

The Parish Church of Saint George



PARISH MAGAZINE

An open door in the heart of the City



St Michael The Archangel



SEPTEMBER 2021

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Views expressed by contributors do not necessarily represent the views of the parish.
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From the Rector's Desk



Dear Friends in Christ,

We were blessed with unseasonably warm and pleasant weather for a good part of July and at the time of writing are expecting more of the same at the end of August. Whilst some of us at least were able to enjoy the hot sun, nevertheless the reasons behind it are concerning – namely global warming and climate change. We are now as a parish, renewing our efforts to reduce our carbon footprint and make St George's more environmentally friendly and efficient. Geoff Newell has agreed to help us focus our thoughts and efforts to this end. If you have any workable suggestions or practical ideas, please do let Geoff, Douglas McIlldoon or me know of them.

The Select Vestry has agreed to replace the green carpet in the baptistry with tiles similar to the pattern in the chancel. A design has been agreed and the final cost will be in the region £5-8000 depending on whether remedial work is required when the carpet is removed. If you would like to make a contribution towards the re-tiling then please speak to Douglas McIlldoon.

I've already received a number of enquiries about Confirmation next Easter when the Bishop traditionally attends our Easter Eve Liturgy. If you or one of your children are interested in Confirmation, please let me know before the beginning of October as we would need to arrange for classes to start in time for 2022.

The Covid-19 situation is still changing day by day despite some relaxation of the government rules and recommendations. The Delta variant is rampant but thankfully fewer people are being hospitalised because of vaccination. We will review a further opening up of St George's for Evensong and weekday services in the light of changing circumstances. In the meantime please continue to wear a mask in church, practice social distancing and get fully vaccinated, if you've not already been inoculated.

Finally please do continue to let me know of anyone who is in hospital or sick at home. I would rather have 10 phone calls about a sick parishioner than not know at all of their illness. Please do enjoy the remainder of the summer, keep yourself and your loved ones safe from Covid and I look forward to seeing you all in the autumn.

God bless you all.

Yours in Christ

Brian Stewart

The Glass Soldiers

Paul McLaughlin



My father takes off his brown leather gloves. They have cream-coloured fur inside that warms his hands. “It used to belong to a rabbit”, he laughs, “But he had no further use for it”. I frown because Miss Thompson our teacher has told us that too many little creatures are killed for **‘human convenience’**. “It’s only artificial fur”, he says squeezing my hand to reassure me. “Do I look like the sort of man who would kill a wee bunny”? And he closes one eye and growls like a pirate.

He opens his leather-bound family missal as the bell rings for the start of Sunday Mass and follows the words of the priest. The Latin text sits side-by-side with its English translation on each decorative page. I sit silently at his side, the bottle green mittens knitted by my mother rolled up in a ball on the pew in front of us, listening to an old woman to our left reciting the Rosary in a whispering-whistling way that sounds as if she is calling a cat.

My father places two shiny half crowns on the collection plate and watches, smiling as I take the sixpence he has given me and set it on top of them. I think of the caramels, chocolate Whoppers and Beechnut chewing gum that it would have bought in McAleavy’s shop.

We bless ourselves as the priest makes the sign of the cross and are swept out of the monastery as the congregation surges for the huge double doors. My feet are struggling to stay on the ground, but my father keeps hold of my hand until we reach the bus stop.

He lights a cigarette, lets me blow out the match, and guides me upstairs on the bus. His hand is firm at my back and so unlike that of my older sister who drags me onto the bus to school each day, taking handfuls of coat, schoolbag and sometimes hair.

The city centre is deserted. “You couldn’t have got moving in this street last night”, he says as he unlocks the side door of the public house where he works. It is the ‘Black Bull’, but he always calls it the shop when he is at home.

There is sawdust on the floor, a huge marble counter and wooden seating booths to each side stretching straight to a stained-glass window that is lit by the sun. But, unlike Clonard Monastery, there are no saints’ faces on display here. My father says that Mister Moley the owner, although a religious man, settled for images of a bull.

“Everything has its place”, says my father, donning a black and white striped apron that he ties about his waist with a length of cord, “And holy pictures have no place in a pub”.

I follow him down stone steps into the semi darkness of the cellar as he switches on lights as we descend. There are crates upon crates of beer stacked in three corners of the cement-floored room, but we head straight for the bottling corner. Dark brown bottles are standing in ranks, shining emptily and my father sets me on a stool as he sets about bottling stout from a huge hogshead barrel of Guinness.

“One of these boys holds more than 60 gallons of the stuff”, he says, bottling away without spilling a drop.

“You’re very careful Daddy,” I say. “So I should be son. For every twelve dozen there is for Mister Moley, there’s one dozen for us. That’s the boss’s wee reward for our hard work”.

I help to put bottles into crates as my father whizzes through labelling, bottling and crown topping dozens of the glass soldiers as he calls them.

There is a small bottle of brown lemonade set on the counter for me when we are finished around lunchtime. And we two sit on the large bar stools that face a mirror that’s nearly as big as the wall itself. It feels good to see us both reflected there. A memory caught on glass that has stayed with me for more than sixty years.

(Continued from page 7)

years, aided by the fact we had competent soloists in each section. This was one of the highlights of our year. Since those days I have sung in a number of choirs. One thing I have noticed about the best conductors, - they know how to give choir members the feel-good factor. It may be appreciation of work well done, it may be praise or flattery, it may be giving perks and treats but they all have it. Selwood Lindsay had this quality in spades. One memory stands out. At a treble practice, we had sung a psalm or anthem especially well. So Selwood said to us, “Boys, when I get to heaven, I don’t expect the angels there to sing that piece any better than you’ve just done.” We laughed but went home feeling ten feet tall. Can anyone wonder why St Bart’s choir worked so hard and performed so well during that time

Editor: Peter Hunter, a member of St George's saw Jeffrey's tribute and makes the comment.

Dr Selwood Lindsay was indeed highly regarded in Church of Ireland circles. He used to attend St Anne's for Evensong, and I remember him when I was a chorister there. He presented a medal to St Anne's for the chorister line, known as the 'Lindsay Medal'. He had a carol published in the Church of Ireland Hymnal - 'Hush Thee to Sleep', which was recorded by the choir with Harry Grindle, and rather beautiful.

LIFE AS A CHOIRBOY IN ST BARTHOLOMEW'S - REMEMBERING DR SELWOOD LINDSAY

Jeffrey Johnston

From time to time we welcome contributions from members of St George's about their experience of life in other Church of Ireland parishes in past decades and we are grateful to Jeffrey for his contribution.

I joined St Bart's Choir as a chorister when I was eight years old. I did not expect that it would be such fun. To begin with, the boys' practice started at 7.00pm but for 20 minutes before then, there was 'touch rucker' on the grass beside the church. Then there was the natural camaraderie of boys, most of whom lived close by on the Stranmillis Road. Our choirmaster, whom we called 'The Doc' had perfected the art of building up confidence in the choir. One of his methods was to be liberal with his praise. Shortly after I joined as a probationer he said to me "Your brother is an excellent chorister and I believe you will be as good as he." That seemed to work, for soon I was taking lessons from a singing teacher and later singing solos at musical festivals and concerts. As choirboys we even found a way to shorten the sermon. In normal times choristers would suck a sweet during sermons but sweets were rationed; in the post-war era you needed coupons. However, in a chemist shop you could buy Ovaltine tablets - nearly as good. The tablets were the size of a 10p piece. One Sunday a boy dropped one during sermon time. Everyone watched transfixed as it rolled all along the chancel, dropped down two marble steps and came to a stop beside the pulpit. The preacher paused briefly, took in the scene, and then carried on without comment. After some years I became a prefect. I cannot recall any duties involved but it meant I was paid! Each term, at Easter, June and Christmas, I received a half crown, - 12½p in new money, but then it seemed like a fortune.

Dr Selwood Lindsay, 'The Doc,' was fairly unique in being a medical doctor, who had far more interest in church music than in medicine. He was fortunate in having an organist who was content to let him train the choir. This he did to a high standard so that we would take on tough anthems like Handel's "Let the bright seraphim" that not many church choirs would attempt. He was fond of quoting Boris Ord, then Director of Music at King's College, Cambridge. At that time there were a number of good choirs in Belfast, including Belfast Cathedral, St George's and St Peter's, but it was to Selwood Lindsay and St Bart's that a BBC producer turned when he wanted to broadcast a carol service one Christmas. That started a tradition, and we sang the broadcast carol service on Radio Ulster over many

Continued on page 6)



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JESU, GRANT ME THIS, I PRAY Billy Adair

In my youth, when I visited any Roman Catholic home, I was invariably confronted with a rather disturbing picture of our Blessed Lord with His heart exposed. Nearby would be a little red lamp, the light in which was never extinguished, meaning that the picture was of particular significance. This represented the devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus. (I have a feeling that such pictures are rarer in Roman Catholic homes today).

Away back in the Middle Ages mystics began to concentrate on the Divine Love of Christ, which led to special devotion to the Sacred Heart of Jesus, the centre of Divine Compassion. By the 17th century this practice had greatly increased throughout the Roman Catholic Church, and so the Latin hymn "Dignare me, O Jesu, rogo te" was written specially for this observance. In 1765 the Feast of the Sacred Heart was officially announced.

The hymn first appeared in Cologne in 1695, but the author is unknown. It was translated by Sir Henry Baker for the first edition of 'Hymns Ancient and Modern' in 1861. Sir Henry Baker also gave us the most Christianized paraphrase of Psalm 23, "The King of Love my shepherd is".

This hymn is set to the tune "Song 13" by Orlando Gibbons (1583-1625), a chorister at King's College, Cambridge, who became organist of the Chapel Royal and also Westminster Abbey. The modern version of the tune in equal notes as given in Church Hymnal 5, robs the tune of Gibbon's original and much more subtle rhythms, but is easier to sing.

VI Jesu, grant me this, I pray,
Ever in Thy heart to stay;
Let me evermore abide
Hidden in Thy wounded side.

This is a simple plea - that Jesus in His loving compassion will draw us into Himself and keep us near to Him, for "He was wounded for our transgressions and was bruised for our iniquities".

V2 If the world or Satan lay
Tempting snares about my way
I am safe when I abide
In Thy heart and wounded side.

Baker translated the first two lines of this verse: "If the evil one prepare, or the world, a tempting snare", but these were later changed to the version we now have — a definite improvement. But

surely there was no necessity to change "Jesu", to "Jesus" in the opening and closing verses as "Jesu" is more intimate.

V3 If the flesh, more dangerous still,
Tempt my soul to deeds of ill,
Naught I fear when I abide
In Thy heart and wounded side.

The writer here is in earnest in living the good life, and realizes the great temptations are the world, the flesh and the devil. That is where the Devotion to the Sacred Heart comes in — such pitfalls can be safely negotiated when surrounded by the Divine Compassion of Jesus.

V4 Death will come one day to me;
Jesu, cast me not from thee;
Dying, let me still abide
In Thy heart and wounded side.

To those of us in the Eventide of life this is a poignant verse, for death is inevitable. But the Love of Jesus never fails, and His compassion is unbounded. He loves us with an everlasting love. Those of us who are loyal Church of Ireland members may feel this doctrine of the Sacred Heart of Jesus more than a trifle off-putting, but isn't it a comfort to know that at the end, there is room in the Heart of Jesus for you, and for me.

WALSINGHAM PILGRIMAGE



I am very pleased to say that our annual pilgrimage to the Shrine of Our Lady of Walsingham in Norfolk will begin on Tuesday 21st September. However, this year will be slightly different as we are combining our pilgrimage with a visit to the Community of the Resurrection at Mirfield, Yorkshire. We would ask that you would pray for us who will be on pilgrimage as we will be praying for you. We return home on Wednesday 29th September.

Fr. Graeme Pollock

Slaying the Dragon - Saint George's and Climate Change

It took Christians almost two thousand years to recognise that women were at least as well suited to be priests, ministers and church leaders as the male of the human species. It took just over three centuries to recognise that the slave trade wasn't a particularly nice idea. If we take as long to face up to climate change Earth will in a very short geological time frame be a dead planet carrying no Christian passengers on its eternal circumnavigation of the sun. By God's grace we've latched on to climate change in just three decades since the Rio de Janeiro conference in 1992 spelled out to all who bothered to listen that, unless we mended our ways, the sins of the fathers – our generations' sins of ignorance, inertia and indifference - would be visited with a vengeance on to the third and fourth generation. As our Rector made clear in the August edition of the parish magazine climate change is an issue for this parish and clapping with one hand is a useless gesture.

So what should we do as a parish and indeed what have we done – if anything - to reduce our greenhouse gas emissions?

As a parish we have done a number of the “top down” things which can be done unilaterally. We moved our heating from oil to gas as soon as gas became an option in 1996. We have 12 kilowatts of [photovoltaic](#) panels on the roof of the parish hall which has to date produced 48,000 units of electricity – much of it exported into the grid. The rest of our electricity comes from a “green” supplier and over the years we have moved to much more energy efficient lighting and – until Covid induced us to leave our doors open during services – we had reduced heat loss by improving our insulation. As a result of these efficiency measures electricity consumption in 2019 – our last full year before lockdown – was only 61.45% of the consumption in 2010. However as we had a smaller 3kw PV (photovoltaic) array in 2010 we have overall reduced our electricity consumption by something over 40% of what it would have been - at a saving of over a thousand pounds a year. Although all the electricity we buy is renewable reducing our consumption remains important because – in addition to the money we save - renewable electricity is given priority on the grid so by being efficient we displace and thus block “dirty” electricity which would otherwise be required to meet the electricity demand.

Our old PV system was itself recycled – we donated it to a small social enterprise and as far as we know it is still generating green electricity. Transport is a problem though cars are in general less polluting than they were. Our sexton now comes to work on an electric bike re-

charged from our photovoltaics!

We have as a parish always endeavoured to ensure that our reserves are invested ethically. We have invested in recent years some £160,000 in over twenty renewable energy projects which equates to St George's having fully funded by itself the equivalent of 13 of the arrays of solar panels – a total of 156kws - which we have on the roof of the parish hall. That this was possible was largely through the bequests left by parishioners. Their legacies both provide income for the parish and contribute to restoring the health of God's creation uniting the work of the saints below and the prayers of the saints above.

But these are all actions the Select Vestry was able to take unilaterally without involvement by parishioners. If we are to do more we all need to be involved in collective action as a parish and as individuals. Reducing greenhouse gas emissions is the essential first step – and there is more to be done. But there is a much wider agenda of necessary actions if humanity's legacy is not to be a dead sterile plant.

As a start the parish should join up to and participate actively in the work of Eco-Congregation Ireland. You can read about it by following the link www.econcongregationireland. But we clearly need a number of parishioners and friends of the parish to become involved in developing this aspect of the parish's vocation.

If you would like to become involved, help generate ideas about what we might do, or merely be better informed about what you could do, please contact the Rector or one of us: Geoff Newell (newellgeoff@hotmail.com) Eleanor Maynard (Eleanor@thebostons.eu) Douglas McIlDoon (douglasmcildoon@phonecoop.coop) or use the parish's email address to leave your contact details.

There is always some additional, but quite simple, action each of us can do like changing to a green electricity supplier or finding which shops will recycle plastic wrappings or planting more flowers. Your contribution matters – all our contributions together could restore creation to its full glory.

EUROPEAN HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

It is with regret that St George's, Belfast, will not be taking part in the 2021 *European Heritage Open Days* in September. This is because of concerns over the Delta variant of Coronavirus.

The Church will not, therefore, be open on September 10th, 11th and 12th, as advertised.

We look forward to being part of the EHOD scheme next year and wish the project well for 2021.

MUSIC LIST September 2021

Sunday 5th September

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Trinity 14

Parish Choir

Setting	Missa Princeps Pacis - <i>Lloyd Webber</i>
Psalm	125
Offertory Hymn	Dear Lord and Father of mankind 353
Communion Hymn	282
Motet	Ave verum - <i>Elgar</i>
Recessional Hymn	Praise my soul the King of heaven 436

Sunday 12th September

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Trinity 15

Parish Choir

Setting	Sunsion in F
Psalm	19
Offertory Hymn	Rejoice the Lord is King. 443
Communion Hymn	305
Motet	Ave verum - <i>Byrd</i>
Recessional Hymn	We have a gospel. 486

Sunday 19th September

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Trinity 16

Parish Choir

Setting	Ireland in C
Psalm	1
Offertory Hymn	My song is love unknown 86
Communion Hymn	272
Motet	Paris angelicus - <i>Franck</i>
Recessional Hymn	Thy hand O God has guided 485

Sunday 26th September

11.00am Choral Eucharist

Trinity 17

Parish Choir

Setting	Darke in E
Psalm	124
Offertory Hymn	How sweet the name 374
Communion Hymn	275
Motet	Factum est silencium - <i>Dering</i>
Recessional Hymn	Guide me O thou great Jehovah 368

APHIDS Terence Mayne



Sitting having coffee in the Anning Rooms at The Natural History Museum, I struck up a conversation with a man who had a small box with a clear lid at the table at which we were seated. He aroused my interest by saying he was President of S.T.A., the Save The Aphids Society. Not only had I never heard of such an organisation or seen such an insect, although growing up, I recall Mother and Father calling them nasty words. I had also learned they ate roses, even though the said plant has survived for millions of years, and surprisingly, there is no

shortage of roses. The President opened the box in which was, confirmed by an expert, a very rare green peach aphid (*myzus persicae*) that very morning. One could go so far as to say there was a look of love in his eyes as he ordered more coffee and continued my education.

With huge reproductive potential, aphids are the most destructive of all plant eating insects. Virtually all crop species, and roses of course, are affected by their feeding and the viral diseases they transmit, but as oldies on this planet they feel they have a right to eat what they wish. Long, long before hunters, gatherers and agriculturalists, aphids were being farmed by ants because they (the aphids) secrete a sticky, sugary substance known as honey dew, the production of which is stimulated by gentle stroking, milking, by the ants antennae. The symbiotic existence of these two species of insect contributes to their successful survival over the millenniums. The favourite colour is green; pink, black and brown being the alternatives and it can be said they tend to be spoilt, for ants will take them from a withered plant to a healthier one and milk them; protect them from the rain, and milk them; house them to overwinter, feed them, and milk them. To speed things up and keep ahead of predators females are parthenogenetic, (reproduction in which the eggs develop without fertilisation), dispensing with the nonsense of mating, and may carry developing young, which are themselves carrying developing young, just magic for rapid population growth. Offspring are produced in order, male, female, soldier or winged. These last don't set any aviation records but can ride the wind with some skill to relocate and feed swallows. The soldiers, known as kick boxers, with burly legs for battering and squeezing, do much to protect the colonies from intruders. They have on their abdomen, two small tubes from which a nasty liquid is secreted, to deter predators of which there are many, ladybirds, parasitic wasps, lacewings, wolf spiders, to name but a few.

Whilst, as David Goulson states in his excellent book "Silent Earth", all insects should be saved, I asked my informant why he had singled out only the characterful, resourceful aphid, for preservation with S.T.A. His reply was frustrating; he said "Until such time as vegetarians and the media convince us otherwise, there will be 26 billion or more live chickens at any one time on planet Earth, and that's not counting the dead ones. Go figure." To be honest, I just can't. With that he just upped and left, I thought rather abruptly, as if to say, "No further questions!"

A BRIEF HISTORY OF PERSIA - ITS FAITH AND CULTURE

Over the last four years we have been joined in our worship by a number of Iranian asylum seekers. They come from a country with a very long history and a rich culture which pre-dates that of these islands by several centuries and about which there is still much to learn. This is the first of four articles on the history, faith and culture of Persia from ancient times.

The Persian Empire is the name given to a series of dynasties centred in what is now modern-day Iran that spanned several centuries from the sixth century BC onwards. The first of these empires was founded by Cyrus I around 550BC and became one of the largest empires in human history. Sometimes called the Achaemenid Empire, it was a global hub of culture, religion, science, art and technology for more than 200 years, but began as a collection of semi-nomadic tribes who raised cattle, sheep and goats on the Iranian plateau.

Cyrus I, the leader of one such tribe, began to defeat nearby kingdoms, joining them under one rule. Cyrus was so successful at extending his authority that these once tribal kingdoms grew rapidly into the first Persian Empire and soon became the world's first superpower. It united under one government three important sites of early human civilisation in the ancient world - Egypt's Nile Valley, India's Indus Valley, and Babylon. Cyrus the Great, as he later became known, is immortalized in the Cyrus Cylinder which was inscribed in the year 539BC. After being lost for many centuries it was rediscovered in the 1870's during an archaeological dig in Mesopotamia, now modern Iraq. The cylinder has Akkadian Cuneiform script written around its exterior and tells the tale of how Cyrus conquered one of his neighbours. The Cylinder is now in the care of the British Museum.

Darius I, also known as the Great, the fourth Achaemenid king, ruled over the Persian Empire when it was at its largest. It stretched from the Caucasus and western Asia to Macedonia in south-eastern Europe along with parts of Bulgaria, Romania and Ukraine as well as the Black Sea, and even parts of Libya as well as Egypt. Darius continued in a similar vein as his predecessor, Cyrus. In order to achieve a greater unity within the Empire he introduced a standard currency, weights and measures, and to improve communications roads were built, Aramaic made the official language of Empire, and the world's first postal service was developed. The Behistun Inscription, a multi-lingual relief carved into Mount Behistun in western Iran, extolls the virtues of Darius and was a critical key in deciphering Cuneiform script. Its impact has been compared to that

of the Rosetta Stone, the tablet that enabled scholars to decipher Egyptian hieroglyphics.

Many people today think of Iran (Persia) as synonymous with Islam. However, Islam only became the dominant religion in the Persian Empire after the Arab conquests of the seventh century AD. The first Persian Empire was shaped by a very different religion - Zoroastrianism. Named after the Persian prophet Zoroaster (also known as Zarathustra), Zoroastrianism is one of the world's oldest monotheistic religions and is still practiced today as a minority religion in parts of Iran and India. Zoroaster taught his followers to worship one god instead of the many deities worshipped by earlier Indo-Iranian groups.

Most of what is known about Zoroaster comes from the Avesta, a collection of Zoroastrian religious scriptures. However, it is unclear exactly when he may have lived. Some scholars believe he was a contemporary of Cyrus the Great, placing him in the 6th century BC. However, most linguistic and archaeological evidence points to an earlier date, sometime between 1500 & 1200BC, and he is thought to have been born in the region of north-eastern Iran or south-western Afghanistan. He may also have lived in a tribe that followed an ancient religion with many gods, a religion likely to be similar to early forms of Hinduism. According to Zoroastrian tradition, Zoroaster had a divine vision of a supreme being while partaking in a pagan purification rite at the age of 30.

The Achaemenian kings were devout Zoroastrians. By most accounts, Cyrus the Great was a tolerant ruler who allowed his subjects to speak their own languages and practice their own religions. While he ruled by the Zoroastrian law of *asha* (truth and righteousness), he didn't impose Zoroastrianism on the people of Persia's conquered territories. Second Isaiah praises Cyrus the Great as the Lord's "Anointed" and elsewhere in the Hebrew Scriptures we hear the story of the freeing of the Jewish people from their Babylonian captivity, allowing them to return to Jerusalem. (See Nehemiah, Ezra & Daniel) Subsequent rulers in the Achaemenid Empire followed Cyrus' hands-off approach to social and religious affairs, allowing Persia's diverse citizenry to continue practicing their own ways of life. This period is sometimes called the *Pax Persica*, or Persian Peace. There will be more on Zoroaster and his beliefs next month.

Fr. Graeme Pollock & Meisam Khalili.

BELFAST MARATHON

The Belfast Marathon will take place on Sunday 3rd October, starting at Stormont Estate at 9.00am and finishing in Ormeau Park at approximately 4.30pm. The roads approaching St George's will be closed from 9.30am - 3.00pm making it difficult to get to church for the 11.00am service.

The map (next page) and information below was provided by the Marathon organisers to show how we should get to and from St George's on the day. Further information will be issued on the parish website and in St George's before the event.

Belfast Marathon – Route Description

Stormont

Turn Right

Pass Clonlee Drive

Turn Left

Beersbridge Road

Turn Left

Castlereagh Road

Turn Right

Montgomery Road

Turn Right

Cregagh Road

Pass Loopland Park

Straight on to Woodstock Road

Turn Left

Albertbridge Road

Turn Left

Ravenhill Road

Into Ormeau Park via the Embankment Junction

Through Ormeau Park

Onto Ormeau Road - **Turn Right** Citybound

Past Shaftsbury Avenue

Remain on Ormeau Road

Veer Left onto Victoria Street

Turn Left

Chichester Street

Continue onto Wellington Place

Turn Left

Great Victoria Street

Turn Right

Donegal Road

Turn Left

Glenmachan Street

Straight On

Boucher Road

Turn Left

Main Gate Charles Hurst into Lislea Drive

Onto Lisburn Road

Turn Right - country bound over the bridge

Continue up the Lisburn Road

Turn Right

Finaghy Road North

Straight on to Junction of Andersonstown Road

Andersonstown Road

Through Kennedy Way Crossroads

Onto Falls Road

Pass the Whiterock Road

Turn Left at Grosvenor Crossroads

Onto Springfield Road

Turn Right

Onto Lanark Way

Straight on towards Shankill Road

Turn Left

Shankill Road

Turn Right

Cambrai Street

Turn Right

Crumlin Road

Turn Left

Hillview Road

Turn Left

Oldpark Road

Turn Right

Cliftonville Road

Turn Left

Up side of Solitude

Turn Left

Waterworks (clockwise)

Exit bottom gate (opposite Pacific Av)

Turn Right

Antrim Road

Turn Left

Duncairn Gardens

Turn Right

North Queen Street

Under the bridge & Turn Left

Fredrick Street

Turn Left onto Albert Square

Pass Tomb Street

Turn Right

Donegall Quay (Past The Big Fish)

Straight on to Oxford Street

Turn Left

May Street / Lanyon Place

Follow Lanyon Place around

Turn Right

Mays Meadow

Turn Right

East Bridge Street

Onto Tow Path

Follow Tow Path to Ormeau Road

Turn Left

Ormeau Bridge

Ormeau Road

Turn Left at Rosetta Roundabout

Ravenhill Road

Turn Left

Along Ormeau Embankment

Turn Left

Driveway to Ozone Tennis Centre



Endpiece by Jo Calder

A Different Rescue

Just now we are watching the unbelievable horror taking place in Afghanistan, with people trying to flee this blighted country. It is beyond comprehension what it must be like there, as we see developments on TV from the comfort of our living rooms. Neither can we contemplate the medieval barbarity of the Taliban, and what is awaiting those who will never get to safety. I know there is much controversy going on regarding how Mr Biden, his advisors and our government have been handling this catastrophe think it is a total disaster.

I feel when the Taliban began their rampage taking over cities plans should have been implemented, not wait until they invaded the country's main capital, Kabul. Indeed, I feel when Trump first announced the withdrawal of American troops arrangements should have been underway. Naturally what I think is irrelevant; we all know none of our views matter. It is also dreadful other western countries seem totally uninterested in the awful plight of Afghans, and some countries have expressed the view they will not be accepting refugees.

For me it is also unsettling a few seem to be giving credence to the declarations from the Taliban leaders things will be different. Perhaps a few may be willing to try to have a less brutal regime than in the past, but I fear the "foot soldiers" remain as vile as they ever where. There are already reports from other parts of the country of people being killed or tortured, and I watched in disgust at one TV report where it was clearly seen one Taliban lout hitting some people who are stranded in the area of Kabul airport. I have already witnessed more women now dressed in burkas, yet the Taliban spokesperson stated they would only be "required" to wear a hijab. It is a far cry from the Afghanistan of the 70's – I still clearly remember pictures from there with women wearing mini skirts, and men in jeans.

I hope what I'm about to write now will, even for a few moments, lighten the mood a little. As some know, I am a total animal freak; my kitchen walls are covered with pictures of all kinds of animals, and I also collect stories from newspapers etc about animals. I was having a look at some of my collections recently and came across the story I'm going to tell. It concerns a former British soldier who had been in the Royal Engineers (he left the Army in 2014, had suffered from PTSD, but also found adapting to civilian life very difficult,) who had been recruited to go to Raqqa, Syria in 2018 as part of a unit defusing Improvised Explosive Devices (IED's) during the time of the monsters called ISIS, and a young puppy he named Barry. One day, while clearing away some rubble he heard a faint cry, and thinking it was perhaps a young child, he moved aside the rubble and discovered a small puppy. Sadly he also discovered the bodies of 3 other puppies and their mother.

The little creature was covered in dust and dirt and was trembling very badly. The soldier admitted he was scared of dogs, having been bitten

by a neighbour's dog when he was just 5, but his apprehension was overcome by the plight of the little puppy. He moved closer to the little animal and offered him a piece of biscuit, and that was the beginning of the enduring friendship he had with the animal. He could see the puppy was still too nervous to be picked up, so when he had to return to camp, he left the pup with some biscuits and water. He also decided there and then to call him Barry. The others with him apparently burst into fits of laughing at this.

He went back the next day to the spot where he had first seen Barry, but was really upset when he couldn't see the puppy. He was about to leave to drive back to base when one of the Syrians he was working with started to shout out the puppy's name. The little pup had taken shelter out of the cold. The guy decided that he was going to take Barry back to base with him, where he placed him on his duvet, and let him sleep. Afterwards Barry was given a bath – it was during this time the ex soldier realised Barry wasn't a boy! However, he decided not to change the name as such, and so Barry became Barrie. Later Barrie and her dad went out for the night to the bar, where they met with another worker who instantly also fell for Barrie and made her a teddy bear. This man had worked with an animal Charity called War Paws which rescued dogs from Afghanistan. The ex soldier had already decided he wanted to bring Barrie back home to England with him and set up an on-line fundraising page – it would cost about £4,500 to be able to rescue Barrie – within 24 hours £1,000 had been raised. He recalls the times Barrie would accompany the team in their truck around Raqqa, interested in everything.

Then a big problem arose. Because of the deteriorating situation in Syria, travel was no longer permitted where they had been working, the contracts of the workers were cancelled, and the team were being flown home. Thankfully the War Paws charity had already secured the full amount needed to rescue Barrie and bring her back to England. The huge effort began – first of all Barrie had to be smuggled out of Syria in a truck and into Iraq. Then began 3 months of quarantine in Jordan. There then was three false starts before Barrie was put on a flight to Paris. The man and his wife booked tickets on the Eurostar and then drove 300 miles to meet Barrie at Charles De Gaulle airport. When they got there they heard a dreadful commotion coming from a crate – it was Barrie. However she soon calmed down when she heard her dad's voice and met her new mum for the first time. Of course the puppy by this time was now a dog. Their story had been in newspapers, on TV news and appeared with Eamonn Holmes. The ex soldier stated that Barrie was the best thing which had happened to him, that she helped him move on from the dark memories of the atrocities he witnessed while serving in Afghanistan, and feels she saved his life.

Sadly, the vast majority of those in Afghanistan will never have the wonderful rescue Barrie had.