

Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel



Founded 1662

Built 1703

"Here set no man a stranger be"



October to December 2011

www.unitarian.org.uk/mda/rivington

Chairman's Letter

Again we have a bit of a mixed bag to report, with some good and encouraging news but also with notes of concern.

Firstly we would all like to say a big THANK YOU to David Worsley who has done such a brilliant job in putting a fine finish on the display units which will also protect them for many years to come. He really has brought the best out of them.

Joan Thursby has passed all the necessary procedures and has taken on the important role of Authorised Person (Registrar), which means that we no longer need an external Registrar to be present to officiate at weddings. This can only enhance the facilities that this friendly Chapel can offer. So, well done Joan.

Well done also to Joan Holding who continues the important job of arranging our pulpit rota. Joan goes from strength to strength and we are seeing ever more new and engaging preachers. Thanks, Joan.

Everybody is doing their bit in and outside of Chapel and, on the sad occasion of Rev John Hopkins's wife passing away, Judith attended the funeral and was able to give him this Chapel's condolences.

Whoever has the book "Rivington Unitarian Chapel Record of Church Furnishings" that was presented to us by Bolton Fine Arts Society, please would you return it as soon as possible. Many of us haven't yet seen it and it was also unavailable for the Heritage Open Day (HOD) that we held on Saturday 10th September.

What a fantastic floral display we witnessed in Chapel at the beginning of August; this was lovingly done by Linda and Paul for the wedding of Jennifer Roberts and Christopher Keenan. Linda and Paul were up until the early hours of the morning completing this monumental work of art. (See cover photograph)

As I write, it's fingers crossed for our Late Summer Fayre on September 10th, but everyone is doing what they can, so if the weather does its bit and the publicity generated from the HOD pays off, we will hopefully have a good day.

The Harvest Festival on 16th October will be conducted by Graham Pilsborough. It was decided by the committee to distribute any green produce among the congregation but that dry goods, tins and other non-perishables will be given to deserving causes such as Shelter and other inner city missions.

The Chapel has received a request for a donation from Macclesfield Unitarian Chapel for urgent building works; the committee was happy to respond by giving them a £50 donation.

Dr Watt has decided that he would like to be taken off the congregational committee as due to other pressing time commitments he feels he is unable to contribute as much as he would like. We would like to take this opportunity to thank Roger and his wife for their invaluable assistance over the years and look forward to seeing them again soon.

On 4th September we had our first Songs of Praise service for ages and although we were a bit rusty a good time was had by all. Perhaps as we familiarise ourselves with the new purple hymn book we can do it all again and hopefully have as much fun.

And finally, just to remind you all that our carol service is scheduled to take place at the same time as usual. This year it will be on 18th December, so please be sure to polish your skis and strap on your crampons then maybe we won't have quite so much snow – Oh! By the way, we have asked Santa Clause to call in and he has said he will.

Vince

The Celebration of Summer Service - Sunday 18th July

The rain did not deter the congregation. We were joined by groups from Bank Street, Chow Bent and also from the Gaskell Society; in total forty seekers after comfort both spiritual and physical.

Gordon and Veronica Walker celebrated music with the help of Roy. We also celebrated the physical with superb English strawberries, one of the few blessings of our wet English summer. Did Roy grow them himself, I wonder. As for the drink of tea- well, that was rather interesting

The members of the Gaskell Society were pleased to receive a donation to the fund for the restoration of the Gaskell house at 84 Plymouth Grove in Manchester. More information about the Gaskell Society and 84 Plymouth Grove can be found at www.gaskellsociety.co.uk or by contacting Christine Lingard (01625 611517)

Dennis Crompton

Winstanley's Wisdom

The future is purchased by the present.

You should play the violin while you are depressed - it will help you keep your chin up!

You know you're getting old when you can make the wrinkles you see in the mirror disappear by just taking your glasses off.

A married man must shed many skins -before he outgrows the bachelor in him.

Visitors from Western Australia

When I was a small boy, my father often spoke of our family history and in particular of the Crompton family ties to Bolton and the Rivington Chapel. For me, the story begins with my great grandfather, Joseph Crompton. Joseph, orphaned at the age of six, was placed in the care of his maiden aunts at Rivington Hall. He was educated at the Unitarian preparatory boarding school at Knutsford and spent his holidays with his aunts at Rivington.

By 1860, at the age of twenty and in poor health, Joseph decided to migrate to Australia for the clean air and a chance to make his fortune. When he reached Adelaide in South Australia, he retained his close relationship with the Unitarian Church and the Unitarian community and left a lasting legacy to the benefit of his family and the broader community. The relationship with the Unitarian Church continued with my grandfather, father and now me.

For some years, I have wanted to return to the area where my family came from and, for me, the Chapel has always been a point of contact with the past. With Joan Thursby as our guide, my wife Helen and I were intrigued to pass a cottage on the way to the Chapel with a date stone of 1788 - the date of the First Fleet arriving in Botany Bay to establish a new penal colony in Australia. As we approached the Chapel, it was exactly as my father had described and as I had envisaged. The simplicity of the architecture is the essence of its beauty. We were grateful to both Joan Thursby and Joan Holding who so freely gave of their time to give us an insight into the history of the Chapel and a wonderful afternoon tea at the Village tea rooms. We were also delighted to attend a service at the Chapel on Sunday, 5th June where we were made to feel so welcome by those attending the service.

I hope we have the opportunity to come again and spend a little more time to meet and greet those who were so kind to a couple of strangers from a land so far away.

Best wishes and many thanks,
Ken Crompton

Alice Winstanley 1919 - 2011

The service in celebration of the life of Alice Winstanley took place in the chapel on Tuesday, 19th July attended by family, friends and members of the congregation. This was followed by the committal at Overdale, Bolton.

Alice, who died on 7th July, was the only surviving member of a family of six sisters and four brothers. She lived at Common Farm until the family moved to Babylon Lane, Adlington.

Like many women in wartime she worked at the Royal Ordnance Factory, Euxton. The work was exacting and dangerous so much so that some of the workers lost their lives there. She and Jimmy were married when he was on a short leave from the RAF. Kathleen, her daughter was born in 1951. Before her retirement, Alice worked at the Lancashire Knitting Factory but she also enjoyed looking after her two grandchildren of whom she was very proud.

After the war they went to the dances held at the school room behind the chapel, now the tea- room, and so began her attendance at Rivington where Jimmy's family had worshipped for some years. Being a lively and fun-loving person, she continued to enjoy the life of the chapel, its special occasions, and particularly its canal trips when she entertained us with hilarious stories told in her down-to-earth

manner, sometimes at Jimmy's expense. It was of course at this chapel that they celebrated their 65th Wedding Anniversary and one of our memories is of her bonny, cheerful face as she sat in the pew that she and Jim seemed to make their own.

Unfortunately failing eye-sight deprived her of her love of reading but her love of life remained undiminished.

Our sympathies go to Jimmy, Kathleen and David, Catherine and Paul, Gillian and Robert, Rebecca, Emma and Rachael.

As Judith said at the committal 'We pray that the thought of Alice's life be an uplifting, cheerful and helpful influence in our own'.

Dennis Crompton

Sad Farewells

On Tuesday 9 August, I had the privilege of conducting the funeral of Norman Alexander Craig in the peaceful and beautiful setting of the Crematorium at Charnock Richard. Norman was a frequent visitor to Chapel with his daughter and son-in-law Sharon and Alan Elder whom I married here in April 2000. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to Sharon, Alan and his wider family by whom he will be sorely missed.

The following day at noon, I attended the Memorial Service for Joy Hopkins at Chorley United Reform Church. Many of you will remember her beautiful smile when she joined us for worship at those wonderful services conducted by her dear husband John. After the inspiring celebration of her life in the packed church I was able to give loving expressions of care and concern, on behalf of us all, to John and their two lovely daughters.

It was then on to Chapel, where, in torrential rain and beneath the sea of umbrellas, Stephen Lingwood interred the ashes of Vera Rigby. Vera had given a lifetime of devoted service to our Bank Street Chapel and members joined her family in love and support.

In recent weeks we have said our sad farewells by interring the ashes of Alice Winstanley and Gwendolyn Mutlow. Norman Craig's ashes will be interred after the service on Sunday 16th October.

Judith Crompton

Manchester District Association

Ken Johnson of Dean Row Chapel has recently begun his two-year term of office as president of the Manchester District Association. When he came to Rivington Chapel in June he gave a very informative talk on the history, the organisation and the function of the MDA.

The MDA offers support to the fourteen member congregations, of which Rivington Chapel is one, and to the wider community in many ways. Some examples are contributions to ministers' stipends, help with building repairs, donations to other Unitarian bodies and grants to charities such as Lifeshare.

Ken asked that people should contact him if they would like to know more about the MDA or if they have any suggestions for consideration by the District. His e-mail address is

kenneth.johnson1@btinternet.com .

One Accord CD launch - Friday 16th July at Rivington Village Club

Here was plenty of opportunity for others to sing favourite folk songs, some moving, some jolly. However it was our own group 'One Accord' who hosted the evening with their music, a characteristic blend of voices, recorders, concertina and accordion. They also provided a buffet that was so lavish that the programme had to be interspersed by special cake intervals.

The songs on their second CD, like those on their first, provide not only music but also a glimpse into history, not the history of kings, queens or statesmen but of events in the lives of ordinary people. Yet the events are far from ordinary: a song of the sea or a Scottish tune allegedly made up on the eve of the composer's execution. Not all tragedy of course and the CD is worth buying for the sheer beauty of 'Lark in the Clear Air' or the fun of 'Bear Dance'. And if you aren't a music-lover you can still appreciate the front cover of the CD with its two meanings of 'broadcast': the old and the contemporary - just like 'One Accord', in fact. The CD costs £10 and is available from One Accord. More information is available on the group's website (www.oneaccord.eu) or by contacting the editor – see back cover for contact details.

Dennis Crompton

Snippets from the past

Extract from the **Bolton Weekly Journal**, Saturday, 14 January 1882.

Rivington Chapel

The Congregational tea meeting in connection with this place of worship was held on Saturday evening. After tea, the room was cleared for dancing. During the evening, songs were given by Mr Thompson and Miss Johnson.

Dates for your Diary

Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

2 October	Rev Desmond Porter - Walmsley Chapel
16 October	Graham Pilborough -Padiham Chapel
6 November	Vince Mc Cully - Rivington Chapel
20 November	Rev Stephen Lingwood - Bank Street chapel
4 December	Michael Cuerden - Dean Row Chapel
18 December	Carol Service - Rivington Chapel Congregation
1 January	Vince Mc Cully - Rivington Chapel

Flower Donors

2 October	Vince and Isobel Mc Cully
16 October	Linda Hadfield
6 November	Roy Shepherd
20 November	John Patefield
4 December	Carol Worsley
18 December	Christmas Decorations
1 January	Christmas Decorations

Other Dates and Ceremonies

Sun 16 October	Interment of ashes - Norman Alexander Craig
After service	
Wed 2 November	Chapel Trustees Meeting
NB change of date	
Sun 6 November	Congregational Committee Meeting
After service	
Fri 11 November	Wedding - Simon Ainscough and Nicola Ratcliffe
3:00 pm	Conducted by Vince Mc Cully

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

Joan Thursby tel: (01204) 520264

Copy date for next issue: 1 December 2011

Issue date: 18 December 2011

send to: Alison Whitaker, 14 Church Street, Westhoughton, Bolton,
BL5 3RS

telephone: (01942) 816569

email: whitaker@bearon.org.uk

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

Chairman	Vince Mc Cully 20 Thirlmere Close, Anderton Lancashire, PR6 9QD 01257 483733 email: vinmcul@hotmail.co.uk
Secretary & Flower Rota	Joan Thursby 5 Lovat Road, Bolton, BL2 6LP 01204 520264
Treasurer & Chapel Keeper	Frank Ascroft 13a Highfield Road North, Adlington, Lancashire, PR6 9RN 01257 483635
Organist	Roy Shepherd MGI; MNMSCM 20 Shillingston Close, Harwood, BL2 3PD 01204 394061 email: roy.shepherd@yahoo.co.uk
Pulpit Supply Secretary	Joan Holding Lime Kiln House, 223 Chorley Road, Blackrod, BL6 5LJ 01257 480461
Publicity Officer	Dennis Crompton Rossett Gill, 48 Redcar Road, Smithills, Bolton, BL1 6LL 01204 841685 email: dennisfcrompton@btinternet.com
Other Committee Members	Jacqueline Dagnall 01204 691833 Leighton & Muriel Jones 01257 232564 Jeff Newey 07570 876710

Other Contact Details

Newsletter Editor	Alison Whitaker 14 Church Street, Westhoughton, Bolton, BL5 3RS 01942 816569 email: whitaker@bearon.org.uk
Newsletter Distribution	Lynne & Chris Haighton 105 Albert Road West, Heaton, Bolton, BL1 5ED 01204 841678 email: chris.haighton@virgin.net