

St. Clement's Christmas Newsletter 2009.

In the year of Our Lord 1259 Magna Carta had been signed by King John 44 years previously. Henry III was King of England and Bishop Walter Bronescombe arrived at the newly built little church of Powderham and consecrated it on St. Clement's Day, the 23rd November. This year was the 750th anniversary of that day and Bishop Michael Langrish conducted a service of Holy Communion to commemorate it and to bless the two new Churchwardens' wands. The history of the intervening years is contained in a revised 8 page leaflet now available at the back of the church. (A beautiful new "Donations box" has been made by John Thompson and installed by the west door for payment of these leaflets.)

During the last 25 years Gordon Mortimer has been a Churchwarden following generations of his family in the job, but at 86 he thought he ought to retire this year. His years in office have seen the regular congregation increase from about 10 to over 30 and this is a testament to his dedicated work and care for the church and parishioners. We thank him and his late wife Freda for everything that they have done for us. John Thompson was instated as Churchwarden at the Cathedral by the Bishop of Exeter last May and we thank him for all the work that he has already done and hope that he will continue to look after us for many years to come.

To celebrate the church's anniversary two special events took place during the year, the first being the Flower festival over the late May bank holiday weekend when over 600 people visited the church viewed the wonderful displays put together by members of the congregation, listened to the Alpine Horns, the St. Celia Choir and partook of the delicious cream teas. The event was featured in the Prayer Book Society national newsletter and raised over £412 for the building repair fund. The second event, a concert, took place in the music room of the castle on a fine June evening with performers ranging from Seraphim, a trio from

St. Margaret's School, the Chamber Choir Enigma, the newly restored organ being played. This raised over £730 for St. Clement's. Our other annual events, the BBQ at the Belvedere and Harvest Lunch at Forest Gate raised a further £613. So with donations and these events £3008 was raised for ongoing building repair work.

The last stained glass window on the south side has now been restored and protected with a mesh grill at a total cost of £2440 and during 2010 the two windows at the north east corner, in the Devon pew area, and the one above the vestry roof will be worked on.

We are in the initial stages of working out how we can install a w.c. in part of the vestry. As there are many obstacles to be overcome it will take some time. Watch this space!

At our Harvest Festival service this year we made a special collection for the charity "Farm Crisis Network", which supports farmers in Devon and raised just over £200 to give to the Rev'd Terry Brighton, who conducted the service. During 2009 we had the funeral of Mrs. Brenda Deasy and the ashes of John Much interred. They were both long standing members of our congregation and dedicated to the continuance of life at St. Clement's. Some of John's wonderful sermons will be remembered for many years to come, as will his slots on Westward television in the "Epilogues" .

We also interred the ashes of Mrs. Hilda Brewer who died just short of her 100th birthday. Both she and her husband were staunch members of the congregation. We had 3 weddings and 5 baptisms during the year.

You will have noticed the wonderful collage of photographs showing our activities during the year displayed in the south porch. We are very grateful to Jennifer and Bernard Rowland for putting this together. Dr. Gordon Langley has also been recording our 750th year and plans to put a record in the church's log book for future generations. (If you see some flashes go off during the Carol Service it will be Gordon and not the electrical system blowing out we hope!) Last year's annual report reminded us that the day to day running expenses of St. Clement's requires just over £9 a week from each of us in the collection. The Parish's contribution to the Dioceses has been raised by 43% for 2010 and naturally your Parochial Church Council is protesting about this. Any restoration work is funded from the events that we hold during the year. We would thank all of our priests and lay readers for taking our services and all those that "do their bit" to make sure that there is a service to come to every at Sunday at 11am. We have lost some our hardest working team members during 2009 and we desperately need replacements in the front lines of the duty verger, flower arranging and cleaning rotas. We need everyone to "do their bit" otherwise the ones that are doing theirs become very despondent.