



The Common Riding

the Borders Book Festival

the price of petrol



Voice 2 is unashamedly topical this quarter

Also included is an in-depth look at homelessness in the Borders and the part the churches can play in helping, and we ask young people what they think about going to church. The poetry page returns — it was the page we received most comment about — as does Why I support.

Reader response to Voice 1 has been very positive. It was great to hear that it looked so interesting someone read it over their friend's shoulder. In fact I gave away the only remaining copy to a friend last week who wanted to show their magazine editor what they could be doing!

At least thirty different people have contributed to this edition, of all ages, and backgrounds and most of them have volunteered — hence the bumper edition of 20 pages, and the fact that we are producing 50 more copies.

Don't forget that a large print version is available on request. Who knows you may be able to access us online one day. In the meantime we really do want to know what you think of Voice and would welcome suggestions of other places where a copy might be picked up and enjoyed.



When we moved to Selkirk we were paying less than £1 per litre for the diesel we put in our car. The other day I saw it on sale in a Borders garage for 136.99p.

Realistically, the price of oil is unlikely to fall much again. Supplies are finite, and the closer we get to the end of them, the more expensive fuel will get; and, meanwhile, more and more of it is being siphoned off by the boom economies of China and India. Rising costs will very likely mean we

have to start adjusting our expectations. The trend to smaller cars with more economical engines is already well established (alongside the rather contradictory trend to larger and larger gas-guzzling Chelsea tractors). Government makes noises from time to time about the importance of switching to public transport. And then there's car-sharing.

When we lived in London, Heather had a car-sharing arrangement with a colleague at her school who lived near us. They'd take turns, a week on and a week off, at providing the transport to and from work. It was complicated. She liked to be there before 8.00 in the morning; he had a young family to get up, breakfasted and off to school before he set off: she often found herself waiting for him in the morning. He wanted to get home when the school day was over to have tea with his kids; she had meetings after school almost every day and often

wasn't ready to leave until 5.00 or 6.00 in the evening: he often found himself waiting for her at the end of the day. Car-sharing took a lot of organising, a lot of negotiating. It involved time spent in dialogue, conversation, human interaction. It was inconvenient.

But actually, it was good. Not just because it saved petrol and reduced emissions. It was good because it engendered a relationship. We got to know Paul and his wife and kids, and they got to know us.

Conversing and negotiating may be inconvenient and demanding, but they are ways in which we make connections with others and sustain relationships. Our culture has increasingly made a value of convenience, very often interpreted in strongly individualistic terms. The multi-car family is a manifestation of that tendency: its members don't need to negotiate about travel – to make concessions to each other, to wait for each other, to adjust their timetables in relation to each other. They each get into their individually convenient motor and go – on their own as often as not – symbols of the multitude of ways in which our society has moved away from its base in community and mutuality. If the increasing cost of fuel leads us to more car-sharing, with all its consequent processes of negotiation and accommodation to one another's situations and circumstances, it may yet prove to be a benefit as well as a challenge.

reflections

reflections

David Sceats

Poet's Corner

Sport

To bat away darkness
 To the boundary
 And catch the light
 In safe hands
 To tackle pride
 With a well-timed crunch
 And split the defence with humility
 To dispossess pride
 And jink past gluttony
 To dummy lust,
 And nutmeg anger
 To run and not grow weary
 To return violence
 With a winning cross-court forehand
 To pass greed and lob envy
 Forty (faith, hope) love
 To run and not grow weary
 To hold on, hold on in the scrum,
 Of dark, sweating, blinded community
 To heave and shove, to push and pull
 Across, across the try line
 To hurdle bitterness, leap over apathy
 To press on towards the goal
 To fight the good fight
 And dance and dive until the final bell
 To forget what lies behind
 To take hold of that other prize
 To run and not grow weary
 To walk and not be faint

Martin Wroe
 The Sky's Window

Poems we love

I love the energy of this poem, and the way it uses such a variety of sporting ideas to show how we should "tackle" the evil we find around us and within us.

Heather Sceats



“ To strike it true and drive out self doubt ”



No room for homelessness

Someone is wrapped in newspaper huddled in a shop doorway or under a railway bridge. A youngster is sitting on the pavement, begging for a handout. Why are they there?— problems with drugs or alcohol perhaps or broken relationships that have led to their leaving home. You won't see many people like this in Selkirk or Gala, but that doesn't mean that they are not here. It is estimated that there are about 900 homeless people at any one time in the Borders. They may not be sleeping rough; they may be staying at a hostel, or housed by the Council in a Bed and Breakfast, but the fact remains that they have no home.

One of them is J. who told Carol Wilson his story over coffee.

At the age of 50 J. had a wife and children, a business doing well, a small-holding in Wales and plans to move abroad. Then in 1991 his wife and two children aged 7 and 3½ died in a road accident.

Following the tragedy J. said "I packed up (mentally); no drink or drugs, but I couldn't cope and stared at the wall for two years."

Some time after that he came to Edinburgh and started up his business afresh and did well. But he missed female companionship and a relationship developed which was to undermine his newfound financial stability. "I thought the world of her, I was in love with her, adored her. I spent money on her which should have been for stock. Finally, I sold my house and moved in with her. She spent hundreds of £s on clothes and shopping channels including my house money and consequently the bank foreclosed on the business." She told him, "I need a man with money and a car, so you may as well go". He left with only £15 in his pocket, and a small bag.

J. looks back at this time as his lowest point. He caught a bus to Perth where he thought there would be emergency housing,



J. now supports himself by selling the Big Issue

“
much of it
(homelessness)
is relationships
”

but all he found was a charity who gave him a meal and a sleeping bag as there was no room to stay. He had no connections in Perth and his previous friends had drifted away. He slept by the river for four nights and on the last night took all his heart medication tablets, which only served to make him sick.

He had been reported as missing and when traced, was issued with a bus ticket back to Edinburgh where his woman friend allowed him to stay for one night. He then went to the Council and declared himself homeless; he signed on but Social Security asked for his business books which he didn't have as he had left his previous address in such a state of shock.

He came to Galashiels a year ago and supports himself by selling The Big Issue which he heard about at a B&B. He had to show a letter from the Council to prove that he was homeless, and then he was given ten issues free, a badge and a pitch. Selling 10 magazines (at that time for £1.20) made a profit of £12, which allowed him to buy more Issues. Now he pays 70p for each magazine and sells them at £1.50. He works 6 days a week, usually selling about 160 issues, making himself £128. When he first came to Gala he made £250. There is no moving from your allotted pitch. If you do your badge is taken away.

J. can have lean times: "I can sell ten in two minutes and then go two hours and sell only one. Suicidal - that's how low you get - on a poor day - but tomorrow's another day. You're tired but have a sleep and start again". J. is not an 'in your face' seller. He waits for people to come to him.

He once told a woman in a flashy car that she'd left her lights on. At first she thought he was trying to sell her the magazine. When she realised, she returned to turn off her lights, came back with an Eccles cake - and didn't buy the magazine!

Although he 'works' in Galashiels J. chooses to stay at the Council-run Cowgate hostel in Edinburgh. He feels Edinburgh is the best place he's heard about for making sure you have somewhere to stay and eat. He uses his bus pass to travel to and fro. The Cowgate is free to use, is open from 10pm to 8am and has people on duty. There is a café there and he can have a free shave and a bath. But he is not allowed to take blankets in because of flea risk and has to sleep on the floor with his



Anita Roddick gave funds to start The Big Issue in Scotland after her husband funded the English B.I.

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Main causes of homelessness are abuse - physical, sexual, & emotional, marriage break up and redundancy
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“
Being homeless means thinking of survival day by day
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People who are poor give freely. Richer people (in big cars), with the occasional exception, don't give.

”

“

Homelessness is deep, too far gone. Every story is different

”

clothes on. There are free medical services available nearby including a dentist, doctor and psychiatrist.

J. told Carol about the problems homeless people have securing work. To get a job, a permanent address is required; generally, wages are paid into a bank account, which is impossible if you are bankrupt. As a result homeless people have to rely on selling the Big Issue or receiving benefits, but these are only paid to those homeless people who also have a medical condition. J. does not claim benefits. Two years ago he tried to claim — "there were so many questions; perhaps I might have to stop selling the Big Issue. I might get less than what I get with the BI. I manage on my own. I don't gamble, take drugs, smoke or drink. I've got my senses. I can save."

J. thinks there is a lack of compassion in the benefit system; workers seem like robots, constrained by the requirement to follow the law. He feels the police and society, in the main, look down on the homeless. On the other hand he finds most Gala people good. He recognises that many Border people don't make big wages but that the poor tend to give to the poor.

Finding housing is also very difficult. There is no Council housing and the cost of private housing is prohibitive if you do not receive benefits. A poky one-bedroom flat with very tiny toilet and bathroom costs £825 a month. The Council will put you in one providing there is no drink, drugs or violence and Social Security will pay. If you get work it's difficult to find the rent even if it is reduced to £90 a week. For some time J. has been on the Borders Council housing list, but is not sure where he comes on points. "You don't get many points for being homeless."

But the greatest problem J. faces is not finding work or accommodation - it is isolation and this will intensify if he does find a flat to live in. At least selling the Big Issue he's meeting people. He is a Buddhist, has been down to Samye Ling and found the experience very beneficial. He would like to be involved in more social activities like cricket, rugby and bowling, but has lost the confidence to go along on his own.

"I'd love to be in a relationship - come home to someone But then are you better on your own?"

Voice would like to thank J. for sharing his story, and Carol Wilson for talking to him. If you would be interested to read the full version of Carol's conversation, please ask her for a copy.

STOP PRESS: In mid-May J. was offered and has accepted a flat in Galashiels

Selkirk's Starter Pack Campaign

One of the main problems for homeless people in the Borders is making a successful transition from rough sleeping or B & B accommodation to managing a tenancy. This involves not only the practical aspects of financial management and having home basics in place, but also dealing with the isolation that replaces the companionship of being with other homeless people.

SCCHA is working with a group of enthusiasts from Selkirk Council of Churches to set up a **starter pack** scheme in the town. This will gather donations of household necessities to help people like J. — pots and pans, cutlery and crockery, bed linen, cleaning materials and equipment. Some items will be provided new, such as electric kettles; much will be second-hand, of decent quality, and collected through individual congregations.

The homelessness section of Scottish Borders Council is supportive of this work, and is keen to see it get under way.



Starter Pack Items will be stored at Shepherd Mill

The contact in St John's Episcopal Church is **Dick Kightley** Please let him know if you are able to help with getting this new initiative going.



J. thought the starter pack was quite good; that there were all the basic items needed. He suggested razors and blades and, importantly a radio. "It would be sound, something to listen to... company"

Books with Bite

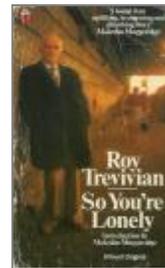


The Leopard has, I have discovered, become a classic, and here's why. It is set in Sicily around 1860 at the point when the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies was ending and the country was about to become unified for the first time since the time of the Roman Empire. The central figure is the Prince of Salina (the Leopard) who rules over a large family and large swathes of land and people at this time of changeover from the traditional feudal way of life. With the advent of Garibaldi and his revolutionaries, Salina has to choose whether to reject or embrace the new ways. The book is perfection: a very interesting setting and plot; sympathetic and realistic characterisation. L.P. Hartley said of it, "Perhaps the greatest novel of the century." The author was a Sicilian nobleman whose work was unknown in his lifetime. His manuscript was incomplete and anonymous when discovered, and was put together with the help of his wife and friends and first published in 1958.

I first came across mention of this book whilst reading another (Midnight in Sicily, by Peter Robb) which has also become a favourite. I have returned to it several times and not tired of it. **Marnet Hargreave**

The Leopard by Giuseppe Tomasi di Lampedusa.
Published by Modern Library Paperbacks

The Rev Roy Trevivian, who died in 1990, wrote *So You're Lonely* in 1978 yet it still remains one of the most honest and down-to-earth books written on the problem of loneliness in this country. Drawing on his own personal painful experiences including a harsh upbringing, battles with mental illness, alcoholism, marriage break up, and culminating in career failure, Trevivian looks squarely at all the causes of loneliness and the often futile escape methods that people employ.

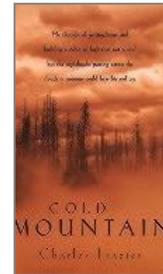


Loneliness can drive sufferers into all kinds of social and mental problems making life almost unbearable for themselves and those around them resulting in multiple relationship failures. However, amidst the darkness, hope reaches out to the lonely in the Good News from our steadfast companion from Galilee, Jesus Christ. Trevivian states unequivocally, "The rock of his presence with us now is the one relationship which will not break down from his side when all other relationships have". This is an uplifting and heartening story from a man who knew all there is to know about loneliness. **David Longbotham**

So You're Lonely by Roy Trevivian.
Published by Collins (A Fount Original).

Out of Print but available from www.abebooks.co.uk

The Annual Borders Book Festival is with us again so we invited a range of readers to recommend a book that has made a strong impression on them



I don't have the scholarly ability to review *Cold Mountain* in the usual 'in depth' manner. I can only urge you to read it if, like me, you have a well-developed wanderlust coupled with a pioneering spirit! Inman, the main character in the book, attempts to make his way home to the woman he loves but left behind when he joined up to fight in the American Civil War. It is a long and arduous journey. The narrative seemed to me to be written in the idiom of the time which lent credence to the story and heightened my absorption in this book.

The tension, born of the unknown, in Inman's journey is always with the reader.

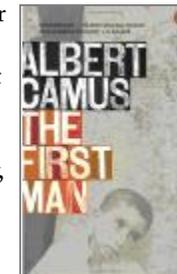
I 'walked every mile' with Inman and as I came to the end of the book I was exhausted and also very.....

No! I won't spoil the ending.

Carol Wilson

Cold Mountain by Charles Frazier.
Published by Sceptre

Unfinished at the time of Camus' early death in a car crash in 1960 this autobiographical novel was not published until 1995 and it was some years later that I came across and read *The First Man*. I have always read a wide range of literature but found this work had an exceptionally moving effect upon me. Firstly, the author's description of poverty and total destitution in childhood seemed so much more real than the contemporary daily media depiction of third world deprivation with subsequent compassion fatigue and guilt. Secondly, the crucial role of a dedicated primary school teacher in shaping a child's destiny. Thirdly, and I suspect the real reason for my selection of this book; in the latter years of my career, at a time of modest material satisfaction, I re-read an author who was an icon of my student days. Nobel laureate, philosopher, socialist intellectual Camus epitomised the spirit of the age. Reading his work again reminds me just how profoundly our world has changed in a single generation. **Chris Sharpe**



The First Man (Le Premier Homme) by Albert Camus
ISBN 10 0-14 025724-0 13 978-2070401017 (French)

“

The rock of his presence with us now is the one relationship which will not break down from his side when all other relationships have.

”

The Common Riding - Celebration for all?



(A conversation between an incomer, Heather Sceats and John Smail Merchant Company standard bearer for 2008)

As someone about to move to Selkirk last year, the strangest thing for me was not being able to find out when The Common Riding was! Nowhere on any tourist website could I find the date, so I formed the very definite impression that the Common Riding was just for the people of Selkirk. Is that your view – that it's for the people of Selkirk and primarily for those who've lived here a long time?

I think Selkirk Common Riding is for everyone. I know of several visitors who originally stumbled across the celebrations by accident, but who found themselves so caught up in the proceedings that they now come back every June, and have made many lasting friendships in the town as a result. Of course the Common Riding has tremendous significance for true Souters, but there is no sense of exclusivity about the event. I originally come from Berwick upon Tweed, but that has not been a bar to my being appointed Merchant Company Standard Bearer for 2008.

What's it for? It seems like a combination of beating the bounds or in this case riding them, celebrating the town's history and remembrance day.

Selkirk Common Riding is essentially the amalgamation of two separate customs – the riding of the marches, and the commemoration of Flodden. The riding of the Burgh Marches (i.e. the land of the town) to ensure everything is in order and that there have been no incursions dates back to 1113, while the commemoration of Flodden dates back to 1513. The casting of the colours in the Market Place at the end of the ceremonies commemorates the sacrifice made by the 80 men from Selkirk who marched to Flodden to fight for the army of King James IV. Only one returned. His name was Fletcher, and he bore the captured standard belonging to the Macclesfield regiment. On his return he cast the flag around his head to signify that his comrades had all perished in the battle. It is recorded that a Common Riding in the form that we know it today took place in 1704. Selkirk Merchant Company's first Standard Bearer was appointed in 1721.

Provost Jim Henderson has spoken of the Common Riding as 'the re-affirmation of our traditional values'. What are those traditional values in your opinion? and how do they relate to what you see as Christian values?

The values I think the Provost is referring to concern a healthy respect for the past, an acknowledgement of the debt we owe our forebears, a duty to uphold the community's high standards and sense of fellowship, and a resolve to preserve and uphold these principles, handing them on safely to the next generation. To my way of thinking many of these ideals chime with modern Christian values.



Members of St John's play their part in the Common Riding

What role, if any, do you think the churches should play in the Common Riding?

The churches in Selkirk are all rooted in the local community, as are the town's Common Riding celebrations, so I would contend that both complement each other. The United Crafts (the Incorporation of Hammermen & the Weavers' Incorporation) appoint an official chaplain (Rev. Jim Campbell) and hold a special church service each Common Riding.

Do you think the Common Riding helps to create social cohesion? Or does it perpetuate past conflicts?

Selkirk is certainly a strong community, although not as commercially vibrant as it has been in the past. I have never lived in a more caring or friendly place, or one that takes such pride in its traditions and history. The Common Riding does indeed promote social cohesion – you only have to see the thousands of families, friends and neighbours thronging the streets to march behind the town's Silver & Pipe Bands on Common Riding Day to realise just what a unifying force the Common Riding is. Past conflicts may be remembered, but are in no way perpetuated.

Do you think there are any down-sides to the Common Riding celebrations which the community needs to address?

It is hard to think of any, to be honest. The Common Riding celebrations incorporate all sections of the community. For example, the Royal Burgh Standard Bearer and his Attendants visit patients from Selkirk who are in the BGH; casting practices and visits are staged at The Bield and Thornfield homes; while Selkirk Merchant Company provides an annual bursary to help pupils at Selkirk High School. These are just some of the positive ways the Common Riding helps the local community.

Has it outlived its original purpose?

In no way, shape or form has Selkirk Common Riding outlived its original purpose! There again, perhaps you shouldn't be asking me this question... when it comes to Selkirk Common Riding I'm unashamedly biased!



The Churches and the Common Riding

- **Do the Churches have more of a role to play?**
- **What traditional values do you want to see upheld in Selkirk?**

Photo: Sandra Towers





Books with Bite



Another one of Alexander McCall Smith's witty stories of life in post colonial Africa I loved *The Good Husband of Zebra Drive* because it was so easy to take up where I left off in every transit lounge I visited on the way to New Zealand. I was so disappointed when I finished it and could no longer travel along with Mma Ramotswe as she solved an array of mysteries; where else but in his novels could the description of overweight carry the title of "traditionally built"! I love this man!

It's a very light hearted book portraying honesty, politeness and respect, values that sadly seem missing today. A reminder of a leisurely way of life which no longer exists. Most of all it made me smile.

Gill Howes

The Good Husband of Zebra Drive by Alexander McCall Smith.
Published by Abacus.

This was recommended Lent reading from the Rev. Mary Taylor. What joy! I feel that my own spiritual journey is like sailing in a boat, strangely always westwards, sometimes in a howling gale, and sometimes stuck like "a painted ship upon a painted ocean". *At Sea with God* is an exciting invitation to make a voyage of the heart and soul! "The sea, source of terror and glory; God the mystery, a mixture of terror and glory; being held by someone I can't see or understand." I can sail over waters, waters that give me what I need to stay alive, but also make me face my personal depths. Chapters explain the cargo, navigation, perils, going nowhere, dropping anchor and moving on. It has no creed or doctrine but explains the living experience of being "at sea" in the events and relationships of life. The journey is not solo. One day the boat will fall apart and the journey is beyond the horizon, having learned to trust the immensity of the ocean of God's love.



Rosalie Saunders

At Sea with God by Margaret Silf.
ISBN 0232 524 38 6.

When I look at my bookcases I realise I have in fact three favourite authors, Lindsey Davies, Kathy Reichs and Dick Francis. These three all write mystery/thriller novels, but in totally different settings. Lindsey Davies' hero is Marcus Didius Falco, an informer in Rome in the period 60-80 AD. In addition to being well written mystery novels, they give a wealth of information on life in the Roman Empire in that period and appear to be well researched. Kathy Reichs' heroine is Tempe Brennan, a forensic anthropologist working in the Southern USA and Canada. The books are straightforward murder stories and all contain a great deal of information on forensic science. Indeed, at times they read almost like a textbook on the subject. My favourite though has to be Dick Francis. His novels nearly always have different heroes, and whilst the majority have a horse or horse racing background, the remainder have varied settings. From these books I have learned about horse racing, painting with acrylic, glass sculpting, hostage negotiation and surviving in the wilds. Dick Francis' books are extremely well written, have a way of building up tension as the book progresses and always come to a satisfactory climax.

Over the years I have had a great deal of pleasure reading these books, and I know I will experience that pleasure again when the time comes for me to read them for a third time.

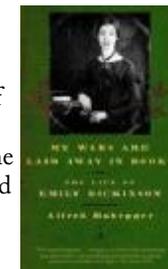
Brian Riley

Have you ever thought what book you would take with you "apart from the Bible and Shakespeare" if you were cast alone on that mythical desert island? My own immediate response would be "The Bible, of course, but, instead of Shakespeare — and with the greatest respect to the noble Bard — I would take The Complete Works of Emily Dickinson and, as my third item, *My Wars are Laid Away in Books*, Alfred Habbegger's masterly biography of Dickinson."

In an era when the expressions *amazing* and *awesome* are so often overused, the startling lyrics of America's greatest poet are indeed amazing and can only be regarded with a real sense of awe! Habbegger's superb book helps us reach into the extraordinary mind of this perplexing poet and into her unique world of imagination, observation, and concisely articulated spiritual and emotional experience. Her wonderful epigrammatic, portable distillations investigate every question about existence we confront and continue to "nibble at the soul" long after we have finished reading them.

David Longbotham

My Wars are Laid Away in Books by Alfred Habbegger.
Published by Modern Library Paperbacks



“ If summer were an axiom what sorcery had snow? ”

A central theme of Emily Dickinson's work

If life were one long summer we should be without the mysterious truths we learn from our 'winters' of suffering

Honeybees

Carol Wilson
introduces us
to the art of
beekeeping

I first started keeping bees in 1994, although my interest was fostered 20 years earlier by our village policeman who took me with him many times as he inspected his numerous hives. He was, and still is, considered to be a 'beekeeping maestro' in the local area where I lived in Yorkshire. I was fortunate to have such a teacher. During these visits to the hives I quickly became fascinated by the bees and full of wonder for their inborn sense of purpose. I see their fragility and vulnerability; how 'their world order' could be destroyed in 'the blinking of an eye'. As someone who takes a little honey from them, the least I can do is to be grateful and to treat them with respect and tender, loving care.

Someone, (was it William Blake?) once said, "ducks is valiant things and ducks is comical things"! I would certainly place bees in the former category . . . valiant and industrious; their small size belies their intelligence and ability.

Beekeeping is an ancient craft. The earliest evidence of men taking honey is recorded in a rock-painting in Valencia, Spain. There are many different kinds of bees, at least 20,000, which can nest in various different outdoor places but honey bees are the most common and man shelters them in hives so that honey can be collected.

The colony consists of one Queen bee whose purpose is to lay fertilized eggs - more than 10,000 per day. She begins in January; the larvae reach full size within 5 days. The cells are sealed with porous wax and after the pupa stage the worker bees emerge at 12-14 days, chewing their way through the cappings, and begin their many tasks which include cleaning the brood cells, nursing the young, tending the hive and looking after the queen. They also stand guard for the colony at the entrance and, placing themselves on the landing board, beat their wings to keep the hive cool. At 21 days the all-female workers begin to forage, travelling some 3 miles using trees and other large objects, and the sun, sensing it through cloud, as signposts. The flight becomes easier as they travel to and fro. On returning from foraging they perform a specific dance, wagging their tails to indicate to the others where the flowers are to be found. Flower markings also help.



A bee collecting nectar

The bees have hairs and antennae which feel vibrations and they can hear and smell with their antennae. These senses enable them to escape from danger and to recognise each other. The bee uses its long tongue to suck up the nectar which is made into honey in the



Bees store pollen in "baskets" supported on their back legs

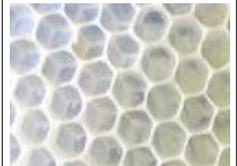
'bee stomach'. Pollen is scraped from the stamens using the tongue and jaws and is mixed with nectar which, along with honey, is used to feed the young and themselves. Their back legs support 'baskets' in which the yellow/orange pollen is carried; you can easily see these full baskets at the height of the gathering season. Bees also collect gum from the buds of trees and make propolis (Greek: before the city). It was used to seal apertures in straw hives and they continue to use it nowadays. Propolis is thought to be an antiseptic and natural antibiotic.

The bee's abdomens contain glands which make wax; this is used for making cells in the hive. They cleverly build in a hexagonal shape which is space-saving. Situated at the tail-end of the bee is a sting barb. This is to warn predators such as insects, birds, and mice (and includes us humans!) to keep away from the hive. Once the bee has stung, part of its abdomen is left behind as it moves away and therefore, sadly, the bee dies. In any event the worker lives for only three weeks in the height of summer, dying of exhaustion and old age.

Nectar is found in most flowering vegetation, commonly hawthorn, pear, sycamore, rape, clover, lime and heather. There are many garden plants which particularly attract bees.

The drone bees are male and are laid by the queen from March onward. Their only function is to mate with the queen. In autumn, their usefulness over, they are starved of food and are pulled outside by the workers to die of exposure.

(to be continued)



For garden plants to attract bees see
www.gardenersworld.com/plants/features



Why do you think fewer young people are going to church today?

Religion isn't as strong as it used to be. *People just don't believe in miracles any more.* Most kids do not go to church because they think it will make them look like a geek and people will take the mick out of them. *The modern age is taking over the world.* Teenagers are getting more games consoles, mobiles and electronics so they don't want to go to church. *Not a lot of adults encourage their children to go.* Their parents give them a choice and some of the teachings disagree with what they want to do. *I don't think many people can sit for an hour and listen to different things.* It is sort of like being in school. *They want to have fun and not sit in a church.* They think they have something better to do on a Sunday morning. *I can't get out of bed in time.*

T H E W A Y

Thanks to Mr Foreman and the following first year students at the High School

- Rachael Armstrong
- Dore Ashrowan
- Skye Brown
- Craig Bruce
- Callum Barnett
- Christy Burrows
- Olivia Douglas
- Ben Edwards
- Julia Grierson
- Connall Grieve
- Craig Henry
- Steven Horsman
- Aimee Kemp
- Sarah McCorm
- Iona Matheson
- Megan
- Liam Murray
- Alastair Penny



If you have been to church, how did you find it?

I didn't enjoy it because I don't like listening to people for ages. *I can't sit for an hour saying nothing.* The seats were hard and it hurt after a while. *It was very boring and illogical.* God doesn't exist. *Some of the stories are quite complicated and there's not much to do except sit on a bench listening to the minister speaking about Jesus and God.* It's too hard. *I found it very boring because you have to sing boring songs a lot.* I found it quite strange because there was a lot of singing and praying and the older people were shouting when they were singing and praying. *Our church has a monthly All Age Service which is great for young people and my friends enjoy that.* Some people I know would come but they have football training on Sunday morning. *I have been to church a few times and I like it because of the peacefulness.* I wouldn't go regularly but I find churches quite interesting to visit and see the stained glass windows. *When I was little I really enjoyed church because I went to Sunday School, but now I just think it's a bit too young for me* I have honestly never been to church except from some special ceremonies.

I S E E I T

Would you go back again and what would you be looking for?

The only time I'd consider going is for the Christingle service, because it makes me more excited for Christmas. *I would be looking for something to keep children more occupied.* It would have to be fun. *I would go if there were a play area for younger people, a chat room for teenagers and a lot of refreshments.* I would want to be with my age group. *I would go to a church that has a range of games, fun activities and that has interesting things to learn.* I would be looking for more interesting stories, like what happened to people. *I would probably go to St John's because it is more quiet.* I would like to go back for a visit because it is good to go to a quiet place and worship now and again. *I'd look for proof that God exists.* I wouldn't go because it would probably still be boring! *I don't understand why some people go just to fit in.*

Why I Support

Peggy Cookman explains why she supports BibleLands

BibleLands is a charity which works in partnership with local Christians in the lands of the Bible, as they show the compassion of Jesus in tending, treating and teaching the young and the needy.

I first supported BibleLands many years ago by buying Christmas cards. I liked the designs, the wording and the price. When funds permitted I gave a donation. I liked the fact the projects were multi-national, looking after those in need, irrespective of colour, creed, or class.

I trained as a Registered Nurse/Midwife/Health Visitor, at no cost to myself. Though the pay was minimal I was privileged for over 40 years



On the left, Nadia Nuebi and Ali Nujedat, two of the nurses Peggy has sponsored

to do a job I loved, caring for people in the community in beautiful surroundings - first Gloucestershire, then the Lake District, finally the Scottish Borders. In the Middle East no such free training exists. At the Nazareth Hospital student nurses pay for their training. The thing that impressed me was that students can be Israeli, Palestinian, Arab, Jew, Christian, Muslim, or of no religious persuasion. I decided that I would like to give back to nursing in some way - so I sponsored two nurses through their 3-year training at The Nazareth, that is paying their fees - and so I've continued for many years. Ironically, I have sponsored more Muslim students than Christian. Nowadays there is a new hospital, and no individual scholarships, but I still support the Nursing School.

I feel especially that these nurses, of different nationalities and faiths, working and living together, and looking after patients from different backgrounds, must learn tolerance and understanding of each other's attitudes. After training they will take this outlook back to their own towns and villages. Hopefully this will sow a seed of peace and goodwill which will grow and thrive in the troubled land where our Lord walked.



For further information on BibleLands go to www.biblelands.org.uk



Traidcraft Target Achieved

£300 raised to support Bangladesh training project

Over the past nine months members of St John's Church have raised £300 towards a Traidcraft Exchange project in Northern Bangladesh. About half the money has come from the profits from the monthly stall, selling Fairtrade food, gifts and cards. The rest has come from selling home produced notelets.

The five-year project we are supporting will reduce poverty among poor and marginalised communities in Northern Bangladesh by increasing income and employment opportunities.

What is the project addressing?

Northern Bangladesh is the poorest part of Bangladesh. People living in rural areas depend on work which is seasonal, poorly paid and exploitative. As a result, they remain trapped in poverty, and become increasingly marginalised.



"Unfortunately small businesses often struggle to become economically viable"

Small businesses can provide opportunities for work, and sometimes additional services such as schooling or health care facilities for workers and their families. Unfortunately though, small businesses often struggle to become economically viable. The majority receive no business support, so their problems

persist, they fail to become viable, and their employees remain poor and marginalised.

In order to alleviate poverty in Northern Bangladesh there is a need to create and secure employment opportunities for poor and disadvantaged groups.

What is the project doing?

The project is training 60 local organisations to provide vital business support to 1200 small businesses. Improving the business performance of small businesses will provide employment and income generating opportunities for poor producers. Each of the businesses provides an income for 6000 households. The project will therefore benefit a total of 28,200 poor and disadvantaged people.

The project will also help poor producers to influence local, national and international policies and practices which have a direct and often negative impact upon their livelihoods. It will also empower them to demand their rights to, for example, a fair price, a fair wage, decent living and working conditions, access to healthcare and other essential social services.

For more information see www.traidcraft.co.uk/international_development/overseas_programmes/south_asia/slipp_bangladesh.htm

SNIPPETS

Monday Club

In its 2007/2008 session, the Monday Club had the usual afternoons of slide shows and talks including a cheese tasting and a very good mime show by Jeremy and Heather.

The highlights of the session were a trip to Dobbies at Ponteland to see their Christmas display, a trip to Dunfermline, and an excellent lunch at the Hazelknowe



Jeremy in action at Kaleidoscope Theatre

restaurant at Ashkirk.

The members also enjoyed the usual Christmas party and a tea party on the last Monday. The average attendance was 25/30 and the club met every Monday afternoon apart from two occasions when it had to be cancelled due to snow.

Sandra Riley

Magazine Team

Editorial

Heather Sceats (Editor)
Christine Hill, Carol Wilson

Production

David Longbottom (Origination)
David Sceats (Print & Finish)

Distribution

Christine Hill Carol Wilson

Contributions

Contact Heather Sceats
01750 21364

St John's Episcopal Church, Selkirk, is a charity registered in Scotland.
Charity No SC002969
Registered address: St John's Church, Shawpark Road, Selkirk, TD7 4EE

Chainsaw Massacre!



On Saturday 17th May a party of volunteers cut down the "jungle" that threatened to engulf the church hall! Several trailer loads of trees and branches were removed but there was so much material that professional help is to be sought to recycle the remainder of the chopped down branches.



Faith in Older People

When? Sunday 22nd June.
Stay for lunch outside or in Church Hall after morning service. Bring your own sandwiches. Drink provided.

What? Join in Faith in Older People course, led by Mary Moffat.

Why? To develop an understanding of spiritual care of older people

Who? Anyone who wants to celebrate growing older and/or develop their skills to give spiritual care to older friends or relatives.



Next Issue Copy Deadline

Sunday 24th August 2008