

CHURCH OF ST MARY, SARNESFIELD JUNE 01 2009

The first of June and the sun is shining.....can this be the long-wished-for summer that the forecasters have hinted at? Well, let's hope so as it'll get some good heat into those ancient stone walls that make St Mary's so special.

And talking of stones, the dry-stone walling repairs around the churchyard are now completed, and enthusiastically welcomed by those who have visited in recent weeks. For those of you who know the churchyard well, you'll know the wall on the southern side was badly cracked and falling away. This has now been repaired; it looks as good as new, and is much safer too! In order to do the work, Simon had to relocate the water tap, but only by a few feet and so it's almost where it always was. At the same time, in order to get to the wall, he had to cut back the rather woody, overgrown rhododendron, and so I think we have an opportunity for a small amount of new planting; perhaps the gardeners among us will have ideas? If you do, please let us know.

Inside the church we have a new inscribed stone vase, in memory of Ivy Lewis, and this now sits in the East window where there is a matching memorial to her husband Les. Ivy and Les spent a great deal of their life together at Sarnesfield, and I know from conversations with Ivy that they both had very fond memories of the estate, and working in the woods in particular. I'm afraid that the days of having four men working in the woods have passed us by now, but I hope some of the magic Ivy described is still there, even if one has to look just a little harder to find it.

A new, and potentially exciting revelation is the strong probability that the stained glass window behind the altar is by Christopher Whall, a very celebrated Arts & Crafts window designer. This probability came to light when an architectural and stained glass historian came to visit the church recently. He is working on a revision of the Herefordshire title in Nikolaus Pevsner's '*The Buildings of England*' series of architectural guides. He arrived, already armed with a great deal of research and his assertion that the window is by Christopher Whall. Let's hope that this is soon confirmed beyond doubt as it would be nice to be quite sure, and if it is, it then it gives St Mary's another point of interest that will attract visitors.

ANOTHER SLICE OF FUNDRAISING!

High summer? Well almost, and in these post Hay Festival, Wimbledon's-around-the-corner days what better than picnics and cucumber sandwiches. But there's more to a tea-time picnic than just sandwiches - cake is an essential companion on the rug, and here's the answer for those lucky enough to be in Weobley next week!

Yes, it's time for the next **Sarnesfield Ladies Cake Stall** and the date is **Thursday June 11th** from about 9am onwards as usual. It will be at our usual location in Weobley, just outside by the Corner Shop Newsagent at the top of Broad Street.

With outstanding cake-baking support, the April Cake stall was a cherry-topped success, and a complete sell out. So I hope you can help us once again with stall No 2/2009. If you are able to help us maintain both the variety and the quantity of cakes we've had in the past, do please drop off your cakes with Hilary Havard or Viv Leech, or bring them to the stall on the morning from about 9.00 am onwards. See you then I hope, and thank you all once again.

BYFORD, JUST TOO GOOD!

This year's Inter-Parish Croquet Tournament was won by Byford, again! Stage-managed by Sir John Cotterell and Maggie Denaro at Garnons in May - a lovely venue on a sunny day - there was some pretty tough competition, not least between Sarnesfield 1 and Sarnesfield 2 in the semi-final! Sarnesfield 1, that was Jake Leech and yours truly, progressed to the final where we made a good fist of coming second to Byford's all-conquering Sue Hubbard and Will Denaro. We had a fun afternoon, lovely teas, and with Byford winning, it's back to Garnons next year - nothing wrong with that!

SERVICES AT SARNESFIELD

- Sunday June 28th - Family Service: 9.15am
- Sunday 23rd August - Family Service: 9.15am

ALSO FOR YOUR DIARY.....

- Sunday July 26th - Final Service for Rev'd Lynn Money at Weobley (Time TBA)
- Group Communion at Byford - Sunday 30th August: 11.00am
- Cake Stall - Thursday September 17th
- Cake Stall - Thursday December 3rd

All the best,
Roger Marshall

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GROUP WEBSITE: www.weobleyandstaunton.co.uk