



St Bartholomew's News

<http://www.stbartholomews.ie>

April 2008

Easter Vestry

The Annual General Vestry took place on Sunday 6th April. The main business of this meeting is to elect the Select Vestry, who will be responsible for making decisions relating to the church for the next calendar year. Those elected this year are as follows: Richard Bannister, Judith Barden, Alan Bigley, Don Cazzini, Tony Conroy, Gillian Davidson, Traudi Ferguson, Brian Gageby, Niamh Harty, John King, David Jones, Amos McGrath, Huw Rolfe, Charlie Smith, Molly Sullivan, and Ferdinand von Prondzynski.

Traudi Ferguson and Niamh Harty were appointed as Parochial Nominators, with Sara McMurry and David Jones as deputies. Barbara Bergin and Tony Conroy were appointed as Synod Representatives, with John King and Kaye Marshall as deputies.

Richard Bannister

Choir trip to Westport

I thought it was only in England that the weather was supposed to be totally unpredictable (heavy snow in April?!), but on the Choir's recent trip to Westport, Co. Mayo, the west coast of Ireland showed itself to have an equally fickle climate. Not knowing whether

in swan pedalos. Happily, the picnic lunch (hand-made by our wonderfully dedicated team of parents) was eaten in gorgeous warm sunshine. It was fantastic that in the town of Westport itself everything was close at hand – hotel, churches and rehearsal room



The choristers with their new director. [Photo: Richard Bannister]

to take shorts and sunglasses or lots of big woolly jumpers, I packed both, and spent most of the weekend not knowing which to put on. The travelling party took it all in their stride, and the outing to Westport House on the Saturday afternoon was in no way spoilt by the rain starting to pour just as the boys set sail on the lake

were only a few minutes' walk from each other, so as long as you put your head down and ran for it, you wouldn't get too wet – and it had all been arranged with great efficiency. This was my first time away with the choir, and I don't really think I could have had a better introductory weekend than this. I was grateful for

Choir trip to Westport (continued)

the warm and enthusiastic welcome that everyone gave me, and it was a very sociable and enjoyable time. Musically speaking, we made some good progress, and I now have a good idea of what we can work on next. Everything ran smoothly and we had plenty of time for singing as well as sightseeing and leisure activities. Our hotel was very comfortable and accommodating, and the dinners were exceptional!

On the Saturday night we sang at the Vigil Mass in the Roman Catholic church of St. Mary, right in the centre of the town on the banks of the river. I was amazed by the attendance: there must have been five or six hundred people there, and we had the best seat in the house – right at the back, in the organ gallery high up on the back wall! From there the acoustic was quite beautiful, and we enjoyed singing the Mass, unseen! The following morning we were delighted to sing at Holy Trinity church – a Service of the Word – not quite such a large congregation (despite the gorgeous weather) but still a very supportive and appreciative one. It's easy to forget that many,

perhaps most, churches don't have any regular live music at all, and so it's a real treat for the congregation when a choir comes to visit. Of course, it's also a privilege for us to be



Singing in the church. [Photo: Brian Lowry]

able to share in and enhance their worship, so such visits are a good thing for everyone. (I think Alex might disagree with that, though, having had to contend with a deeply temperamental (and rarely used!) organ – which she did admirably and in some style, of course!)

Such trips could not take place without the hard work and dedication of many people. The men and boys sang with commitment and energy throughout (and were suitably exhausted afterwards!), and they adapted very quickly to the two very different buildings and types of service. I was still tired from Holy Week and I'm sure

they were too, but it didn't show until after the Sunday service when we could all relax at last! The trip could not have happened without the boundless enthusiasm and hard work of the parents, and I'm very grateful to all of them for helping so willingly in so many ways. Niamh Harty's support and co-ordination skills made all the difference, and took away a huge amount of work from me (which I was naturally grateful for!).

Robin Heather's thorough organisation and planning of the weekend was invaluable and much appreciated, and his local knowledge proved very useful in making arrangements. Alex Jobling's playing and conducting was excellent as always, and I particularly appreciated her willingness and ability to be so flexible when we were planning how things would work. The time away only reinforced my excitement and enthusiasm for the job that I'm about to begin with you all, and it will be good finally to arrive at St Bartholomew's next month. I think I will bring my extra large umbrella, just in case!

Fraser Wilson

Girls' Choir in Trinity College

Members of the Girls' choir took part in the RSCM's annual choral festival on Saturday 12 April. The festival, held in the chapel of Trinity College, attracted over 130 choristers from church choirs all over Dublin, and from further afield. St Bartholomew's has been an affiliated member of the RSCM since the early years of the twentieth century, but this was the first time that the church has been represented at an RSCM event in recent years. The rehearsal



Some of the girls at the event. [Photo: DCO]

and service were conducted by Blanaid Murphy, Director of the Palestrina Choir at the Pro-Cathedral and the organist was David Leigh, Assistant Organist of St Patrick's

Cathedral. A large variety of music was sung, representative of the different Christian traditions present on the day. The service finished with a rousing rendition of the Hallelujah Chorus from Handel's Messiah. It is to be hoped that St Bartholomew's will be represented at RSCM events in the future; indeed, there are already plans to hold a choral workshop day at St Bartholomew's in the Autumn. Further details will follow!

Peter Parshall

Clodagh Rolfe

Clodagh Rolfe, who died on 6th March, a few days before her 68th birthday, loved St Bartholomew's Church: its holiness, its people, and its music. It had been her place of worship for more than thirty years. One of her greatest sources of pride was when her youngest son John was admitted to the choir. She was kind to people in need, loyal to friends that her talent for friendship had won, and spontaneously generous in many causes. She loved social gatherings in the church, events to which she would habitually contribute a large



Clodagh Rolfe. [Photo: Don Cazzini]

bowl of trifle. At her funeral the universal observation was that Clodagh had been good company. The words poured out of her carried by a rippling laugh. Clodagh experienced life in most of its facets. She

married for love 44 years ago; and all know that she and Huw were devoted to each other. There were three sons – David, Richard and John – and the first grandchildren had come. There had been good holidays with family and friends. Yes, there were darker times – ill-health in some form was a well-nigh constant companion – but Clodagh had the gift of mirth, and she was sustained by a sense of the spiritual that was sure and deep.

Requiescat in pace.

Traudi Ferguson

History of the Vicarage

The Vicarage was built, the neighbours say, in 1941. The parish bought the house in 1965. At the time of purchase it was heated by electric storage heaters, and had a Beeston hot water boiler in a corner of the kitchen. The wartime steel windows had already begun to corrode and the bay window in the living room was in a sorry state. The original tiled fireplaces were deemed to be ugly and in bad condition. Some remedial work was carried out and an oil-fired central system was installed.

By 1985 the oil tank and oil boiler needed to be replaced, although the pre-existing radiators and pipe work were left in place. The kitchen layout was redesigned, incorporating the old pantry into the



main kitchen. A new kitchen was installed. Dado rails were fitted in the main reception rooms and master bedroom. Unfortunately they ran out of

dado rail and left a bit missing in a corner of the bedroom. A door was installed between the master bedroom and the adjoining room to make a dressing room. The garage and shed roofs were recovered and other remedial works carried out, including the replacing of the ugly broken fire places with a 19th century bedroom fireplace in the dining room, and a more modern wood surround with green marble inset in the living room.

To celebrate the millennium and the arrival of a new Vicar, the Vicarage received its next phase of renovation and repair. By this time the garage doors had rotted and required replacement. The gate pier was in trouble and the garden gates were severely stressed. Part of the driveway had sunk and required attention. Some remedial work was undertaken on sections of the gutters

and down pipes, which were subsequently repainted. The exterior of the house was repainted. An accumulation of concrete and rubble was re-

moved from the outhouse. Internally it was recommended that areas with condensation damage be treated with fungicide prior to repainting. The



kitchen was fitted with an extractor hood and fan over the cooker. White goods were supplied and a new section of kitchen counter installed to facilitate the use of a microwave and television set in the kitchen. Security was improved by fitting a five lever mortice lock to the back door. It would seem that at this stage a number of the steel windows, still remaining in the house, were replaced with double-glazed units. Once the remedial work had been carried out the house was completely carpeted and curtained with high quality carpets and coordinated curtains.

2004 saw the arrival of yet another new Vicar and again attention turned to the Vicarage. This time the former

History of the Vicarage (continued)

dressing room was converted into an en-suite bathroom. High quality bathroom furniture and fittings were chosen for the en-suite bathroom. Extractor fans were fitted in the bathrooms, and the interior of the house was given a coat of paint. Bookshelves were installed in the study in compliance with the wishes of the incoming Vicar.

By 2006 the back garden fence between the Vicarage and the adjoining house had fallen into disrepair. The old fencing was removed and replaced with pressure treated timber units set in concrete uprights. Some overgrown shrubbery was removed, and the area grassed to simplify the upkeep of the garden.

In 2007 the Vicarage



was vacant again. This led to the RCB architect carrying out an inspection of the premises in October 07. The parish is now deemed to be a landlord

and the Vicar a tenant. With this in mind the house had to be brought up to the health and safety standard for any privately rented property. A committee consisting of the glebe wardens and the treasurers from both parishes was set up to undertake the works. Decisions were made when all parties had been consulted on the issues.

The glebe wardens put in place a three-pronged action plan. First of all the house had to be prepared to be used on occasional weekends by John and Rhona McKay when John was taking the services. Secondly, it was deemed necessary to present the house as best we could for viewing by prospective Vicars in early January 2008. With this in mind the house was given a professional cleaning, and some naked light bulbs got a paper shade. The oil heating was set to

come on prior to the time of viewings to welcome the candidates to a warm house. The cost of the heating oil used, soon let us know that the next

Vicar could not be expected to try to heat his/her home with this costly and energy inefficient system and comply with the undertaking given by



the select vestry to provide the Vicar with a comfortable home. Heating became one of the items on our agenda as its provision comes under the umbrella of health and safety. Thirdly tenders were put out and service providers chosen, to bring the Vicarage up to scratch.

The bedroom windows at the back of the house had to be replaced, as they did not comply with current safety regulations for bedroom windows. The remaining single glazed windows and the kitchen door were replaced with double glazed units to cut down on condensation and the formation of mould, of which there was much in the house.

It was discovered that

History of the Vicarage (continued)

the bathroom extractor fans had not in fact been ducted or vented, but had been covered by attic insulation and had therefore not been of any use. The bathroom walls were black and mouldy. The en-suite bathroom had proved not to be watertight and had leaked continuously into the study underneath. There was also evidence on the study ceiling of a major leakage. The fans have now been ducted and vented to the exterior. The en-suite bathroom has had the fittings removed, the floor sheeted, the walls tanked, tiled where necessary and the bathroom furniture refitted. The en-suite floor has been fully tiled in an effort to reduce movement in the floor. The bath has been removed



from the main bathroom and the walls treated in the same manner as those in the en-suite before refitting the bath.

The glebe wardens were instructed to have the fireplaces and flues examined by experts. It was found that the flues needed to be treated and lined to prevent heat and fume leakage into the bedrooms. The obsolete kitchen and bedroom flues have been cleaned, vented and capped to prevent dampness. The reception room fireplaces were deemed not to be suitable for a house of its age and had not been adequately sealed when fitted. They have been replaced with new identical units. Gas fires have been fitted to cut down on the emissions from the house in preparation for next year's compulsory energy audit, with which all rental properties must comply.

The 1985 boiler has been replaced with a gas fired condenser boiler which is 96% efficient. The 1965 pipes and radiators have gone to the good radiator graveyard, as they had long exceeded their twenty-five year lifespan. New high output radiators and

insulated copper piping have been installed in all rooms except the small front bedroom, which already boasted a new radiator. The electrical system



was checked and as defects come to our notice they are addressed.

The patio and path in the back garden were relaid to prevent slipping and tripping. The front and back gardens were landscaped. The gardens are being maintained at the same time as the church grounds.

The new Vicar visited the Vicarage on 26th March to discuss the décor, and his wishes are now being put in place. Every effort is being made to have the house ready for his arrival in early May. Now that the Vicarage is up to speed we wish Fr. Andrew many happy years here.

Judith Barden

Norah Bedlow

We were saddened to learn of the death on the 8th of March of Norah Bedlow, after some years of ill health. Norah and her late husband Sidney were faithful parishioners of St Bartholomew's for many years, and Norah was parish treasurer for a long period.

She will be remembered by many for her efficient work with the Sunday School Society for Ireland and the Religious Education Resource Centre.

Her son David was Organist and Choirmaster at Christ Church Leeson Park for many years, until Sunday services ceased there three years ago. Her family are in our thoughts and prayers at this time.

Fergus McCullough



Choir Table Quiz and Auction

The fourth annual choir Table Quiz and Auction was on Wednesday 16th April in the now familiar venue of Merrion Cricket Club. This event has become a major social event in the life of our parish and an excellent opportunity for parents of choristers to meet each other in a convivial (if sometimes competitive) environment.

A total of fourteen tables entered this year, with prizes being awarded to both the best and worst achievers. The organisers always have considerable fun devising prizes for the latter, with the original plan of one-way plane tickets to

Doncaster (excluding taxes and charges!) being shelved at the last minute in favour of some scrubbing brushes.

As usual the questions and answer booklets were produced by Richard Bannister, who kept the event running behind the scenes while Robin Heather acted as MC.

At the halfway point of the quiz a number of valuable items were auctioned off. Two particular individuals staged a bidding war over two cases of wine, providing

major amusement to all those present while at the same time achieving the primary goal.

We are particularly in debt to all those who donated items for auction, including Richard Bannister, Bobby Barden, Alan Bigley, Michael Doyle, Robin Heather, Tim Thurston, The Wicklow Wine Company, Lumley's Bakery, The Fone Factory, Saab



The Quiz. [Photo: Andrew Bannister]

Ireland, and Jaguar Ireland. Many more people donated items for the raffle, ensuring there were prizes for nearly everybody in the audience. It is impossible to mention everyone by name, so please accept this as a collective thank you to all who contributed.

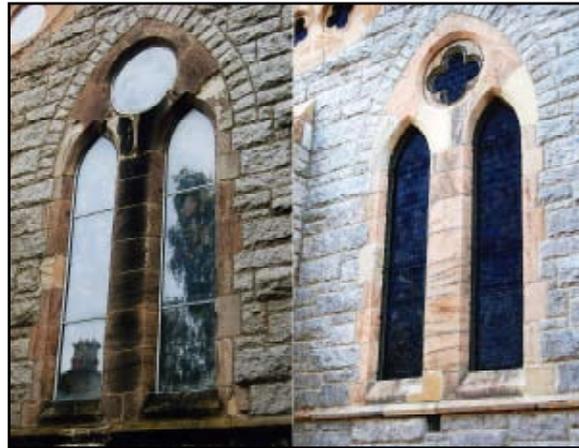
The total raised - following donations - has exceeded €2150, which will be going towards the cost of bringing both choirs on tour in 2009.

Robin Heather

Conservation Project

A major conservation study was carried out on St. Bartholomew's early in 2006, which highlighted a number of factors which had contributed to erosion of much of the sandstone on the exterior of the building. These included the presence of cementitious pointing in exterior joints (rather than mortar-based), gutters and downpipes in need of repair, secondary glazing on some windows, moss, algae and lichen growths, and inferior quality sandstone. The study also highlighted the problems which are caused in this type of building in trying to meet the requirement of occupant comfort in an economical manner, which leads to large movements in internal temperature.

Quotations were received for an extensive restoration programme, including renovation of the stained glass windows, which in total came to



Before and after. [Photos: Don Cazzini]

€1 million. The Select Vestry decided to proceed initially with work on the west façade. The stonework was cleaned down, and any stone which was extensively eroded was replaced, mainly around the windows and along the string-

course. Stonework which was not so seriously eroded was repaired. The original pointing was all scraped out and replaced with appropriate material. Renovation of the windows was a major part of the operation as each window was removed, and totally dismantled. Each piece of glass was carefully examined and repainted where necessary, and then all was re-assembled and released. The secondary glazing was replaced by steel grills. The work was completed last November at a cost of €110,000. The excellent results are there for all to see, but proceeding further will obviously require some major fund-raising initiatives.

Charlie Smith

Address Book

Vicar: *From May 19th, Revd Andrew McCroskery. Queries prior to that date should be addressed to Revd Canon Neil McEndoo, Tel: 01-4971797.*

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About

St Bartholomew's News is edited and typeset by Richard Bannister. Submissions for future issues and all enquiries about advertising should be sent to the address on the left. The newsletter is available by post for a nominal charge; for further details, contact the Parish Administrator.

A full schedule of services and events is available on the diary page of the parish web site, located at <http://www.stbartholomews.ie/services.htm>.