

BOAT LANE COURT

VERY SHELTERED HOUSING

**BOAT LANE COURT,
BRETT ST., NORTHENDEN.**

RETIREMENT FLATS

ALL ENQUIRIES TO :

The Manager, Boat Lane Court, Northenden, M 22 4 EZ

Tel. 0161 945-7064 or 07970 676785

J U L Y 2 0 0 6

Cover Picture; A shot of the mill as it was, and part of the area earmarked for our “linear park” ~ see items later in this issue.

Prayers for the Month,

Almighty God, without you we are not able to please you. Mercifully grant that your Holy Spirit may in all things direct and rule our hearts; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen

Defend, O Lord, us your servants with your heavenly grace, that we may continue yours for ever, and daily increase more and more in your Holy Spirit, until we come to your everlasting kingdom. Amen.

Collects for 6th Sun. after Pentecost, and for Confirmation, ASB.

**Northenden Rectory,
Ford Lane, 0161 998 – 2615**

Dear Friends,

Firstly, thank you once again to all involved in Christian Aid Week ~ collectors and donors. Details of the May 14-21 collection are as follows: we had collectors from Northenden Methodist Church, St. Hilda's and St. Wilfrid's. The total paid in to our bank was £1950. A cheque for this will be going to Christian Aid headquarters in the next few days ~ i.e. before you read this!

What I have not calculated, but know will be coming, is the amount which is credited to Christian Aid's account by the Inland Revenue, to cover tax on donations made under the “Gift Aid” scheme, which means they get £22 from the tax man for

every £78 donated by people who have signed the appropriate form on their envelope.

This figure of £1950 is lower than on some previous occasions. I am actually not surprised, because a number of regular collectors were unable to do anything this year because of other commitments out of Northenden. For that reason I am actually very pleased with this result. Thank you again.

And now for a piece of “housekeeping”! Regular subscribers to Concord will be familiar with my annual plea in connection with the churchyard. At this time of year the grass in it grows very long. That is natural. This year a wet May gave way to a warm June, and suddenly the grass was around our knees. Please do not complain. If you wish to cut the grass around your own family grave, we shall be most grateful: please put the cuttings in the wheelie-bins provided. If you cannot cut it yourself, but need specially to visit the grave for an anniversary (for instance) let us know, and we will do our best to include your patch next time work is done. Otherwise, our policy (as I have said before in Concord) is to cut all areas by the end of the year, but to leave a fair amount of the ground uncut at any one time, so that it is a wildlife haven. And lastly, if you think that in the good old days churchyards were all cut like the Wimbledon centre court, I have a photograph from the 1890s which shows grass near the south door brushing the choir’s knees.

It was sad to hear of the death of Stan Critchley in the middle of June. He was, I believe, churchwarden here for a brief spell some years before I came to Northenden, though latterly he has been worshipping at St.John’s Brooklands. His work here is appreciated. He was killed in a nasty car accident in Cumbria, which adds to the shock. It seems strange that we shall no longer see him cycling down Ford Lane ~ as he often did ~ to the Lamb Pits allotments.

Later in this issue I report on the recent inspection of St.Wilfrid’s school. This prompts me to comment on some wider features of education nowadays. We are in an era when Government feels it has to intervene, even micro-manage, in almost everything. Perhaps this is because they are over-

sensitive to comment and criticism that “they ought to do something about ...”, though in the case that I have in mind it is also pure politicking. Traditionally the admissions policies of schools have been decided locally. For county schools the local authority decided, and for church schools the school governors, or sometimes the diocese decided. On paper that is still the case, but the regulations as to how policies are shaped are being made so rigid that what it boils down to is this: you have free choice in setting your policy, so long as it is what we in Whitehall tell you. “Any colour, so long as it is black!”

The reason for this is internal labour party politics, I suggest, and not the needs of children or the situation on the ground. Equality of opportunity and non-discrimination are such magic words. *Seem* to deny them, and you won’t get their vote, and won’t get some flagship bill passed in Parliament. And so it looks as if in the next round of regulation Faith Schools (which, by the way, the Government likes because they produce good results) will not be allowed to select on the basis of active faith in case this discriminates against families who have no faith. I hope that is a caricature, but I’m afraid it might not be.

In St.Wilfrid’s at present we have a policy of giving children in the nursery a place in the main school as a matter of course. This seems eminently reasonable to parents and anyone else we consult ~ except Education officials! It might discriminate against latecomers, they say, who (in a piece of social stereotyping) are bound to be the underprivileged or a racial minority. I agree with the intention of protecting those who are vulnerable ~ but as it will work out in Northenden, the children who are excluded (if we have to turn away some already in the nursery to make way for late arrivals in Northenden) will be the ones from further away; that is ones from North Benchill, perhaps the most socially deprived area in the country! So much for “social inclusion”! But this is the likely outcome of know-alls in Whitehall trying to second guess and micro-manage something which is best understood locally. I could go on!

So perhaps we as a society should expect less from our politicians, and they should let go some of their wish to control.

Yours faithfully, **Greg Forster**

The Religious Society of Friends (Quakers)
Wythenshawe Meeting

**There is a meeting for worship
at the Friends' Meeting House, Wythenshawe Rd.,
At 10.30am every Sunday.**

Children welcome

Details from Enid Pinch (445 – 6778)

The main hall and smaller rooms are available for hire;
~ contact Peter Todhunter (Meeting House Warden) 834-5797,

Magpie ...

Magpie's wry eye caught the questionnaires circulated about the Linear Park. It is a reflection ~ a sad reflection, perhaps ~ on our society that the questionnaire about race and gender and equality of access was as long as the one about people's views of the proposed park, if not longer. The questioners are so keen to know whether they have consulted people of all possible permutations and combinations that they have forgotten how to spell. You'd think that if they wanted heterosexuals to be fairly represented they would look in their dictionaries before calling them heterosexuals! (Or is this some weird permutation that Magpie is too naïve to know about?)

So there was no grand opening of Northenden's traffic lights! Suddenly they were there (well, not suddenly, but they just came on unannounced one day in May.) There has been almost as much protest about them now they are there as there was because they weren't there. The timing is wrong; there's no bleep; it takes 8 minutes for a pedestrian to walk round them; the queue is backing up to the motorway, or to Allanson Rd., or wherever, ...! You just can't win. Well, to answer the critics, Magpie has a little inside information. ...

1. The work is not finished. (now they tell us!) Traffic sensor cables have still to be inserted into the road surface, so at the moment they are working on a simple timed sequence which does not register traffic conditions. 2. Modern traffic lights do not have bleeps, but there is a gadget, a kind of knob, hidden behind and under the push button, which will spin when the lights

are go for pedestrians. The partially sighted should hold this while they wait, and when it tirls they are free to walk across. How many of Magpie's readers know this, we wonders. How many of Magpie's partially sighted readers know this is the real question. (And if they would like to let him know, the results of the survey will appear in a future edition of Magpie's Journal.)

And talking about bleeps, did you know that the bleeper on the old pedestrian lights by Tesco's was actually audible from the tower of St.Wilfrid's? Ah! there is something missing in Northenden's soundscape.

Have you noticed how all the trees in Northenden have sprouted brown rings? Not just the trees, either. All the grass verges are edged in brown, so far from being green verges they are a mucky burned colour. Frankly, this is because someone, and I think it is the council's contractors, is too lazy to do a job properly. Given the task of preventing the verges from spreading, and keeping weeds out of the cracks and keeping the grass short around the trees, they do it by poisoning everything in the neighbourhood. A swathe of weedkiller is laid by someone tanking along on a quad bike. They make a desert, and call it gardening! Here, thinks Magpie, is a contract waiting to be re-allocated.

Excellent Care, Guidance and Support!

St. Wilfrid's School Ofsted report, May 2006.

Staff and Governors have expressed satisfaction at the results of the recent "Ofsted" inspection of St. Wilfrid's Church of England Primary School in Northenden. The are especially happy with the verdict of "Good" on the care and support offered the children. The inspectors commend the school for having good capacity for further improvement and reckon that it offers value for money.

In the chill official language of their report they judged the overall effectiveness of the school to be "satisfactory", with many "good" points. This means the pupils and their teachers are doing all that is expected of them in most things, and better than is expected in nine out of the 22 points on the inspectors' check list.

I find it especially good to see how well we rate over the way we help the children develop personally and look after their well-being. The inspectors recognise that children enjoy coming to this school, and even quote one of them saying ‘It’s great’”

The school is being challenged to raise pupils’ standards in creative and descriptive writing, and to push them harder in some other lessons. In fact writing standards nationally seem to fall short of what children attain in reading and other subjects. There are other technical recommendations to do with tracking pupils’ progress and improving their learning. Most of what the inspectors tell us endorses what we told them that we were already trying to do ~ that is the nature of these inspections nowadays. They say, “Could try harder” ~ and we shall ~ but we are already confident that we are among the best in Manchester and with results above the national average.

Mrs. Ford, our head teacher, has commented that there were no surprises. “We let them know where we are, where we want to go, and how we want to get there, and they agreed with us.” She reckons the teaching is good (using the word in the Ofsted sense) but the inspectors would not concede this, since the improvements which pupils do make in their performance over their careers at the school are not sufficiently better than the national average.

I reckon the inspection process itself demands further comment. Value for money is important, but economics should not be the bottom line in education. It saddens me to see children as young as five being assessed on how they ‘develop workplace and other skills that will contribute to their future economic well-being.’ There is something inadequate about an official view of life which has to ask that question, whether the school gets a “good” mark for it or not. Children are not just cogs in an economic machine.”

Greg Forster (Chairman of School Governors)

Did you miss the “Open Days” at St.Wilfrid’s Church in June? The next full church opening is part of the national “Heritage Open Day” scheme in September, though the building is open every Sunday afternoon, and there may be some extras to tie in with the Mill open days this month.

Northenden Methodist Church.

Palatine Road.

Minister: the Revd. David Bown,
5 Kenworthy Lane, Northenden, M 22 4 JF
0161 998 – 2158

Sunday Services.

- July 2nd 11.00am Mr. Duncan Rutter
 6.30pm United Service at St. Wilfrid's
- 9th 11.00am Holy Communion
 The Rev. David Bown.
- 16th 11.00am Mr. David Hillary
- 23rd 11.00am Mr. Gwyn Williams
- 30th 11.00am Miss Joyce Burgess

COMMUNITY LUNCH ... on Wed...12th July
12.00 noon to 1.30pm at the "Eatery". Victoria Rd.
and on Wed. 26th July, a **cold buffet lunch** too.

FUN BINGO; Saturday Sat. 29th July 2.00 – 4.00pm

NEW DAWN COUNSELLING.

Free, professional counselling
at the New Dawn Community Centre,
Button Lane, Northen Moor. Tel. 0161 – 962-8100.
*Counselling in a Christian context, under the auspices of the
Brit. Assoc. of Counselling and Psychotherapy,*
The service is free, though donations towards the costs are welcome.

DIG NORTHENDEN MILL ~ YET AGAIN!

The dig is well under way now, with the school children delving into the back yard of the millers' house and the mill shop and getting into quite old, and muddy layers, I think. In the deeper section for older diggers we are beginning to lift a cobbled roadway, in the hope that underneath there will be some layers sealed before the Georgian/Regency building (the brickwork that

is easiest to see) was built. Simon Askew, the lead archaeologist at the site, has hopes of finding nice wet slutchy levels, with leather or other organic matter ~ even insects and parasites ~ preserved in it. That will be real fun (especially for the children, who may get a chance to look at it through microscopes.)

One of the differences from last year is the level of safety precautions. Fences are stronger, and everyone is asking “can we go any deeper without creating steps.” Certainly health and safety is important, but very soon archaeology will become a branch of the Health and Safety Executive.

There are open days on 8th/9th July, when you can visit the site, see what has been exposed, and hear reports on what was found about this site together with singing, food, and local tours.

A LINEAR PARK?

Greg Forster

Mention of the Mill dig prompts me to mention the proposed Linear Park along both sides of that stretch of the Mersey. There is a presentation about it today as I write (20th June), in the library. Some of the ideas are good: to tidy up the area and garden some of the bare rubble near Palatine Rd. can't be bad.

To create a children's play area near the heart of the village is splendid, as is the use of ground under the motorway as a recreation area for teenagers. I hope that people will accept that the motorway viaduct supports will be used (as they are now, unofficially) as graffiti walls. A dedicated area for this art form (even if you don't class it as high art!) might divert the artists from other sites! Similarly, I am glad that the grim concrete of the motorway abutment on Palatine Rd. is to have a mural.

What does disturb me a bit is the idea of making paths through the natural woodland of the old Vic's Field, between the river and the motorway. The beauty of this land is that it is not interfered with by us humans and is left for wildlife.

Some kind of display board or other interpretation is intended for the Mill site, talking about the mill, and about the natural history of the area. Splendid, but as I read the plans, that will curtail the parking area available there considerably. Even if it is laid out more logically and efficiently than at present, that is not good news for Camperlands, valley walkers, or the village and its trade in general. As they say, watch this space!

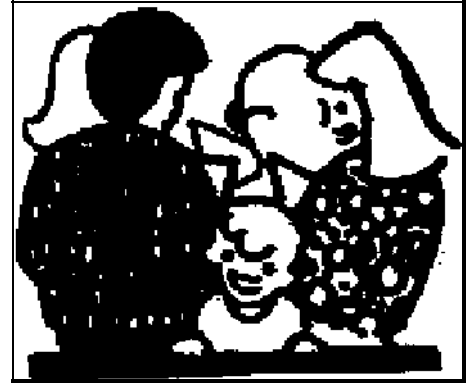
St. Wilfrid's Church,

Ford Lane. (Off Church Rd.)

Rector: Greg Forster (998-2615)

Organist: Arthur Mellor (928-0472)

www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk



Services:

On Sundays at 8.00am, and on Thursdays at 10.00am there is a Communion service (using the old Prayer Book).

There is a "Sunday Club" for 7 – 11+ year olds in the Rectory at 10.30am, for about an hour, except when there is a Family Service (for parents and children together) in Church.

A Sunday School, for children from 3½ to 6+, meets in the Church Hall from 10.30 till about 11.30am., except when there is a Family Service.

2 nd July	10.30am	Family Communion & Parade Service.
	6.30pm	Evening Worship (United Service)
9 th	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evening Worship
16 th	10.30am	Holy Communion & Baptism
	6.30pm	Evening Worship
23 rd	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Evening Worship
30 th	10.30am	Holy Communion
	6.30pm	Holy Communion (1662)
6 th Aug.	10.30am	Family Communion
	6.30pm	Evening Service at Northenden Methodist Ch.

Please note too that the church is open each Sunday afternoon from 1.45 – approx. 5.15pm, for prayer, visiting, enquiries, &c.

For your Diaries

Sat. 1st July Coffee Morning 10am ...

Mon. 3rd Women's Group Barbecue, 7.00pm

Wed. 5th Bible Study, Rectory, 8.00pm
(also 12th, 19th & 26th.)
Thu. 27th P.C.C. meeting. 7.30pm, Church Hall.
Sat. 5th Aug. Coffee Morning, 10am ... Church Hall.

WOMEN'S GROUP ... MON. 3RD JULY 7.00PM
BARBECUE

As usual, you are most welcome even if you have not come before, and if you need a lift contact me on 998-2615.

Please note the earlier time; and please bring food for half a person if you can.

Sue Forster

From the Registers ...

In Memoriam ...

Gladys Allman (Palatine Rd.) 77, Robert Skinkis (Sale)
Terry Jones (Robt. Owen Gdns)
also Stan Critchley (Shandon Ave.)

Confirmation:

This takes place on 25th June, too late for the names of those confirmed to be included in this month's issue of Concord.

Married in the Parish Church on June 10th
Caroline Bloor to Andrew Fay.

Toilets update ~ church and hall: *Greg Forster*

Once again, this is still "ongoing"! The Diocese have sent us the papers to do with their permission to do the work. If you want to see the plans, I have them; if you want to object, details are on public notices in church and in the notice board.

The City Council want a third quotation for the hall work before they can consider making a grant. We are working on that, and will keep you all posted on developments.

CUBS, BROWNIES; A Cub group uses St. Wilfrid's School on Tuesday evenings, 6.00pm; *contact Mike Clegg, 998 – 4143.*
Brownies, Church Hall, Mondays from 6.00pm.

Cards ~ some with prayers for the sick or bereaved, some with pictures of the church, and some (by Roni Armstrong) with elaborate designs for very special events, are available on sale in St. Wilfrid's church. Can you use them, for your own prayers or for a friend, or for special times?

wwwWebsite: St. Wilfrid's has a website up and running at [www . stwilfridsnorthenden . org . uk](http://www.stwilfridsnorthenden.org.uk) . Look us up, and let us know what you think. I am told that there is also an item about us on the English Heritage website now, since they have funded some of our recent maintenance work and we are "listed".

How much do you know about the basics of our faith? I have given the people who are to be confirmed at the end of June some notes: here is a shortened version of one set.

Confirmation notes 8 ~ Prayer. *Greg Forster*

Prayer isn't just asking for things; it is time spent with God, thinking about him, letting him speak to us, perhaps as we read a passage from the bible, or think about something we know about him. It can be worship and praise, or confession of the things we have got wrong. But it can be asking for things for ourselves or for other people too! You can do it alone, or in a group or a crowd. It can be planned and ordered, or gasped out in an emergency: beautiful words from a book or stumbling groans.

Jesus made a habit of praying. We read in the gospels that even when things seemed to be going very well for him he went off very early, away from the crowds, to pray. When he had a big decision to make he spent all night praying!

His followers buttonholed him and asked him once for him to teach them to pray. We read on another occasion when he taught the crowds not to go in for showy prayers, but to use a pattern he gave them. That is what we know as the **Lord's Prayer**. Though we do use it so often as *the* Christian prayer, I believe it is a pattern, not just a formula. Build other prayer around it; don't just use it ad nauseam.

It begins by recognising that God is approachable and personal ~ like a father at his best ~ and not a blind force, or a harsh tyrant. It recognises his authority, and his distinctiveness from the created order around us: he is “in heaven”. And it then asks that his name (his character, not just a label) will be respected.

We then ask that his kingdom may rule on earth as in heaven ~ and this means that his will is fulfilled by us as well as other people: his kingdom is what people live by in their day to day lives and relationships, not just some future glory.

We then bring to God our needs (not our wants or luxuries, though he is generous, but what we need for basic life.) Give us today’s bread. We recognise that we depend on God, ultimately, for our life, even if it comes via something else.

Forgiveness is also crucial in our day to day lives: we break relationships with God and each other and need to be forgiven, but living by forgiveness means that we show it too to other people. Matt. 6; 14)

We ask for God to rescue us from temptations to go wrong in our lives, and keep us safe from harm ~ both physical harm and moral harm in our lives.

In fact there are two versions of the Lord’s Prayer in the gospels; in Luke’s Gospel it seems lower key, more private, as if for personal use. In Matthew it is a bit grander, and is the version we use in public prayers, as was perhaps intended. (Matt. Ch. 6 vv 7 – 15, Luke ch. 11 vv 2 – 13)

In Prayer we are encouraged to **listen to God** as well as talk to ~ or at ~ him! But how? One way is to read passages from the bible and let God bring particular points to your mind out of them.

Read a story from the gospels about Jesus: how would you feel if you were at the back of the crowd, overhearing him? What would his words make you want to do?

Or what does the passage tell you about God, or Jesus, that you want to thank him or worship him for? Is there a wrong in the story that we should avoid, or something good to copy?

Is there a promise to treasure ~ a reassurance or a challenge to take to heart? God’s word is for now as well as the past!