas yet to put to the PCC but any new thoughts would be very welcome.

Incidentally, for interest, I can mention the church does have a rather inaccessible cellar beneath the old Vestry (the Upper Room). 20 years or so ago this was found to be so full of spring water that it was syphoning into the church. As a result an automatic electric pump was installed in a sump in the floor and this has kept the cellar dry and available as storage for a few selected items. However this August the pump failed but was fortunately discovered before any

harm was done. A new pump has been installed and the cellar made safe again. An interesting, muddy and very wet exercise for 2 FoStA members!

Dr Ian Barker. PCC Secretary.



Moving Home, Moving Church

We first visited St Andrew's Church in August 2004 during a family holiday in the area. At that time we were in the process of purchasing Tumbles Cottage in Hersham, just up the lane from Stratton, in the short term as a getaway from a stressful life in London, but in the longer term as somewhere for our retirement. Knowing that we would be spending a great deal of time in the area, and as church had always played a significant part in our lives, it was important to us to find a local church where we would feel comfortable. So why did we choose to move to this area and why did we choose St Andrews?

Well to answer the first of these questions – there was no reason other than pure chance. We knew nothing of North Cornwall and had no connections with the area at all. Sheila and I had lived in East Finchley in London for many years; in fact in Sheila's case she had lived nowhere else other than North London having been born and raised there. At that time our first grandchild had just been born and although it was still a number of years before our youngest son would be through school and university, we nonetheless began to discuss the future 'life after children' and agreed that we would not want to remain in London. It was therefore just out of curiosity that I started to look at properties on various web sites. Initially I was looking in the Cumbria and Northumberland areas, where we had spent several family holidays, but also in North Norfolk as Sheila and I knew this area well due to our annual pilgrimage to the shrine at Walsingham.

So Cornwall was not on the radar at all. Then during the period between Christmas and New-Year I was in the office with not much to do and I starting surfing through one of the property web-sites. By chance I came across an interesting looking thatched cottage near Bude that had just come back on the market after a sale had fallen through. The vendors were looking for a quick sale as they were emigrating to America. That evening I showed the details to Sheila and we agreed it was worth finding out more. A phone call later and we had agreed to visit the next day and the vendors had even offered to put us up for the night. Generally we are not spur of the moment people, but in this case it felt right and so we ended up owners of a cottage in North Cornwall.

And why St Andrew's? In fact Tumbles Cottage is in the parish of Launcells, but St Andrew's is more convenient for us to get to as we just need to drive down our lane into Stratton. Indeed we first came across St Andrew's as we were driving past and we decided to stop and see if the church was open, which it was. We were immediately struck, not only by the beautiful historic building, but also by the atmosphere of the place which I am sure is due to the centuries of prayer and worship that have taken place there. It also had the feel of a living and loved church, which sadly is not the case in all churches one visits. We checked out the service times and decided to return the following Sunday.

We could not have been made to feel more welcome. We have in the past visited churches where we felt as if we were intruders and we have even had it made clear that we had sat where we should not. St Andrew's was not like this. From the moment we entered we were warmly welcomed and made to feel at home. The worship and the 'bells and smells' was also just what we were used to from our church in London. We were sure we would be happy at St Andrew's.

There was also an amazing co-incidence that just goes to show what a small world this is, particularly within the church community. Father Richard Stranack was parish priest at the time and when Sheila saw his wife Penny she was sure she recognised her. They spoke after the service and it transpired that they had met at a Mother's Union conference in London. Furthermore their daughter Catherine had for a while lived in East Finchley and during this period had attended our church of All Saints. Our daughter had even babysat for Catherine's children.

We therefore became regular visitors to St Andrews and although we were still not able to spend as much time in Cornwall as we would have liked, we soon felt part of the church family and it was not long before we were asked to be on the electoral role. Later, Father David Standen suggested that we might like to become Friends of St Andrew's, which we did. This we found extremely beneficial as even during periods when we were unable to visit Cornwall, we were still able to keep up to date with the life of the parish and to support various church activities from a distance.

In late 2013 I was fortunate to be able to take early retirement. At the same time our youngest son was in his final year at the University of East Anglia and had made it clear that he intended to remain in Norwich after he had graduated. We therefore felt that we were finally in a position to be able to sell our house in London and make Tumbles Cottage our main home.

During all our discussions about moving from London we had often wondered about how we would feel to finally leave the family home of 24 years. In fact we did not find this hard at all. However, finally saying goodbye to All Saints church was different. This was the church where Sheila and I had met and where our children had been

baptised, confirmed and, in the case of 2 of them, married. We had also always been heavily involved with the life of the church, particularly Sheila, and we were apprehensive that letting all this go would leave an emptiness in our lives.

We need not have worried. In fact initially it was just nice not to have any responsibilities, to be able to go to church and worship each week without various people putting demands on us. However, as time went by and we got to know better the church family at St Andrew's and take a greater part in the social life of the church, it was inevitable that we would become more involved. Val asked us to join the FoStA committee and our names were added to the readers rota. Sheila continued her commitment to the Mother's Union taking part in cluster group activities and also now with responsibilities at diocesan level. This year I was elected to the St Andrew's PCC and am also on the fabric committee. When friends from London visit us it is always a pleasure to take them to St Andrew's and to be able to say "this is our church".

It is often said that house moving is one of the most stressful things one can do, even more so when this is to the other side of the country and at the same time as retirement and children growing up and leaving home. We were lucky to already feel part of the church family at St Andrew's before we moved, which has made the transition so much easier. We have not lost friends from London, even if we do not see them so often, but we have gained many new friends. Cornwall and St Andrew's are now as much home to us as London and All Saints ever were.

Simon Waring

Home and Away

In April 2014 I returned home to Bude after over 40 years away. Except that I was never really 'away' because I returned home 3 or 4 times a year to visit my widowed mother, and even more frequently in recent years. When I was growing up at Wainhouse Corner we worshipped at St James' Jacobstow then, after moving into Bude, we worshipped at St Michael's where I also sang in the choir. Leaving Bude to go to university and then pursue a career in the Law resulted in me not only being away from Bude but also travelling the world, at first in Europe but then mainly in the Far East where my husband worked. Starting with our marriage at St Alban's Anglican-Episcopalian Church in Tokyo our careers enabled us to travel and experience the Anglican communion in many places across the globe. We noticed that among the great legacies of the British Empire are the churches and cathedrals spread throughout the world. However, as demonstrated during our time living in Tokyo and Paris, as well as a recent visit to South America, Christian communities and churches are to be found in countries other than former colonies!

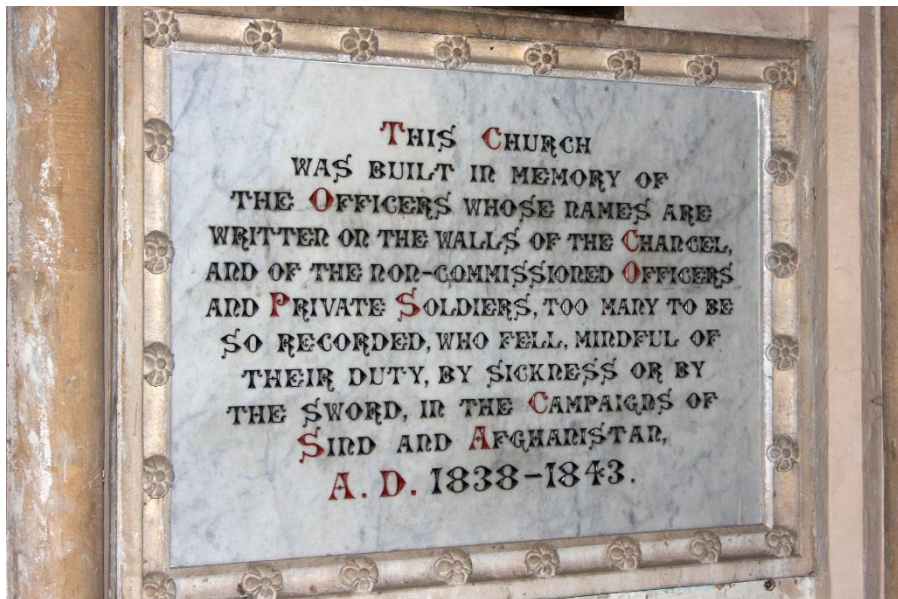
In 2007 I had a chance meeting in Stratton with Anne Day (née Worden), a former class-mate from Bude Grammar School who, unbeknownst to me, had moved back to Stratton a number of years earlier. That year she hosted the St Andrew's Christmas dinner in aid of FoStA. This was the beginning of our own involvement with St Andrew's and FoStA. Following our move back to Bude (where we happen to live in the parish of St Andrew's!) I became more closely involved with FoStA as the committee minutes secretary. Val Barker, FoStA Chairman and magazine editor, is always looking for ways to enhance the magazine. Thus it was that after a recent committee meeting she suggested I might like to write something

about my travels because although I have come home, we are still going away! Most recently to India, to attend a Hindu wedding in Bombay, and on tour to Argentina with our former church choir from St George's Paris.

We are familiar with the churches and cathedrals of Malaysia, Singapore and Hong Kong, countries we have visited frequently over the years. However, a recent trip to Bombay (as the Indians call it!) presented us with a new and different historical context in which to view the Anglican communion. Most people visiting Bombay will visit St Thomas' Cathedral Church, the first Anglican church in that city. It was completed in 1718 to serve the large and growing British community, made up in large part by the employees and families of the East India Company. However, we were intrigued to visit 'the Afghan church' which is more correctly known as the Church of St John the Evangelist. It was built to commemorate those who died in the First Afghan War (1838-42). Consecrated in 1858, it is a wonderful example of Victorian Gothic architecture, although it started out as a small thatched chapel (with no seats or pews!) in the Bombay naval cantonment. The church commemorates the dead of both the British and Indian regiments who fought in the four year campaign which ultimately resulted in a disastrous defeat for the British. Twenty years after the church was consecrated the second Afghan War (1878-1880) began. Although it did not end in a British defeat this time, inevitably the death toll was significant and the church once again became the centre for commemorating those who lost their lives. With the recent withdrawal of British and Coalition forces from yet another conflict in Afghanistan just completed, it was a sombre place for us to reflect upon so many lives lost and so little apparently learnt.

Services take place at the church from time-to-time, although it seems the congregation is small and the pigeons numerous! The

once splendid Gothic church is now somewhat dilapidated and kept locked, but the caretaker noticed us in the grounds and kindly opened the church to show us around. Inside the weight of history is overwhelming: the original pews have rifle notches where the men rested their weapons during the service and the walls are covered with numerous commemorative plaques both to those who died fighting in the wars as well as the many who died through illness.

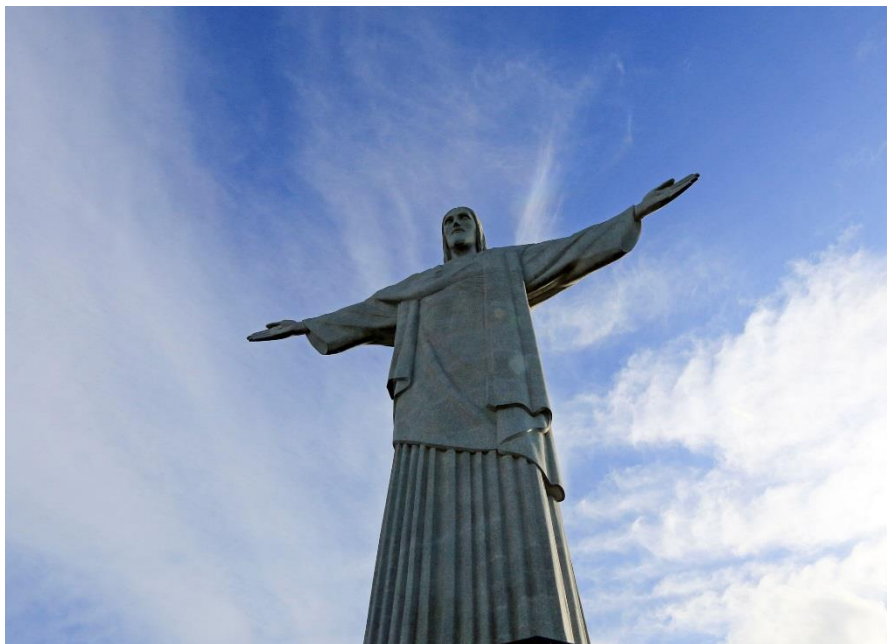


Rather poignantly one commemorative plaque (as shown above) states that the dead were too numerous to be recorded. Although the church feels like a forgotten memorial to a bygone era we noticed two shiny brass plaques on a front pew. These record that the Prince of Wales and the Duchess of Cornwall attended a Remembrance Day service at the church in 2013. So not quite forgotten!

When someone from your former church choir telephones and asks if you want to join them for a tour in Argentina the answer just has to be yes! That church is St George's in Paris which has a vibrant and

mixed congregation that we were lucky to be part of when we lived there. In fact it has two congregations because it serves both the French-speaking Malagasy community and the mainly expatriate British community. It is not obviously a church in the strict architectural sense and can therefore easily be missed, as I almost did when we first moved to an apartment nearby and started exploring the area. Because it is an integral part of the terrace of buildings on one side of the Rue Auguste Vacquerie in the centre of Paris it can easily be mistaken for an office building! However, on entering the building through the modern glass doors at ground floor level you are led down to the church which, although in the basement, has a stained glass window which makes the church light and full of atmosphere. It has a beautiful organ built by Patrick Collon, a Belgian organ builder, which was inaugurated in 1980. The church choir which we joined shortly after our arrival in Paris not only sings for the regular services but also goes on tour each year which, until the Argentina trip in 2015, had been limited to various countries in Europe.

We were to do six concerts, five in Buenos Aires and one in Cordoba thanks to an Anglo-Argentinian member of the choir who made all the arrangements. We just had to get there! And why not fly to Buenos Aires via Rio de Janeiro? As a child at school in Bude I had been fascinated by a picture of the statue of Christ the Redeemer in my geography textbook. The 2014 football World Cup in Rio had provided plenty of TV pictures of the Statue, but the black and white picture from my geography book remained a powerful image in my mind. However, nothing prepared me for the sheer size of the statue up close. To stand at the base of the statue and gaze up at Christ was truly awe-inspiring. Looking up at the statue framed by blue sky and cloud, we understood something of how it must have felt to have witnessed the resurrection.



The statue is built on the top of Corcovado mountain and stands 38 metres tall (about 115 feet). Corcovado means ‘hunchback’ and, looking up at the mountain from the city of Rio below, it is easy to see how it got its name. Although it is possible to go up the mountain by car or bus, by far the best way is by the red narrow-gauged train which slowly travels up the mountain and provides some wonderful views of the city below. The final station is a short distance from the lift which takes you to the very top of the mountain. Coming round the corner and seeing the statue for the first time was breath-taking. Rio is spread out below with a stunning view of Sugar Loaf Mountain on one side and on the other a view of the famous Maracana football stadium.

The idea of placing a statue on top of Corcovado was first proposed in the 19th century, but it was not until 1920 that the funds were raised and various designs considered. Eventually the one chosen was of Christ the Redeemer with open arms as a sign of peace.

Heitor da Silva Costa, a local engineer, designed the statue in collaboration with the French engineer Albert Caquot. It was sculpted by the Polish-French sculptor Paul Landowski. The statue is made from reinforced concrete and was opened in 1931. On the 75th anniversary of its opening a small chapel was consecrated at the base of the statue named after Brazil's patron saint, Our Lady of Aparecida. As it is floodlit at night it is a 24 hour reminder of Christ's presence in the world.

After a short interlude in Rio it was on to the main purpose of the trip, the choir tour in Argentina. This started with a sung Mass at the Anglican Cathedral of San Juan Bautista (Saint John the Baptist) in Buenos Aires. (See picture below).



The Cathedral was opened in 1831 and is the mother church of the Anglican diocese of Argentina. It is closely associated with the early history of Argentina where, in the 19th century, engineers, bankers, tradesmen and farmers emigrated from Britain to contribute to the development of Argentina. A strong Anglo-Argentinian community was established and many of their descendants remain and worship

at the Cathedral. As if to underline that history, our second concert was held in the chapel of St George's College at Quilmes on the outskirts of Buenos Aires. (See picture below).



The college was founded in 1895 by an Anglican priest who had originally been appointed to All Saints Anglican Church at Quilmes where there were already 200 worshippers. The Foundation stone of the college chapel was laid in 1913 with the service of dedication taking place the following year. It is home to an organ built by the British firm of Hele & Co in 1914. Hele & Co were founded in 1866 when George Hele built his first organ for St Paul's Church in Truro. Wandering around the grounds of the College it was easy to think we were back in England with rugby being played on the sports field, the choir taking tea in the sports pavilion and then rehearsal in chapel.

Our next concert took us away from the Anglican tradition. St Andrew's Presbyterian church is a reminder of the Scottish settlers

who arrived in Argentina in the 19th century. The current church, dedicated in 1896, is the second one which was built to serve the Scottish community, the first having been expropriated by the municipality of Buenos Aires! In addition to being merchants and farmers, the Scottish settlers made a major contribution to the railways and the engineering feat that was the Great Southern Railway. Sadly the railways of Argentina are no more, but the memory of them, and the Scottish community that helped build them, lives on in the various plaques in the church and the photographs on display in the corridors of the presbytery. Nevertheless, one can't help but feel a tinge of sadness reading a plaque which says "born in Melrose, died at Buenos Aires" knowing that this was at a time when communications with home took months and visits back to Scotland were unlikely. Nevertheless, the life of settlers often brought opportunities and wealth for themselves as well as the country where they lived. St Andrew's marks the contribution of those Presbyterians who settled and worshiped in Argentina.

The final three concerts of the tour were in the church of San Salvador, the Basilica del Santisimo Sacramento, both in Buenos Aires, and the Iglesia Nuestro Señora Carmen in Cordoba. All three are catholic churches and provided a striking contrast to the 'British' venues in both architecture as well as religious decoration. However, with the exception of a mass by the French composer Louis Verne, all the music came from the English choral tradition spanning the centuries from Purcell through to Parry. With the choir tour finished, it was off and away to Patagonia, Chile and Easter Island for a non-singing break, albeit with one or two fascinating church visits! Then home again to reflect upon an amazing experience and plan the next 'away' visit.

Meryll Goodwin (née Dean)

Val Barker writes:

As you will have already read, the last months have been a busy time for St Andrew's and the parish in general and despite all that has been said there are a few little things for me to add.

I was delighted to receive the two leading articles submitted by our new committee members and feel sure that you will have enjoyed them too. Their involvement is appreciated.

Simon's reflections made me think that perhaps we shouldn't be so afraid of change and also gave me an insight into how our church family are perceived by someone new to the area. Meryll's travelogue is interesting and thought provoking and needs to be read several times to take it all in!

Helen Wilson visited St. Andrew's in May and kept her audience captivated as she brought alive for us the Pinwill family, Violet in particular, and the wonderful carvings both in Stratton church and many others in the neighbourhood. It was fascinating to see, from her archive of photographs, pieces being worked on or completed in the workshop and then in place within the church and she explained the symbolism and representations behind some of the chosen designs. We look forward to the publication of her book in due course.

It was a pleasure for the church family to have the opportunity of welcoming two FoStA members to the Sunday Parish Mass earlier in the year. Pete and Edna Hockridge had been married at St. Andrew's and came back for the service as part of their Golden Wedding Anniversary celebrations. We wish them many more happy years together.

Glancing through the Spring Newsletter I couldn't fail to notice how smart the Lychgate looked when it was first built 80 odd years ago. 'Front of House' is given considerable importance and consideration these days for obvious reasons so, while the builders were here working on the tiled area in the church, they spent a little time on the slates and ridge of the roof and patched the underneath lime plaster. It all looks a good deal better again and the old ship's timbers afforded greater protection.

Saturday the 4th of July was a very special day for our Curate & in the life of our group of churches as it was the day that Alison was ordained Priest at the Cathedral. Many people from this area travelled to Truro to support her & to share in that special time. She will continue her ministry here for two years or more so please keep Alison & us in your prayers as we continue on.

As ever, a huge Thank You to all of you from all of us for your continuing support, practical help and generosity of giving.

Together, we make a great team.

Val

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a PDF version is available on the FoStA web site - www.fosta.org.uk

Parish Priest: Father David Barnes

The Rectory, 8 Falcon Terrace, Bude EX23 8LJ
Tel: 01288 352254 e-mail: d.barnes645@btinternet.com

Curate: Revd Alison Hardy

Newfield, Brook Drive, Bude. EX23 8NY
Tel: 01288 488308 e-mail: reverendalisonhardy@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Mrs Val Barker

Chynoweth, Bowden, Stratton, Bude EX23 9BH
Tel: 01288 353435 e-mail: memsec@fosta.org.uk

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