



# Kitbag!

Volume 8, Issue 2

December 2007

## Farewell to Tony



It is with great sadness that we say farewell to the Revd Dr Tony Bell who is leaving the circuit at the end of December to pursue his physics career. Tony has only been with us for just over two years but in that time has seen over the refurbishment at Lime Walk, inaugurated a very successful Bible Study at Horspath, has encouraged growth at Cowley Road, has helped develop courses exploring Christianity at Lime Walk and has gently guided through his preaching and his thoughtful care. We shall miss him and we wish him well and every blessing for the future.

Because Tony has had to leave earlier than he had wished in order to take advantage of the job opportunity being offered to him, there will be a short interim period until our newly appointed minister arrives in September. During this time, the Revd Jonathan Todd will have pastoral charge of Lime Walk, Cowley Road and Horspath, in addition to his current responsibilities. To help facilitate this, Jonathan will be going full-time in the circuit from January instead of from September, as originally planned.

## Bladon Junior Church

Our autumn production was the Broadway version of Kenneth Grahame's classic *The Wind in the Willows*. As well as the principal characters of Toad, Ratty, Mole and Badger, the cast included over 30 stoats, weasels, rabbits, ferrets and other woodland creatures. The church was transformed into a wonderful wood-

where you can also listen to a copy of the hilarious Radio Oxford interview.



land scene and was full to capacity for every performance of this magical musical. The show was great fun to rehearse and perform and the audience loved it. The cast were brilliant and we are very proud of them all.

We also got invited to the BBC Radio Oxford Studios where Toad, the Chief Weasel and a small Ferret overwhelmed the presenter who was lost for words when faced with such strong personalities!

Photographs from the show are on our website at [juniorchurch.co.uk/willows](http://juniorchurch.co.uk/willows),



### Christmas

Our Christmas events kick off with our ever popular Candlelit Concert on Tuesday 11th December at 7pm. The Methodist Church will be spectacularly lit with candles, thousands of fairy lights and other lighting effects for this concert of songs by the Junior Church and guest artists. If that wasn't enough, the concert will be followed by delicious refreshments for all the audience. Our Christmas Family Service will be at 11am on Sunday 16th December and will include an amusing nativity play by the Junior Church. Our annual Carol Singing expedition will leave from the school-room at 6pm on Sunday 23rd December and finally, on Christmas Eve at 5pm, we will conclude our celebrations with an All-Age Christmas Eve Service. After the hustle and bustle of the Christmas preparations, this is a lovely way to relax and reflect on the true meaning of Christmas.

### Message boards

As well as meeting on Sundays, Junior Church members keep in touch with each other during the week on our Junior Church Message Boards which now have 41 members and over 46,000 posts! As well as current members, the boards are also open to past members to register. Recently Fiona and Heather Athie, who regularly attended Bladon Junior Church during the 1990s, have joined our community from as far away as Mexico!

Phil Rumsby



## Golden Wedding Bells

Many congratulations to the Revd Das Gill and his wife Shila on the occasion of their 50th wedding anniversary. Das is the pastor of the Indian Congregation at Cowley Road, and has been for many years.

Many congratulations, too, to Hilary Blake and Ian Miller on the occasion of their wedding on 15th December. Hilary is one of our young local preachers and they both worship at Wesley Memorial. In fifty years time, maybe we will print one of their wedding photos!

## Circuit Noticeboard

### A Tribute

May I through *Kitbag* pay a tribute to one of our senior members at Lime Walk. I refer, of course, to Mary Hanna. Mary has been a member of Lime Walk for many years and, during that time, has been an example to us all. She has run the women's "Thursday Fellowship" for decades and always takes an interest in church activities, such as Open House, Bring and Share and the annual church holiday.

Although not 100% healthwise, Mary overcomes transport difficulties and can be seen racing around Headington on her scooter. She has always loved music and is a keen member of our church choir. As chairwoman of the Drama Group, she plays an active role in rehearsals and in the policy of the group. Thank you, Mary, for being there.

*Tony Claridge*

### Green Gyms

You may have heard various things on the radio recently about Green Gyms: the idea that a three hour stint spent doing practical conservation work would benefit people's health at the same time as helping the environment.

One such group, run by the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers, operates in Woodstock. Led by a trained conservation officer, I have found the group to be superbly organised. I have enjoyed the opportunity to improve the environment in Woodstock while losing a few pounds and making new friends.

The next Green Gym opportunity is on 28<sup>th</sup> November at 10am at Glyme Close car park, Woodstock. For further information telephone Nina Sperinck on 01296 330033 or check the BTCV website

*Jane Brown*

### Woodstock Books

In order to build a tiny training school for metalwork in Kitwe, Zambia, Jane Brown and Megan Chappell have set up a social enterprise. Their aim is to demonstrate added value in their own community by collecting up any book, in any condition, on any subject that has had one or more owners.

Jane explained: "We've negotiated a deal with a London book-seller who has agreed to buy all our books from us. All we have to do is to find the books and get them to London.

"Using this social approach we cover our main aims: to create a small local business; to keep books in circulation; to return all profit to the project in Zambia."

Their aim is to send £5,000. Their challenge is to find sufficient books. Can you help? Contact Jane on 07905850486 or 01993 810444.

### NCH Autumn Fair

A huge thank you to everyone who took part in the NCH Autumn Fair on 17<sup>th</sup> November – we raised a staggering £1055.77. This is a brilliant total and will be much appreciated by NCH, which runs projects across the country to help disadvantaged young people. Many thanks to everyone who contributed, whether by running a stall, helping to set up or coming to spend some money!

*Emma Huber*

### Preacher Development

All preachers in the circuit are now listened to on a regular basis and feedback offered as a way of affirming and supporting them in their work. Worship is the responsibility of us all and our preachers greatly value your thoughts and comments about what happens during worship. The feedback process involves the appointed listener attending the service and sharing with the preacher afterwards their comments: what worked well, and maybe what didn't quite work on this occasion, feeding back not only their own thoughts but also those from other members of the congregation. Our reaction to worship can be very personal. It is thus important to try and get a response from a wide cross-section of the congregation. So, when such a feedback process is taking place where you are, please do help our preachers by sharing your thoughts when asked. Your input is much appreciated and will always be listened to.

*Jonathan Todd*

# Kennington makes history

Kennington made history on September 16th when, for our Mission in Britain Sunday, we invited the Director of the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies, Dr Farhan Nizami, to preach at our morning service. He talked about the basic tenets of the Islamic faith, and as this was at the start of Ramadan, he shared with us its importance for every Muslim. He called Christians and Muslims "cousins" and we had a very warm time of fellowship together. We learned a great deal and Dr Nizami expressed his pleasure at being with us.

The Kennington Choirs gave their annual performance of Handel's "Messiah" in early October in the Holywell Music Room in Oxford and raised £5,930 for the Medi-

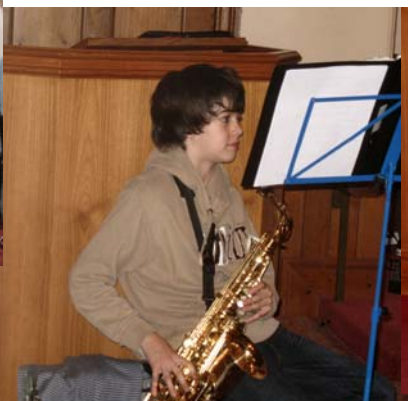
cal Foundation for Victims of Torture. This included a splendid anonymous gift of £4,000.

On November 18th Kennington celebrated its 40th birthday and, as well as special events on the day, the November edition of the Kennington Chronicle, which goes to every house in the village, produced a special edition with a colour photograph of the sanctuary on the front cover, and four pages of photographs inside accompanied by the history of the church and its present activities. It has given us a real mission opportunity. We look forward to the future with great confidence.

*Trevor Cowlett*

# Rockfish Record CD

Stuck for a Christmas present? Rockfish, the young people's worship band at Wesley Memorial, were recently to be found at Woodstock recording a new CD which, we hope, will soon be topping the charts. It will soon be on sale and available through the Church Office at Wesley Memorial.



# Tackley Bicentenary

2008 will be an important year for Tackley Methodist Church as we shall be celebrating our Bicentenary and have a number of special events planned. Former ministers have been invited to take services during the year and we are extremely fortunate that the President of the Methodist Conference, the Revd Dr Martyn Atkins, will be preaching at the morning service on Sunday May 18th. There will also be an open air service on the Village Green at 4pm (followed by tea) when the Revd Dr Tim Macquiban is to be the preacher. Perhaps the weather will be kinder to us than on the occasion planned to cele-

brate Charles Wesley's tercentenary! May 18th is the Sunday nearest to the date two hundred years ago when the building and land were made available to the original Trustees. A Reunion of all who have attended

the Sunday School, former members, and anyone baptised or married at the Church, is planned to coincide with an exhibition in the Church over the weekend of March 8th and 9th. We are also compiling a short history of the chapel and a book of prayers. We would be delighted to welcome friends from the circuit at events during the year.

*Vi Banbury*

### Forthcoming Dates

Feb 24	10.30am	Revd Dr Andrew Fox
Weekend of Mar 8/9		Exhibition of the Church's life through the years
Mar 8		Re-union event
Apr 13	10.30am	Revd Brian Spencer
May 18		Anniversary services
	10.30am	Revd Dr Martyn Atkins (President of Conference)
	4.00pm	Revd Dr Tim Macquiban (on village green)

## Oxford Circuit

Circuit Office  
Wesley Memorial Church  
New Inn Hall Street  
Oxford

Phone: 01865-243216

Fax: 01865-247706

Email:

newsletter@oxfordmethodists.org.uk

Web:

www.oxfordmethodists.org.uk

**Deadline for next issue  
18th February 2008**



KEEPING  
IN TOUCH

Please send contributions to the  
editor, Jonathan Todd, either  
via the circuit office or by email.

## Carols at Murcott

You are warmly invited to join the people at Murcott for a short carol service in the church at 7:30pm followed by more informal carol singing and mince pies around the fire at Murcott House, the home of Peggy North. This annual event is a great way to start your Christmas celebrations and everyone is very welcome. If you are not sure where Murcott is, please contact Jonathan (Ox 842214) or Peggy (Ox 331328).

**Thursday, 20th December  
7:30pm  
Murcott Church**



## Dates for your Diary

Saturday 1st December—11am

Christmas Bazaar at Lime Walk

Friday 14th December

Lime Walk Players present an International Christmas Evening

Friday & Saturday 14th & 15th December—7:30pm

Kennington Choirs perform *Princess Ida* at Kennington Methodist Church in aid of Penhurst NCH Special School, Chipping Norton

Weekend of March 7th/8th

Tackley bicentenary exhibition of the church's life through the years

March 8th

Tackley bicentenary re-union event

March 8th—10am until 4pm

Secondhand Book Sale at Kidlington Methodist Church  
Very crowded in the morning but books topped up at 1pm

## SoS—Spirituality on Screen

2nd December *Tsotsi*

6th January *Star Wars—A New Hope*

3rd February *Into Great Silence*

2nd March *Babel*

10 Bletchingdon Road, Islip

5:30pm



# Alternativity

## A musical for after Christmas

**Where:** Wesley Memorial  
**When:** Saturday 19th and Sunday 20th January  
**Time:** 7:30pm

*Alternativity tells the story of what might have happened at the first Christmas if other people had had a hand in the planning. A colourful, tuneful, light-hearted entertainment for all the family with one or two serious thoughts tucked in there somewhere...*

Fun for all the family! Everyone welcome! Please do come!  
Now in its 23rd year!!