

Cymbal

**Newsletter of
Mothers' Union
in the
Diocese of Manchester**



Summer 2009

DIOCESAN FESTIVAL

The annual act of worship for our whole Diocese will take place at the Cathedral in the autumn. The date is Wednesday 7 October and the service starts at 7.30pm. Our guest preacher will be the Rt Revd Richard Inwood, Bishop of Bedford, who is the Central Chaplain for the Mothers' Union. Please do your best to join in this shared time of praise and witness.

Robin Morris

CATHEDRAL QUIET DAY

In our crowded lives many find the need for times of space and reflection, if only to renew our jaded energies. There will be a chance later in the year to join in a Quiet Day which has been arranged at the Cathedral. It will take place on Thursday 19 November and will be led by Gilly Myers, one of the residentiary Canons. It starts with coffee at 10 – 10.30 a.m. in the library and will end at 2.30 p.m. Please bring a packed lunch – drinks are provided.

Lily Critten



DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

4 August	Diocesan Eucharist at St George, Mossley
10 August	Bolton Archdeaconry Festival at Bradshaw
10-24 August	Shop & Office shut
13 August	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
9 September	Rochdale Archdeaconry Festival at Oldham Parish Church
10 September	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
26 September	International Year of Child Service at Cathedral
7 October	Diocesan Festival at the Cathedral
8 October	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
17 October	Autumn Council at Ardwick
12 November	Thursday Prayer at the Cathedral
19 November	Quiet Day at the Cathedral
3 December	Advent Carols at St Ann, Manchester
10 December	Provincial Service at Sheffield
21 Dec – 4 Jan	Shop and Office closed

FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear Friends,

First I would like to thank everyone who nominated me to serve for a second term as your President. The past three years have included some amazing new experiences and I have often been conscious of your love and prayers. I have enjoyed meeting many members but there are areas of the diocese which I still do not know. I hope that in the coming triennium I shall be invited to join you, whether it is to speak, to worship with you or to share fellowship.

For the past three years I have been supported by a very strong team, some of whom will complete their term of office in December. Others have been elected to continue the work and I know will have your full support. Some posts are still vacant, so please pray that the right person may be identified and if you are interested in knowing more about a role do please ask.

The concerns which form the basis of all Mothers' Union work are ones which are currently on many agendas. So let people in your communities know about our work, find ways in which you or your branch could get involved (not forgetting the power of prayer), make certain that the church family understands the reason for our existence. Then involve them in your projects. Most people will respond to an invitation to help in a practical way to meet an obvious need. Recently we have heard of several branches which are growing significantly in number. Each is proof of the power of invitation. If it is working for them why shouldn't it work for you? But don't leave it all to your branch leader - every member needs to be involved.

You will read in the following pages about our visit to Maseno West and Jennifer and I are happy to come and talk to your group. Our fellow members in this link are without exception proud to be members of Mothers' Union. They have to show the leadership that they are worthy to wear the uniform. They are valued in the community, in the church, by the clergy - because they are working in many practical ways to meet the needs they have identified: they teach and lead worship, they support in word and deed. We can learn so much from them.

The roads in Kenya are atrocious! (Ask Jennifer!) But as one member said, 'We do not need roads. In Kenya we have the Way.' May we here in Manchester recognise 'the Way' and serve Him to the best of our ability, by our Christian witness and through our membership of Mothers' Union.

With love,
Barbara

Extra pages, pictures & colour... this is you only!

VISITING KENYA

In the evening of 5 March, Barbara Taylor and I alighted from an Air Kenya aeroplane to begin a visit to our link Diocese of Maseno West. We were met by Stella Okoyo, Mothers' Union Worker, Jenipha Wasonga, the Bishop's wife and Diocesan President and Margaret Achieng Musega, the Diocesan Chairlady. We were to spend the next twelve days squashed in the Mothers' Union land rover with Stella, Margaret and Clarice Awuor, the Diocesan treasurer! We became great friends.

By the time we got to the Siaya region, it was pitch dark and we had our first introduction to life without electricity and running water. However, we soon adjusted and this was not a problem for us.

On our first full day there, we went to the retirement service and presentation of gifts for Henry Moyi and his wife, Mary. Many of you will remember that Henry came to England two years ago with Stella. The occasion was no different from our retirement events in the UK, with one exception – the gifts included several hens and a cow, which was reluctantly led down the aisle! The Mothers' Union presented them both with a LARGE cooking pot and they processed in song and tribal 'whoops'!



After the service, the whole congregation went into the parish hall for lunch.

We then commenced our visiting programme. There are seven deaneries in Maseno West and we visited each one of them, often necessitating an overnight stay. At each one we were welcomed, usually in song and attended a 'Rally'. We hadn't realised just how much people were looking forward to meeting us. We were asked by Jenipha and Stella to encourage and enthuse members. The fighting of 2007/2008 had left many members depressed as they saw loved ones die or disappear. It had been a very hard time for them and had resulted in much poverty and hardship. Mothers' Union leaders are in the forefront of teaching about family life and we were glad to be able to support this work. We also saw the effect of HIV/AIDS on family life and the large number of orphans. In line with this year's theme of "The cost of relationship", we saw sacrificial giving in time, talent and money.

The weather was also causing great hardship as the rains were expected but had not yet come. People were unable to plant seeds/crops because the soil was too hard. One night we did have some rain and the congregation was a little depleted the next day as women needed to till the land.

Either before or after the 'rally' in each deanery, we visited schools and various projects. We even planted trees! The projects are so variable. It might be poultry keeping for one family or a larger 'cooperative' of barn hens. It could be the fish farm or the bee keeping, the jiko (kitchen) and even the fertilizer production with the by-product of bio-gas.



One founder member of Mothers' Union in Maseno West had been given goats as an income-generating project so that she was able to look after her ten orphans. We visited several schools and at other times were entertained by Sunday School children. The overwhelming message in schools is HIV/AIDS prevention. "You must learn that it is ok to say 'no'". All school children must wear school uniform. Many children had grown out of or torn

their uniform but it was all they had. A large proportion also attended school without shoes. £4.50 for a uniform and £2.00 for a pair of rubber shoes does not appear much to us, but is a fortune for most people in Maseno West. Buying textbooks is also a problem and often there is only one book between 4 or 5 pupils. That is manageable until you come to do homework. We had been given some money from Manchester members prior to our visit and we were able to give this to teachers to help them with books.

We did do one tourist bit whilst we were there for about 5 minutes. We had our photographs taken at the equator!! Space does not allow me to say much more but I must close by saying that I have never been welcomed anywhere with so much happiness and overwhelming love. It has been a humbling, yet inspirational experience. Please invite either of us to your branch or deanery. There is so much to tell, so much to show you!

Mothers' Union in Maseno West is working very hard to promote conditions as favourable as possible for family life. Their faith in our Lord Jesus Christ is unmovable and an example to us all who live in a world of comparative luxuries. They support and are supported by their clergy at all levels and they too need our prayers. They wanted us to visit them so that we could come back and tell you all that they are doing.. It means so much to them that we care. Please remember them in your prayers.



Jennifer White

VISITORS FROM THE SOUTH

As the Salisbury Link Correspondent I would like to tell you of the wonderful four days spent entertaining 34 members from the Salisbury Diocese 14 - 17 May. Lots of fun, laughter and eating! I have received many thank you cards and letters in praise of the visit and will put them together with photos in a file. If anyone has any duplicate photos please could I have them?

I want to thank Jean Williamson and Jean Driver for the initial hard work of placing guests with hostesses, not an easy task. Thanks to the Archdeaconry Presidents for providing food for us and especially to Mary Helliwell for all her hard work, and generous support. I don't wish to leave anyone out; thanks to all the Hostesses and others who gave their valuable time in organizing events. Thank you all.

Molly Marsh, Salisbury Link Correspondent

FROM FRIENDS IN SALISBURY

In May 34 members from the Bradford-on-Avon and Devizes Deaneries travelled by coach on a somewhat dreary and cloudy morning, though as we approached Manchester the weather brightened. But a very warm welcome awaited us at St. Paul's, Blackley, and we sat down to a splendid tea of cakes and scones before going off with our various hostesses.

On Friday morning we all met at St. Ann's in the city centre for coffee and biscuits, followed by the Verger's interesting talk on the church's history. After mid-day prayers, some free time, buffet lunch in the Cathedral and a short tour we broke up and departed with our hostesses once more.

On Saturday morning we made our way by coach to Uppermill and on for mid-day prayers and salmon salad at Diggle. Afterwards we went on to Ashton Canal Basin and Museum and from there to Christ Church, Walmersley, for a hot supper at which we were joined by the Bishop of Bolton. The highlight of the evening's entertainment was a performance by the Reach Puppets with a strong Christian message.

All too soon the Sunday morning service with our hostesses was over and we found ourselves back at St Paul's for a final Songs of Praise, led by Canon Roy Chow, the Manchester Archdeaconry Chaplain, at which we paraded our banners. Goodbyes followed a cup of tea and we all agreed that Manchester had entertained us well and that new friendships had been made and old ones strengthened. We all hope that the Link continues to flourish.

Evelyn Grant

Devizes Deanery Leader

A HOSTESS RESPONDS

What a wonderful few days we had with our visitors. On Thursday some were friends and others visitors, but by Sunday all were friends. Good relationships were formed. We laughed, joked, prayed and even, dare I say, cried together. Those who had never been to Manchester before were very impressed and even showed things to me that I had never seen. They would like to come back for a longer visit, perhaps to visit the restored Victoria Baths which they had seen on television. They loved the rolling hills and the names of our villages like Saddleworth, Upper Mossley, Lower Mossley, Uppermill and Diggle, which made me puff up with pride. One lady, Edith, who originally came from Oldham but has lived in the Salisbury area for the past 42 years, met one of our members at Diggle who was in her infant and junior classes at Burnley Street school in Oldham (since demolished) and they chatted like old friends and exchanged addresses. How about that?

One of my guest's ancestors was Honorary Canon Saunders at Manchester Cathedral about 1847. She couldn't find any mention of him, but was advised to write to the Cathedral Archivist. The weather? Not a problem – what's a drop of water between friends? My friends left us with these words: "Thoroughly enjoyed the weekend, very impressed with the organisation and hospitality, greatly inspired by the young people on Saturday evening – in fact, no fault with anything!" Well, with the helping hand of God and a lot of hard work by background people too numerous to mention, we couldn't have done better could we?

Barbara Robertson

Oldham West Deanery

SPEAKERS EVENING

The Speakers Evening on 7 May at Church House organized by the Training Officers was much appreciated by the five teams of three people who took part, and by the audience. We were variously informed, entertained and inspired by the stories of the five speakers. Our adjudicator was the Revd. Beryl Smart who gave us some constructive advice on speaking to an audience, whilst applauding the standard of speakers taking part. One member observed "it is amazing what interesting and talented people we have in our membership". I was not surprised: most people have a story worthy of telling – it is just a matter of encouraging them to speak out. One good thing – the speeches were 'timed', as were the introduction and closing remarks, so there was no rambling on, it was a case of stand up, speak up and shut up, which left everyone wanting more. We hope to repeat this exercise in the not too distant future.

Mary Doyle

PROVINCIAL PILGRIMAGE

On a cold and wet Friday in May we were making our way up the A1 and wondering what we had let ourselves in for. As we passed the Angel of the North, only just visible through the mist and rain, our thoughts were about the open air service to be held the next day in the Priory on the Holy Island of Lindisfarne, just off the coast of Northumberland. On the Saturday after breakfast we set off for Holy Island, the weather still being cold but dry, and as we crossed the causeway the mainland disappeared in the mist. The option many of us took was to find refuge in the local pub and have a very welcoming cup of hot coffee.



To our surprise on leaving the pub the weather had improved and it was to be the beginning of a sunny day. We all met at 12 noon on the beach for a Midday Meditation, given by Lynne Tembey, our Provincial President, to listen to God's Word and reflect upon what the Lord was saying to us all. We found a sheltered spot and had our picnic lunch while Lynne came round and talked to as

many people as she could.

At 2pm we all found ourselves in the ruined Priory for a Eucharist which was led by the Bishop of Newcastle with approximately 2000 Mothers' Union members taking part. It was such a moving experience to have the peace of the Eucharist while the seagulls were flying overhead and the sun shining on us all.



We had been asked to take a banner from each diocese and the Manchester banner was admired by many for both its contents and the way it had been laminated. As we left the Island we felt very privileged to worship in the Priory, this most holy ground where so many saints like Cuthbert and Aidan have lived and worshipped.

Bryan and May Goodall

AN EVENING OF CELEBRATION

Two years ago the Rally was advertised as a Night of Celebration, this year it was an Evening of Celebration; whatever noun is used the word to remember is Celebration; again this year it truly lived up to its name. It was a celebration of the work of the members of the Mothers' Union in our local communities, it was a celebration of the dedication of its members throughout the world and it was a joyful celebration of what the Mothers' Union is all about, to demonstrate the Christian faith in action.



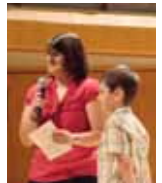
The musical entertainment was provided by the Smithills School Senior Brass Band and what a sterling performance they gave; it was a delight to see so many young people playing with such obvious pleasure and giving their time to entertain an audience of Mothers' Union members - not the usual image of how young people spend their evenings.

The guest speaker was Canon Roger Royle whose witty, self deprecating style – dashing round the stage with his hand held mike, talking about his early life in Wales , telling anecdotes and shamelessly name dropping, made for a relaxing and entertaining evening.



Of course there has to be a business side to the evening, but by making it a question and answer session the unit co-ordinators got their messages across with ease and clarity but no less emphasizing the need for our continued help and support in the various areas in which the Mothers' Union is involved. We also witnessed the launch of the Mothers' Union website which was revealed as www.mothersunionmanchester.org It's easy to access and well worth a visit.

For me the star of the evening was Reuben Cook who, in order to raise money for the Bishop's appeal and the Mothers' Union Relief Fund, had, at the age of eight, not only memorized 125 capital cities of the world but also allowed himself to be tested, on stage, in front of an audience of Mothers' Union members: that took some courage!



It was a very enjoyable evening and the rousing hymns, voted for by Mothers' Union members, certainly made the Bridgewater bounce. If you haven't been to the Rally for a while - and there were still a number of empty seats - try the new improved Evening of Celebration. You could be very pleasantly surprised.

Kathleen Halstead St Michael's, Bamford

AGM IN CROYDON

I was enjoying myself at a Deanery Social at All Saints and Martyr's, Langley, on Monday 17 June, when our Deanery Leader asked me if I would have the time to join other members from the Diocese to go to Croydon for the General Meeting of Mothers' Union Worldwide. She told me to think about it and let her know my decision by the next day as they were leaving on Wednesday morning. I felt excited for the rest of the evening and I knew before I went home that my answer was going to be 'yes', but I had to make some personal arrangements in order to go to this event as we are coming to a busy time in our family because of our son's wedding. Having sorted things out on a personal basis, on Wednesday morning I set off for London Euston to make up a group of 14 ladies. We had a good journey and I was made to feel at home with everyone in the group and yet I hadn't met some of them before and some of the others I only knew from Festival Services around our Diocese.

After we had booked in at our Travel Lodge in Croydon and had a quick wash and brush-up we set off back into London where 8 of our party enjoyed a wonderful meal of fish, chips, mushy peas and a glass of wine and good Christian fellowship (which means a really good laugh, mostly at our own expense).

We arrived for the worldwide Festival Service to find the Cathedral already nearly full to bursting. I just stood inside drinking in the atmosphere which was awesome. People greeting friends from all over the country, whom they hadn't seen for 12 months. The noise of friendly exchange of 'O it's lovely to see you again, how are you doing?' all around me. There were people from all around the world. Because it was so full we had to sit on one of the side aisles so we couldn't see anybody but could hear every word that was said. Banners were processed from all around the Diocese and we sang lustily: 'Fill your hearts with joy and gladness', 'As the deer pants for the water', 'Longing for light, we wait in the darkness', finishing with that great hymn 'Guide me, O thou great redeemer'. The offertory hymn was, 'Lord, you meet us from the future' sung to the tune of 'Love Divine'. It had been written by Neil Thompson for the Southwark Diocesan Centenary in 2005. The Sermon was preached by Margaret Sentamu, wife of the Archbishop: so very inspiring and relevant for the times we are living in. The Intercessions were led by Rosemary Kempself, Worldwide President, and Ann Wright, President of Southwark Diocese. I just felt privileged to have been able to take part in worship with people from all around the world who worked tirelessly to help people in need wherever they may be in the world.

On Thursday morning we arrived downstairs to share breakfast before taking our packed lunches and going across the road to the Fairfield Hall in Croydon for the General Meeting. It did get a little humid in the hall but it was so interesting to hear the reports from the Unit Coordinators at Mary Sumner House which is the power house of Mothers' Union.

It was inspiring to hear how our money and fundraising is enabling people all around the world to live independent lives. Money of course needs to be spent here in the UK to help under-privileged families but there is a far greater need in places like Uganda, Sri Lanka, Tanzania and the West Indies. So there I was sitting with some 1,500 other members of the Mothers' Union from Australia, Canada, New Zealand, India, West Indies, Kenya and many more. So many members of the same Christian organization, from so many different cultures, but with the same aims and objectives, to support and uphold family life through service and under-pinned by prayer.

Reg Bailey the Chief Executive of the Mothers' Union interviewed Provincial Presidents from West Indies, Tanzania, Sri Lanka, Southern Cone. One striking thing from these countries is that their membership is growing whilst our membership in the UK is declining. One thing I did bring back from my time away in Croydon is how we can find ways to change this trend and to enthuse people to join us.

I was asked to write an article for Cymbal with first impressions of a time away at the General Meeting for the first time. My first word on this experience was 'WOW!' and it still is. I wouldn't have missed it for the world.

Joyce Robinson

St. Michael's Church, Tonge-cum-Alkrington

APRIL QUIET DAY

Canon Roger Hill led the day, which was attended by around fifteen members from across the Diocese. The first theme was Contemplation and Stillness. He likened it to a contemplation pod in a room of silence, giving a quiet time to think about our inspiration for living and a time to contemplate our own lives and to think about our dignity and tolerance, and unity between people of all nations. (*Are you looking forward to some quietness today?*)

The next theme was The Cost of Relationship and how our lives can be turned upside down by relationships and how we can have laughter, love, passion and anguish. (*Has getting involved with Jesus brought you problems?*)

The final theme was Drawing Good from Evil, calling us to engage with evil and to grow in self knowledge in order to love sensibly. (*In your life, where is God asking you to help defeat evil with love?*)

To finish, a Eucharist service was held at the High Altar.

Marion Perrin *Bury Deanery*



WHIT WALK



WHAT A fantastic occasion! We arrived at the Cathedral just after 9am on 25 May to witness many people gathering for the annual Whit Walk – little children dressed in beautifully made matching outfits: Mothers' Union ladies supporting their churches, banners draped in the lemon and white colours and the Clergy looking resplendent in their robes.

The walk began from Fennel Street and made its way, to the sounds of the bands, to Albert Square and the Town Hall. The sun was shining all the way for us, and the crowds of shoppers were there to cheer us on. The Service was led by The Very Rev. Rogers Govender, Dean of Manchester, and the Address was given by The Rt. Rev. Mark Davies, Bishop of Middleton. The service was also attended by the Lord Mayors of Manchester and Salford. The address was very uplifting and made us all feel wonderful to be party to such an occasion, which has been ongoing for 210 years. We sang our hearts out to "The Church's One Foundation", "Shine, Jesus, Shine", "The Lord of the Dance" and "One more Step along the Road We Go". Many of our MU members danced at the invitation of the Clergy and the whole service made us feel proud to be part of the Christian Faith. The Service ended with the National Anthem.

We made our way back by procession to the Cathedral, again to the warmth of the sun and the crowds who cheered everyone on – the atmosphere was wonderful. Our banner followed two ladies who were 79 and 85 years of age, who could not walk too fast but were very determined they were going to finish the walk. They were an inspiration to us all. We dismantled our banners at the foot of the Cathedral. Whilst we were watching the tail end of the procession bypass us, we were delighted to see one young boy, under five years of age, stop dead in his tracks, dressed in his lemon and white outfit, with a look on his face which read "If you think I am going to walk any further, you are mistaken"!

What an end to a perfect morning!

Maureen Moore
Stretford Deanery.

FROM ANOTHER ANGLE

Many of you will be off on holiday at this time (or looking after grandchildren). While I am writing this Margaret is on her way to Croydon for the A.G.M., which is I suppose a holiday of sorts. She's taken our camera – the old fashioned variety (1997) which needs to have its results taken along to the chemist to be processed. I always worry how many pictures she'll be taking of her friends against various backgrounds and how soon the film will run out. Of course if we had one of those digital cameras she could be firing off in all directions without any restrictions. It always strikes me how many unnecessary pictures people take once armed with this gadget. But then again it gives one the chance of taking the same scene from lots of different angles – and this can lead to new ways of looking at things.

Looking at things from different angles is really something the Mothers Union ought to be very good at. We have so many opportunities for seeing the world from someone else's point of view. We hope that CYMBAL itself gives us an idea of how the world – and the Mothers Union – looks if you belong to another parish, or another Diocese or don't belong at all, or if you're African or American or West Indian or live in Moss Side or Belmont or London. The list is endless. What matters is that we make the most of our opportunities to see the world through other peoples' eyes. It will add enormously to the richness of life and the way we appreciate the world we inhabit.

It will also, I think, deepen our faith, because it will broaden our understanding of God. He works in different ways for different people and you have to look at them from different angles to appreciate his handiwork! Perhaps the writer of the first Epistle of Peter (4.10) was saying something like this. Our bibles translate the phrase rather boringly as “the manifold grace of God”. The Greek word actually means variegated (like those hostas with green leaves edged with yellow) or many-coloured. Christians ought to see their surroundings, and their neighbours, in many different colours, from many different angles. What a lot we would miss if we were all still hugging our Brownie box cameras!

Robin Morris

CATHEDRAL FLOWERS

Congratulations to all who took part in this wonderful Festival. We spent the Saturday afternoon marvelling at the displays and the thought and skill that had gone into them. All the displays deserve credit: the ones that particularly caught our eye were the white lilies surrounding the steps for the public to view from the pavement outside, also the Chetham's display with musical instruments interspersed with flowers and the Mother's Union display for families throughout the world. The Bolton Flower Club showed a Sunday School and the children had made a wonderful display of Noah's Ark with animals. There was also a feature depicting a Baptism, which was a christening robe and a prayer book covered with baby's breath.

'Thank You' to all who took part and those who provided afternoon tea while we listened to the cathedral choir.

Marion Johnson
and **Jean Townshend**
St Ann's, Belfield, Rochdale.



MAKE A MOTHER'S DAY

The Central Co-ordinators in their reports at the AGM voiced a heartfelt Thank You to members for their magnificent effort in raising £185,745.60 for this year's Appeal, making a total of £465,755.60 over the three year period. So Thank You again to all who took part so generously.

Margaret Morris



FRESHERS



Thank You to everyone who responded to last year's appeal for goods – we filled over 2000 bags for grateful students! We are appealing again for help in collecting items for September – packets of rice, pasta, tea, coffee (small jars), toilet rolls, toiletries or soups etc – all gratefully received.

The Bagging-Up is at the Chaplaincy 17-18 September & Distribution 21-24 September – if you can help, please ring me 01706 642 846 or Judith at the Office.

Margaret Morris

WEBSITE

The Manchester Mothers' Union website is up and running and is being constantly updated. So visit www.mothersunionmanchester.org and spread the word.

Please send information and reports and if you would like to advertise an upcoming event get in touch with Judith at the office.



CONGRATULATIONS



A very long serving member of the Mothers' Union celebrated her 100th Birthday on 27 June. She is **Nellie Gorse**, of St Michael and All Angels, Howe Bridge, and we would like to join in the many congratulations she has received.

At St. John the Baptist, Little Hulton two members of the Branch have recently marked their Diamond Weddings. For **Margaret and George Rourke** the day was 4 June, and for **Olive and Harry Buckley** it was 15 June. Our best wishes go to all four of them at this time of thanksgiving.

