

Rivington Unitarian and Free Christian Chapel



Founded 1662

Built 1703

"Here let no man a stranger be"



Nov 2021 - Jan 2022

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk

Facebook: Rivington Unitarian Chapel

Lay Person in Charge's Letter

Our world creaks back into motion; are we the wiser? I know we are the poorer, for all the dear friends we have lost and have yet to fully mourn.

Our latest sad news comes with the loss of John Patefield on 22 September. John was for many, many years a stalwart of this Chapel. At one time he was both the Trustees' and Congregational Committee's chair and we owe him a huge debt of gratitude.

For many years he and Olive Mayor looked after the Chapel grounds and as they stepped back and I assumed these roles, I was helped and gently put right regarding matters unforeseen.

On recent visits to John the door was always open and a warm and friendlier greeting one could not hope for. Rest in Peace John, you have our prayers and fondest memories.

This scourge that is Covid 19 is still killing people at an alarming rate and on 2nd October the daily death rate was 121 (800 in the last 7 days). For this reason there is a question mark over our beloved carol service. We love our carol service as it goes to heart of who we are. We also love our congregation and our dear visiting friends. If we try to open for a 'quiet' service we are likely to be full to the gunnels so perhaps it might be better to Zoom our carol service as we did last year - nowhere near as good, but we get to live. This is something the Congregational Committee has yet to make a final decision on.

On a happy note, The Rivington Spring Festival is looking very promising on 7 May 2022 and as it is largely an open-air, open-door event it should prove to be very life affirming with charity stalls galore, barbecue, choirs and fun music.

A Harvest Blessing (Inspired by Chowbent Chapel Introit and Anthem)

As you have lifted your hearts today in gratitude for all the gifts of life,

May you have peace that turns away all enmities and strife.

As you bring to your altar offerings of flowers, light, doves, bread,
hope, love, work and yourselves,

May your common ideals and beliefs bring to you and your loved ones
and all the world about you,

A Harvest of goodness in earth, sky and sea.

Amen

Stay Safe and God Bless

Vince

Lay Person In Charge

Chairman's Letter

Although the government lifted COVID restrictions in July, we are still taking some precautions to help people stay safe. Hand sanitiser is still available and we try to keep the building as well-ventilated as possible. The collection box is left in one place and people are recommended to wear a face covering while moving around. We have re-introduced refreshments after the service and asked everyone to remain in their pews while they are being served.

The Chapel opened to mark Heritage Open Days on Sunday 18 September. The number of visitors was lower than we would expect in more normal times, but we still raised not far short of £200 from the sale of preserves, books, bric-a-brac, craft items and toys.

We were very pleased that Rachel and Ryan were able to celebrate their wedding on Saturday 4 September as planned. Thanks to Rachel for donating to us some of the attractive containers they used to hold their flowers.

We are waiting till nearer the time to decide the arrangements for this year's Christmas Carol Service. Please keep an eye on our website and Facebook page for updates. If you have no access to the internet, we will keep you informed by phone.

While we are still looking for a new Rites of Passage Coordinator, please address enquiries about arranging a ceremony to me or Vince. Contact details are on the back page of the newsletter and there is now a contact form on the Chapel website

www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk/contact-us

Alison Whitaker
Chairman, Congregational Committee

Trust Matters

With the release from lockdown in July and with the hope that the pandemic is now "on the run", (although recent infection statistical trends would question that assumption) the Chapel was able to resume its services during the summer. Chapel maintenance during this period has focussed on the continuing problems with the Tea Room and Chapel toilet drain blockages, which have continued in spite of the earlier work on the upper drain portions. The problem was identified as being root damage to the lower portion as a consequence of an adjacent tree. No work could be carried out until the offending tree was first removed, which would require permission from Chorley Council. In the meantime, our tenants were asked to

manage the toilets more carefully in terms of flushing them well before and at the end of each day. In addition, the company who had been regularly called out to unblock the drains recommended use of a more dispersible toilet paper. Since adopting these changes, there have been no further blockages.

In the meantime, application was made to Chorley Council to remove the tree together with another larger poplar, which had a branch overhanging the fire exit of the Tea Room and both permissions were obtained in early September. Both trees have now been removed and quotations for drain repairs are being obtained. We applied for and received a generous grant from Manchester District Association for the whole cost of tree removal, which was £7,680 including non-reclaimable VAT; this was in addition to the £3,610 figure for the drain works undertaken earlier in the year. With regard to the additional drain works, we have received a grant of £750 from the Gregson Trust as a contribution to the costs, which are estimated to be roughly in the region of £2,000.

Plans are in hand with our architect to undertake the forthcoming Quinquennial Review and, after alerting the Hibbert Trust, we shall be able to reclaim a proportion of the costs after having received the review and formulated a plan for addressing the issues raised.

Other planned work in hand includes applying a second coat of lime wash to supplement that applied to the Chapel interior walls last winter.

As indicated in this and previous newsletters, the overall maintenance of the Chapel requires continual effort. The tree felling has been managed by Vince McCully and all the works mentioned above by Paul Fairclough to whom the Trustees are grateful for their respective efforts.

As mentioned elsewhere in the Newsletter, the very recent death of John Patefield must be mentioned again here, since not only did he serve as Chairman of the Trustees for a number of years, but also managed the niche allocations and sales, both responsibilities which I now hold. His significant contributions to the maintenance of the Chapel fabric must, therefore, be recognised and acknowledged.

Richard Horrocks
Chairman, Rivington Chapel Trustees

John Patefield 7 April 1936 - 22 September 2021

About half a dozen of us were able to represent Rivington Chapel at John's funeral, which took place on Wednesday 6 October at St Barnabas Parish Church, Heapey.

John was born in Clitheroe, but had lived in Heapey for many years. He had trained as a draughtsman at Horwich Technical School and most of his working life was spent in the Architects department of Chorley Council. In 1973, he bought a plot of land on Blackburn Road in Heapey and designed the house where he lived for the rest of his life.

John supported both St Barnabas Church and Rivington Chapel, and he and Olive (Mayor) were regular attenders at Chapel services, usually occupying the pew next to the vestry door. In 1998, John joined the Congregational Committee as Chairman, a post he held until 2002, and he remained on the Committee until 2006.

John was a Trustee of the Chapel from 1991 to 2016, and served as Chairman from 2001 to 2011. For a short period he was Acting Treasurer, and was responsible for the niches in the Garden of Rest from

2000 to 2016. The Chapel was very fortunate to be able to draw on his knowledge and expertise on many building-related matters throughout this time.

John had many and varied interests, including woodturning, gardening, baking, water divining, travel and walking. For several years John and Olive led the 'Rivington Ramblers' group of Chapel members on walks in the nearby countryside and further afield. They also organised many enjoyable canal boat trips.

Over the last couple of years, John, with the support of visiting care givers, had been caring for Olive as she experienced the onset of dementia. She is currently being looked after in Chorley Hospital.

Mary Hough 24 February 1926 - 4 September 2021

We were sad to hear of the death of Michael Hough's mother at the beginning of September. Mary, with her husband Norman, usually accompanied by a golden labrador, was a regular attender of Rivington Chapel for many years. She served on the Congregational Committee throughout the 1990s.

Mary was born in E Yorkshire, the youngest of eight children. The family moved to Horwich when she was very young to work at Cooke and Nuttall Paper Mills. After leaving school Mary worked there as a 'sticker girl' in the packing department, and this is where she met Norman who was an office junior at the time.

Mary's many interests included the Inner Wheel, support for Guide Dogs for the Blind, organising Meals on Wheels in Horwich and membership of Rivington Bowling Club. After Norman's death she moved from the house in Heath Charnock to Rockhaven Court in Horwich.

Following a stroke in 2019 she was no longer able to live independently and spent the last months of her life in Strathmore Nursing Home, Bolton.

Motorhomes, Mills and Munificence

On a bright, sunny morning at the beginning of September, John and I left our motorhome at The Firs Caravan and Motorhome Club site to walk into the town of Belper in Derbyshire. I'd like to share with you here a little of our visit.

The walk down the country lanes from the site offered spectacular views across the Derwent Valley. Eventually we rounded a bend and were met by the imposing sight of Belper East Mill – all 7 storeys of it with corner turrets and a tower on one end. We had reached the town.

Jedediah Strutt built his first timber-framed mill next to this site in 1786. Sadly, he discovered to his cost that flammable cotton fibre in the air, oil lamps and candles together with machine processes where metal parts beat against each other and created sparks, were not a good mix. The mill burned down without insurance in 1803. Undeterred, Jedediah's eldest son William designed a 'fire-proof' iron-framed replacement and the family were back in business with the North Mill by 1804. The Strutts made a fortune in hosiery, silk and cotton whilst living by Unitarian beliefs. They were benefactors to Belper for two centuries, providing for their workers' physical, educational and spiritual needs.

Our first stop was next to the mill at the River Gardens, built on a former osier bed where willow had been grown to make baskets used in the mills. This picturesque Victorian park was a gift to the people of the town by Jedediah's middle son, George. He provided a boathouse

(now supplying rented swan pedaloos), a tea house and a bandstand (still in use for summer concerts).



On the elegant promenade next to the river we sat in the sunshine and enjoyed a coffee overlooking the spectacular Horseshoe Weir which once powered the mills.

From there we took a guided tour of the museum housed in the mill. It was especially interesting to us as one of John's first jobs was as a Ring Spinner at Ena Mill in Atherton. He was able to tell me more about many of the exhibits than even the guide could!

Mill tour over, we repaired to The Devonshire pub for a sustaining lunch before setting out to explore Jedediah's Belper.

To encourage families to move to and work in Belper, the Strutts built houses close to the mills, all of which benefitted from gardens, privies and pigsties. Nearly all these houses have survived and are still much sought after. First to be built were 4 short rows of cottages followed by 'Long Row'; a 3-storey terrace built as stepped pairs that interlock around the staircase. The final phase, 'The Clusters', were blocks of 4 semi-detached back-to-back houses. Wandering along the cobbled streets and through the ginnels (or 'channels' as they are known locally) felt like a real step back in time.



When the railway came through the town the Strutt family demolished 4 or 5 houses in each row so that a cutting could go through and there are 11 bridges in the one mile stretch through Belper. On the bridge in the middle of Long Row is a walled area, known as the dirt hole, where people emptied their ashes to be collected by the ash cart. Today it houses a very attractive floral display.

Most of the millworkers were women and children. Children were taught reading, writing and arithmetic for 2 hours each day on the top floor of the mill until 1818 when the Long Row School Room was built. We passed by there just as the 2021 pupils were being collected at the end of their lessons.

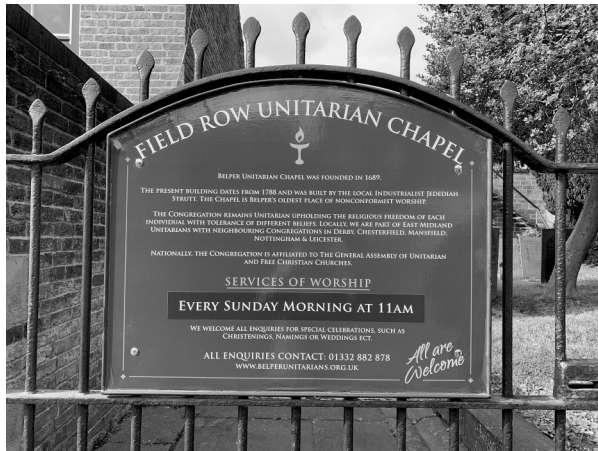
To support their workers' financial security the Strutts founded a Savings Bank in the town (sadly now closed having been vacated by TSB in recent times). Small workshops were built where the men could pursue a trade in nailmaking and other cottage industries.

With housing, employment, education and financial needs catered for the Strutts did not neglect the workers' spiritual needs. We finished our tour at the Unitarian Chapel where members of the Strutt family are buried. Unfortunately it was not open, but we were glad we



were able to see the outside. It seemed a fitting place to end our visit to a town where one of the world's first industrial communities was built on Unitarian principles.

You remember I said we walked down to Belper? Well, of course, the way back was most definitely up and we were very glad to reach the comfort of our van at the end of a most enjoyable and interesting day.



Linda Green

Global Chalice Lighting

From the bottom of my very existence
I am pervaded with light energy,
shining colours to my eye, warmth to my skin,
inspiration to my soul.

In this unity of creative sparks
and sparkling creation
life unfolds.

Let us open our senses to the light within and around us
and send it out with shining examples
into the world!

Words by Dorothea Kaufmann
Unitarian Religious Community of Free Faith, Germany

Resolution

from 'The Invisible Sun' by Muriel Hilton, a former columnist for The Inquirer

To find enjoyment in the common things of every day;

to be content with simple food and drink; To forbid repetition
which would dull the imagination;

to cherish old friends, yet welcome all new friends into the circle of
the affections;

to work for the good of all rather than for personal advancement;

to seek the wisdom that is able to distinguish the important from
the trivial;

to love even the unlovely;

to accept what cannot be altered, refusing to allow the canker of
resentment and bitterness or self-pity to lodge in the heart;

to be grateful for the manifold blessings of the day, not forgetting
the legacy of courage, vision, and achievement bequeathed from
the past;

to be tranquil even amidst the storms and stresses that might so
easily prove overpowering: that I might turn life's common clay into
the loveliness of living,

Rivington Calendar 2022

The new calendar is now available, price £6, and is on sale in the Chapel. You can also find them in Rivington Village Green Tea Room, Adlington Post Office and Wright Reads Bookshop on Winter Hey Lane, Horwich. Please contact Chris Martin (01257 483702, email: chris_and_june@hotmail.com) if you would like a copy by post.

You should also contact Chris if you would like to buy any of the various Rivington Chapel publications, details of which can be found on the website: www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk/publications

Donations

Although the Chapel is now open for services, there will still be some of you who will not be able to attend or who prefer to avoid using cash. If you wish to contribute what you would have put in the collection you can still do so via CAFDonate.

You can either follow the Donations link on our website www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk or go directly to <https://cafdonate.cafonline.org/12556>

A Note from the Editor

If you need to inform us of any change in your details, or if you no longer wish to receive our newsletter, please contact me, either by emailing newsletter@rivingtonchapel.org.uk or phoning 01942 816569.

Also, please email if you would like to help us reduce the cost of printing and posting the newsletter by opting to have an e-mail version rather than a paper copy. You can read this and past issues online at www.rivingtonchapel.org.uk.

Dates for your Diary

Sunday Services at 2:15 PM

7 November	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
21 November	Veronica Walker - Bank Street Chapel
5 December	Jean Clements - Denton Chapel
19 December	Christmas Carol Service
2 January	Vince McCully - Rivington Chapel
16 January	Hannah Stevenson - Southport Unitarians
6 February	Graeme Pilbrough - Padiham Chapel

Flower Donors

7 November	Jacqui Kershaw
21 November	tba
5 December	Carol Worsley
19 December	Christmas Decorations
2 January	Christmas Decorations
16 January	tba
6 February	Alison Whitaker & Peter Bearon

If you would like to arrange a ceremony at Rivington
Chapel, please contact Alison or Vince
Contact details overleaf

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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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