



Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel

Founded 1662

Built 1703

"Here set no man a stranger be"



April to June 2012

www.ukunitarians.org/rivington

Chairman's Letter

The recent AGM marks the end of another year in the life of Rivington Chapel and I would like to say thank you to all the members of this congregation and to its trustees, without whose efforts we simply would not be here.

A special thanks to Joan Holding who, though temporarily housebound, is doing sterling work as pulpit supply secretary, a job which can be very time-consuming.

The Early Registers Booklet has been lovingly revised and beautifully republished. This is due entirely to the tireless efforts and commitment of Joan Holding and Linda Green with support from Alison, Peter and John. A cake and a bottle of wine donated by Joan Holding to celebrate the relaunch was presented by Judith to Alison and Peter (and Linda and John in their absence) at the last service.

Thanks also to Alison, who has been doing a fantastic job as editor of the newsletter.

Unfortunately, a clerical error at Rivington Barn has led to the proposed date for the Pilgrimage in 2012 being double booked. Kevin Salmon has apologised profusely. An alternative date has been set for the following year, which will be 6 October 2013.

The driveway up to the Chapel is in great need of repair due to severe winter damage. As the driveway is unadopted, help from the local authority is unlikely to be forthcoming. The trustees have instructed Vince and Frank to obtain quotes for the repairs and to investigate the possibility of obtaining funding from various parties.

It now seems likely that two of the trees in the churchyard will have

to be felled on safety grounds, namely the chestnut tree by the gate and one of the hornbeam trees. The trustees have approved the quote from the tree surgeons for the work, which will also include the raising of the crown of the yew tree.

A new sign for the Garden of Remembrance will be erected so that full decorum befitting acts of remembrance and committal of ashes can be assured.

We have been approached by Alex Bradley, the Principal of Unitarian College at Luther King House, with regard to a student pastorate placement. This will be for a year and will help the student to gain valuable pastoral experience. This will also further the Unitarian cause in general and the MDA position in particular. Bearing in mind the great benefit of the MDA to our congregation, both the Congregational committee and the trustees have approved this appointment in principle, though the financial aspects have still to be discussed.

Vince

A Note from the Editor

At the AGM, it was decided to change the starting date of the newsletter, as this would enable information about significant events during the year to be included nearer to the time that they take place. There will be more details about this in the next issue, but in the meantime I would be grateful if people would bear in mind that it will cover four months (July, August, September and October) instead of the usual three to cover the transition.

Alison

350th anniversary of the Great Ejection

Among the events planned to mark this anniversary in this area is an exhibition at John Rylands Library in Manchester. The exhibition is entitled "**St Bartholomew's Day 1662: The triumph of bigotry and the birth of toleration**" and runs until Sunday 1 July.

In conjunction with this, there will be a conference on Wednesday and Thursday 27 and 28 June organised by Prof Jeremy Gregory, University of Manchester. The keynote speakers will be Dr Rose, University of St Andrews and Dr Southcombe, Brasenose College, Oxford.

Further details from <http://www.library.manchester.ac.uk/deansgate>

On 28 April, following the North West Provincial Assembly AGM at Ullet Road Unitarian Church in Liverpool, Ullet Road will present a play: "**The Great Ejection**" - an amusing account of the "**selected ejected**". There will also be songs performed by John Readett and some traditional clog dancing.

Words of Wisdom (unfortunately none from Jimmy this time - these are some one-line sermons courtesy of Vince.)

People are funny; they want the front of the bus, the middle of the road, and the back of the church.

Peace starts with a smile.

Nothing was created without a purpose, but mosquitoes come close.

Some minds are like concrete, thoroughly mixed up and permanently set.

Jennifer Whitelaw 1940 - 2011

Jennifer's funeral on 19th December was taken by her friend Rev. Brenda Catherall. All the relatives and friends there must have reflected not only on their grievous loss but also on the amazing diversity of her talents and experience. Her career as reporter and editor involved wide travel to such seemingly exotic places as South America. She served on the board of 'The Inquirer', on the committees of Nelum, Astley Hall in Chorley and Atherton Heritage Society. She supported local radio and Bolton Carers; in fact she took up any worthwhile cause, national or local, that came within her orbit.

Jennifer was a radiator not a drain. She was a kind and gifted person who radiated warmth and wisdom as her husband Bill will testify; she was the opposite of 'drains' who draw everything to themselves and leave nothing behind.

As a journalist, Jennifer was a great sender of emails and she and her cousin Judith emailed each other almost daily so much so that for Judith the letters "www." came to stand at all times for "witty, wise and wonderful".

It is perhaps her contribution as a wise and witty Unitarian preacher that made her a popular visitor to Rivington and elsewhere. Her themes were from literature rather than theology. In one of her addresses she spoke of the passing of Time that had taken from her many of her friends (rather ironic in the light of her own illness) but which had also instilled in her the importance of being positive, of seizing the moment, as the poet Herrick said,

Gather ye rosebuds while ye may,
Old time is still a-flying,
And this same flower that smiles today
Tomorrow may be dying.

However, she also believed in the future. With the help of a Mayor of Bolton she had a Peace Tree brought from Nagasaki. It was a cutting from a tree that had survived the atomic bomb and it will in good time blossom in the garden of a local primary school.

She once said that we should remember our past, should prepare for the future, but most of all we should rejoice in the here and now. So be it.

Dennis Crompton

News from One Accord

As well as marking 350 years since the Great Ejection, 2012 is the 200th anniversary of the burning of a mill in Westhoughton by Luddites. The Westhoughton Local History Group is organising a series of events to commemorate this bicentenary.

On Tuesday 24th of April, the actual anniversary of the mill burning, One Accord will be giving a performance in Westhoughton Library based on a long poem published in 1882 by John Clough which tells the story of the burning of the mill. We have set some sections of the words to local folk and hymn tunes. Some of the hymn tunes come from the handwritten manuscript book that Peter found in the vestry several years ago. (One day, he'll get round to finishing the

transcription of this manuscript, but that's another story!)

The performance will begin at about 6:00pm and will last approximately one hour. In the library there will also be a display by the Westhoughton Local History Group of the findings of their research about the mill burning.

For more details of the burning of the mill, and of the other events planned by the Local History Group, see: www.westhoughtonhistorygroup.org.uk and www.theluddites.org.uk

The Registers

At long last, we have taken delivery of 1,000 copies of the revised Rivington Chapel Registers booklet. Copies are available in the chapel, or from either Frank Ascroft or myself and cost £5.00 each (plus p&p where necessary).

As I reported in a previous newsletter, the booklet is also available electronically in pdf format. At the time of writing the trustees are still considering the best way of making the registers available via the web, but in the meantime if you would like an electronic copy please email registers@oneaccord.eu. Donations for the electronic version can be made using the BT MyDonate webpage at: <https://mydonate.bt.com/charities/rivingtonchapel>. Donations are eligible for Gift Aid. This page can be used to make any donations to the chapel, not just for the registers.

To contact me for the booklet you can phone 01942 816569 or use the email address above. For Frank's contact details please see the back page of the newsletter.

Peter Bearon – Chairman and Secretary of the Trustees

Snippets from the past

Bolton Weekly journal 1873 28th June

Rivington Club Day

This annual event took place on Tuesday last, but owing to the unfavourable state of the weather in the early part of the day, attendance was not very large. In the forenoon, the members assembled at the Blackamoor's Head, formed a procession, and, headed by Adlington Brass Band, proceeded to Rivington Chapel, where an appropriate sermon was preached by the Rev J.S. Gilbert, the Minister of the place. The members then partook of an exceptional dinner at the hotel, which did credit to the catering abilities of Mr and Mrs Jones and assistants.

Dinner over, Mr John Yates moved, and Mr James Bain seconded, a vote of thanks to the Rev J.S. Gilbert for the sermon, which was carried unanimously, as was also a vote of thanks to Mrs Crompton for providing the harmonium, moved by Mr Howarth and seconded by the Rev Thomas Sutcliffe.

The afternoon being more favourable, the procession reformed and marched to the village green (opposite the Parsonage) where members and friends joined in the social dances to the strains of the band, and although there was not a large attendance, the green presented a lively appearance, the attire of the ladies blending with the deep green foliage of the trees in the background of the scene, with the range of hills towering in the distance, surmounted by the noted "Pike" lending enchantment to the view.

Dates for your Diary

Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

1 April	Chrissie Wilkie - Dean Row Chapel
15 April	Rev Penny Johnson - Dean Row Chapel
6 May	Vince Mc Cully - Rivington Chapel
20 May	Rev Stephen Lingwood - Bank Street Chapel Anniversary Sermons
3 June	Rev Jane Barraclough - Cross Street Chapel
17 June	Rev Desmond Porter - Walmsley Chapel
1 July	Vince Mc Cully - Rivington Chapel

Flower Donors

1 April	Olive Mayer
15 April	Olive Fisher
6 May	Jacqueline Dagnall
20 May	Mrs Jones
3 June	Judith Crompton
17 June	tba
1 July	Frank Ascroft

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sat 5May	Spring Festival
Sun 20 May	Anniversary congregational meal - venue and time to be arranged

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

Joan Thursby tel: (01204) 520264

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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,

Your Committee

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