



Anglican Parish of
Caversham Saint Peter,
Dunedin, New Zealand

THE ROCK

December 2018—Christmas

Merry Christmas

We wish everyone a very Merry Christmas and Happy New Year and many thanks to all our advertisers and contributors.

The Rock will next be published in February 2019.



The church that almost was

By The Vicar

Continuing the story of Saint Peter the Less.

A Watershed Moment

In May 1966 vestry secretary Macassey wrote to the diocesan registrar saying the vestry had decided not to proceed with the rebuild but would instead renovate the existing building. No reason was given for this change of heart.

The minutes of the special vestry meeting held on 2 May to resolve the issue shed some light on how that decision was arrived at. An attempt was made to save the rebuild project with the first motion of the evening, "That we proceed with the rebuilding project at St Peter's the Less with the intention that such a building could be incorporated into a combined Parish in the event of Union". However, this was lost on a show of hands. It is interesting to note that the church union proposals had some bearing on vestry thinking. Then came the decisive motion of the evening, "That the Works Committee be empowered to obtain estimates for the renovation of St Peter's the Less, such estimates to be available for the June meeting of vestry". It was further resolved to hold a general meeting of Parishioners at the Less on 16 May.

The following month John Teal explained the renovation decision this way in the parish magazine:

It was stated in the "Pebble" that vestry had decided not to proceed with the re-building of St Peter the Less. Two reasons were stated—Finance and Re-union proceedings. Finance

loomed large, for only £1,900 had come in from gifts which, with the use of £3,000 from the General Purposes Fund, would still require a large loan to meet what looked to be going to cost £8,500. This would not have deterred anyone, but when one looked critically at the section one couldn't help wondering whether the expenditure of that amount of money would be justified; after all, if it fell down, no one in St Clair would be more than seven minutes from St Peter's. Many have grown to enjoy their worship in St Peter the Less: habit does not break easily, but when it is all said, everyone is only minutes away from the parish church. Even before the questions raised by re-union came up, it is questionable whether the project should have proceeded. Now that re-union proposals are in the air, and given it will be our grandchildren who will first realise the full impact of what is being done at the present, this is not very many years ahead, and when the time comes the present building can either be scrapped, sold...but they will not be encumbered with a church still comparatively new—one built in permanent materials not knowing what to do with it...In passing, note how St Peter's is becoming more and more on the fringe of the parish.

(Continued on page 2)



The church that almost was

(Continued from page 1)

He then went on to request that those who had given money for the rebuild would now allow it to be used for renovation.

One is struck by the way in which although money and reunion are themes Teal began with, his major point focuses on the close proximity of the parish church, the small travel time to reach it and the desire not to be encumbered by a permanent materials building in the future. The evidence does seem to point to a possible conclusion that John Teal had inherited a situation of a vestry and local mission church keen to advance a rebuild but that his enthusiasm for the project had waned the closer it came to fruition. We know he was keen to close St Alban's Corstorphine. That wouldn't be possible at St Peter the Less because of its activity and attendance levels and the fact that key lay leaders were based there. However, if St Peter the Less were just given a facelift that would leave the closure option more likely in the future, as increasing mobility made the mother church a more attractive worship location.

Something else had occurred in 1965 which may well have dampened his enthusiasm for a more robust St Clair ecclesial base. It had been decided to hold an exercise in lay consultation in Lent entitled "Parish Life Probe; the People of the Parish looking at the Life of the Parish." It was to run over five consecutive nights of the week 14-18 March and was to be led by Alan Blackburn and Bob Walton who were devotees of the Group Life Laboratory Movement [see sidebar]. Apparently the invitation to a full, free and frank discussion of the parish's life past, present and future was seized upon by some St Clair parishioners with long memories of the inter war years who gave

The Group Life Laboratory Movement was a church version of the encounter groups or T groups intended to develop the insights and self-awareness of participants, particularly as they operated in groups. This was very much a feature of life in the 1960s and such exercises in letting it all hang out could have unpredictable and difficult to deal with downwind consequences.

vent to their grievances about the parish leadership's treatment of St Peter the Less. There was a feeling that Pandora's Box had been opened and that the hurt and anger which had come out into the open could not be dealt with or laid to rest. John Teal was clearly rocked by the experience. Taken together with the inconclusive and disappointing referendum on a possible church name change this could well have cooled his ardour for further church development in the St Clair area.

By September renovation work had begun with this involving new iron on the roof, rough-casting the walls, lining the interior of the church and the porch, removing the two vestries, making the sanctuary larger, returning the communion rails to the east wall, removing the pulpit, adding new pews, lengthening others and changing the position of the organ. The work was completed by December and was revealingly described as a "facelift" [Fisherman, December 1966].

In my opinion a second decisive marker point had been reached. Button's decision to confine St Peter the Less to the role of a chapel of ease and a mission church blocked the path to eventual independence as a parish in its own right. The decision not to rebuild



St Peter the Less in its modern life as a family home.

PHOTO.: GOOGLE EARTH.

confirmed this confined role of the St Clair church and made it highly likely it would have a limited shelf life in the future. A hidden identity marker of Anglican denominational identity is that its adherents like their churches to be beautiful, a house of God they can take pride in. The modernist design of Mason and Wales may have raised some eyebrows on aesthetic grounds, but the vestry and the general meeting of parishioners had accepted it. As experience had shown at Corstorphine a purely functional nondescript church building was easy to walk away from. The new church was more likely to open a pathway to a permanent Anglican presence in St Clair. The old church which had merely received a facelift faced a vulnerable and uncertain future as tougher times lay ahead for the mainline denominations in the decades to follow.

The Changing of the Guard

As the 1970s developed the props were knocked away from St Peter the Less. By 1974 there was no longer any Sunday School or Thursday Class activity. The Young Wives' group had closed two years earlier. The youth group would limp on for a few more years until its demise before the close of the decade.

1974 saw also the deaths of Mrs Connie Petre, Miss Edna Bishop and Miss Trixie Chalmers, key members of the St Clair Anglican matriarchy. It is appropriate to salute them by name at this point in the words of Anne Turvey who knew them well. Having acknowledged their "confident, often domineering relationships with those around them" she then went on to list them:

Mrs Margie Johnston (nee Featherstone) a quiet competent person, clearly used to taking responsibility in church affairs and willing to lead the Guild, take charge of the cleansing of chalice and paten, arrange flowers and be a welcome face at the door. She came from Central Otago where she was active in church affairs. By then widowed, her husband had been a well-known local businessman. Miss Blyth and Miss B. Chalmers who taught Sunday school with her. Mrs D. Wedekind who in my eyes was the epitome of the English middle classes from which she came. She demanded a high standard at every level of religious observance and social

(Continued on page 3)

McAuliffe Jewellers
WATCHMAKER & JEWELLER

177 KING EDWARD STREET

03 455 4307

OR SHOP ONLINE AT

WWW.MCAULIFFEJEWELLERS.CO.NZ/TOP-PICKS.HTML

New

Antique

The local family jeweller and watchmaker
for all jewellery, clocks and watches.

Repair

Restore



The church that almost was

(Continued from page 2)

behaviour and could best be described as "indomitable". She favoured tailored, expensive tweed costumes, and with an appropriate blouse of pink, yellow or blue and an elaborate hat she was a striking woman. Mrs Connie Petre—an imposing person. She was widowed and a woman of considerable financial means. Like several other members of "the Less," she often financially supported church enterprises without fanfare or discussion. She had also been a school teacher at the private girls' school Archerfield. Miss Edna Bishop and Miss Trixie Chalmers were both great workers for the church. [E MAIL ANNE TURVEY TO AUTHOR, 10 DECEMBER 2016].

It is worth reflecting on the issue of class at this point. Anne Turvey made it clear several times in her filmed interviews that part of the reason for the antagonism between St Peter the Less and the mother church was the desire of upper middle class St Clair Anglicans to have as little as possible to do with working class Caversham and above all not to be taking executive direction from the vestry of St Peters Caversham. It would appear that lay leaders like Dick Wedekind and Lyndon Macassey took a more generous and inclusive view. Yet it is an interesting reality that the issue of class, so highlighted in the publications of the Caversham project, plays out in reverse in the story of the St Clair mission church. The New Testament documents make it abundantly clear that the new community called the church, founded around the teaching and example of Jesus Christ, is to transcend the usual divisions of the human family based around ethnic origins, language and culture groups; and class. Yet the Caversham Parish obviously struggled to overcome this latter division. Pywell managed to pull the two groups together for a time by sheer force of character and a skilful use of the wartime emergency. The parish leadership before and after him appear to have been reluctant to face the issue head on and to have attempted to resolve it by the application of theological and Scriptural principles.

St Peter the Less would continue on for another two decades. Its 9am Book of Common Prayer Communion Service with hymns, a no frills middle of the road style of Anglican religion, still had a following. There was a new generation of St Clair Anglicans to patronise it, including the Buxtons, Jim and Josephine Weipers, Lesley and Buster Sinclair and Jim and Shirley Menzies. Messrs Buxton and Weipers were vestrymen and or wardens.

Neither a Bang nor a Whimper

The end when it came was quiet and undemonstrative. In May 1993 the vestry resolved to discuss the closure of St Peter the Less with parishioners. The People's Warden was to contact all the families who worshipped at that church and invite them to join the mother church. Most did indeed make the transition. The parishioner meeting took place on Sunday 6 June and was attended by 13 parishioners with four apologies. The meeting resolved to close the church on 20 June 1993 when the Bishop would be visiting the parish with the regular 9am Service being the last Service there. The altar was brought back to Saint Peter's, Hillside Rd, the pews were sold and the church was sold at first to a person who used it as a dance studio who then on sold it to a builder and developer who converted it into his private dwelling. 🏠



A Dunedin owned optometry practice with a reputation for friendly, quality service

- ◆ General Eye Exams
- ◆ Contact Lenses
- ◆ Spectacles
- ◆ Glaucoma Screening
- ◆ Visual Field Screening
- ◆ Retinal Photography
- ◆ Irlen Syndrome Screening

183 King Edward Street

PO Box 2035, Dunedin South 9044

Email: reception@myglasses.co.nz

Phone: (03) 455 3459 : Fax: (03) 455 3859

<http://myglasses.co.nz>

Letters

The Rock welcomes letters to the Editor. Letters are subject to selection and, if selected, to editing for length and house style. Letters may be :

Posted to : The Editor of The Rock,
c/- The Vicarage, 57 Baker Street,
Caversham,
Dunedin, N.Z. 9012

Emailed to: TheRockEditor@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

Ask The Vicar

For answers to questions doctrinal, spiritual and liturgical.

Write to: Ask The Vicar, c/- The Vicarage as above

Or email: AskTheVicar@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

ASK THE VESTRY

Questions about the secular life and fabric of the parish may be:

Posted to : Ask The Vestry, c/- The Vicarage as above

Emailed to: AskTheVestry@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

Christmas Greetings

From Lesley and Buster Sinclair to all the parishioners at Saint Peter's.

The Articles of Religion

ISSUED BY THE CONVOCATION OF CLERGY OF THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND IN 1571

XXX. Of both Kinds.

The Cup of the Lord is not to be denied to the Lay-people: for both the parts of the Lord's Sacrament, by Christ's ordinance and commandment, ought to be ministered to all Christian men alike.

The Frolicsome Friar



"No, the Tower of Babel wasn't built for better phone reception."

SOURCE: WWW.HOWTOGEEK.COM.



Nutritious



Food for the Journey

By Alex Chisholm



ver Christmas, journeys are often a special feature of life and many childhood memories are of trips to visit relatives or of camping and time spent in the outdoors. In New Zealand people may head for the beach or the family holiday destination, to enjoy barbeques and usual summer food as well as the New Zealand interpretation of traditional festive cuisine. In colder climes, meeting with family and friends in warm houses to eat hot traditional Christmas fare is likely to be more popular.

Whatever our destination, especially for a longer journey, preparation



"Many of the features we take for granted would not have been available on the journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem.

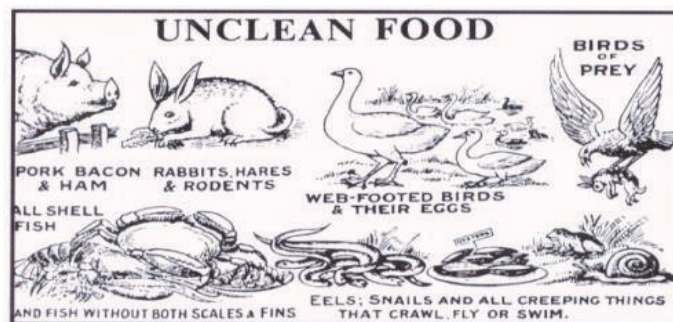
A present-day map shows Nazareth (105km North of Jerusalem) and Bethlehem (marked, 8km South of Jerusalem).

MAP: GOOGLE.

would have been a much safer situation which may have provided opportunities for food sharing as well as having women from the family available to assist Mary.

As Father Hugh reminded us in his sermon on Advent 2, Jesus was a person of his time who would grow up in the human context of an observant Jewish family grounded in the Scriptures and attendance at the Synagogue. Thus not only the food which was generally available and affordable, but also the dietary laws of Judaism (Kashrut) would have determined their choices. Specific types of food were forbidden and food had to be prepared in a particular way. The meat, for example, came from animals which had cloven hooves and chewed their cud—the goat and the lamb. These had to be killed in an humane way, so the animal suffered as little as possible. As a

rule, animals which ate grass were permitted but animals which ate flesh were not. All reptiles were forbidden. Fish must have fins and scales and crustaceans could not be eaten. Eggs from kosher animals were acceptable. However meat and dairy could not be in the same meal.



SOURCE: [HTTPS://HUBPAGES.COM](https://hubpages.com).

When investigating the food available in the region generally, a number of foods which would be familiar to those following a Mediterranean diet appear on the list. Grapes, dates and figs, pomegranates eaten fresh or dried, olives, a wide range of vegetables, beans, lentils and peas, onions and leeks, melons and cucumbers. Goat or sheep cheese and yogurt if available were eaten fresh because of the heat.

However, what type of foods would, so far as we know, have been the basis of the diet for most people living in this area at that time? Bread, usually barley bread, was a feature of most meals and women made it by grinding the grain between two stones, the grain was mixed with water and the fermented dough, kept for this purpose, was kneaded into the dough, which was left to rise. Then the thin, flat circles of dough were slapped onto the hot stones in the fire, or placed in a bread oven, possibly only weekly even if the family had access to one. Wine, water and curdled milk, similar to liquid yogurt, could be part of a meal. However accessing sufficient clean water was not easy. Meat was a rarity, kept for very special occasions, fish was much more common. The dried fish industry was an important source of wealth for the people around the Sea of Galilee, but given the distance of Nazareth from the Sea of Galilee (30km) it is likely the fish would have been salted, smoked or dried. The main dish in a meal could be lentil stew seasoned with herbs like cumin, black cumin or coriander.

Susan Weingarten, an archaeologist and food historian who lives in Galilee, writing in the *Church Times* tells us "Bean and/or lentil stew,

(Continued on page 6)



In Saint Peter's Garden



By Warwick Harris

On Camels at Christmas

A visit to the Kingdom of Bahrain in October this year brought an unexpected visit to a camel farm. Although camels are often encountered in zoos, I have only once before met one outside that confinement. That was in the

grazing can lead to desertification. There is an UNESCO programme fostering the shift to farmed camels.

Camels often appear on the illustrations which come with modern Christmas celebrations. However, even though camels are



Left: Camel calf resting after a meal of lucerne at the Royal Camel Farm. Camel wool was once a useful product.
Right: Royal Camel Farm, Manama, Bahrain, with camels tethered to a leg.

PHOTO'S: DEIRDRE HARRIS

Northern Territory of Australia in the early 1970s when, with a companion, Sandy Clark, I travelled from Darwin to Alice Springs doing a survey of materials used in the construction of yards at cattle stations along the way. While we turned off the main highway on to long side roads to get to cattle stations, another pair involved in the survey flew by light aircraft to even more remote stations.

The survey was initiated by companies involved in the manufacture and sale of cattle yards made from iron-based metal. As well as the convenience of assembling yards from this material there is also their unpalatability to termites! While driving along the side road to a station Sandy and I spotted some dromedary camels amongst sparse vegetation away from the road. Excited, we left our 4WD and ran toward the camels, expecting them to gallop away. Instead they stayed put, and approaching one we saw it had an unattached tethering rope. Cautious that camels could bite or spit (projectile regurgitation) we kept our distance and having satisfied our curiosity, returned to our vehicle.

The camels we saw that day were domesticated. This was about the time of the turnaround from when camels were introduced to Australia as a mode of transport to when they became serious feral animals, degrading the natural vegetation of central Australia. Australia is the only country where camels are feral. The feral population there reached about a million in 2008 and by 2013 culling had reduced the number to about 600,000.

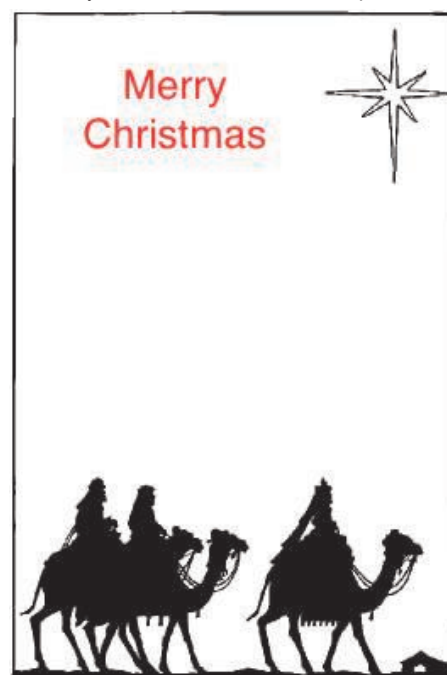
Part of the strategy to control the number of camels and their impact on natural vegetation is to farm them. So now in Australia there are abattoirs which process camel meat and dairies producing camel milk for export. Presumably the camels at the Bahrain farm produce similar products. Farming them is seen as a means to reduce the number of feral camels on dryland ecosystems where their over-

mentioned 29 times in the bible, they are not mentioned in the New Testament account of the Nativity (Matthew 2). This tells that wise men had followed a star in the East leading them to Jerusalem and then to Bethlehem where they found the child Jesus with his mother Mary. There they gave gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.

There is no mention of the mode of transport of the wise men, but it is a reasonable conjecture that they travelled by camel. This is because camels, "the ship of the desert", were, in the time of the Nativity, used to transport frankincense and myrrh from where these were produced, principally in Oman.

Today the usefulness of camels as a mode of desert travel has largely been superseded by 4-wheel drive vehicles and helicopters. But adding to their continued use as food, in recent times these noble animals, remarkably adapted to survive in hot and dry climates, are the subjects of camel racing and beauty contests.

Merry Christmas. 🐫





By Tubby Hopkins,
Vicar's Warden

CHURCHWARDEN CORNER

Well, here we are; Advent 3 at the time of writing, nearly Christmas. Gosh where has the past year gone? How many times have we heard that question? With that in mind and there not being very much news of Saint Peter's I'll just write a few rambling thoughts.

We all seem to think the years pass with ever increasing speed but do they really? I'm sure there have been 365 days in a year for centuries and each one of those days has 24 hours, so why does it appear to go faster? Is it our biological clocks making things appear to go faster as we get older? Remember as kids, how long it used to take for the next lot of school holidays to come round, or how long it was until Christmas and we could go on holiday.



Is technology part of the reason
time flies?

A natural disaster, such as a Tsunami, earthquake or maybe a terrorist bomb attack on the other side of the world, can often be watched live on TV as it unfolds and we just take it for granted. Maybe the immediacy of seeing all these things happen so quickly is why we think the year has flown by.

I wonder if our Lord ever sat down with a wine 2000 years ago and said, "Gosh Peter, I can't believe it, where has the past year gone? Never mind, we've got another year ahead and we'll do it all again"

God Bless you all, have a Happy Christmas and New Year, stay safe and with a bit of luck, we'll do it all over again in 2019. 🙏

Maybe it's the technology we try to keep up with in this modern world. I'm sure that over the past 70 years we've witnessed the most progress and new inventions the world has known in such a space of time. Take sport for instance, in the 1940s and 50s our national teams, cricket and rugby, would tour the United Kingdom and take six weeks to travel there in a ship and six weeks for the return journey, three months slipped by, without even playing a match. When they did play a match, we might see a single "wire photo" in the *ODT* of a try being scored, four or five days later—and what a grainy photo that would be. Now we sit back in the comfort of our lounges with a beer and enjoy it all live, as it happens! A sports team now thinks nothing of boarding a plane and flying halfway around the world for a single game, then returning to play another game the next weekend in New Zealand.



Part of the score of *Tempus Fugit*, a piece for flute and guitar by Anna-Lena Laurin.



STEWART Construction Ltd

29 Fox Street
South Dunedin

Ph 03 455 2057
Fax 03 455 5959
Cell 0274 360 097

■ Construction
■ Homes
■ Joinery
■ Kitchens
■ Design

☒ Alterations
☒ Joinery
☒ Commercial

☒ Maintenance
☒ Kitchens

www.stewartconstruction.co.nz



Nutritious Food for the Journey

(Continued from page 4)

known as miqpeh, was a common dish at the time, but the word refers to a solidified mass, which is what happens to cooked lentils when left to cool. Solid lumps of food were easier to scoop up by hand for poor families who would not have owned many eating utensils. This dish was often flavoured with garlic and other



Journeys over. Mary, Joseph and the Three Wise Men together in the manger with the Christ Child.

vegetables were added, such as cabbage. For other flavourings, mustard was widely cultivated in Roman Galilee, as we know from Jesus's parable of the mustard seed (Mark 4.31). Dill, cumin and mint are all mentioned in the New Testament as herbs which the Pharisees tithe".

On the other hand the provisions the Magi may have taken on their much longer journey would have reflected their high status and food customs in their countries of origin. However, the food taken on that important journey as Jesus' family travelled to Bethlehem would have been very much simpler and more frugal than the fare most of us associate with Christmas. Whatever it was though was sufficient to sustain Him who now Sunday by Sunday offers us, in the Eucharist, the gift of the ultimate food for our journeys. 🙏



Susan Weingarten.



Regular Services

(for variations consult *The Pebble* or our website)
All services are held in Saint Peter's unless noted otherwise

SUNDAY:

8am: Holy Communion according to the Book of Common Prayer
10.30am: Solemn Sung Eucharist
5pm: **first Sunday of the month only** : Evensong and Benediction followed by a social gathering in the lounge.

THURSDAY:

10am: Eucharist

FIRST THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH:

11am: Eucharist in the lounge of Frances Hodgkins Retirement Village, Fenton Crescent

Special Services

Contact The Vicar to arrange baptisms, weddings, house blessings, burials, confessions and other special services.

Parish Contacts:

VICAR:

Father Hugh Bowron,
The Vicarage, 57 Baker St., Caversham, Dunedin,
New Zealand 9012.
(03) 455-3961
Vicar@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

ASSISTANT PRIEST:

Father Brian Kilkelly.
(03)455-4121 or 027-229-3450

CHURCH WARDENS:

Vicar's Warden:

Tubby Hopkins
(03) 454-2399
VicarsWarden@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

People's Warden:

Di Bunker
(03) 477 2474
PeoplesWarden@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

VESTRY SECRETARY:

Vestry@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC

AND PARISH CENTRE MANAGER:

David Hoskins
Telephone: (03) 453-4621
ParishCentre@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

FINANCE:

Danielle Harrison
(03) 455-0759
Finance@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

The Rock is published by The Anglican Parish of Caversham, Dunedin, N.Z.

EDITORIAL TEAM:

David Scoular
Telephone (03) 454-6004
TheRockEditor@stpeterscaversham.org.nz
The Vicar, Father Hugh Bowron
Telephone (03) 455-3961
The Vicarage, 57 Baker Street
Vicar@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

ADVERTISING QUERIES:

TheRockAds@stpeterscaversham.org.nz

PRE-PRINT SERVICES BY: Information Services Otago Ltd.

PRINTED BY: Dunedin Print Ltd.



estry meetings are generally held every two months. There was no meeting in December.



We're locally and family owned and operated which means we'll always be here when you need us

Compassionate guidance, support and advice 24/7

Ph: 03 455 2128 (24hrs)
407 Hillside Rd, Sth Dunedin
www.gillions.co.nz

GILLIONS
FUNERAL SERVICES

Maybe Christmas, the
Grinch thought, doesn't
come from a store

Dr. Seuss

Let's be naughty and save
Santa the trip.

Gary Allan



I will honor Christmas in my
heart, and try to keep it all
the year.

Charles Dickens

There would be no
Christmas if there was no
Easter.

Gordon B. Hinckley

For your diary

Sunday, 23 December : Service of Nine Lessons and Carols at 10.30 am

Monday, 24 December : Christmas Eve

11am Eucharist at Frances Hodgkins Retirement Village

6pm Eucharist at St Barnabas

10.30pm A candlelit Service of Carols, Readings and first Mass of the Nativity in Saint Peter's

Christmas Day : 9 am Holy Communion (1662) with Carols

Monday, 31 December : New Year's Eve

3pm The marriage of Annabel Barton to Barton Price at Saint Peter's

10.30pm Watchnight Service followed by a social gathering in the lounge

Sunday 6 January : Feast of the Epiphany

10.30am Epiphany Carol Service

Saturday, 12 January : New Year Film Season in the Vicarage at 2pm *Mao's Last Dancer*, the story of Li Cunxin's remarkable journey from Mao's cultural revolution to becoming an acclaimed dancer in the west

Saturday, 19 January : New Year Film Season in the Vicarage at 2pm *Balanchine* about George Balanchine, who trained at Russia's Maryinsky theatre and became the 'father of American ballet.'

Saturday, 26 January : New Year Film Season in the Vicarage at 2pm *Suzanne Farrell: Elusive Muse*, a candid account of her complex relationship with Balanchine

January—date to be arranged: Parish barbeque

February—date to be arranged: Garage Sale

Sunday, 24 February : Deadline for copy for the February edition of *The Rock*. (There will be no edition in January)



Rock music



By David Hoskins, Director of Music

O Holy Night

- A carol or not?

At Christmas each year one of the musical favourites is the *Cantique de Noel*, or as we know it, *O Holy Night*. However, there is an interesting back-story here.

It's always referred to as being written by Adolph Adam. Adam may have supplied the music in 1847 but the text was written by wine merchant and poet (a fine combination) Placide Cappeau (1808-1877).

The history of the piece runs something like this—though there are always embellishments.

In late-1843 Roquemaure, a small town near Avignon, France, the organ of the parish church had been rebuilt in fine style. The parish priest asked local poet, Placide Cappeau, to write a Christmas poem to celebrate the event. Cappeau had never shown the slightest interest in religion. However, he completed the poem in good time and later that year his friend and composer, Adolph Adam, wrote the music.

The song had to wait until 1847 for its premiere by the noted opera



Adolphe Adam.

PHOTO.: SUPPLIED.

critic in the United States and had a lasting impact on music throughout the country. Ordained in 1840, he drifted from this vocation into matters musical and the foundational work of developing the American taste for European high art.

In 1855 Dwight translated *O Holy Night* into English and it developed a wide distribution world-wide via his extensive publishing interests. Dwight's translation dwells more on the humanistic aspects of the original.

The edition we at Saint Peter's are accustomed to stresses the religious tone opening with 'O holy night! The stars are brightly shining, it is the night of the dear Saviour's birth'. The later stanzas refer to chains of the oppressed masses being broken—depending on the translation. However, the message of the song is unmistakable and very much part of Christmas music. YouTube abounds with variations of both words and music—some truly dire! But the song remains dear in the hearts of congregations and audiences world-wide. Not bad for a job of work from a small town wine merchant.



John Dwight.

PHOTO.: SUPPLIED.

singer Emily Laurey. There the history could well have ended. The song was translated by the extraordinary Unitarian minister John Sullivan Dwight (1813-1893). Dwight was the first major influential classical music

STEWART Construction Ltd

29 Fox Street
South Dunedin

Ph 03 455 2057
Fax 03 455 5959
Cell 0274 360 097

■ Construction ■ Homes ■ Joinery ■ Kitchens ■ Design

- ✓ Alterations
- ✓ Maintenance
- ✓ Joinery
- ✓ Kitchens
- ✓ Commercial

www.stewartconstruction.co.nz



Justin Welby
The Archbishop of Canterbury

My Lords, of the choice of psalms that form part of daily prayers in the Lords we have Psalm 46, which we heard today: "the nations are in uproar, the kingdoms totter..." and Psalm 121, which we'll doubtless hear tomorrow: "I lift up my eyes to the hills... My help comes from the Lord who made heaven and earth..."

More online :

Read the complete text at:

<https://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/speaking-and-writing/speeches/archbishop-canterburys-speech-lords-debate-brexit-deal>

The opening of the Archbishop's speech during the House of Lords debate on the withdrawal of Great Britain from the European Union on 5 December, 2018.



More online :

Two of the many versions available on YouTube

Featuring Susan Boyle:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=e7xkA8xoQn0>

Featuring Luciano Pavarotti and Placido Domingo:
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=V7uiqRCW6l8>

Google "O Holy Night" for others.