



ST JOHN
at HACKNEY

Reflections

monthly magazine
September 2009

FROM THE CLERGY

Fr Rob Wickham



During the summer, we have seen a flurry of activity in and around the church building. I find the sight of scaffolding and the smell of paint really exciting, as it reminds us of the ever developing nature of

the life of St John-at-Hackney. By the time you read this, the clock and weathervane will be almost restored, with the tower and roof hopefully watertight, so the outside of the building will be looking rather splendid indeed.

More importantly however, we have seen an incredible amount of action in and around the building. We've hosted a series of events:

- ∞ bringing people back into work - some amongst those with drug addictions;
- ∞ a garden party for the Mothers' Union;

- ∞ games days for the Council;
- ∞ a political march organised by mothers concerned about the levels of gang violence in our streets.

Our building is an incredible asset to God's greater glory in Hackney. Every day, it stands tall and proud shouting to the world that God is alive and his presence is deep in the heart of Hackney.

I know that you love our building, and I also know that you would like to see many changes - so it doesn't look tired and tatty inside - just look up and see the stains! I also know that you can see how the building might be developed further, as we organise our own events, but also host others in their endeavours in Hackney. If this is the case then this month I need your help. Please look at the St John-at-Hackney project page, and sign up for our various consultations organised this month. Then, as well as the outside looking wonderful and restored, so too might we say the same about the inside!

With love and best wishes, Fr Rob

TELCO (The East London Communities Organisation) says: It Cannot Be Business As Usual!

The recession is having an impact across our member organisations and, while the banks have been bailed out to continue with business as usual, ordinary people are still struggling to deal with their debts. In response to this, London Citizens have launched a campaign against exploitative lending, calling for a cap on the interest rate that can be charged on loans. This, and the impact of the economic crisis on our communities, will be the theme of our annual delegates assembly at the Barbican in November, at which the Mayor of London and bank chairmen will hear our stories.

Have you been finding it harder to make ends meet since the economic crash? Have unfair interest rates been applied to your loans? Have you had to tighten your belt? Between now and 26 September, TELCO is conducting a listening campaign across our members, through a series of small house groups to discuss the impact the recession is having on us. If you would be able to host six or eight people to hold such a discussion, or would like to join a group discussion at the church, or have a story you'd like to share, please speak to Fr Rob, or TELCO organiser Jessica Jones on 07899663123.

The HELP Project

David Hazeldine



As you may be aware, I will be leaving my current post as Hackney South East Cluster Community Development Officer on Friday 25 September to pursue my ordination training

for ministerial work in the Baptist Union in early October. There will be a replacement for my post so the good work will carry on!

For St. John's my work has really been about starting H.E.L.P. so we're more open to the community, and helping Fr. Rob in linking with Hackney Council about the plans for the building. It appears at present that both have been successful - but the work must continue

as part of the wider *St. John-at-Hackney Project*.

Thank you for all your support and willingness to get involved, I will miss Hackney a great deal and have enjoyed every minute of my time here.

Remember
Madeleine Shaw
who died on
12 September 2008



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WELCOME!

Billy Tomlinson was born at the



Homerton Hospital on the morning of 19th August, a sound 7lb 1oz, with long toes and fingers.

Parents (Laura and Jonathan) are very proud and still a bit overwhelmed but thank all at St John's for their kind wishes, cards and gifts.

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NEWS OF OLD FRIENDS

Richard Burge writes



I have some significant news. On 7 September I will join the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as chief executive of Wilton Park. This is the FCO's centre for bringing together

opinion formers, policy makers, and politicians to address critical issues in international relations. The themes cover terrorism, to trade, to international finance. Most of the events take place in a rather beautiful country house in West Sussex, but I am charged with creating a London presence and increasing the number of events taking place in other countries. It is fair to say that this is a hidden but neglected tool of British diplomacy and with a new chairman (Iain Ferguson who is just retiring as chief executive of Tate and Lyle), I have been asked to lead it through considerable change as public diplomacy becomes increasingly important for the UK. So I will be living just north of Shoreham-on-Sea but spending a considerable amount of time in London. The rather boring website is www.wiltonpark.org.uk – watch for improvements!

Karen and I have to sort out what this means for our idyll of living in rural France – but there is no rush.

I am currently on the roll of St Leonard's Streatham (where we have a flat near our daughter, son-in-law and grandson) but will be changing soon – Wilton Park has its own church! It also means that I am 15 minutes drive from John Pridmore whom I see regularly.

Life continues for the rest of the family. Frances has had a really big break – she is assistant director of a production of Simon Bents' *Prick up Your Ears* being re-written for the west end. She is currently rehearsing, so our son-in-law has a lot to do with young Ethan – who is now 8 months old. Karen is enjoying being Nana. Edward is about to start his last year at Leeds University and is planning to go to Sandhurst in May 2010 – but his choice of regiment will wait – just so many opportunities!

Editor's Footnote: If you didn't know Richard, he is godfather to Rebecca Pridmore and therefore a close friend of the family. He was also our Parish Treasurer for a while and his son made that angel which lurks in our gallery.

St John-at-Hackney Project WORKING PARTY REPORTS

September is likely to be a busy month with the Project. Ed Cox, our Consultant, is planning 9 Consultation events, in seeking the thoughts of local people and local stakeholders. He is devising a Project Document to give away and a Questionnaire.

The 9 events are as follows:

- 9 Sept. Street Survey 1
- 9 Sept. Health Stakeholders
- 10 Sept. Street Survey 2
- 10 Sept. Heritage Stakeholders
- 18 Sept. Street Survey 3
- 18 Sept. Arts Stakeholders
- 19 Sept. Open Church survey
- 20 Sept. Sunday Morning Survey
- TBA Schools Consultation

The street surveys will take place during the day; the Stakeholder events at 5pm. Please sign up on the lists in church and help when you can.

Other meetings this month

- 6 Sept. 11.45am Children and Youth
- 13 Sept. 11.45am People and prayer
- 4pm Youth Steering group
- 16 Sept. 5pm Hackney Free and Parochial School Open Day **
- 20 Sept. 10am Baptism Sunday
- 12noon Operation and Finance
- 6pm Commissioning of confirmation candidates
- 27 Sept. 11.45am Development Meeting
- 4pm Standing Committee
- 6 Oct. 7pm PCC meeting

Please note that there will be a Working Party workshop with a series of consultants from the Royal London Asset Management Group. They will be spending most of Tuesday 13 October with us, to help in developing the work of our four Working Parties, to prepare us for the reissuing of budgets and outcomes in the autumn. If you are a member of a Working Party, please keep that Tuesday afternoon free, as we work together for the St John-at-Hackney Project.

** Please come to the school open day. Let's also congratulate Richard Brown, head teacher and his team for raising the GCSE results this year. We have a school to be proud of. Please also remember Michelle Dos Santos who will become the new Governor representing the Parochial Church Council.

Mary Pullen writes

In June we made the big move out of London, and bought a small holding in North Wales near Caernarfon. It's totally beautiful here. All really loving the outside life, and the space. Have started going to a lovely small local church, they have been very welcoming and I feel very blessed. Last week we had no organist, so got to hear the Welsh singing at its best!

Editor's Footnote: Mary and her family lived in Mehetabel Road before moving to Twickenham a couple of years ago. She sent me a colourful newsletter but it's in a format which I can't copy here. So to see more about their life in Wales go to their website - <http://www.cynlas.com/>

DEJA VUE

Phyllis Manning

I walked through the Churchyard and looking up, got a surprise; almost a fright. There was scaffolding encasing the front of the Church and the Belfry Tower. I remembered scaffolding on the Tower in 1955, when St John's was so nearly destroyed by fire.

The fire started at the top and spread over the roof, which soon fell into the church in a fiery fury, destroying most of the interior. It was discovered by two Church Councillors who had seen smoke coming from the belfry. By the time they



ran up to the ringing chamber, fire had already taken hold in the roof.

At that time, after the shock of the fire and the decision to reinstate the church, an investigation took place to find the cause. No decision was ever reached, but inevitably ideas were put forward. The most favoured view was that a cigarette had been dropped - perhaps on the scaffolding, or in the ringing chamber itself. Who had done this? A workman? A trespasser? A vandal? A person who had climbed up the scaffolding to get a magnificent view of Hackney? It remains a mystery.

So, for a moment, I had a strange feeling seeing the scaffolding. Those working there assured me that all would be safe - the scaffolding would be protected both electronically and with netting.

So we can look forward to our Church continuing to give it's visual message to Hackney in 2009 safely, without a hazard! In 1955 the Rector, Rev HAS Pink, immediately set about keeping everything going, starting with an Ascension Day Communion early the next morning. I don't think any service was missed. They were held in the Secondary School hall and a Primary School classroom, both dedicated for these purposes by the Bishop of Stepney, who had hurried to Hackney on the evening of the fire. They used the word *RESURGAM*.

We are still rising again a beacon in Hackney and for me no cause for alarm even though there is scaffolding around the Tower! God indeed moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

MEMORIAL CHAPEL

Hugo Deadman



If you look on your left as you come into church, you may notice something a bit different. Our memorial chapel - commemorating the dead of Hackney from two world wars - was

beginning to look a bit scruffy. We don't use it for services nowadays as much as we did, although our friends at the Den still hold a lovely service there each Remembrance Sunday.

So the chapel was getting a bit neglected and looking rather sad - a shame as it's a lovely space where we should respect the memory of the people it commemorates.

So we have removed the very uncomfortable and inflexible pews

and generally tidied it up. We hope it will be used now as a quiet space - something lacking recently at St John's. We invite you to use the chapel to think or pray before services; light a candle; make your confession; or discuss anything you wish to with a member of the clergy (who will be available before and after services).

There are two places to light candles ∞ one focused on prayers for others, ∞ the other for prayers about personal and spiritual development. You can also leave your prayer requests there.

We hope that this renewed space remains respectful of its status as a memorial, while adding somewhere more contemplative to our church.

Let us know what you think.

INTRODUCING FIRST AID COORDINATORS JOHN & JANET TRIBE



When you come to church, you're likely to see John and Janet: they may be sitting in the front pew; they may be guiding you during the Eucharist as sidespeople; or John could be robed to assist at a funeral or wedding.

The Tribes first came to St John-at-Hackney in 2007 and their talents were soon recognised and harnessed: John became First Aid Coordinator, working as a team, with Janet as his Deputy, in 2008. John has been involved with St John Ambulance for 30 years (Janet 10 years) and has worked as a paramedic for 13 years. So what does the First Aid Coordinator do?

You wouldn't expect a church to be an especially hazardous place! However, medical emergencies do arise: therefore, as First Aid Coordinators, John and Janet ensure there are always qualified first aiders and fully stocked first aid kits available at all times. For instance, at the recent funeral of teenager Jamal Mason-Blair, Janet and John treated distressed family members, some of whom collapsed with the intensity of their grief. On a happier note, during the church's

August children's summer school, John accompanied Toyin and the volunteers on trips to such places as St Paul's Cathedral and Mudchute Farm.

A major focus for John and Janet at present is building up the church's team of first aiders. To that end, John is busy organising training to help people qualify from scratch or brush up their skills ([see the Page 5 Supplement for more information on how you can benefit from what's on offer](#)).

As a "day job", John is an ambulance paramedic, and Janet a medic, in London. They are trained in HeartStart Defibrillators and work as a rapid response team. They work at nightclubs, music festivals, sporting events and state occasions like the trooping of the colour. They have dealt with all sorts of medical emergencies, from stabbings, shootings and road traffic accidents through to happier occasions such as the birth of a baby. The Tribes are highly skilled and able to remain calm, in control and compassionate during a crisis.

Sadly, their work can put their own safety at risk and they often wear stab vests; when metal plates are inserted, these will even stop bullets fired from an AK47 machine gun! John also has a black belt so he can handle many dangerous situations. On the plus side, their schedules are varied, enabling them to pursue other interests. Although at times there's a lot of hanging around in the back of ambulances, at other times their work is extraordinarily intense and rewarding.

Their skills can be called on even in their leisure time however. In early August, John and Janet were on a bus to Islington when it came to a halt in Richmond Road. The street was blocked and, looking out of the window, they could see a woman lying in the road. They dashed from the bus to help. The woman had just been knocked off her bicycle by a van and had suffered head wounds and cuts to her body. She was bleeding, afraid and starting to lose consciousness. A passerby had dialed 999 but was standing by helplessly looking frightened. John and Janet took charge of the situation and were able to treat and reassure the woman until the ambulance crew arrived. They then continued on their journey, safe in the knowledge that they had helped maximise the woman's chances of making a full recovery. So the moral of the story is, if you're going to get run over by a van, make sure the Tribes are on the bus behind!

Article and photograph by Joanne Mortimer

FROM THE EDITOR

Audrey Seabrook



I was disappointed that none of you sent in an account of your holidays to share with those of us who stayed at home. Reflections is not only handed out to all who attend our

Sunday service, but is also published on the Internet. An American reader enjoys our **Poetry Corner** and has said he wants to see some Kipling this month. This is his offering:

*When Earth's last picture is painted
and the tubes are twisted and dried,
When the oldest colours have faded,
and the youngest critic has died,
We shall rest, and, faith, we shall need it
- lie down for an aeon or two,
Till the Master of All Good Workmen
shall put us to work anew.*

*And those that were good shall be happy;
they shall sit in a golden chair;
They shall splash at a ten-league canvas
with brushes of comets' hair.
They shall find real saints to draw from
- Magdalene, Peter, and Paul;
They shall work for an age at a sitting
and never be tired at all!*

*And only the Master shall praise us,
and only the Master shall blame;
And no one shall work for money,
and no one shall work for fame,
But each for the joy of the working,
and each, in his separate star,
Shall draw the thing as he sees it
for the God of Things as they are!*

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

To comment on anything in *Reflections*, please email as shown below

Deadline for contributions for October issue is Sunday 26th September to seabrook@mac.com

PHOTOGRAPHS for REFLECTIONS or WEBSITE

Please remember if taking photographs to send by email for use in *Reflections* or on our website, you should select a small file size.

Here's Audrey's contribution by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. (American poet, 1807-1882)

*There was a little girl, who had a little curl
Right in the middle of her forehead,
And when she was good,
she was very, very good,
But when she was bad she was horrid.*

*She stood on her head,
on her little trundle bed,*

*With nobody by for to hinder;
She screamed and she squalled,
she yelled and she bawled,
And drummed her little heels
against the winder.*

*Her mother heard the noise,
and thought it was the boys
Playing in the empty attic,
She rushed upstairs,
and caught her unawares,
And spanked her, most emphatic.*

STAFF and VOLUNTEERS at ST JOHN-at-HACKNEY

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Community Development Worker	Mr David Hazeldine	
Cleaner	Ms Hazel Panton	
First Aider	Mr John Tribe E: johnjanettribe@yahoo.co.uk	
Tower Captain	Mr Stephen Jakeman	
Artist in Residence	Mr Andrew Coombes	
Mothers' Union Leader	Mrs Mercy Moss	

PARISH DIARY

For Services see the weekly Sunday notice sheet

Sundays 9am Choir practice
Mondays 7.30pm Bellringers practice
SCOUTS and GUIDES meet regularly at their headquarters
The Den, in the Old Rectory Drive
activities for boys and girls from age 6 years
Contact Jim or Judy Phillips
Tel: 020 8985 9397;
Email: phillips_james I @sky.com

TRAINING COURSES THIS AUTUMN

* Confirmation

The Bishop of Stepney will be coming to St John's on 30 November for our annual Confirmation service. Classes begin this month, led by Rev'ds David Evans for the adults and Liz Adekunle for the children.

There will be a commissioning service for the candidates at St Luke's Homerton on 20 September. Please pray for them.

* New Step

Seven members of the congregation will be beginning the **Stepney Area New Step Programme**. This will last for two terms and will develop the Christian understanding and discipleship of our church. Please pray for our group as they make these new steps for Jesus.

* Growing Leaders

From January we will also be running a **Growing Leaders Course**, which is designed to give some direction to the issues of leadership in churches. Several people have already signed up for this. **If you are interested, please let Fr Rob know.**

COMMUNITY LEGAL ADVICE

Hugo Deadman

Times are tough at the moment across the country. That can mean that it's extra tough for lots of people in Hackney and that includes people at St John's. While we all want to help each other as much as we can, sometimes it's best to get professional legal advice, especially on complicated issues like debt, housing, employment and immigration, but of course lawyers can cost a lot of money!

There are always brilliant local services like law centres and citizens advice bureaux - but they're terribly busy and it's difficult to get appointments.

However, help is at hand! The Government funds something called Community Legal Advice (CLA). If you're on benefits or have a low income you

could be eligible for free, confidential legal advice and support if, for instance, you are worried about benefits; your debts are worrying you; you are having trouble at work; or difficulties with your landlord.

The CLA has loads of information on its website communitylegaladvice.org.uk.

To speak to someone (and find out whether you are eligible for more help) call 0845 345 4345. Calls cost no more than 4p per minute from a BT landline.

If you're worried about the cost, you can ask to be called back. You can also ask to discuss your problems in a language other than English.

CASUALTY COMES TO SJH!

Joanne Mortimer

Whether or not you have a first aid certificate, read on to find out how you can enhance your skills by joining John & Janet Tribe's first aid team

You're enjoying a glass of wine in the garden at a family party when suddenly you hear a child cry out. You rush over to find she's burned her arm on the barbeque. Should you apply ice? A bandage? Take her to the GP or call an ambulance?

You're at a restaurant when your friend stops eating, grasps her throat and starts gasping for breath. What should you do?

You're in the supermarket queue when the man in front suddenly collapses. You call an ambulance, but what can you do to help him until it arrives?

St John-at-Hackney church now offers the opportunity to enhance your skills and become better equipped to deal with such situations. So what is planned and who can benefit?

* Would you like to receive thorough training and earn a first aid certificate? Training is planned for spring 2010, when you will learn how to deal effectively with this sort of medical emergency and qualify for a first aid certificate, valid for 3 years.

* Do you have a valid first aid certificate but feel your knowledge is a bit rusty? Refresher sessions will take place at the church in the autumn dealing with basic life saving techniques, first aid treatment and major medical emergencies, so you can brush up on your skills in a friendly and supportive environment.

* If you have a current first aid certificate and are confident your skills are up to date, you will be given a brief assessment, involving a fake casualty! There will be the opportunity to participate in ongoing refresher training to keep your skills current.

All training will be at no (or nominal) cost. All that is asked in return is that you volunteer for the church's first aid rota.

St John-at-Hackney church needs more qualified first aiders. Once on the rota, you could be asked to be the on-site first aider during a regular Sunday service, or at a special event such as the church fete or patronal festival, or at a children's activity like the summer school or ice skating trip. All expenses will be reimbursed.

When it's your turn on the rota, all you have to do is to keep an eye out in case a medical emergency arises. This is unlikely to happen but, if it does, you will need to assess the situation then treat the casualty until the professionals arrive.

You could be asked to help out as often as once a month. However it should be less because John and Janet are aiming to build a team of 12 qualified first aiders who can work together in pairs. The rota will be flexible, to accommodate people's daily lives and responsibilities.

What do I do now?

Spaces are limited so, if you would like to find out more or want to sign up speak to:

John Tribe (First Aid Coordinator) or his deputy **Janet Tribe** in church; email them on:

JohnJanetTribe@yahoo.co.uk or call on:

07852 833 0315, as soon as possible. They will be happy to answer any questions you may have and to encourage you to join the team!