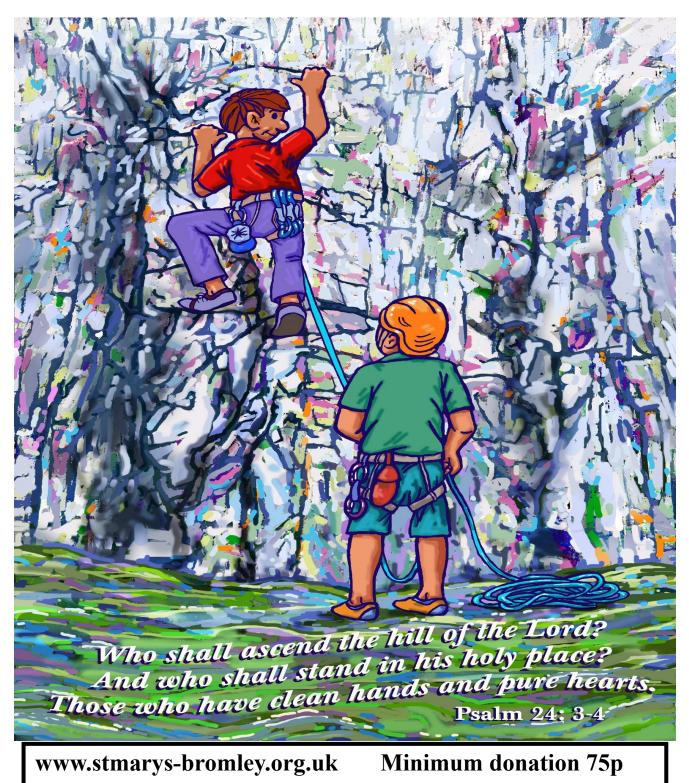
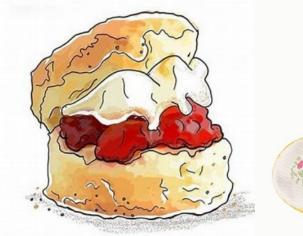
St Mary's Church, Bromley Parish Magazine SEPTEMBER 2024 61 College Road Bromley BR1 3QG





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Welcome to the September 2024 edition of the Parish Magazine.

The front cover is a little different from usual and I chose this as I was reading about Toby Roberts (a Godincidence) the 17 year old who won an Olympic Gold medal for climbing so showing what can be achieved with hard work but what is also enjoyable.

I read somewhere that September editions of magazines are difficult to produce due to lack of input as people have been on holiday and have not quite gotten back in to the swing of things. Fingers crossed that for our Parish magazine that feeling does not continue throughout the year.

Anglicans are more likely to say that they are satisfied with their lives, and many older churchgoers say that they never feel lonely.

A recent survey for the Belonging Forum, which supports dialogue between faiths, has found that there is a strong association between belonging to a faith group and having greater well-being and health.

The survey found that religious people have higher levels of 'social connectedness' and friendships than the general population. They are more likely to speak with their neighbours regularly, and to have on average more friends than non-religious people do.

It seems that faith communities can play an important role in providing a sense of belonging and purpose in the UK.

Do you feel "Connected" to St Mary's the editors of the magazine would love to hear

Your thoughts . Jo Clark

This month's editor: Jo Clark Editor for October: Jill Atkinson Copy date: Friday 20th September 2024

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Memorial Book



St. Mary's Church has a memorial book in which may be inscribed names of people associated with the parish. If you would like to know more details please contact Alan or Jean Read on 020 8402 0886.

Disclaimer The opinions, beliefs and viewpoints expressed by the various participants in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the opinions, beliefs and viewpoints of the Editors.

Mary and St Mary's



As we are, we hope coming towards the end of our vacancy, or at least towards the beginning of the end, with interviews soon, I invite you to join me in thanking all those people who have come to St Mary's and helped us. Those who have helped with our worship who have come from outside have been really interesting and different. Those of us from within the St Mary's community have found ourselves developing new skills and ensuring all our different activities continue in some shape or form. We have all done so.

As well as the practical help we remember and thank all those who have prayed for us while we have been waiting in hope 'for a new parish priest. It is truly heartwarming and inspiring, so thank you all, especially those who gave us advice at need, may God bless you in all the days ahead. A particular thank you to Rev'd Angela King, who when I asked if she could lay her hands on a spare oil stock, to use at our baptism services went out and found us one.

It gives me such pleasure thinking back on all the gifts so generously shared with us, that I recommend sometimes remembering good times shared, as a cheering way of spending time at the end of the day, as well examining the day mindfully for our faults and failings, and planning selfimprovement.

I am writing this around the time when some Churches dedicated to Mary celebrate the feast of the Assumption. I don't myself, but I have been in places where they do, and I don't think anyone at St Mary's keeps this feast, as it's a very old tradition more frequently observed in the Roman Catholic and Orthodox Churches, based on the belief that Mary on her deathbed, like Jesus was raised from the dead and went straight to. heaven in body as well as soul. It is a contentious belief ,and the arguments about it detract, I think, from the most significant contributions of Mary to our understanding of our faith.

But what any feast of Mary does is give us another opportunity to think about what we actually learn *from* Mary rather than *about* her. We know very little about Mary for certain, because the information in the Scriptures is quite limited.

In summary ,she said 'yes' to God's call to be the mother of the Lord, she was faithful to the end, despite the cost, following her son on the way of the cross and beyond. She carried the heart break of being possibly a refugee, and an exile in a strange land, but certainly of living in fear of persecution, by either the Romans or the religious authorities.

She might possibly have been ostracised for being pregnant in mysterious circumstances.

But more significant, perhaps, as God was Jesus's father in heaven. Then Mary, was his mother on earth, with all the responsibility that it involves for his health and welfare, his safety as a child, and most importantly for his early learning and training as a human child, and adolescent. Mary had a lot of input into the kind of man that Jesus became, and his understanding of what it means to be fully human, as well as fully divine. Interestingly, Mary has often been likened to the perfect disciple, because she said 'yes' *to* God, and accepted her calling *from* God and she is an inspiration to all of us to show similar obedience when God calls us to follow in the footsteps of Jesus.

She is also a good model for discretion, she kept what she knew and pondered it 'in her heart' she reflected on her experience and seems to have accepted the pain of what happened to her son without any recorded protest.

We can only hope and assume, that she responded in the tradition of Job, who said in response to his losses of everything , health, wife and family, flocks, land and possessions. "The Lord gives, and the Lord takes away. Blessed be the name of the Lord."

7

Despite their overwhelming grief and pain, Mary like Job before her appears to maintain an unwavering faith in God, through Crucifixion to Resurrection. Job accepts the transient nature of life and the material possessions that come with it, Mary watches the humiliation and death of her son in the cruellest of ways, and yet is a witness ultimately to both his earthly life and his Resurrection.

But Mary's possible influence continues in the words of the Magnificat , known as the Song of Mary, which St Luke ascribes to her in his gospel. It is one of the oldest of Christian hymns and one of the most radical of texts, in terms of justice and equality. It is one of those texts that reveals the complete transformation that Jesus proclaims, the turning upside down of the accepted status quo, with the coming of God's kingdom.

In a way it doesn't matter if was actually Mary who first spoke the words of the Magnificat ,because she was the mother of Jesus who lived them out in his earthly life, so I hope she knew the message, and the hope and expectation they contain.

So here they are those thrilling words describing radical change ahead:

My soul proclaims the greatness of the Lord, my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, for He has looked with favour on His humble servant. From this day all generations will call me blessed, the Almighty has done great things for me, and holy is His Name. He has mercy on those who fear Him in every generation. He has shown the strength of his arm, He has scattered the proud in their conceit. He has cast down the mighty from their thrones, and has lifted up the humble. He has filled the hungry with good things, and the rich He has sent away empty. He has come to the help of His servant Israel for He has remembered his promise of mercy, the promise He made to our fathers, to Abraham and his children for ever.

A view from the pew



Dogs bring you back to basics. Well, not only dogs, but cats, rabbits, guinea pigs, mice and, I suppose, even goldfish. We don't have a pet, but we regularly look after our daughter's dog. And she (the dog, not the daughter) has a way of ensuring that we pay attention. Seldom with barks, and never with bites, but often with a hard stare when the meal is overdue. Or it's a tug on the trouser leg when it is "walkies time". Or a reproachful look by the back door when it is time to play in the garden. If an animal can be so obvious in their communication, it beggars belief that humans can make such a mess with their ability to talk. But we have the unerring ability to say one thing and "imply" the opposite. Or we can speak clearly while avoiding the issue at hand. Or we can attribute meaning to words that they fail to carry.

We have many dangerous examples of this at the highest level, for example when Trump and Putin exchanged words and we held our breath over the translations. Trump's throwaway remarks, when he said he would "encourage" aggressors to do whatever they want with NATO countries that fail to pay their dues.

At the local level, friends may interpret the need for space as neglect, while there have been many examples in social media posts of misunderstanding because of brevity. This can happen in business, as well. Feedback can be seen as criticism when it is intended to promote growth.

The straining of relationships, confusion and conflict can all arise due to miscommunication. This may be down to styles (we all have our own way of expressing opinions), or to unspoken assumptions/expectations, or possibly to the interpretation of non-verbal cues, such as body language or facial expressions.

Sadly, the wonderful boon that the media has brought us, has also opened up more opportunity for misinterpretation. We all use the "shorthand" of the digital realm in our own personal way, leading to messages/tones being taken wrongly.

But enough of the pitfalls. What about the resolution of these problems?

We need to listen carefully – and actively to ensure we have the true weighting of comments.

We need to express feelings clearly, and claim them as our own by using "I" statements.

We need to avoid making assumptions about each other's intentions, and seek clarification instead of jumping to conclusions.

We need to encourage a culture of apology and forgiveness, and to acknowledge our mistakes openly.

Mediation can often be a valuable tool to facilitate constructive dialogue. But please don't ask me to adjudicate. I would doubtless say the wrong thing, give an ambiguous glance, drop the baton....

What I am saying is.....please use your own judgement. It is bound to be better than mine.

Peter Fall

RIDE Ride and Stride – Saturday 14th September

Ride and Stride for Friends of Kent Churches is on **Saturday 14th September** this year, it's 75th anniversary. Last year this event raised £140,029 and St Mary's hopes to take part again. Therefore, we need your help. Are you willing to visit participating churches and chapels on that date or help keep St Mary's open...Can you provide sponsorship? This event will be combined with **London Open House** at the same **t**ime. Please let Chris Soper know and add the date to your diary.

Choir Notes



"I hate church choirs!"

This was in an article I read recently about the history of hymns. It went on to expand on this damning statement:

"They perform boring, outdated music. I could tolerate boring, outdated music if it was done

well, but amateur choirs usually sound terrible. You can't expect them to sound good with an hour of rehearsal on a Wednesday night."

For "Wednesday" read "Thursday" and it could be about St Mary's Church choir! Maybe people in St Mary's congregation are thinking the same thing. It seems that choirs may have gone out of fashion, especially in newer churches. What has happened?

Everyone has a hectic schedule these days. Many churches have reduced their weekly choir rehearsals to fortnightly, or even monthly. Music leaders of all types are finding it hard to keep up with the multiple commitments they so often have.

Is choir music too hard for today's generation? Schools tend not to include music-reading programmes in their over-burdened music curriculum, so few amateur singers today can sight-read music. Most of us just know that when the little dots on the page moved up the lines we had to sing higher! Generally we just like music and want to be part of a group.

But do today's congregations really want a traditional four-part choir? With the emphasis on worship, praise and participatory songs are becoming the norm, rather than a choir that "performs" dated anthems. A praise choir would lead the congregation spiritually as well as vocally. It would function as a small group, spending time together in prayer asking God to bless their contribution to worship. You will be delighted to know that we do! The choir always prays together before and after a service. And at every rehearsal we ask for God's blessing on each member, whether present or absent. St Mary's Choir is not like an average non-church choir. There is no audition, we sing to the glory of God, and to encourage and support the congregation in their worship. The music we prepare is chosen to be relevant to the church year, with appropriate words and tuneful melodies. Many anthems will be familiar to regular church-goers, but we occasionally introduce a completely new piece (to us), at an appropriate time, because of the relevance of its words and music.

We are blessed with an enormous stock of choral music in the choir vestry, from which we are usually able to find anthems that are timely and relevant. This means that, as well as the famous composers, such as Bach, Handel, Mendelssohn, Parry and Rutter, we are able occasionally to bring you pieces by lesser-known folk such as Stainer, Farrant, Pitoni and Howell. If you have any favourite anthems you would like to hear sung during a service, please let one of the choir know – and if it is relevant (and singable by us) we will try to find the right place for it in the church's year.

Oh, by the way.... we love Handel, but his fugues are beyond our capabilities – for example "All we like sheep" from "Messiah". In that piece we really do tend to "all go our own way"!

Peter Fall

When the sun goes edgewise – and daytime equals night

23rd September is the autumnal equinox (if you live in the northern hemisphere) or the vernal (Spring) equinox (if you live in the southern hemisphere) The equinoxes occur in March and September, when the Sun is 'edgewise' to the Earth's axis of rotation, so that everywhere on earth has twelve hours of daylight and twelve hours of darkness.

Mothers' Union Matters

There has been a long and sustained fight for equality for the sexes, both in this country and around the world.

The fact is that equality is no longer considered adequate,

and the focus should now be more on equity. Equity is the new way to approach gender equality.

Unlike equality, equity understands that help needs to be tailored to each individual's needs so everyone reaches the same level. Not all assistance will help in the same way, as everyone is unique and has different resources. An example to illustrate this is giving everyone the same pair of shoes. Not everyone has the same shape or sized foot, therefore the same shoe will not be suitable for all. It is best to give an individual the shoe that fits their foot. Just as it best to give people the help that best fits their situation.

At Mothers' Union, equity is at the heart of what their programmes achieve within local communities, providing individuals with tools, knowledge and means to lift themselves out of poverty. One of the programmes in South Sudan looks at the startling difference of responsibility between the women and men in the society. This is called the 24-hour clock participatory learning activity. It is known as the safest way to bring up gender equality in these communities. The 24-hour clock activity aims to highlight how much work and responsibility falls on the women in the family in a 24-hour period.

On the daily activity chart, the women's day was filled with cleaning, washing, cooking and looking after the children. In contrast, the father of the family had activities such as reading the Bible, listening to the radio, going for prayers and community meetings, and watching sport. It reveals the difference in responsibility in the household. Despite the men believing they have a full day their activity shows that this is not the case



By giving the women of the household this knowledge, it gives them the confidence to ask for help and raise their voice, not only for themselves but that of their children. It challenges former behaviours and shows how much the women of the family are doing alone.

This gave women in Juba the confidence to 'give some duties to my children' and release some of the burden of their daily life and give the male children added responsibility. 'With sweeping I divide the area to the three small boys.' The learning then trickles down further into the community from the initial training, one woman 'educated the [neighbour] girl on the daily activity chart'. 'I raised my voice about gender' said one participant.

Mothers' Union equips local communities with the tools they need to help themselves and the wider community. Not only do they fight for equality, but they strive for equity. Due to this input, female participants have said that their homelife and their workload has changed after the training. It is helping them get more support from their families with their household duties and sharing the burden.

All of this has a familiar ring about it. Maybe, just maybe, it might apply much closer to home.

Dare you try the 24-hour clock activity chart?

Peter Fall

MU Meetings in September 2024

Wednesday 4th Grace Café from 10 a.m.

Thursday 19th Knit 'n' Knatter from 10 a.m. (in Front Room.

Plant sale - growing success - an email received



I hope this email finds you well.

I purchased a busy lizzie cutting from your plant sale a couple of months ago, and wanted to show you it now.

After weeks of care, here it is now! Please kindly see attached photo.

I am delighted with it, and it makes me happy everytime I go into my garden and see it!

I will be back again when you next have a sale.

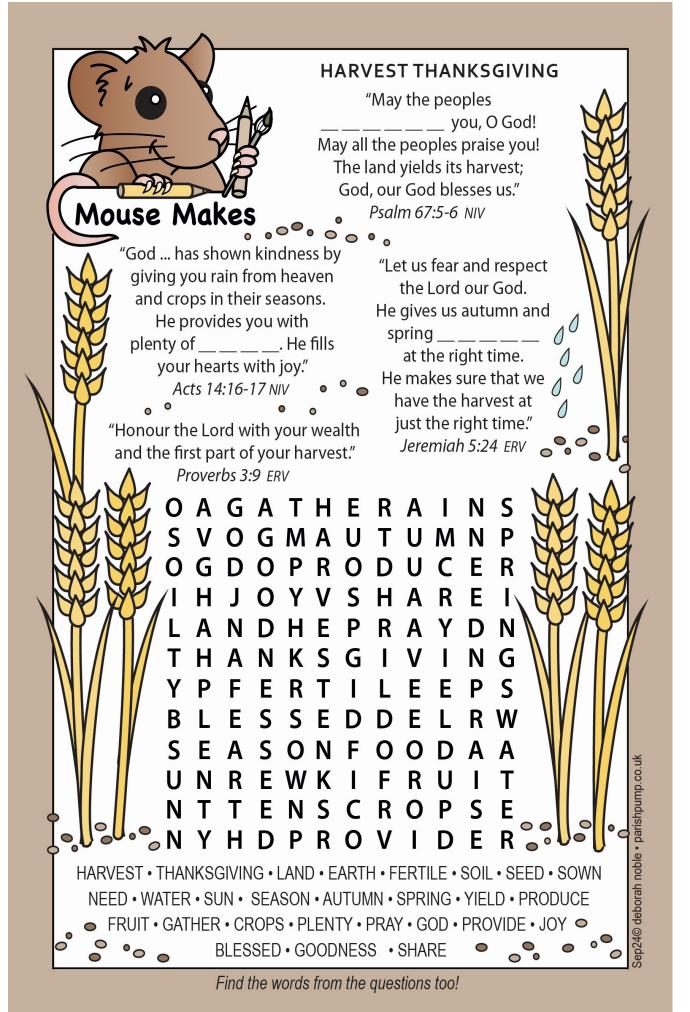
Kind regards Andrea



Careplus aims to provide free local volunteer support for older people locally. Their needs are met for befriending, social support and practical assistance. This is undertaken by volunteers who give support in the form of befriending, shopping and transport.

Please consider helping Careplus. It will also be wonderful if there could be a representative of St. Mary's Church to be on the organizing committee which meets three times a year. To know more please speak visit http://www.careplusbromley.org.uk





Board Games

Board games seem to crop up in every culture all over the world, usually with either a gambling or a religious aspect. But how long have they really been around?

The oldest board game found is disputed by many authorities. In the end, it seems to depend on your exact definition of a board game and also whether we know what the rules were, or not.

At the moment the earliest contender are a group of stone slabs between 6,000 and 10,000 years old from the Syria/Jordan/Iran area. They are basically flat slabs with two rows of pits carved into them. There may also be game pieces in the form of 22 polished limestone pieces from southern Turkey.

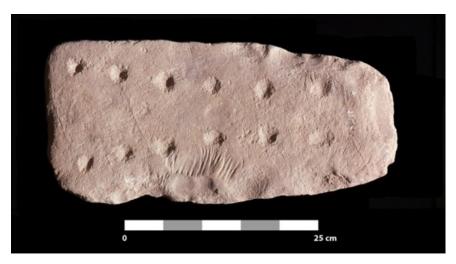


Figure 1Neoithic Game Board

The next find is from a grave about 5,000 years old. This consists of 49 stones which have been painted or sculpted together with a dice. Egypt also has games from about 5,000 years ago, using a stone board carved as a coiled snake. These are found in burial tombs and may represent the path to the after life



Figure 2 Egyptian Snake Game

After that comes the Royal Game of Ur, about 4,500 years old. This was found in the excavations of a Royal cemetery in the Sumerian city of Ur. At the time the rules were not known, but later they were found written down by a second century BC astrologer. It is one of the type of games where you move counters in a race round the board, like ludo or backgammon, eating, or bumping your opponent's counters off the board. Irving Finkel of the British museum translated the rules and it is worth watching him playing it on the British Museum website. At that time a set of six tetrahedral pieces were used instead of dice, A very similar game is still played in the near East.

Go is also an old game, but only from about 2,000 BC. It started in China, but it took the Japanese in about 500 AD to formalise the rules. As such, it is probably the game that has been played unchanged the longest. Mahjong is also an old Chinese game, but, compared to the others it is a baby – probably less than 400 years old.

Not much is known about early games in the Americas as the various invaders destroyed most of the evidence, but there too, games seem to have started about 5,000 years ago, again moving tokens along a track and using beans as dice and they too facilitated gambling. Other games came later. Snakes and ladders probably started in India in the second century AD, although there is some evidence of similar games being played earlier. It had a secondary teaching function, emphasising Karma and the Hindu principals of cause and effect.

Chess came a couple of hundred years later from India, or maybe China, as a game of strategy, but it only got its current format in Europe in the 15th Century.

So, we have evidence for games almost from the end of the last ice age. Maybe they existed before that, but we have not found any evidence so far. Chance features in most of them, but there is always an element of strategy. This aspect has given rise to a whole area of research – game theory, which I might investigate on another date

Trine Hevezi



The Borghese Gladiator, Houghton Hall Norfolk



As soon as I saw this statue of a gladiator, a Renaissance bronze copy of a Greco-Roman marble original: I was reminded of the Henry Moore sculpture I saw in Italy and shared with you earlier in the year. The Warrior, who had only one functioning arm -holding a shield, two damaged legs and half his other arm missing, and this Gladiator with all his limbs, sword and shield, have on the surface little in common. Unless we look deeper....

The Warrior, seems especially sad. He had only a shield and no attacking options and seemed to be preparing to die bravely unable to resist effectively, just facing a sad and solitary ending and then we see the Gladiator. As you can see him above with all his limbs intact, sword and shield in two hands.

His prospects seem much brighter, but the standard greeting of gladiators in the Arena to the Emperor or local Roman Governor was "We who are about to die salute you" so despite the apparent advantage, gladiators knew their fights were rigged, they faced unwinnable odds against them, they knew they were about to die, unable to win unlikely to survive.

The messages I take from these two completely different pieces of art is the one of the futility of conflict, of the inevitability of death, of the dreadful games sometimes played by men with power, and also of the bravery of some of those who face death without a prospect of surviving

Alison Tyler



...I take it our local supermarket has a rather good offer on tinned peas at the moment!

ARIES 88 Polar Flight (Part 2)



During 1988, I was working at Louis Newmark plc Aircraft Division in New Addington as a Senior Product Support Engineer. As a company representative, I was invited to take part in the Aries 88 No. 20GD Aerosystems Course Long Range Flight Trial instructing RAF students with the operation and error plotting using the Louis Newmark LN6000 Series Attitude Heading Reference System (A.H.R.S.), which is a fully aerobatic system.

The LN6000 A.H.R.S. is the standard equipment fitted on the British Aerospace plc (BAe) Hawk aircraft, which are in service with the RAF (including The Red Arrows) and a number of Air Forces around the word, plus the United States Air Force (U.S.A.F.) A-10 Close Support Aircraft and the German Alfa Jet.

The system consists of a Displacement Gyroscope Assembly (D.G.A.), Electronic Control Amplifier (E.C.A.) and Compass System Controller (C.S.C.).

The system provides the following outputs: (i) Heading, (ii) Pitch, (iii) Roll, (iv) Turn-rate, (v) Validity and (vi) Autopilot interlocking.

The primary aim of Aries 88 was to provide the GD Aerosystems Course students with experience in the use and evaluation of inertial navigation systems (INS), flight management systems, heading reference systems and long range navigation aids at high altitudes. Specific objectives were to recognise limitations and in remote polar regions with the equipment. The Aries 88 Polar Flight was arranged to depart from RAF Brize Norton, Oxfordshire on Monday the 16th May 1988 and I arrived to check-in at the airbase the previous evening by 2000hrs. Following an early call, breakfast and transport to the aircraft apron, the aircraft was to depart at 0900hrs.

The aircraft for the flight was a Vickers-Armstrong VC10 of 10 Squadron, which was specially fitted with a variety of avionics equipment provided by both Industry and the Services. The Polar Flights represented the culmination of The APE syllabus. 54 VC10 aircraft were manufactured between 1962 and 1970, therefore the one with the tail marking No. 102, which was being used for the flight, was quite a few years old.

Equipment from many manufactures, including Louis Newmark, Litton Aero Products, Honeywell, British Aerospace, Delco Systems Operations, Ferranti, Smiths Industries, Polytechnic Electronics, Plessey and Decca was set up at trial stations in the fuselage of the aircraft and connected to the aircraft power systems. Appropriate seating for students, crew and company representatives were placed at each trial station.

The first leg of the flight from Brize Norton left at 0900hrs and landed at Keflavik International Airport, Iceland, 30 miles from the capital Reykjavik for refuelling at 1030hrs. During the flight, trial crew members and students changed trial stations at hourly intervals and with the Louis Newmark A.H.R.S. system, a plotter recorded gyro drift rates and an operator set the equipment. All manually and automated data would be analysed later with draft reports produced at aircraft bases.

Unfortunately, during the first leg of the flight, a wing slat became stuck and remained fully down and couldn't initially be retracted to its normal position. When the VC10 was in Keflavik, an engineer managed to retract the slat and it appeared to function correctly on test. The aircraft was considered to be repaired, so it took off at 1200hrs for the second leg of the flight to the north pole but again the slat jammed, so the flight to the north pole was abandoned and the aircraft limped back to Brize Norton at 350kts and at a lower altitude, arriving at 1600hrs. However, the work carried on in the aircraft for the students as they still gained valuable experience on the different types of equipment.

I arrived back home at 1915hrs, somewhat disappointed but I did receive a Polar Certificate worded: (nearly) reached the `Top of the World` and circumnavigated the North Geographic Pole, signed by the Air CDRE Assistant Commandant, RAF College Cranwell, Dept of Air Warfare!

I believe that the Aries Polar Flights were undertaken approximately every 2 years up until at least 1988 but I cannot find any information whether they continued after that year, although I believe that they no longer take place. During alternating years up to 1988, there were similar flights to the equator from the RAF base at Akratiri, Cyprus, in which a different Louis Newmark work colleague participated on each flight. They experienced a much warmer climate with an extended stay in Cyprus compared with the Polar Flights!

The photos are from my slides showing the VC10 used and the Louis Newmark trial station set-up inside the aircraft.

Roger Benoy

Those Church Notices that didn't quite make it...

A talk on drugs will be given at the next Mothers' Union meeting. This will be followed by a Bring and Buy Sale.

A sudden gust of wind took all who were at the ceremony by surprise. Hats were blown off and copies of the vicar's speech and other rubbish were scattered over the site.

The Rector is on holiday this month. Local clergy will be celebrating with us all the Sundays that he is away.



Certificate of Thanks

| This Certificate is presented to all those who have donated to Bromley Borough Foodbank: | St Mary's Bromley |
|--|-------------------|
| Date of donations: | May-June 2024 |
| Total donations given to help support the work of Bromley Borough Foodbank: | 14.95kg |

With our Grateful

Thanks

Worship Diary

We offer a variety of services through the year. They are mostly on a Sunday at 10.30am and are mostly Family Communion. Most months we also have an All Age Communion. We hope you will find us a warm and friendly congregation. If you have questions about what we do, why we do it or how you might like to be more involved please do speak with a Church Warden, a sidesman... or anyone really!

Our Sunday Club is a valued provision for our youngest members. They do not meet during school holidays.

Services for September

Sunday 1st September—14th Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club Sunday 8th September—15th Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am All Age Communion Sunday 15th September—16th Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club Sunday 22nd September—17th Sunday after Trinity 10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club

10.30 am Family Communion with Sunday Club



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