

At the start of 1996 we still had no Vicar. Keith James was our Curate, Mick Maskell our Youth & Community worker, and Janice Brader the Parish Clerk. The two Church Wardens were Barbara Scott and Mary Markham.

In January, the Knights of St George performed Mother Goose, another successful pantomime, which raised £499.31 for church funds. In February, Churches in North Scunthorpe (CINS) organised a series of Lent meetings based in different churches. St George's also held five Sunday evening meetings throughout Lent.

In the March magazine, Keith James reviewed the various Synods and Committees. CINS (Churches in North Scunthorpe) was a committee made up of representatives from St George's, St Michael's, St Lawrence's, Centenary, New Brumby, and Crosby Methodist Churches, and the Church of the Resurrection. This group organised the distribution of Christmas and Easter cards to every home in North Scunthorpe. They also organised social events and services of worship.

SACF (Scunthorpe Area Churches Forum) was a group which represented all churches in the Scunthorpe area. This Forum was created to give the opportunity to represent Christian opinion locally on matters of common interest and to encourage communication between different traditions and denominations.

The Deanery Synod is simply a group of parishes; we are in the Manlake Deanery which covers parishes in Scunthorpe, Alkborough, Gunness, Messingham, Burton, Winterton, Scotter and Scotton. The Clergy of these parishes meet together regularly; these meetings are called Chapter meetings. The Deanery Synod is the decision making body and churches are represented by both Clergy and lay people.

The Diocesan Synod is the body which represents all the Deaneries in the Diocese. Deaneries are represented by both Clergy and lay people.

In March the Pathfinders held a week-end Churchathon. This was a sponsored challenge when they had to stay in church for a full 24 hours. The Explorers and Scramblers also took part but did not stay the night. The Pathfinders arrived at 12 noon on the Saturday and then made a circuit for the Scramblers Grand Prix. They then had a series of games and Worship Workshops. In the evening there was an obstacle course round the church. On the Sunday they made final preparations for taking the Mothering Sunday Service which went very well.

In the May magazine Tim Savage reviewed the Community Centre development. In the 1960's the Youth Centre and Greeson hall was built and a Neighbourhood Association set up. This was funded jointly by local government and the Church of England. The Youth Centre had now been sold to Crosby School and the Greeson Hall was starting to show signs of aging. A new chapter was about to begin with the awarding of a grant of £500,000 from the Single Regeneration Budget to provide a new community centre. In addition there would be a parallel development of excellent community facilities, including a large hall across the road in the Sikh Temple.

The new centre would serve a number of different purposes. The Adult Education Service would transfer its teaching activities from Ancholme house. The Somali

Welfare Community Association, presently meeting at 198 Frodingham Road, would use its rooms for educational and social activities. An outreach Youth Worker, also funded by the SRB, would be based there, and there will be a child centre where crèche facilities would be available for Adult Education students. The Community Office would move from 198 Frodingham Road and there will be a new Parish Office and Vestibule. Work was due to begin in July and be operational by next March.

A Confirmation Service was held on 19 May. Candidates were Kelly Abbott, Andrew and Mark Baker, Fiona Bramley, Ashley Coggan, Pat Day, Kevin Foulston, Daniel Grix, Michelle and Robert Lewis, Pat Lodge, Mary Tate, Andrew and Robert Whitehouse.

We held a week-end Festival in June. This started with a prayer vigil on the Friday evening. The Summer Fair was held the next day and was opened by Neil Cox of Middlesbrough FC. This raised £700 for church funds. The British Legion Brass Band played and there were singing groups from both Gurnell Street and Crosby Primary Schools. On the following Sunday an all-age worship service was held followed by an evening Songs of Praise and Thanksgiving for the Greeson Hall.

In August the Local Ministry Team reported on their progress. They had attended five ten-week sessions on Caring for People, Worship, St Mark's Gospel, A Way into the Old Testament, and The Costly Love of God. They had completed individual and group assignments on each of these sessions and attended study days and week-ends away each year. The team were mandated in Lincoln Cathedral on 10 September, along with six other groups. The parish was mandated on 13 October by the Bishop of Grimsby.

On 8 October St George's Mother Union celebrated its 80th birthday with a service at which Christopher Laurence preached. Keith James announced that he had accepted the Bishop of Grimsby's offer to become Priest-in-Charge of Cherry Willingham with Greetwell. He was duly licensed on 20 December.

A Grand Trolley Dash, in aid of the Steve Barker Kidney Machine Fund, was held on 16 November at Asda. This raised a remarkable £2,500. A Ceilidh was held on 26 November at Redbourn Club and raised £209 for church funds.

On 9 December, Jonathan Thacker was licensed as Priest-in-Charge of Crosby. Jonathan was born in Newark-on-Trent and, after attending Magnus Grammar School, he studied Geography at University College, London and Theology at both Lincoln and Nottingham Universities. He 'served his title' at Bromyard in the Hereford Diocese and was ordained Deacon at Michaelmas 1979 and Priest at Petertide 1980. In 1982 Jonathan moved to Penkridge, in the Diocese of Lichfield. In 1987 he moved to Brotherton and was tutor to the Local Ministry Team at Stickney. He was Rural Dean of Holland West from May 1992 to September 1995.

Liz Hanson had retired after many years as Church Organist at St George's and before that at St John's. Martyn Whitehouse appealed for an accompanist to play on Sunday mornings, not necessarily an organist.

The Christmas Fayre raised £900 for church funds. As we had lost the use of the Greeson Hall, this was held in the church for the first time.

Another pantomime, this time Aladdin, was held in January 1997 at the Centenary Methodist Church. The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity was celebrated with a series of nine services in different churches in the locality, including the Hospital Chapel.

In March, Martyn Whitehouse reported that we had now finished the financial review and funding campaign, with the help of Keith Bourne. This review indicated that St George's needed £502:50 per week to meet all its financial obligations and we had a shortfall of approximately £110 per week.

Mary Markham's term of office as Church Warden ended in April and she thanked everyone for all the help she had received during this time. James Houldsworth had been elected to take her place.

At a meeting held on 29 April it was decided to form a men's group. Ideas about group activities were many and varied but eventually most members were agreed about three points. One, the group should not meet in a pub. Two, it should concern itself with study and strengthening the faith of individual members and their relationship with the community. Three, it should encourage a discussion of ideas.

During Christian Aid Week, several members of the congregation took part in a sponsored walk over the Humber Bridge which raised just over £100. All enthusiastic gardeners were invited to a Plant Sale in May which raised £320 for the church.

St Michael's celebrated its 65th Anniversary on Whit Sunday when the Rev Tony Burton presided and preached. Joyce Braithwaite, a respected member of St Michael's Family Circle, died in June. Joyce had been a member of the Youth Club, a Sunday School teacher, an organist, and a member of the church committee for many years.

The Summer Fayre took place on 26 July and raised almost £500. This was the first major event to take place in the new community hall. The Garden Party held in Rothwell Road raised £210 for church funds. Margaret Clark and her neighbour held this in the gardens of their adjacent homes and raised funds for both St George's and St Hugh's Church.

A Barbecue was held at the Vicarage on 30 August, all proceeds being for church funds. The official opening of the new Community Centre took place on 27 September. St Michael's Family Circle celebrated its 55th Anniversary on 4 November with a dinner at the Wortley Hotel.

In December we said goodbye to Mick Maskell and thanked him for his tremendous work in the community. Among other things he was involved with the Christmas Shelter, the Community Help and Advice Centre, the Furniture Scheme, the Holiday Caravan, the Playbus, the Holiday Day Scheme, the Mother and Toddler Group, the Credit Union, various multi-cultural groups, etc etc.. He was also the drummer in the Music Group.

The Christmas Fayre took place on 6 December.

Our fifth pantomime, Jack and the Beanstalk, took place in January 1998, again at the Centenary Methodist Church. This raised £509 for the church. Attendance at the Men's Group meetings continued to be both consistent and encouraging.

A Fashion Show took place in February and raised £204 in aid of church roof repairs.

In March, Jill Burns reported on the Mother's Union Prison Visiting Scheme which the Crosby branch had been supporting since last October. They were helping to run a crèche for the children of visitors to Lincoln prison.

The Greeson Hall Community Association Committee was now advertising some of its activities which included Line Dancing and Keep Fit. £309 was raised for Christian Aid week by various means, including the Humber Bridge walk, the Mile of Pennies and street collections.

Said Communion services were now being held on the first Tuesday of every month, primarily for members of the congregation who are in employment. The first service was held on 2 June at 6:45 pm.

Jonathan reported that after the Quinquennial inspection, the electricity system had been condemned and we now had no heating, lighting, or power for the organ blower. Additionally the flat roofs over the aisles are in need of major repair, the choir vestry needs to be replastered and fungal growths eliminated. All this meant that we had to find another £70,000 or so over the next two to three years.

The Summer Fayre was held on 20 June and a Garden Party at Rothwell Road on 4 July. The Mothers' Union held a well supported Quiz Night for their funds and raised £121. The funerals of Ray Parker and Sylvia Charlesworth were held in June. Both had been great workers for the church and would be greatly missed. Mildred Button was thanked for distributing the Parish Magazine for an amazing 61 years; she had now decided to retire from this duty!

During the school holidays the Playbus could be seen every week day around the Crosby/Town Centre area. All sessions were free of charge and open to everyone. There were two types of sessions; toddler sessions for children up to five years and playgroup sessions for children 2 ½ to five years. The Playbus is funded by the Scunthorpe Single Regeneration Budget in partnership with North Lincolnshire Social Services and St George's Community Development.

The barbecue held at the Vicarage on 1 August raised £232.

Lisbet Magnusson was licensed as Assistant Curate on 14 September. This service took place at St Michael's, as St George's was without power awaiting repairs. Lisbet came originally from the town of Sundsvall in Northern Sweden and had been ordained in the Church of Sweden, a Lutheran Church, for four years. Since the Porvoo agreement, the Church of England had recognised the ministries of those who

had been ordained in the Lutheran Churches of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Iceland, Denmark, Norway and Sweden.

With the death of Terry Jarvis we lost another valued member of the congregation. Terry had been Senior Sidesman and Caretaker for both the church and old Greeson Hall.

A Tudor Day was held on 1 November. This included a Communion Service according to the Prayer Book of 1549 when Edward VI was King, a Fayre in the afternoon and a Tudor banquet in the evening. All three events took place in St George's Church, which was lit with candles and heated with portable gas heaters. After this St George's was closed and all services were transferred to St Michael's Church for the time being.

Fundraising for the Restoration Fund continued apace. Monies raised included: Cake Stall £186; Entertainments Night at the Polish Club £516; Race Night at Redbourn Club £404; Table Top Sale £63; Tea Bags £130 and Tudor Day £1,259.

Anne Lawrence left the parish to live with her daughter in the south. Anne was a tireless worker for the parish magazine. She assisted with planning, delivering magazines and collecting advertisement monies, etc. Jack Scott thanked her for her contribution. The price of the parish magazine increased to 25p from January 1999.

The Knights of St George presented Cinderella in 1999. This year they had a change of venue as the Centenary Methodists were still working on improvements to their hall. Foxhills School became the new venue. This gave Chris Baker and the backstage crew a few challenges since the stage was much bigger than the one they were used to.

The Restoration Fund received £614 from the Charity Concert given by the Co-operative Junior Choir last October and the sale of Calendars, Poems and Meditations raised £272. The sale of clothes at the Fashion Sale contributed £212 and the sale of Teabags £172.

Best wishes were given to Elsie Welch who had recently moved away from the Parish. Over the years Elsie had been Vice Chairman, Treasurer, and member of St Michael's Church Council, Chapel Warden and one of the first two Licensed Assistants.

Tim Savage reported that the Community Centre had now completed its first full year of operation and had provided facilities, as planned, for the Somali Community Welfare Association, the Crosby Youth project, Adult Education Service and the Child Centre Project. The facilities available were steadily becoming more widely known in the community and this had led to an increase in demand for room bookings. Recent events held included a number of Muslim weddings and an Eid party.

In March the Restoration Fund received a £200 donation after Ralph Button's funeral and the Knights of St George gave £500. St Michael's Family Circle Coffee Morning raised £125.

Wednesday, 12 May saw the last meeting of St George's Family Circle. It had been 60 years since Nurse Andrews started this as a meeting place for the wives of soldiers on active duty and the format of the meeting had never changed, a service followed by a cup of tea and a "natter". At one time the membership had exceeded 60 and outings were held throughout the year with a dinner at Christmas. Sylvia Bibb thanked Madge Smales for all her years of service as leader.

On 30 May we said farewell to Lisbet and prepared to welcome the Lines family. Lisbet had been appointed Team Vicar in the Gainsborough Team Ministry and would be living in the vicarage at Morton. Graham, who was to be our next curate, came from Grimsby. He had been married to Carole for 23 years and had two children, Rachel who was 15 and Martin 10. Graham spent 26 years working in the fish trade before coming to faith. He was confirmed in 1991 with his wife and eventually, in 1997, started a new life in Nottingham at St John's College to train for the ministry. He was ordained as Deacon in Lincoln Cathedral on 4 July.

Further monies raised for the Restoration Fund included £53 from a Jumble Sale, £37 from a Cake Stall, £85 from the sale of Easter Egg Chicks made by Madge Smales, £230 from the Family Circle and £21 from Mrs Ellis's Collection Jar in a local shop. The Summer Fayre held on 19 June had an Alice in Wonderland Theme.

Mary Dawson's funeral took place on 2 June. She was a Crosby lady and life long member of St George's. She had been particularly involved with the Mothers' Union since her enrolment in January 1938. She was enrolling member and Branch Chairman for many years. Mary was an amazingly energetic lady and musically talented. She possessed a lovely deep contralto voice and was a member of the choir for many years. She also played the piano and, following Dorrie Webb's retirement, took over as church organist. She was also a flower lover who arranged the flowers in church most week-ends.

On 10 July another Garden Party was held in Rothwell Road. A Sponsored Slim raised £193 for the Restoration Fund and donations from Mary Dawson's funeral were £147. A Sponsored Walk was held in Central Park on 18 July and this raised £600. A Parish Barbecue was held at the Vicarage of 31 July. Monies raised had now topped £39,000 which should pay for the church to be rewired and part of the roof to be repaired.

In October congratulations were given to the following who had recently completed their GCSE examinations and advanced studies in further education: Andrew Baker, Kevin Fulston, Robert Lewis, Rachel Lines, Emma Maskell, Andrew and Robert Whitehouse.

A Sankey and Moody evening of traditional and favourite hymns was held on 17 October. Another Race Night was held on 13 November and raised £470. A sponsored Prayer Meeting raised £152 and a cake stall £231.

1st Crosby Guides closed in December after the retirement of their leaders. The Unit had been in existence since 1923 but no one had come forward to take over.

The Christmas Fayre was held on 4 December and was followed by a Victorian Banquet in the evening.

In February 2000 the Knights of St George presented Scrooge Gets His Girl which was billed as a new and exciting pantomime for the millennium. This was directed by Martyn Whitehouse for the first time. It had been specially written by Liz Hanson and raised £1,279:40.

David Tustin retired as Bishop of Grimsby, a position he had held since 1979. We had all benefited from his pastoral care and great wisdom. The new Bishop would be Canon David Rossdale.

St George's continued to have a caravan on site at Flamingoland which was available for holiday bookings. The caravan cost £250 to hire. However, as the caravan was originally purchased for use by families on low incomes, reduced charges were available when appropriate.

Fund raising continued with £105 from two Table Top sales and £187 from a Plant Sale.

An Emmaus Study Course started on 2 June at the home of the Curate, Graham Lines, who was ordained Priest in Lincoln Cathedral on 2 July.

A Garden Party was held at Rothwell Road on 15 July and raised £360. A Parish Barbecue was held at the Vicarage on 12 August which proved to be a very happy occasion for all present and raised £139. Three coffee mornings raised a total of £306 and a concert £104.

An Autumn Fayre was held on 30 September followed by Entertainment and a Buffet in the evening.

Phyllis Dadd died on 17 September in Winsor Court Care Home, Goole. She had been a much respected member of St George's since the closure of St John's and had been a Lay Reader. She had a marvellous sense of humour and was a very special lady and good friend to many.

In October St George's commemorated the 75th anniversary of the consecration of the Parish Church. Our celebrations started with a concert and buffet supper held in the Greeson Hall Community Centre when the new Bishop of Grimsby was able to join us.

A Cake Stall in the Market raised £258. Another Race Night was held at Redbourn Club on 24 November and this raised £400 for church funds. The Christmas Fayre, which raised £701, took place on 2 December in the Greeson Hall.