

Letter to the Parish

When I was a young man, as a member of the youth fellowship of St Thomas's Church, I used to take services in a nursing home in Edinburgh. We encouraged those present to choose one of their favourite hymns for us all to sing together. Over the years the most popular choice was "O Love That Wilt Not Let Me Go", a hymn written by The Reverend George Matheson who for many years was the minister of St Bernard's Church, Stockbridge, Edinburgh.

O love that will not let me go, I rest my weary soul in thee.

I give thee back the life I owe, that in thine oceans depths its flow. May richer fuller be.

O light followest all my way, I yield my flickering torch to thee.

My heart restores its borrowed ray, that in thy sunshine's blaze its day. May brighter fairer be.

O joy that seekest me through pain, I cannot close my heart to thee.

I chase the rainbow through the rain, and feel the promise is not vain. That morn shall tearless be.

O cross that liftest up my head, I dare not ask to fly from thee.

I lay in dust's life's glory dead, and from the ground there blossoms red. Life that shall endless be.

George lost his sight at a young age and as a consequence his fiancée broke off their engagement.

After that he was helped with his

disability by his sister and it was on the eve of his sister's wedding that he wrote his most famous hymn. He said of writing the hymn, "*I am quite sure that the whole work was completed in five minutes, and equally sure that it never received at my hands any retouching or correction. I have no natural gift of rhythm. All the other verses I have ever written are manufactured articles; this came like a dayspring from on high.*"

The hymn reflects the sadness of his losing, first his fiancée and then, through marriage, the close companionship of his sister but is strong in George's unshakeable faith in a God who loves him no matter what and will never forsake him. The 'rainbow', a sign of God's promise, which George could no longer see physically was a sustaining force in his service to God.

His response to Jesus giving his life for him was to, "give thee back the life I owe".

When we find ourselves at the foot of the cross of Jesus, our response is to lift up our heads in the knowledge that our guilt has been lifted from us and dedicate ourselves to be followers of him who gave his life for us that our lives should "endless be".

Every time I sing the hymn, I am lifted above the stresses of daily life to an emotional place where I receive again the joy of knowing that I am loved by my Creator and that he will never let me go.

Bill Meyer

FELPHAM & MIDDLETON HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Tuesday 22nd October 7.30pm

Planting for Spring Colour by Nick Bailey

Nick's career spans landscape & garden design, garden management, teaching, writing and broadcasting. He is a regular presenter on BBC2's Gardeners' World and is also a writer for several magazines and newspapers. His latest book 'Revive Your Garden' will be on sale at the meeting.

Members: £3 Visitors: £5

St Mary's Centre, Grassmere Close, Felpham PO22 7NU

Visitors Most Welcome

Contact Linda Wilson on 01243 867899 or visit www.fandmhs.co.uk

FOLLOW-UP for PAGHAM ON PARADE

A great day out was had by all! Pagham on Parade (POP19) held at the Village Hall and paddock in Pagham last Sunday was better than ever!

A prolonged heavy shower early morning gave way to bright sunshine which continued for the rest of the day.

Arena events included a dog training display, morris dancers, music by Ballroom Blitz, a steel band, line dancing and a very fitting tribute to the late Ray Radmall by the Rev. Colin Wood. Mr Radmall, who died earlier this year, was the main instigator of Pagham on Parade years ago and worked tirelessly to ensure that it was always a great showcase for the village.

Many interesting craft and charity stalls traded their wares and gave out information. Refreshments as ever were extremely popular as was the bar and BBQ. The classic cars and motorbikes once again were an excellent feature and a huge thank you must be given to the many scouts who assisted with parking. A grand raffle concluded the day with 22 amazing prizes all donated by local businesses. All profits will be distributed to local charities and groups later in the year.

It's almost Panto time! Oh no it isn't! Oh yes it is!

Pagham Players present

ALADDIN

at the Pagham Village Hall

Fri 6th December at 7.30pm with mulled wine and nibbles

Sat 7th December at 7.00pm Followed by A Christmas Party

Tickets: £10, Children £5

Contact Judy on 264622

Polymyalgia Rheumatica and Giant Cell Arteritis support group

We meet monthly on the second Wednesday, from 2.15 - 3.45pm in the Pagham Small Hall, Pagham Road, PO21 4NJ. Call 263866 for more details.