

Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel



Founded 1662

Built 1703

"Here let no man a stranger be"



Nov 2013 - Jan 2014

www.ukunitarians.org.uk/rivington

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Chairman's Letter

I think you could say that this Chapel has enjoyed a blessed summer. The weather has been great and everything in the garden has been green and fruitful.

This has, in no small way, worked to our benefit. Not only have people been encouraged to venture out into the countryside more, but they have also had the opportunity to alight upon our activities, whether these have been organised by us, including an open day, the strawberry tea, the Summer Fair and the Pilgrimage, or by a third party, such as the singing day in August.

The weather has given us not only a rich harvest of visitors but also produce for our Summer Fair. The produce stands were groaning under the weight of vegetables, fruit, plants, biscuits, marmalades, jams, pickles, and chutneys. They must have been good because at the end of the day we were all sold out, including the tombola. We all did very well, there was a great atmosphere of fun and industry and visitors were enchanted by the Chapel; some came just for the Heritage Open Day, most went home laden. We raised £370.16 for Chapel funds.

By the time you read this, our Harvest Festival will also have reflected the great bounty we have enjoyed this summer and also the diverse ways we appreciate it.

Our Pilgrimage took place on the 5th October. It is a three-yearly event and is meant as a great opportunity to bring together diverse groups of Unitarians in the common cause of "Religious and Civil Liberty". It is always well supported and this year was no exception. The speech to civil and religious liberties was entertainingly delivered

by past GA President Neville Kenyon and 79 people were there to enjoy it. Afterwards we processed, gloriously, down the Rivington Hall drive with our Chapel banner, expertly held aloft by Peter Bearon, leading the column, and with the Bank Street banner bringing up the rear. In Chapel, GA Vice President Marion Baker delivered a delightful service, with rousing hymns whereby the rafters were raised by enthusiastic Unitarians in full voice. Once again we were blessed by fine weather; truly a magnificent day was had by all.

We are looking forward to another event organised by a third party at the end of November. Chorley Lions approached us during the summer and mooted the idea of having a musical night towards the end of the year. The time and date of 7.30pm on 29th November has been set; to avoid too great a clash with Christmas festivities and also while the roads are still passable. The upshot is that the Lions are organising the entertainment, raffle prizes, publicity, tickets and mince pies while I will be making the mulled wine and also helping to organise the acts. The artists are all giving their time and talents free of charge and the tickets are £2.50. It was thought that a retiring collection would have the best effect, in that it would not put undue pressure on voluntary acts and (especially as it is an untried event) not raise unrealistic expectations from the audience. If all goes well, the audience can express its appreciation by way of the collection. So, fingers crossed. The Lions expect to fill the place, but I do have an allocation of tickets. Please call me on 01257 483733 if you are able to come and join us. I should point out that all proceeds will go to charity, half to the Lions' good causes and half to the Chapel.

Our carol service will be on its usual day, the third Sunday in December and the theme will be "Father Christmas's from Around

the World". This is so that we can explore the meaning of Christmas in different cultures in a way that is FUN for our VIP visitors (ie. children).

Lastly, please see the section "Dates for your Diary" where, for your convenience, we point out our main dates in 2014.

God Bless and enjoy a safe and secure winter season.

Vince

Chairman
Lay Person in Charge

From the Committee

At the Congregational Committee Meeting on 1 September, It was decided that we should have a section of the newsletter in which matters discussed at the meetings could be reported.

The majority of the meeting was taken up with planning for events taking place during the Autumn, details or reports of which you can find elsewhere in this issue.

We have been approached by a lady researching family history about a marriage that took place at the Chapel in the 1920s. However, we are unlikely to have any information for this period that is not available from the Chorley Record Office.

On the first Sunday in August, the service was cancelled at fairly short notice due to uncertainty over road closures during the Ironman event. Next year's Ironman will be on the 20 July, a third Sunday. We are looking into possible options so that we can avoid having to cancel the service again.

Rivington Foundation Primary School will be celebrating its 300th anniversary in 2014. The Chapel has been approached to see if we would like to be involved in the celebrations. Possibilities discussed so far are a mid-week service in Chapel and a talk during a school assembly.

If anyone has any views or suggestions regarding any of these matters please let the Committee Members know.

Trustees Matters

The trustees held a meeting on Wednesday 18 September.

Visitors to the Chapel will have seen that the rhododendrons have been cut down. However, the roots were not removed and new growth is already appearing. We are looking into how best to get the roots removed. Once this has been done we can look further into the possibility of planting a tree in memory of Joan Holding.

We need to clean the gravestones, but it was felt that it is not the right time of year to do this. It was thought that a working party cum Garden Party might be arranged for some time in Spring. This could be a joint event of the Trustees and the Chapel. Vince will raise the matter at a future Congregational Committee meeting.

We are still looking into the possibility of having ground interments of ashes in the future for when the niches are full.

Vince would like to bring the upper vestry back into use. At the moment it has mould and condensation problems. We will take advice on the best way to resolve these, but in the first instance it was felt that the room should be cleared and cleaned.

There is a problem with plaster crumbling on the pulpit side of the chapel. Unfortunately, it is not simply a case of replacing it as the wall itself is damp. This has been caused by drainage problems outside. John Patefield and Vince will consider how the problem can best be resolved.

Peter Bearon

Chairman of the Trustees

trustchair@rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Trustees – Treasurer Required

Chris Houghton has done sterling work in his role of treasurer for the Trustees since 2001. However, due to family and work commitments he wishes to give up the role at the AGM of the trustees in March 2014. None of the current Trustees feel that they are qualified to take on the role and so we are asking if anyone would like to join the trustees and become the treasurer. If anyone is interested please contact me by email or on 01942 816569.

Peter Bearon

Chairman of the Trustees

trustchair@rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Tributes to Auriel Williams

From Judith Crompton

Auriel died on 26 July 2013, at the age of 89. At the service on 1 September 2013, Judith lit the chalice in memory of Auriel and gave this tribute.

‘Auriel was a devoted member of this congregation for many years. Her talents and generosity of spirit are deeply treasured by those of us fortunate enough to have known her. She was, in the truest sense of the word, a lady. Because of difficult family circumstances Auriel brought up one of her granddaughters, Samantha. Sam also joined the congregation and I had the honour of conducting her marriage. We were deeply saddened when Sam died in childbirth. This tragedy was borne with great courage and fortitude by Auriel.

My fondest memories are of visiting her and taking her jars of my home-made lemon curd when she lived within walking distance of us at Capitol Close. Always gracious and elegant, tea was served in the finest bone china in her beautiful sitting room.

Perhaps her greatest contribution to Rivington was her keeping of the Chapel archive of photographs. These are in the albums which I have brought along today. I confess to having shed tears as I browsed through them this morning - so many precious memories. Do take time to take a trip down memory lane before you leave today.

Thank you, Auriel. Rest in peace. God's blessings be upon you.’

From Beccy Williams

Auriel's other granddaughter, Beccy , was at the service on 1 September.

Here is an adapted version of the tribute she gave at Auriel's funeral.

'In the final years of her life, my Nanna had become very frail. However, she remained a strong-spirited and independent lady to the last. I would like to remember her at her most alive, as the fun, adventurous and pro-active Auriel we knew and loved.

I would like to remember the stories she told me of her own childhood in Sunderland. The financial struggle of the 1930s where the women of the family helped bring in income by baking and selling pies. The back wall was their counter and the hot pies sold out quickly to the hungry dockworkers walking home from their shifts.

I would like to remember her as a young woman during the war. An active member of the WRNS, who trained her as a Welfare Officer, to teach others in her community how to build emergency shelters and look after their families during the raids and rations.

I would like to remember her as a wife and mother who stoically kept together home and family, after the early loss of her beloved husband. His photograph remained by her side for the next 45 years. Her loyalty and devotion were exemplary.

I would like to remember her as a determined 50-year old who returned to college to qualify as a social worker. Courageous and adamant in her support of children's welfare, she made a difference to many young lives. She was highly regarded in her professional life, and I would like to share with you an article written to commemorate her retirement in 1985:

A buffet reception was held at Clowes House on the 18th of October, to mark the retirement of one of the most popular and well-known social workers in the department, Mrs Auriel Williams. The affection and esteem Auriel is held in could be gauged by the number of past and present colleagues who attended the gathering - over 100. Presents included patio furniture, cutlery and a kiss-o-gram.

The Director stressed the qualities that highlighted Auriel's approach - care, compassion and friendliness to both client and colleague.

A native of Sunderland, Auriel joined the department in 1971 and rigorously maintained her standards with regard to social work and also regarding rules of etiquette.

A long and happy retirement is wished to Auriel in her lovely home high above Horwich.

I would like to remember her as a fearless older traveller, who single-handedly took myself and my sister to Disneyland in Florida, who thought nothing of flying alone to Australia.

And so finally, I would like to remember her as the Nanna who was always there in my life; the weeks in summer holidays where I stayed with her at Brinks Row - that lovely home high above Horwich, the family holidays she joined us on, the treats and trips that she always had on-hand, her love of bubbly and cream-cakes. We will be raising a glass of bubbly to her at the wake and would welcome your memories to share.'

West Gallery Music Singing Day

You may be wondering about the subject of this issue's cover photograph. The instrument featured is an early form of a bass horn, which, along with a variety of stringed and woodwind instruments, provided musical accompaniment for the singers gathered in Rivington Chapel on Saturday 17 August. The singers, members of three choirs, The Grace Darling Singers from Cheshire, The Larks of Dean Quire from Rossendale and The Gladly Solemn Sound from Lancaster, worked on a selection of 18th and 19th century church music. This included pieces by John Fawcett, a well-known figure in Bolton choral music circles during the mid-19th century.

Members of the Chapel were on hand to provide refreshments and took the opportunity to enjoy listening (and, in Alison and Peter's case, to join in with the singing). Donations from the participants raised over £90 for Chapel funds.

Dates for Your Diary in 2014

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|---------------------------|---|
| Sun 6 th April | Congregational AGM |
| Sat 3 rd May | Rivington Spring Festival and Open Day |
| Sun 18 th May | Anniversary Sermons
Service to be led by Rev Danny Crosby, Dunham Road & Urmston Chapels |
| Sun 1 st June | Strawberry Tea
Service to be led by Dr Irvine Delamore |
| Sat 13 th Sept | Late Summer Fair and Heritage Open Day |
| Sun 21 st Dec | Carol Service |

Rivington Pilgrimage 2014

Although the pilgrims aren't getting any younger, a goodly number made the journey to enjoy the fine weather and the fine food at the Rivington Hall Barn.

Neville Kenyon, past president of the GA, proposed the toast to Civil and Religious Liberty. He was not the first to do so; the Unitarian Sir John Bowring M.P. was proposing similar toasts in 1872 in the period when Unitarians were making their contribution to the Industrial Revolution and to our civic services. Sir John, incidentally, was conversant with twenty languages; Neville was content to use English. Worthy though our sentiments are, he pointed out that, despite progress, these liberties were far from universal. People who are illiterate are not free, nor are the unemployed nor are some church-goers, nor indeed are civilians living in areas of dreadful conflict or who are trying to escape from them. His approach, however, remained hopeful.

Those who walked (or drove) to the village listened to Marion Baker lead the service and address us on the interesting theme of landscapes - those that have developed over centuries and those that exist within us. Though the present is tied up with the past, we should work towards a movement that has more passion and fewer abstractions as together we journey into landscapes that are pleasant to the eye and to the mind.

Dennis Crompton



CHORLEY LIONS CLUB

PRESENT

A MUSICAL EVENING BY CANDLELIGHT

AT

THE RIVINGTON UNITARIAN CHAPEL
ON THE GREEN.

AT 7.30PM FRIDAY, 29TH NOVEMBER 2013
TICKETS £2.50
(INCLUDING MULLED WINE & MINCE PIES)

PROCEEDS TO LOCAL CHARITIES.

A Prayer

This prayer appeared in a Parish Magazine from a Church in Somerset visited by Iris Wharton while she was on holiday.

Make the door of his house wide enough to receive all who need human love and friendship,

but narrow enough to shut out all envy, pride and malice.

Make it a threshold smooth enough to be no stumbling block to children, nor to straying feet,

but strong enough to turn away the power of evil.

Adapted from a prayer by Thomas Ken (1637 - 1711), an Anglican bishop best known for his hymn writing. The original prayer was placed at the door of a Christian hospital.

A Note from the Editor

Don't forget that if you would like to help us reduce the cost of printing and posting the newsletter, you can opt to have an e-mail version rather than a paper copy. You can, of course, read this and past issues online at www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk. If you are happy to do so, please contact me on newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk, so that the mailing list can be amended. Chris and Lynne Haighton, who distribute the newsletters, would also be grateful to be kept informed if there are any other amendments that need to be made to the list. Their contact details can be found on the back page of the newsletter.

Alison

Dates for your Diary

Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

3 November	Graham Pilborough - Padiham Chapel
17 November	Rev Jane Barraclough - Cross Street Chapel
1 December	Rev Desmond Porter - Walmsley Chapel
15 December	Carol Service
5 January	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
19 January	Veronica and Gordon Walker - Bank Street Chapel
2 February	Clare Grace - Gateacre Chapel

Flower Donors

3 November	Roy Shepherd
17 November	John Patefield
1 December	Carol Worsley
15 December	Christmas decorations
5 January	Elsie Kent
19 January	Lynne Haighton
2 February	Alison Whitaker and Peter Bearon

If you would like to arrange a ceremony at Rivington
Chapel, please contact the Chapel Secretary.

Joan Thursby tel: (01204) 520264

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sun 3 November Congregational Committee Meeting
After service

Sat 9 November Wedding of Zoe Arrowsmith and Gareth Walker
1:00 pm

Fri 29 November Chorley Lions Event
7:30 pm See advert for details

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Please send your contributions electronically if possible to the email address above. For those without access to the internet I am still happy to receive handwritten copy,

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