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Oranges & Lemons

**COVER STORY: Canis Cum Ecclesia
The Hound of Heaven**
(find the dog in the picture)

**The Friends of
St Clement Danes**

**Issue No. 44
Autumn 2017**



The Friends of St Clement Danes

Registered Charity No. 1048757

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O&L Bulletin

Izabela Seabrook (*Editor*) & Daniel Kettle Esq (*Manager*)

The Friends of St Clement Danes

Bulletin
No. 44
Autumn 2017

**ROYAL
AIR FORCE**
St Clement
Danes Church



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“Enabling the sacrifices of the past to support the challenges of the future”

Editorial Note

Iza Seabrook



It is my pleasure to introduce the autumn issue of Oranges & Lemons. It will very soon be time to think about Christmas and New Year but for now we have lots to enjoy about autumn. I for one am looking forward to going on woodland adventures with my little monkeys... who are not so little anymore!

As usual, if you have articles or pictures you wish to see published, please email me: iza.seabrook@gmail.com

THINGS TO DO

- **Tell your friends and neighbours about us**
- **Visit us whenever you are in London**
- **Pray for all who work and visit here**
- **Help out on one Sunday a year**
- **Become a guide to a group of visitors**

Please contact us: 020 7242 8282 or stclementdanesh1@btconnect.com or through the website if you can help out, especially on a Sunday; be a sidesman / woman, macebearer or read a lesson; we can support and encourage you in your new duties.

Chairman's Letter

Group Captain Mark D Heffron CMgr FCMI RAF



Welcome to our latest edition of the Friends of St Clement Danes magazine. Our Annual Concert is only two months away on the 30 November. In the past (for operational reasons) we've had to remain flexible as to which RAF band would perform at the concert. We have to remain flexible, as there are only three bands in the Service.

The effort they make to perform at all events is quite remarkable, considering how they have to break down the band to suit specific events. They never want to let anyone down and certainly have never done so for St Clement Danes. I can say with 99% confidence, that this year we will have The Central Band of the Royal Air Force. They will perform with the Choir of St Clement Danes and our own Director of Music, Simon Over. The programme looks very exciting and I look forward to seeing you there (please see page 13 for how you can order your tickets).

On a more difficult subject of membership fees, I must apologise for the error made by our bank in the collection through Direct Debit. As you are probably aware, the bank initially took the slightly lower fee from bank accounts and then instead of taking the difference between last year's and this year's agreed increase, they took the new rate in full.

In effect all members paid twice. We are working hard with the bank to rectify this problem and members should shortly see a refund into their bank accounts. It would be easy to say "not our fault", however

what has happened, albeit not intentionally, is not right and we will ensure that the matter is corrected.

Finally, may I ask you to keep spreading the word about the Friends and all the pastoral work St Clement Danes undertakes? The church is here for all members of the RAF Family, to support regular serving and reserve personnel, their families and veterans. It is the Central Church of our Service and there for us all.

Trustees' Book

Located within the crypt at St Clement Danes is The Trustees' Book. The book contains the names of people who have died since leaving the Royal Air Force.

Names can be included at the request of family members of the deceased, for which a fee of £40 is payable.

To download the application for an entry in The Trustees' Book, please scroll to the foot of the following page within St Clement Danes website:

www.raf.mod.uk/stclementdanes/friendsofscd/friendstrustees.cfm



From the Resident Chaplain

The Rev'd David Osborn RAF BD AKC PGCE



As we approach the autumn and the nights start to draw in we are already looking towards 2018 - a momentous year for the Royal Air Force as it marks its centenary on 1 April.

We have a comprehensive programme of services throughout the year including the Annual Formation Service as well as occasions that will acknowledge the contribution of, for example, The Chaplains' Branch, the PMRAFNS, RAF Engineers and Women in the RAF – this is just a few

of the highlights – all this without mentioning the 100th anniversary of the end of World War One.

Everyone is very grateful for the magnificent work of the Friends in helping to prepare the church for next year. We have benefited recently from refurbished kneelers, new carpets, choir robes, furniture and much more besides.

As someone remarked recently: *I have passed this church every day for nearly 40 years, and today I finally walked in, and I was stunned by its beauty and by its peace and by the obvious care that is bestowed upon it.*

So thank you for your help and support. Why not join us in the coming months to celebrate 100 great years and the promise of many more to come.

COVER STORY: Canis Cum Eccelsia or as we would say: The Hound of Heaven

**Gp Capt Rev'd John Thomas
Founder of the Friends of St Clement Danes**

The ancient and treasured “Oranges and Lemons” London church, destroyed in the early 1940s by the German Air Force was, ironically, restored in the 1950s by the Royal Air Force, then re-consecrated and dedicated as The Central Church of the RAF. As Resident Chaplain of this world-famed hallowed shrine for some time, the enforced revealing day dawned.

Inevitably it happened! It was noticed and I was questioned. A newspaper reporter of Fleet Street (newspapers were there in my time), with nothing better to do, had spotted that when I entered the church I was accompanied by a female – the same each morning! “Yes”, I owned up, “Jemima, that’s her name, is my friend – faithful, true and exhilaratingly demanding. In fact, she seldom leaves my side, day or night, even to sharing my bed with my wife, who protests, while I insist and Jemima persists”. You see, Jemima, my enterprising and attractive Staffordshire Bull Terrier came to church with me every day, and for some years occupied the post of Churchwarden. When the famous bells rang out calling the faithful to prayer, Jemima in Pavlovian style, would be ready to trip down the stairs!

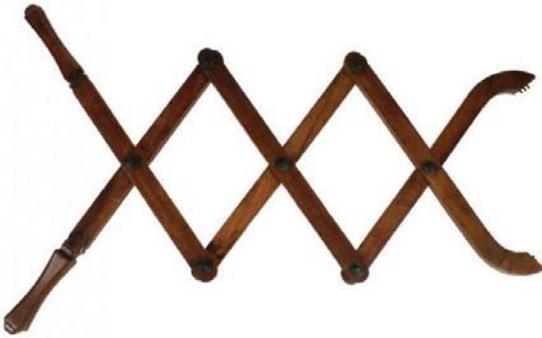
Years ago, as church bells sounded the rousing call for families to attend church their dogs went too. I read that Bishop William of Wykeham, in 1387, instructed the Nunneries in his diocese to remove all dogs from his service because of their “inordinate noise”, but dogs couldn’t care less and continued church-going for another 500-odd years. In many churches we see figures of pet dogs on tombs, at the feet of their owners, keeping watch. And so they were in church with the living as well as the dead.



By Tudor times dogs were so unruly that measures were taken to eject them, so dog-whippers were employed. In one church in 1550, two-pence was paid “to the bellman for getting the dogges out of church”. In Peterborough Cathedral there is a portrait of the grave-digger/beadle named Scarlett, who incidentally buried Queen Catherine of Aragon and Mary Queen of Scots. In his picture you can see a

whip through his belt showing that he was the dog-whipper. Church Wardens’ staves were also used to prod dogs from within the church. Today, the poor vicar, if he is brave enough, reluctantly does the duty – free of charge.

To separate squabbling dogs, a strange appliance was used, namely dog tongs (see illustration on page 9). I can recollect a pair in Bangor Cathedral in North Wales. It would seem they were fairly common in Wales for shepherds brought their sheep-dogs to church and tongs were widely used for some 400 years until the 1800s. It was William Laud, one-time Bishop of St. David’s and later Archbishop of Canterbury who, as you know was beheaded – but not because of this – introduced altar rails to protect the Altar against irreverence: indifferent men and women, marauding dogs and other animals!



Dog tongs

St Paul's Cathedral was for years used as a marketing area, when blind eyes were turned to the misuse of the Cathedral nave. Eventually rails were erected to shield the sanctuary and the altar.

A "Decree for Dogs" occurs in the Book of

Notts – Acts and Decrees written by Thomas Notts in 1567. The Decree was "red and proclaimed in church after evensong that all inhabitants of New Romney disposed (sic) any dog or curr should ... enter their dogges and after observe the decrees". There follows a long list of owners and their dogs, e.g. a bald-branded Mastiff, 3 red Spannelles, a red curr without a taile. An entry in 1574 causes me some amusing speculation in that one Manning was paid 2 pennies for his wages as dog-whipper and that later "he payed to Robert Pell (the Apothecary) for looking at Manning's legsses". Dog bites or varicose veins – I wonder? In some churches "Hall Dog Pews" once existed for the squires' dogs during divine service. Some churches also provided a small door cut in the bottom of the main church door to allow dogs to leave in a hurry.

Did you know that dogs are capable of religious feeling? During the Wesleyan movement there are descriptions of dogs who responded more favourably than their owners. There was a Methodist dog for instance who regularly attended chapel alone in order to entice his drunken master to come as well, hear the gospels and be eternally saved. Poor chap, when he drowned himself in a fit of intoxication his dog never visited the chapel again.

In Scotland, up till the early years of last century, each shepherd would bring his faithful Collie dog to the Kirk, straight from the hills. In some parts where attendance was scanty, half the congregation

was made up of dogs. On reflection, maybe I should have concentrated on enticing into Church those pi-dogs rather than letting them cause a hazard by allowing them to wander on to the North African air-strips. Some clergy unhappily discourage dogs in churches. No “Animal Services” for them! Personally I would welcome them and indeed be delighted to see them. I remember one church in which I served, a yellow Labrador and a Collie regularly attended, well behaved and attentive - but dogs are ever ready to please. As I write this, I remember they never complained of the length or the content of my pulpit utterances, unlike my French Bulldog Chirac whose reluctance to occupy a pew vexed me – perhaps he felt he suffered of sermons at home!

I’m also reminded of my days in Aden in the Gulf when the “State” service in the Colony Church was held in the cool of the evening when the V.I.P.s would be present. I would meet them at the main door. More often than not, lying across the centre aisle, near the Colony Governor’s pew over which revolved a cooling ceiling fan was a wild stray dog – the same dog which we suspected came each Sunday (even stray dogs have habits). The Governor didn’t mind dogs but his wife did and she would, in a stage whisper so that everyone would hear her, tell her husband and me in words I dare not record, “There’s that ????? dog again”. Sunday after Sunday, my unpaid dog-whipper, who was a senior Air Force Officer, would perform the same act, fearlessly and ceremoniously, of picking up the dog and carrying it out. My dog-whipper was eventually promoted, I suspect for bravery beyond the call of duty. His additional award was being the Guild Secretary of St. Clement Danes during my years there.

An upmarket glossy magazine made it known that my intelligent Staffordshire Bull Terrier Jemima was a “verger” of the Church and fond of lying quietly at my feet in my box-stall. I pretended not to hear her snores, or those emanating from the nave pews!

As an Air Force Padre I regularly moved from one RAF station to another with Jemima as my constant companion, not only as an

assiduous Church attender but on my daily rounds of the camp. She was a great favourite with everyone. On one memorable occasion when I left her in the vestry she escaped – to search for me I fondly imagined. Not so, for I found her in a happy and surfeit mood in the kitchens of the airmen’s mess. Another day an entrancing Jemima was being led around on a piece of string by the Station Commander doing his inspection!



I may mention I also had a young Bullmastiff, Sam, who enthusiastically joined the congregation singing. It was so unmelodious that poor Sam had to stay at home.

Do dogs have souls? Those who own dogs, I suspect, hope so as few wish to be separated from their dogs forever. How could man be so arrogant to believe that Heaven and Hell are his alone! Shall we, because we walk on our hind feet, assume to ourselves only, the privilege of imperishability? The English novelist George Elliot asked “shall we, who are even as they, though we wag our tongues and not our tails, demand special providence and a selfish salvation?” Martin Luther attempted to

answer the unanswerable question by assuring, “Be comforted little dog. Thou too in resurrection shall have a golden tail”.

If – and it's a big if – ever I shall reach the Pearly Gates, I know who will meet me with joyous Heavenly bark and happy ecclesiastical leap – Fancy and Kelly and Tim, my Heinz variety of childhood friends; Sian and Llew and Jemima, my faithful courageous Staffs; my fiercely independent Sam, the Bullmastiff; Colette, Gallion, Monique, Rives and Henry, my intelligent, fun-loving French Bulldogs. Then I shall know Heaven will be home.

Pictured left (page 11): Collage of Reverend John Thomas outside St Clement Danes with four of his dogs who did the round of the messes and duties with him at various stations. The top pictures are of his Staffordshire Bull terriers, Sian on the left and Jemima right. Bottom left is Llew the Beagle at RAF Seletar, Singapore. Bottom right is Sam, the Bull Mastiff, who was a regular at St Clement Danes!



You are cordially invited to
The Friends of St Clement Danes

ANNUAL CONCERT

*The Central Band of The Royal Air Force
conducted by Flight Lieutenant Chris L'Anson
and the Choir of St Clement Danes.*

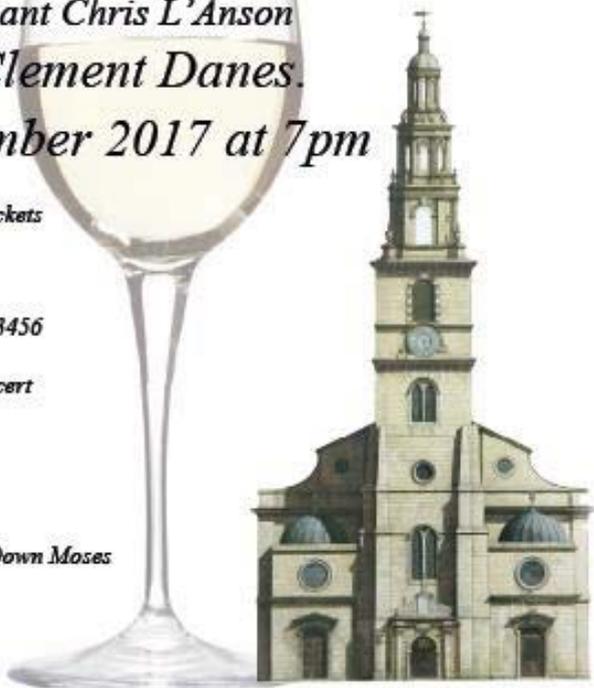
Thursday 30th November 2017 at 7pm

*Donations: £18 per person for pre-ordered tickets
and £20 per person at the door.
Cheques are payable to 'RAFCTE'*

*Tickets are available by telephone: 01285 713456
Or email: wendyt@rafcte.com
Or post to: Friends of St Clement Danes Concert
Douglas Bader House Horcott Hill
Fairford Gloucestershire GL7 4RB*

*The programme will be varied including:
Piano Concerto No2 by Shostakovich
Choral pieces including Steal Away and Go Down Moses
General military and RAF pieces
A touch of Christmas*

Registered Charity No.1048757



From the Registers

We are delighted to share in families' excitement when they come to St Clement Danes for a Baptism or Wedding.

Baptisms

Jenson Scott Nicholson Morris (15 January)

Philippa Johanna Eve Short (15 January)

Theo Alberto Dorricott (5 March)

Blake Eden Eribo (7 May)

Skye Eve Eribo (7 May)

Marcus Martin Dodimead (7 May)

Tremenheere Singh Dowding (2 July)

Weddings

James Peter Smith & Georgina Vere Traboulsi (18 March)

Ryan David Priest & Lucy Ann Stoneham (13 May)

Simon Oliver Adeniran Bashorun & Felicity Jane Brindle (17 June)

Nicholas James Alexander Huntley & Bethan Joan Morgan (15 July)

Michael James Cairns & Fionnuala Rose O'Connell (15 July)

Thomas Charles Osborn & Elizabeth Simone Pratt (12 August)

Sam Daniel William Michael Shelton & Emma Lee Terry (25 August)

**Requests for Baptisms and Weddings should be made
to the Resident Chaplain**

Readings and Services*

Date	Service	First Reading	Second Reading	Third Reading
1 October Trinity 16	Eucharist and Baptism	Ezekiel 18 verses 1-4 & 25 to the end	Philippians 2 verses 1-13	Matthew 21 verses 23-32
8 October Trinity 17 WAAF /WRAF	Matins	Isaiah 5 verses 1-7	Matthew 21 verses 33-46	
15 October Trinity 18	Eucharist	Isaiah 25 verses 1-9	Philippians 4 verses 1-9	Matthew 22 verses 1-14
22 October Trinity 19	Matins	Isaiah 45 verses 1-7	Matthew 22 verses 15-22	
29 October Last in Trinity Bible Sunday	Eucharist	Nehemiah 8 verses 1-4a and 8-12	Colossians 3 verses 12-17	Matthew 24 verses 30-35
5 November All Saints Sunday	Eucharist and Baptism	Revelation 7 verses 9-17	1 John 3 verses 1-3	Matthew 5 verses 1-12
12 November Remembrance Sunday 10.50 start	Remembrance Day Service			
19 November 2 Before Advent	Eucharist	Zephaniah 1 verses 7 & 12-18	1 Thess 5 verses 1-11	Matthew 25 verses 14-30
26 November St Clement (Christ the King)	Eucharist	Proverbs 15.1-4	Philippians 3.17-4.3	Luke 14.7-11

3 December Advent Sunday	Advent Carol Service	Selected Readings		
10 December 15.00 RAF Benevolent Fund Carols	9 Lessons and Carols			
17 December Advent 3	Eucharist and Baptism	Isaiah 61 verses 1-4 & 8-11	1 Thess 5 verses 16-24	John 1 verses 6-8 and 19-28
24 December 23:00 Midnight Mass	Choral Eucharist	Isaiah 9: 2, 6 & 7	Titus 2: 11- 14	John 1: 1- 14
25 December Christmas Day	Choral Eucharist	Isaiah 9: 2, 6 & 7	Titus 2: 11- 14	Luke 2: 1- 14
31 December Christmas 1	NO SERVICE			
2018				
7 January Epiphany 1	Choral Eucharist	Genesis 1: 1- 5	Acts 19: 1-7	Mark 1: 4- 11
14 January Epiphany 2	Matins	1 Samuel 3: 1-10	John 1: 43 to end	
21 January Epiphany 3	Choral Eucharist and Baptism	Genesis 14: 17-20	Revelation 19: 6 -10	John 2: 1:11
28 January Epiphany 4	Matins	Deuteronomy 18: 15-20	Mark 1: 21- 28	

4 February Second Sunday before Lent	Choral Eucharist	Proverbs 8.1: 22-31	Colossians 1: 15-20	John 1: 1- 14
11 February Sunday next before Lent LASER ATC	ATC Service	TBC	TBC	
18 February Lent 1	Choral Eucharist	Genesis 9: 8- 17	1 Peter 3: 18-22	Mark 1: 9- 15
25 February Lent 2	Matins	Genesis 17: 1-7, 15-16	Mark 8: 31 to end	

*Correct as we go to press, but please check the website closer to the date or phone the church to confirm on 020 7242 8282.
All services start at 11am unless specified otherwise

Annual General Meeting of The Friends of SCD Thursday 30 November 2017 at 4pm The Crypt Chapel, SCD, Strand

All members of the Friends are entitled to attend and vote. It is hoped that as many as possible will be able to attend.
Notice issued by Chris Priebe, Secretary.

Agenda

1. Opening Prayer
2. Apologies for Absence
3. Chairman's Opening Remarks
4. Election of Council Officers and Members
5. Minutes of 2016 AGM
6. Treasurer's Report
7. Membership Secretary's Report
8. Any Other Business
9. Date of next AGM

As in previous years, audited accounts will be available at the meeting and will be published with the minutes in the next Oranges & Lemons.

A copy of the Friends of St Clement Danes Constitution will also be available.

Young Organists' Competition

Alan Taylor

At the end of last year St Clement Danes hosted the first London Organ Competition for Young Organists, giving them an opportunity to perform before an audience, receive expert feedback on their playing, and compete amongst each other for generous prizes aimed at furthering their development as musicians. The competition fitted well into the St Clement Danes ethos of supporting and encouraging young musicians. Over the last couple of years the Church has also been presenting a weekly series of 'Tuesday lunch-time concerts' given by young musicians who are on the threshold of leaving Music College and about to step out into the wider world of music-making.

The Organ Competition was established under the auspices of Simon Over, Director of Music, in conjunction with a national charity, The Organ Club, after initial contacts between Alan Taylor of the Church and the Organ Club committee, in particular, John Miley, a past president of the Club who part-sponsored the event. The Organ Club is seeking to develop events particularly to foster talent and enthusiasm among young players, including giving its junior membership opportunities to access some of the country's finest organs and teachers through a programme of visits and masterclasses.

St Clement Danes with its beautiful organ and historic and central location was the perfect setting for the Competition. First proposed in early 2016, Kevin Bowyer and Ben Comeau (two renowned organists) agreed to be the judges. They were well-chosen to complement each other in their different experience and expertise.

Publicity and preparations for the Competition were largely handled by The Organ Club, with no drain on St Clement Danes' own resources, and a cheque from The Organ Club more than covered the running costs of the event. Even in its first year – it is hoped that the Competition will become an annual event. The organisers were delighted to receive approximately double the modest number of entrants they had cautiously estimated, enabling them to be divided into two categories: under and over sixteen years of age, with a separate day for each age-group.



John Miley with senior players

The youngest competitor was 13, and for one of his two chosen pieces played a composition of his own which the judges commended. The scale of interest, with many players travelling from some distance outside London, confirmed that the event was a truly exciting opportunity for these aspiring young musicians.

The youngsters were each allowed a 15 minute practice during the morning, with the competition taking place in the afternoon. For some, it would have been their first experience of talking to an audience about their choice of music and then performing live. Music lessons alone do not necessarily prepare them for developing those skills. For all the competitors, it would have been rewarding and enriching to hear such distinguished judges express appreciation of an aspect of their playing, and to receive from them some quite detailed feedback on their technique or ability to communicate musically. In the end, the judges were so impressed with the quality of the 'field' that they added two extra categories of prizes: a third prize and commendations, and decided that the second prize at senior level should be shared. The winners of the senior competition were also assured of places in a future competition to be held abroad.



(Pictured above: John Varney presents prize to the Junior section winner Paul Greally, watched by judges Ben Comeau and Kevin Bowyer).

The event ran very smoothly, with attendees enjoying the combination of the impressive venue, the friendly atmosphere and

the refreshments unstintingly provided by The Organ Club – not to mention the succession of varied preludes, fugues, sonatas and toccatas resounding through the church.

These were two days of musical enjoyment for all and if, as is hoped, the event is again hosted by St Clement Danes this year and in the future, there will be many more to come, with all the learning value that they provide for young players who may go on to be the church and concert organists of our next generation.

We were gratified that fifty to sixty people per day came to the event. With more publicity this year and a successful pilot experience behind us, we would hope for an even bigger crowd.

The 2018 London Organ Competition for Teenage Organists

Thursday 28 December & Friday 29 December

Why not come and support our next generation of organists in the fabulously Christmas setting of St Clement Danes on the Strand. Taking place for a second year running, you are guaranteed a very warm welcome by The Organ Club.

*The Judges this year will be Simon Over and
Michael Butterfield.*

For details of the competition, please contact The Organ Club directly on: **cegb36@gmail.com**



The London Organ Competition

For Teenage Organists

Promoted by The Organ Club

At St. Clement Danes, Strand, London

On Thursday 28th and Friday 29th December 2017

Applications are invited from young organ students for the following classes:

Senior Section (ages 17-19) Friday 29th December

1st Prize £1,000

2nd Prize £500

Junior Section (age up to and including 16) Thursday 28th December

1st Prize £500

Two prizes of £200 each for the best performance in each age group of:

Up to 14, 15 and 16 with the exception of the winner's age group

Competitors will be required to play a piece by J S Bach and a second piece of their own choice. The performance must be preceded by a short spoken introduction providing information of interest to the audience.

opportunities for further prizes and prestigious recitals

To apply for full details: email: The Organ Club at "cegb36@gmail.com"



Membership Subscription Charges: change in rate

At the AGM in November 2016, the bi-annual review of membership subscription charges was undertaken and your Trustees put forward a motion to increase the subscription rates from £22 to £25 for single membership and from £33 to £38 for joint membership.

This was voted upon and agreed by the AGM attendees. The rates came into effect from 1 July 2017 and publication of the changes were advised in the Spring Edition of the Oranges and Lemons magazine. Unfortunately, the proposal was not included in the publication of the AGM minutes and thus the magazine did not contain details of the date from which the new rates became effective. As a result, some members were not fully aware of the new subscription rates until their direct debit payment was taken.

The Trustees apologise for this oversight and any inconvenience caused and have taken steps to ensure that future changes are fully publicised and that all members are made aware of these changes before the changes are implemented.

Duplication of collection of subscriptions by Direct Debit

Members may be aware that an error occurred during July 2017 in relation to the collection of subscriptions by direct debit. This situation arose due to an error in the processing of the annual direct debit payments by our Direct Debit provider and has affected over 200 members.

The Direct Debit provider did not action the subscription increase from 1 July 2017 and took the old subscription amount on 3 July 2017. When this was discovered the Treasurer requested that the provider take an additional payment for the difference on 21 July

2017. However, the provider took another full years' subscription on this date, rather than the difference.

When this error was realised, the Treasurer contacted the provider and our Bank to determine the best way of refunding the extra payment that was taken. However, this is proving difficult to rectify and it is looking increasingly likely that refunds by cheque will be required. Our provider has confirmed that they now have the correct rates for subscriptions and that no further direct debits will be taken until 1 July 2018 for existing members.

Since the discovery of the error, the Treasurer has contacted those members for whom we hold a current e-mail address to advise them of the situation. As we do not hold e-mail addresses for everyone, then it was felt that this Oranges & Lemons issue was the best way to communicate to the rest of the membership.

It is expected that a final decision on the way in which the overpayment can be refunded will be reached by the end of September 2017, at which time the Treasurer will be in touch to confirm the method of refunding the additional subscription.

The Trustees offer their sincere apologies for the error and would like to thank members for their patience and understanding whilst we rectify the situation.

Should any member affected by the Direct Debit processing error wish to discuss this matter further then they should contact the Church (by e-mail or telephone) and the Church staff will pass on the details to the Treasurer who will respond as soon as practicable.

The Peenemunde Raid, 17-18 August 1943

Iain H. Nicolson, DFC, DFM, Saltire Branch ACA

Iain H. Nicolson, DFC, DFM, Saltire Branch ACA a former Vice-Chairman of the Scottish Saltire Branch, ACA, took part in the Peenemunde raid, location of the notorious V1 & V2 rocket development and launching pads.

Gone unchecked, this rocket project could have been sufficiently developed to spread havoc even further afield and who knows, if uninterrupted may even have reached inter-continental range and the shores of USA. As an RAF navigator, Iain Nicolson completed 31 operations with 5 Group, Bomber Command and 65 operations with the RAF Pathfinder Force. In the following account, Iain relates his memories of the Peenemunde Raid.



Peenemunde was on the Baltic Coast due north of Berlin. A diversionary raid on Berlin by Mosquitoes of 8 Group was laid on with the hope that German fighters would be drawn to the defence of the capital. It was

hoped the first, second and even the third waves of bombers would be able to drop their loads without interference from fighters. We were attacking from 7,000 feet in full moonlight, unusual for Bomber Command.

We took off at 21:40hrs on 17 August 1943 and climbed to 18,000 feet midway to the Danish coast, where all the aircraft converged. On crossing the coast in the moonlight we started to descend to 7,000 feet. By 00:15hrs we could see the start of the attack. The night was very clear and although fighters were the main worry, no activity was seen. The first wave of two hundred aircraft was due to start the attack at 00:15 with the second attacking at 00:30 and the third at 00:45hrs.



We were in the third wave flying at 7,000 feet on a course to the north point of Rugen Island.

Our first pin point, due north of the Southern point, was where the time and distance run started. The run into the target was counted out, and after 15 seconds we were over our target. Bombs gone at 00:45 - photo flash - set course for Mando Island West of Danish Coast.

An aircraft flying ahead of us and slightly below, suddenly exploded. The fighters had arrived!

Fire was all around us, aircraft were falling, weaving, as we headed out of the area. I logged many aircraft going down in the vicinity of the target and then we were clear.

Kiel and Flensburg south of track opened up on aircraft. One aircraft went down over Flensburg at 01:50 then another near Mando Island at 02:10hrs. We set course for home and landed at 04:27. De-briefing and bed by 06:00hrs with only one more operation to do to finish our first operational tour - but that's another story!

Details of Losses:

- 596 Aircraft took part on the raid
- 40 Aircraft lost - 6.7% of total
- 29 Aircraft of the 40 lost were in the last wave

The RAF never raided Peenemunde again!

"I remember the Peenemunde raid so well, much more clearly than all my previous raids. Even the Pathfinder operations in which I later took part did not provide the tension that the Peenemunde raid did. After 57 years, the memory of the Lancasters going down still remains vivid."

The Other Enemy - Weather

Vivian Thomas, Scottish Saltire Branch, ACA

Despite a flying accident early in his RAF career necessitating his admission to Cosford Hospital on 4 October 1940, Vivian Thomas bounced back into active aircrew duties where air operations had to be carried out regardless of conditions. Vivian reminds us of 'the other enemy' - weather!



“As possibly happened to others, my most frightening flying experience, by far, was caused by weather and not by enemy action. Coming home across the Med one night in 1943 in a Halifax 1c of No.462 RAAF Squadron, I wandered off to visit the Elsan and stretch my legs having put Ernie Page, my

Australian observer, in the driving seat. I must have been away for about five minutes, because when I returned to the front, Ernie, at about 8,000 feet, was unconcernedly entering the biggest and dirtiest bank of cloud I had ever seen.

The instant and massive turbulence made it very difficult to change places, but when I was strapped in, I throttled back to try to lose height and perhaps get below the worst weather. This had little effect due to up-currents. I dismissed the possibility of turning round and flying back out because of the fear of being flipped onto my back in the violent lateral, as well as fore and aft turbulence, if I put

on a bit of bank myself. (If I had known how wide the front was, I think I would have tried to do this).

With the nose down and throttled back, the altimeter kept winding up and down, I would lose 3,000 feet in a bump and the instrument would whizz back to 5,000 feet. There was also a tremendous



amount of electricity about, and every five minutes or so, it would discharge from the aeroplane into the cloud with a blinding flash, and a crack well audible above the engine noise. To add to the fire-works display, the prop tips would all light up. What with regularly losing half a mile in bumps and frequent electricity discharges with the permanent violent turbulence, I just sat there with our height varying between 8,000 and 5,000 feet, and wondered if we would emerge in one piece.

At last! There was a hole in the cloud and down below was the North African coast. I spiralled down the vertical tunnel and came out at about 1,500 feet. In an hour we landed at base. We possibly got out just in time because, in the 53 minutes in cloud, two-thirds of the main plane rivets had sprung.”

News from 296 (Stoke Newington) Squadron Air Training Corps

Cadet Warrant Officer Jordann Webb

Welcome to the latest article on behalf of 296 (Stoke Newington). The past eight months has seen some major changes in our Squadron from leadership to updating our Squadron. Currently we are focused on essential maintenance work to benefit current and future cadets. This is to ensure that the 'cadet experience' is provided in a vibrant and fresh manner. Members of staff and cadets have spent much of their own time to see this logistical project through to the end. The usual military approach of 'cracking on' is certainly a common characteristic amongst all our ranks: we battle on and succeed!



In April, 296 Squadron attended the Easter Camp on the Isle of Wight which, as always, was a great success. 30 plus cadets and

staff took part in numerous activities such as: communications drills, shooting, sports, adventure training and first aid and, as always, a disco concluded the week.



Each day, a full timetable was planned to ensure the cadets engaged in various activities and provide them with new experiences. The first of which, the morning inspection, took place daily at 07:00 hrs. Although most cadets hate the early wake up, it



allows them to exercise their discipline and ability to perfect their uniform despite being tired. As you can imagine, weeks and weeks of planning goes into ensuring all in attendance have an enjoyable and action-packed week. Led by six members of staff, this annual activity was deemed to have been the best by a veteran cadet of four previous camps. The Camp also visited Bembridge Lifeboat which is a "Discover" RNLI station. It is located at the eastern end of the Isle of Wight, adjacent to the infamous Bembridge Ledge. So far in 2017, the crew has been involved in 35 services (shouts) and has rescued or assisted 56 people, two dogs, an inflatable swan, two inflatable dinghies and a plastic traffic bollard!

The Inshore Life Boat was placed on immediate readiness on the morning of Friday 14 April whilst we were visiting. There was a possibility we might see the main boat RNLB Alfred Albert Williams being launched but it was stood down after about an hour and a half following the successful conclusion to an incident on Culver Down.

The Squadron has recently been focusing on recruitment. Staff members will be visiting local schools, hosting open evenings, placing flyers in shop windows and reaching out to the local community. Keeping a footprint in the locality is essential to a thriving Squadron. Our first Commanding Officer, Wing Commander L E M Price MBE believed that for a Squadron to run successfully you need dedicated members of staff, enjoyable and new activities and a footprint within the local area. Over 70 years later this is still the case. Our Squadron will ensure continued interest in aviation and that the Royal Air Force is kept in Stoke Newington. As our Squadron motto says: 'Prepared For All Things'.

I hope you all had a well-earned rest over the summer and we look forward to seeing you at the Friends Concert in November.



Legacy Appeal

If St Clement Danes is as important to you as the thousands of people it remembers within its walls, we would ask you to consider leaving a gift in your Will for the future preservation and maintenance of this beautiful sanctuary.

More information is on our website:

www.raf.mod.uk/stclementdanes/friendsofscd/legacygiving

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Our mission is to encourage growth in the membership of the Friends of St Clement Danes through promotion of what St Clement Danes provides spiritually, socially and culturally.

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