

Trinity United Reformed Church
St Albans

December 2011

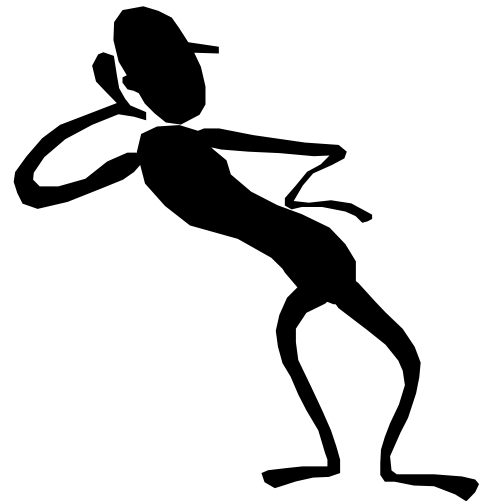
Grapevine



Trinity's annual lecture series have now come to an end and we hope that another congregation will take up the challenge. Maureen Sporle has been the moving force behind them for the past seven years and there was a presentation to her at the end of the last lecture.

Get the Gossip...

- **Claire Weston** has been selected as an Olympic Torchbearer for part of the St Albans section of the London 2012 Olympic Torch Relay. It's due through Hatfield, St Albans, Hemel Hempstead and Luton on Sunday, July 8, 2012.
- Up to 11 December, contributions to this year's **Commitment for Life** appeal were £6143. Contributions for 2011 will be accepted until the end of December. Please remember GiftAid (if you are a taxpayer).
- Thanks to everyone who helped with the Craft Day.
- Christmas carols will be sung outside Trinity on 22 December at 6pm. All welcome!
- Don't forget Trinity's **Christmas card board**. Savings go to Open Door.
- **Carol Tea Party** on Sunday 18 December at 4pm
- Next **Church Meeting** will be on 15 January 2012
- Rev **Heather Kent** has resigned from the Ministry at Chiswell Green URC.
- **Wheathampsted URC** church site is to be redeveloped. The last service will be on 7 January and thereafter there are temporary arrangements to use other churches and services.



Mike Sherriff hosted a lunch for **Friends of Khasdobir**. Several Trinity members joined the gathering at the New Gulshan, next door to Trinity. £250 was raised to support the charity's work in Bangla Desh.

(Website:
<http://www.khasdobir.org.uk/>)

The Lectures Revisited

(Fourword: Will this do, Axel?)

It was summer 2004. We were sitting in Mike & Fiona's garden - Alison, Fiona, Emma and I. Our task was to dream up projects for outreach into the community - a follow-up to what came to be known as the 'Glass Walls Conference' held that spring in Wheathampstead. We watched the butterflies, listened to the bees, sipped our lemonade and pondered.

My mind went back to the few weeks before the Berlin Wall came down and the East Germans flocked into the churches and used them as rallying points to fuel their bid for freedom. Wouldn't it be great, I said aloud, if Trinity became a meeting point for the community, where important issues were debated? We dreamed this dream for a while and then agreed it *was* just a dream. People thought Christians just wanted to lure them into church; they thought we could only offer glib answers to all life's problems; they preferred to discuss important issues in the pub. At this point I recalled seeing notices in Reform about lectures being offered by posh city-centre churches like Carrs Lane, Birmingham and Emmanuel URC, Cambridge. "Why not Trinity?"

We were off!

Amazingly we hatched the whole thing in almost every detail in the next 30 minutes. There were to be groups of four lectures. They were to be in the autumn. They were to be preceded by a meal to foster community spirit and to entice commuters coming home late from London. They were to be on Fridays, then the only free evening at Trinity. Oh dear! The Jews! We raced on. There was to be one lecture each on Science, Religion, Justice and Morality. Maureen was to organise them. "Hang on!" "It was your idea!" And we were off discussing an idea Alison had for a Saturday morning coffee bar. Hard luck, Alison!

And so it came to pass.

Beginner's luck produced three top notch speakers in response to the first batch of letters. A three week lull was broken by a letter of apology from John Cole (former BBC Political Correspondent). He had been in Ireland - was there still a vacancy - could he do the Justice lecture? It was the only topic left! Bingo!

You know the rest! I think it has been a success - but a qualified one. The first year we purposely omitted to send publicity material to the other churches because we didn't want The Lectures to be seen as 'a churchy affair'. However, subsequently it was church-goers who made up the bulk of the audiences. There was always a sprinkling of agnostics, atheists and people of other faiths present, and they often congratulated us on not trying to get them to come to church! Oddly, I think that suggests we were on the right track.

The community does not see Trinity as a rallying point for social action - but it does know we are there behind the seemingly closed doors on the corner. Did I see the glimmer of a glass wall there? I do understand the zeal of those who think that the primary task of the church is to 'get out there' and minister to the poor. Of course! But the church premises are an enormous asset providing a springboard for ministry of all kinds. Ask Nick and Mike what ideas they got from their weekend with Andrew Mawson.

'Living the Questions' is in the pipeline. What next?

Anyone for lemonade in the Smith's garden?

Maureen Sporle

Kenya by bike Celia Knopp

I would like to say that the first words that come to mind when thinking about my cycle trip in Kenya were 'inspirational', 'life changing' or 'magical' but instead they are 'hilly, very hilly'.

However much the guides called them undulating hills or my personal favourite a 'sequence of good hills' they were still very much huge hills.

Very soon, into the first day cycle of 100km, the realisation that this was very much a challenge and not a holiday struck and it was heads down all round. However, as so often with things like this, the true amazement, humour and friendship the other 60 women offered, made the kilometres fly by (well 'fly by' might be a bit of an exaggeration).

We cycled through small towns, villages and tea plantations with children running alongside our bikes (often making me feel like a celebrity from a comic relief film).

Due to the varied ability of the women cycling, there were often periods that people would find themselves cycling on their own. Instead of this being scary it made the trip even more amazing, as you would go from being cheered on by locals through villages, to calm solitude, cycling along while admiring the lush expanse of scenery that couldn't make me feel further away from spinning classes in sunny Potters Bar.

The reason we were putting ourselves through such pain (be it enjoyable pain) was of course to raise money for Women Vs Cancer. And raise money we did! 1.6 Million pounds of it. This in itself was a great achievement (well actually me cycling 400 in Kenya and not being arrested for my foul language when seeing another hill was the main achievement). However, I would like to share some of the other changes our cycle ride brought about.

Due to the publicity surrounding the ride in Kenya, the government passed a bill saying everyone is entitled to free medical care if diagnosed with cancer. Even though there are still massive barriers to overcome before this can happen, in regards to resources, it is still a fairly hefty step in the right direction.

We also raised fifty thousand pounds for a support centre in Nairobi. This is the only Cancer support centre in the whole of Kenya and the people that work there are truly amazing. I have put the website to the project at the bottom of this article and would ask everyone has a look at it and see the amazing work they do. 92 per cent of people in Kenya who were diagnosed with Cancer last year were in stages 3 or 4 which is a shocking statistic. People, in Kenya, do not tend to have access to information about cancer which is the main reason for such late stage diagnoses. With our money the support centre is planning to set up smaller centres across Kenya, in poorer areas, to make the information available.

Somewhere in the few minutes spare time the staff at the centre have, they also teach women in the slums to make jewellery and trinkets to sell to tourists, so they can avoid using prostitution as a main source of income.

So through the pain of the hills, blisters and sores and on top of the enjoyment and laughter, my trip to Kenya has made it possible for myself and everyone who sponsored me to support an absolutely amazing charity. So thank you very much.

<http://www.farajacancersupport.org/>

P.S you can still sponsor me on:

<http://www.justgiving.com/celiaknopp/eurl.axd/ca3bb10d769fe74f85222207363f7caf>

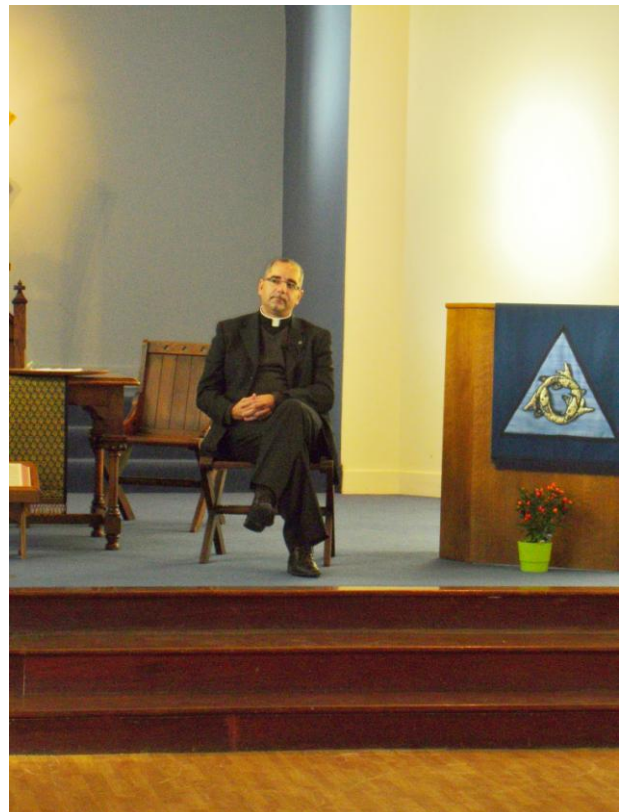


Kenya bikers en masse

Father Johnny Abu Khalil

On Sunday 27 November, we were visited by **Father Johnny Abu Khalil**, a Palestinian Catholic priest. Fr Johnny spoke to us of the daily restrictions and indignities suffered by Palestinians. He referred to the on-going loss of land to settlements and the "separation wall", all of which flout international law. We were able to ask questions.

*(Fr Johnny was driven to St Albans by **Mike Barnes**, who has spoken to us of his experiences as an EAPPI Accompanier. Mike is currently organising a group visit to Palestine and Israel by the Watford Friends of Salfect, to depart in mid-February 2012.)*



THANK YOU! **Maddy Buckley made a sponsored climb of Kilimanjaro**

To everyone who so kindly sponsored my Kilimanjaro climb - I wanted to write to you to let you know about where your money has gone to help, and how our group made it to Uhuru Peak with your support...



We began our adventure with a long flight to Nairobi and an equally long (but considerably more bumpy!) bus journey to Tanzania, which took us to our hotel in Moshi - a town near the foot of the mountain.

Getting to bed early to make the most of our last night's sleep in a real bed and a final shower, we awoke first thing on the 1st September to board the bus from Moshi to the Machame Gate, the location of the beginning of our ascent. Excitement and anticipation filled the bus, particularly because we were never able to see the mountain from afar as we approached due to the constant clouds, and so couldn't truly appreciate the scale of what we were in for! After 45 minutes we arrived, alongside a

number of other climbers, to sign in and register as being on the mountain. An army of porters were lined up getting bags ready to go, preparing to carry unbelievable amounts with apparent ease up the steep slopes we were to face.

The climb began steeply on a wide road which gradually narrowed into a leafy path through the lush rainforest. Trees, plants and all kinds of exotic vegetation surrounded the route; beautifully concealing the steep slopes down either side! The main guides, Saimon and Masheka, led us steadily upwards on the gradual slope, stopping regularly for us to drink, take photos and hurriedly eat a Mars bar before continuing on! Lunch came around after a few hours and we were cooked warming soup and bread with lots of fresh fruit afterwards. Soup seemed like a novelty at this point, but was to become a staple part of every meal on the mountain except breakfast! We continued on with refuelled energy, making gradual progress on the long but relatively gentle 10km track.



The final stages steepened as we came towards camp, a tough final push but with the top of the rainforest in sight we knew we had almost reached our first goal, 1200m up from our 1800m starting point. Finally reaching Machame Hut, we signed in and were quickly ushered into camp to unpack our sleeping bags and go to the mess tent for hot drinks and popcorn - a delight which we were served to boost us up every day when we reached camp. At this 3000m base, surroundings had already changed dramatically, with a much drier ground and more sparse vegetation, but a nice cool camp to rest the night in. After a hearty dinner we went straight to our 3-man tents for as much sleep as we could get before the early start in the morning.



Our guides had informed us at the first day's dinner that because our 20-strong group's pace was good on the first day, we would not be stopping for lunch on the way today but going straight through to camp and eating there - we knew we were in for a gruelling morning! The route was relentlessly



steep from Machame upwards, continuing like this for the whole 850m up to Shira Camp. The views were a much-needed distraction from the tough terrain as we rose entirely above the cloud layer to see a fluffy blanket coating everything below - it encroached softly upon the quickly disappearing forest as the bright turquoise sky became ever-clearer. It was hotter than we had anticipated and as the day went on we progressively shed the majority of the many layers we had put on in the morning. Though this day's

walking was a shorter distance and smaller height gain (850m overall), it was tougher by far than the first day and required our real determination to push on to Shira Camp. Shira was a beautiful, open, rocky slope which had the most incredible view both down the mountain and up – allowing us to see the peak for the first time as the clouds parted, filling us all with nerves as it looked so impossibly far away! After a short acclimatisation trek past the caves to 4000m (just 150m higher than the campsite), we went to sleep ready for the long up and down route of day 3.



Sunrise at Shira Camp was stunning, and we had fantastic views as we left for what was our main acclimatisation day – we were to ascend to the Lava Tower at 4600m, then descend straight away down the other side to camp at a mere 110m higher than we had been at the night before. Slightly less steep than the day before, we made a good start to the day being spurred on by the breathtaking views which surrounded us, also reminding us just how high up we actually were! Around 4400m, some of the team began to struggle with altitude sickness for the first time (which I luckily managed to escape for the duration of the trip) – it was a hard slog to get up to the Lava Tower, but a brilliant view when we got there; only to be directed



straight down the other side for a rocky descent as trees and plants became almost extinct. The team were exhausted as we reached Barranco Camp, our stop for the third night, but looking up after dinner we had the most incredible view of the night sky – despite the imposing Barranco Wall looming over and reminding us of what was to come in the morning...

After several murmurings of disbelief at what we were to begin day 4 with, our group headed down the valley to Barranco camp for one of the most



famous parts of the route – the 300m sheer face that is the Barranco Wall. We stowed our walking poles and began tentatively to scale the wall, in which a fairly manageable path was in fact marked out, using our hands to clamber upwards.



It was unbelievable to see the porters navigating this stage of the climb, with their hands supporting their heavy loads rather than being free to pull them up the wall. 90 minutes of climbing took us to the top, at which stage we carried on downhill

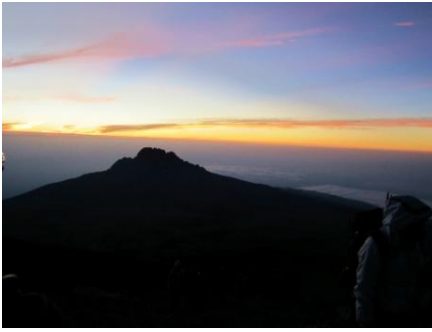
before going up and down again as we traversed a long but frustrating path to our final campsite, Barafu, at 4600m. The longest day of walking so far; it had brought us through a lunar-like landscape to the foot of the path leading to the impending peak, as we arrived at around 6.30pm for dinner.

The night had finally arrived for the summit attempt, and there was a strange mix of excitement and fear resonating around the camp as we lay down to go to sleep at 8pm, just 3 hours before we would be getting up again for the 1295m climb to Uhuru Peak. Arising for a 'breakfast' of porridge and biscuits at 11.30pm, and putting on as many layers of clothes as we physically could, we manoeuvred around the pitch-dark space with head torches – a critical piece of kit for this part of the trek. We lined up behind Saimon, with the slowest people at the front to ensure the pace was set at the right level - tonight it was more critical than ever to walk 'pole pole' (slowly slowly in Swahili – one of the phrases we heard the most while on the mountain!). Clouds of our breath billowed out in front of us as we left Barafu, only able to see the feet of the person in front and a little line of fairy lights way up ahead that were the torches of those groups already progressing towards the peak. The sky looked more incredible than ever before, with nothing interrupting the colossal blanket of gleaming stars that glittered reassuringly above as we began traversing steep rock to reach the frozen scree of the main slope. I had read in my guide book that the first part of the summit ascent



involved 'relentless turnbacks', which turned out to be a very accurate description of the 6 hours that followed, going slowly forward in shallow zigzags. Everyone had iPods in as we couldn't really talk, and once I'd set my shuffle playlist off at midnight I didn't touch it again until we were almost at the peak – it turned out to be the biggest motivator, with each new song providing a new boost and my favourite tunes magically appearing in times of need! Every little thing made the most enormous difference, as this

part of the climb was entirely reliant on determination and self-motivation – looking up to see a shooting star right above me spurred me on a huge amount as I felt tiredness kicking in.



As we neared the top part of the slope, the ground was loosening and we had to negotiate slippery gravel which pushed us 1 step back for every 3 we took forward. This most challenging part of the ascent was softened by the sunrise that began behind us; which was perfect and uninterrupted with not a single blemish on the sky – I only had to look round when I felt myself weakening to be pushed on by this incredible sight. A rest break at around 6.30am was the first time we were informed of any measurable progress by our guides since leaving at midnight – we were now under an hour away from Stella Point (5730m, and less than an hour away from Uhuru).

With the sun almost risen and the knowledge that we were now within reach of our goal, there were several overwhelmed tears around the group and we moved onwards knowing that it wouldn't be long before we were there. Reaching Stella Point brought a wave of relief, and looking across to where we were heading the sign itself was actually visible – it was real!! The final 45 minute push was the hardest part of all, with the thinning air and tiredness making every step a challenge, but nothing was going to stop us from reaching Uhuru now we'd come this far. At around 8.30am, after almost nine hours of exhausting, exhilarating and (almost!) endless climbing we had done it – we'd reached Uhuru Peak, 5895m above sea level. It was a totally overwhelming feeling of elation, tiredness, disbelief and relief to finally arrive there, but it made every step of the way up worth it – we had conquered Kilimanjaro!



Before we did the climb, we had been lucky enough to visit a local school funded by Childreach International, the charity for which our group had raised tens of thousands of pounds. This was an absolute highlight of the trip, and to meet such a wonderful group of kids who sang, played and laughed with us from the moment our bus appeared on the driveway until the last person had shut the bus door before we left. The whole school had been repainted and a toilet block had been built thanks to Childreach's funding (around £10,000 for this school), and the teachers and children looked delighted with the results. Thinking of these smiling faces was a huge motivation for our group as we felt so privileged to have been able to see where the money makes a difference, and remind us why we were all doing the climb.

So, all I have left to say (after that rather longer-than-intended account of my African adventure!) is the most enormous THANK YOU to you for being so generous in donating sponsorship money. It was clear to us all out there how much of a difference the money that you have helped raise will make to their valuable work, and I am so grateful for your generosity in supporting this cause.



(Childreach International website: <http://www.childreach.org.uk/challenge-events/climb-kilimanjaro-4-kids>)

After reading the article "Why we shouldn't believe in belief" by John Gray in the previous "Grapevine", **Mike Barnes** has passed on the following by **Sir Martin Rees**, Astronomer Royal:

Dogma is to be doubted:

If we learn anything from the pursuit of science, it is that something even as basic as an atom is quite hard to understand. We should be unsurprised that many phenomena remain unexplained, and dubious of any claim to have achieved more than a very incomplete and metaphorical insight into any profound aspect of our existence--and especially we should be very sceptical of dogma. That is certainly why I have no religious belief. Despite this I continue to be nourished by the music and liturgy of the Church in which I was brought up.

Preachers & Services
(correct as at 29 October)

18 December 2011	Michael Jagessar	
25 December 2011	Worship Group	
2012		
1 January	No Service	
8 January	John Reardon	Communion
15 January	Worship Group	Followed by Church Meeting
22 January	Leonora Jagessar	
29 January	Joint.Service	
5 February	Leonora Jagessar	Communion
12 February	John Reardon	
19 February	David Jonathan	
26 February	Leonora Jagessar	
4 March	Leonora Jagessar	Communion
11 March	John Reardon	
18 March		Followed by Church Meeting
25 March	Meryl Court	
1 April	Leonora Jagessar	Communion

TRINITY ST. ALBANS UNITED REFORMED CHURCH
ANNUAL CHURCH MEETING – 2ND OCTOBER 2011
CHURCH SECRETARY'S REPORT

1. My last year as Church Secretary has been, as I expected, one when Trinity has been very active. In my report last year I thanked Fiona for making the hand over so easy and I hope that I can do the same to make Nick Brown feel the same when he takes over as Church Secretary
2. Last year I also mentioned that that Annual Church Meeting was the first Leonora was attending. I have tried, I hope successfully, to support her in her first full year with us and I hope that I have helped to ensure that she is now very much part of Trinity
3. There was reference in last year's report to "The Way Ahead". That resulted in a successful Family Day in January. When the Elders were considering the outcome of the Family Day, there was an advertisement in Reform about a Conference entitled "One Church 100 Uses" to be held in Manchester in March. The Elders asked Nick Brown and Mike Smith to attend, and when they presented their initial report to the Elders in April, they were asked to bring a further report to the Elders on the key areas they thought should be considered in developing Trinity's vision and plan. When they presented their report they suggested perhaps there was a need to look at the future of Trinity remaining viable on its own. They also identified that if Trinity's commitment to serve the community has to be achieved it is necessary to find out the community's needs and not Trinity deciding what they thought they were. The Elders have agreed on a programme of carrying out this research including the possibility of employing someone
4. Initially "Living the Questions" was linked to the "Way Ahead" but it is now a separate item on which Leonora will report
5. Another item I am sure Leonora will cover is the working of the three churches in the Pastorate but I think I should mention that after living a longer time than anticipated in a building site, the work on the Manse was completed. Leonora and Michael graciously held Open House times for the members to visit and see the result of the work.
6. One disappointment I have is that all we did this year was to share with SS Alban & Stephen an exchange of candles and attendance at each other services at the start of the Week for Christian Unity. We have also informed each other of events. However I hope that in the future year we will again work at trying to find common ground for doing things together.
7. Whatever else is in my report one very important item must be what has been happening to those of the Trinity Family. During the year both the Elders and church Meetings have been informed of the problems medical and otherwise faced by members. We have also heard of the achievements of the younger members of our congregation particularly in the field of education but also on other activities
8. Unfortunately during the year we had the sadness of the death of Wilma Carroll and news of the death of Roger Tomes who had been Trinity's minister from 1973 to 1977. However we had the joy of accepting Margaret Clarke into membership
9. In last year's report I referred to the Art Exhibition and this year we are indebted to Fiona for the Lent Project Display which was entered into the multi-cultural event in Birmingham. At the time of writing this report the result is not known but I think if it does not win, the winner but be something very special
10. Though there will be a separate report on the Trinity Community Project, (better known as the Day Centre) the Elders accepted that they should have been more supportive They have received reports at every meeting and, having consulted .they appointed a Consultant to look at how the Project is run and to identify anyway that helpful changes could be made to ensure the continuing future of the Project
11. I have to refer to the patience Leonora showed in waiting for the Scroll we signed and hoped would be presented to her at her Induction Service. It was presented to her at the March Church Meeting
12. In addition to the Saturday morning Coffee, a new venture Tea, Cake and Conversation is being held on the third Friday each month

13. Because of the timings there were problems of Leonora being able to attend Church Meetings. This resulted in the March Service on the third Sunday starting at 10.30am and the third Sunday in May and July services starting at 6.30pm.
14. On the 20th February Mike Barnes who had been an Ecumenical Partner led the third part of the service and his attendance having been advertised some Muslim members attended. It is possible that another Partner may attend a service in November
15. When Trinity heard of the difficulties being faced by the new General Secretary of Churches World Mission in getting a visa to get into this country so he could take up his post in CWM's Head Office in London, correspondence was entered into with Anne Main MP. She did support our concerns and the General Secretary did get a visa. Unfortunately CWM has decided to move its Head Office from London to Singapore
16. More recent events which I will just mention are the links with St. Albans Friends of Husan Twinning Group and the return of the repaired Church Bible. However I cannot just refer to Daniel's Sculptor as the last time I was Church Secretary was during Daniel's Ministry. I thought it was great to hear about his inspiration in sculpting our new wonderful addition but I was even more pleased to see how well he looked and that he had lost none of his enthusiasm
- 17. I have kept reference to the Autumn Lectures to near the end, because I do think they deserve to be highlighted as one of Trinity's success stories. There was I am sure a note of sadness for many if not all of us when the decision was made that the 2011 series was to be the last. Whatever Maureen says about the success was achieved because of the involvement of others, I believe the lectures would not have happened if it not been for her initiative and her work in the organisation of them.**
18. I would like to record my thanks to the Elders and the Treasurer who have been very supportive as have all the members during the year
19. As this is the Final Report as Church Secretary, I am going to indulge myself and make some comments about Trinity. I would hope that it is obvious just how much Trinity means to me and like all of you I would be delighted if it could go on for ever. This is what concerns me in that there is no doubt Trinity is very much alive but not only are we a congregation in a declining denomination with little evidence that decline will stop We are also a congregation that is also declining and aging. We are lucky in having good financial resources but our human resources are reducing. I was glad when Nick and Mike included in their report on "Way Ahead" reference to Trinity joining with other congregations. The Synod certainly would encourage congregations to look at joining with another URC congregation or a congregation from another denomination. My view is the time to do this is when we are still very active not when we are struggling for survival. This is not a negative comment but a positive one in that we could offer a lot in such a union, and if not keeping the name of Trinity alive, though that could be possible, we could ensure our vision and aspirations we have to further God's Kingdom would stay alive.
20. It has been a privilege to have served Trinity twice as Church Secretary and I thank God for giving me these opportunities and strength to serve a congregation so dear to my heart

God Bless.

Andrew Jack

25th September 2011

Some corner of a foreign field Peter Elliott

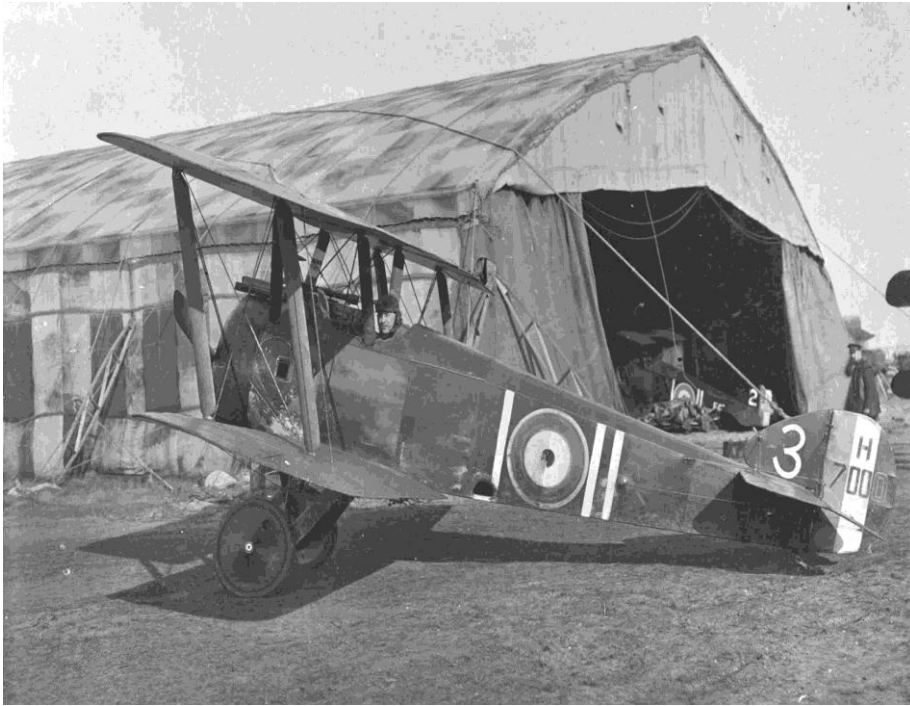
One of the memorial plaques recently reinstalled in the church commemorates Lieutenant Cedric George Edwards RAF, who was killed on 27 August 1918. Having a certain professional interest in such people I thought that a little background information might be of interest to the readers of Grapevine.

Cedric Edwards was born in St Albans on 5 June 1899, the elder surviving son of John and Elizabeth Edwards who lived at "The Homestead" in Lemsford Road and were presumably members of Trinity. He was educated at Mill Hill School and less than a fortnight after his 18th birthday joined the Royal Naval Air Service as a Probationary Flying Officer. After a month's initial training at the Crystal Palace (the RNAS's depot) he went to Vendôme in France, where the RNAS had a flying training school. He seems to have begun his training on Caudron biplanes, and the process was not sophisticated: another trainee at Vendôme wrote "Dual control instruction was 3½ to 4 hours, when out got the instructor, the PFO got into his seat, opened the throttle and... there were 4 in my squad. No. 1 I have a photo of his crash, I was a Pall Bearer, No. 2 I do not have details, but it was unsatisfactory. No 3 Myself... I immediately realised it was the first time I really had full control... No. 4 flatly refused to try solo at all."

The course lasted two months, and from Vendôme Edwards went to Cranwell for further training, graduating at the end of October with a total of 30 hours 12 minutes flying time. His flying ability was assessed as First Class and his record states "Graduated. Very good pilot, indeed very good officer. Recommended for scouts" – the term used at that time for fighter aircraft. After some three weeks based at Manston, he was posted to Dunkirk on 23 December – a holding posting, pending allocation to a front line unit.

On 30 March Cedric joined No. 9 (Naval) Squadron, based at Clairmarais and equipped with Sopwith Camels. Two days later the RNAS became part of the new Royal Air Force, and 9 Squadron RNAS became 209 Squadron RAF. Its role was one of attacking enemy aircraft at both high and low level, but the pilots were also involved in supporting ground troops by attacking ground targets with 25 lb bombs and machine gun fire. He was awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross in July 1918, although the citation was not published until September, after his death "*The fearlessness and disregard of danger displayed by this officer in attacking enemy troops, etc., at low altitudes is most marked, and worthy of the highest praise. On one occasion in an attack on an aerodrome, to enable him to fire on the hangars he descended so low that the wheels of his machine touched the ground. He has in air combats destroyed three hostile aircraft.*"

By mid-August he had been credited with a total of seven enemy aircraft – the popular definition of an “Ace” was a pilot with a score of five or more, although the British air services did not recognise the idea. His final flight came on the second day of an attack mounted by Canadian troops against German positions astride the River Scarpe East of Arras. Edwards' Camel was seen to receive a direct hit from an artillery shell south of the River Scarpe near Jigsaw Wood. He has no known grave and is commemorated on the Arras Flying Services Memorial.



Sopwith Camel of No. 209 Squadron, similar to the aircraft flown by Cedric Edwards

Jill Paton Walsh The Attenbury Emeralds

Lord Peter Wimsey, prompted by the death of Lord Attenbury, looks back at his first case which he had solved some thirty years earlier. Attenbury's heir enlists Wimsey to help resolve a question: are the eponymous jewels, for so long locked in a bank vault, the genuine emeralds? Peter and his wife Harriet soon find themselves investigating a series of deaths which have occurred over the intervening thirty years and are apparently linked to the jewels. In the midst of all this, Wimsey has to deal with major upheaval in his own life.

Jill Paton Walsh, the author of several successful detective novels, has also completed two books based on material left by Dorothy L Sayers, but *The Attenbury Emeralds* is all Walsh's work. She has deftly woven Sayers' cast – the extended Wimsey family, including the sons of both Wimsey and his servant Bunter - into an intriguing story that moves from the 1920s to 1951 and conveys the uncertain feeling of post-war, austerity Britain and the associated social changes. She shares Sayers' talent for observation and sly humour, and has evidently based her novel on extensive, detailed research.

The book is a worthy addition to the Wimsey canon, bringing new life to Dorothy L Sayers' best-known characters; it's not a fast-paced thriller, but the plot's many twists and turns and the author's skill in depicting believable people make it addictive reading.

Peter Elliott

**Please note that there will be no service at Trinity on Sunday
1st January 2012**

Grapevine is the magazine of Trinity United Reformed Church, Beaconsfield Road, St Albans AL1 3RD. Contributions may be sent to axel.kirby@which.net

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Website: **<http://www.trinitystalbans.org.uk/>**
Facebook: **Trinity United Reformed Church, St Albans**
Focus Group **<http://tinyurl.com/ThreeChurchCalendar>**
online programme

January dates

Wednesday 4 January 11am Free Church Service at St Albans Abbey led by the Revd Peter Hudson, Methodist Covenant

Thursday 5 January 10.30am Coffee Morning at Pat Coleman's house.

Wednesday 18 January 12 noon United Service, Week of Prayer for Christian Unity at Harpenden URC

Friday 20 January 2.30pm Tea, Cakes and Conversation

Saturday 21 January 10.30am to 1pm Focus Group Workshop on Prayer, at Harpenden

***Merry Christmas and a
Happy New Year!***