

NUMBER 52 MARCH 2019

Parish Montage

Sacred Heart RC Church Sittingbourne

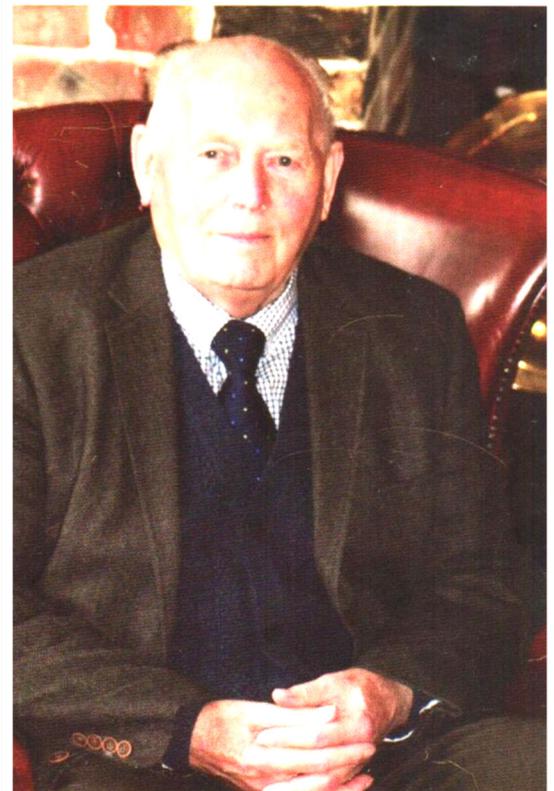
Welcome Fr. Paul



Just before Christmas we welcomed Fr. Paul to our Parish. [Fr. Jim is currently on Sabbatical.] Fr. Paul very quickly settled in and through his weekly homily and end-of-Mass observations has connected warmly with Parishioners.

"I am here for you," said Fr. Paul during his first Mass with us, and he has carefully and lovingly kept that promise ever since.

"Thank you, Fr. Paul for being here for us."



Richard David Gibson

14th September 1934—2nd January 2019

"All the family did something, carrying the coffin, the readings, taking up the Communion."

"They were marvellous and Fr. Paul was wonderful."

"I thank all the parishioners who attended."
Mrs Gibson

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Congratulations



All our best wishes to Stephen Trafford who was commissioned on 3rd February at St. George's Cathedral to be an Extraordinary Minister of Holy Communion. Stephen is also an Altar Server.

"You'll have to ask my father first..."

It was Saturday 15th March 1958 and Richard and Patricia were sitting together at the back of our church waiting for Fr. Lawler to begin Mass. There was just time for Richard to ask Patricia if she would be his wife. Her reply, Richard recalls, was enthusiastic..! "You must speak first to my Dad!" Richard accepted the request and was thrilled when Dad said 'Yes', subject to a couple of conditions! These were that the newly wed couple should not live in a flat nor should they live with their parents!

The outcome of this is plain to see, as we congratulate Mr & Mrs Gibson on sixty years together. And they still occupy the same position in church for every Mass they attend.

[Reprinted from Montage 47]



[Read by Steve during the Service]

When you remember me, Please do not weep.
My body may not be there. It has chosen to sleep.

I'm not that far away. My soul lives on, Looking down, watching over you and everyone.
And when you feel sad and life seems so blue,
Just remember that my spirit has its arms around you.

And on those special days, times that you wish I could see, that cool breeze flowing past you, well, that will be me.

So don't be sad and please have no fear. God has taken me under his wing, but I'll always be near.

I still watch you every minute, every day. My love and soul are with you, and that's where they will stay.

Should you wish to make a donation in memory of Richard, you are invited to do so for either The Stroke Association, or The British Heart Foundation.



[Read by 11 year old grandson during the Service]

....Until We Meet Again

Those special memories of you will always bring a smile if only I could have you back for just a little while.

Then we could sit and talk again just like we used to do, you always meant so very much and always will do too.

The fact that you're no longer here will always cause me pain but you're forever in my heart until we meet again.

"As Dad had been adopted he looked into his family history several years ago and discovered two sisters that he didn't know he had! One came over to meet us from Canada, and Mum and Dad went there to visit them too. I know he was really pleased to have found out about his past, but our Nan and Grandad were his real parents and the older ones of us have fond memories of them."
[Writes Alan]

Parish Montage relies on your help. Thank you to all who have contributed to this issue. You can contact us by email: parishmontage@hotmail.co.uk
all emails will be acknowledged and any photos or other documents will be returned.

OBITUARY

Richard David Gibson

14th September 1934—2nd January 2019



[Part of the Eulogy given by Alan]

How does one sum up a life in a few words? Most of you know Dad's history, being adopted at the age of 5, then going to 11 schools, serving in the Royal Signals in Korea and later in the veteran's association, serving for many years at Sittingbourne Swimming Club and on two occasions as President of Medway Swimming Association, and of course in the phone card collecting world.

But the most important event, of course, was his marriage to Mum in 1958. Dad proposed in this very Church, they married here and have worshipped here all of the 60 years of marriage they celebrated last year. It is very fitting that this Service is also being held here.

To sum up the essence of the man Dad was, I think his overriding theme seemed to be family. When Dad met and married Mum, they moved into their first home in Harold Road, before moving to Springfield Road where we children were raised and our real family home was nurtured. We have many happy memories of that home. I remember the brown Ford Estate car that Dad used to have which we all used to pile in for our trips to Seasalter to collect winkles, or holidays on the coast loaded up with windbreaker, sandwiches and us kids!

As the family grew, with 5 of us children—Steve, Mary, Michael, Clare and me, it was decidedly "cosy" when we were all together, and when Dad got home it was time to vacate HIS chair, and if you didn't see him it was "oi you" and the thumb! Dad and Mum ensured we were all raised with good moral standards and we all attended St Peter's Catholic Primary School. Some of their grandchildren also went to St Peter's and there have now been 3 generations of the Gibson family at the school!

Sometimes things were tough when we were growing up and at times we struggled, especially when he had his triple heart bypass[which 30 years ago he was told would give him 10 years. When he was floored for 6 months due to a slipped disc, there was always food on the table, a roof over our heads and a loving welcome at home.

Dad worked hard to provide for his family, valued his colleagues and friends, but most of all loved his family, particularly Mum, who he was devoted to.

From Mum, Steve, Mary, Michael, Clare, the grandchildren and me, you will be missed Dad and thank you for everything you did for us all. We know that you can now Rest in Peace.



Diamond Wedding Congratulations

Betty and Fred Scoones celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary on 24th January. They were married in our church exactly 60 years ago in 1959.

They first met at the tennis club that was off Highstead Road; it's all houses now! Proud Fred served in the RAF for 22 years and Betty and he had many changes of houses including a two year posting in Singapore.

They now boast 4 children, 12 Grandchildren and 3 Great grandchildren.

New Book—Just published!

The Story of the Convent of the Nativity School

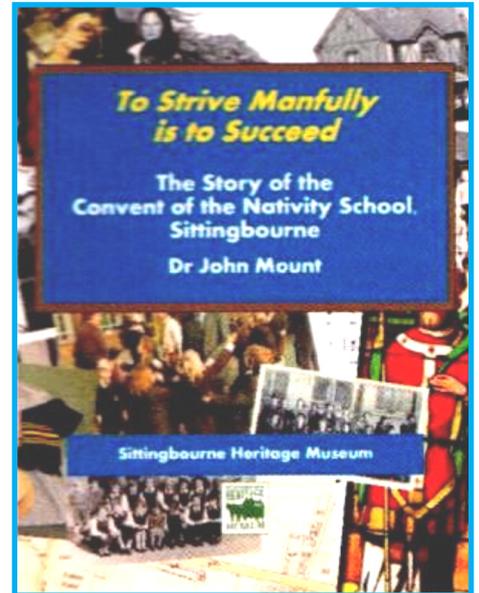
By Dr John Mount

The Convent of the Nativity School played an important part in the life of Sittingbourne from 1894 to 1993. This wonderful tale of achievement of both school and pupils and their love for the nuns who taught and nurtured the “young ladies” has never been told before. The School may be gone but it lives on in the memories of everyone who was at the School or who knew the Convent and its ‘gals’.

This account by John Mount is detailed and thoroughly researched. It covers the whole 98 years of the Convent’s life in Sittingbourne. The book has 187 pages and over 90 illustrations. The price is £11.95 and is available from:

Sittingbourne Heritage Museum, or through the website

www.sittingbourne-museum.co.uk



Welcome to our Parish Family



We welcome LEON BOBOWSKI who received the Sacrament of Baptism on Sunday March 10th 2019.



SKIP TO BE FIT



The Skip to Be Fit Day was a great success! All children learnt new skills and games that they had not tried before—this has further developed their enjoyment of skipping. Midday meals supervisors and parents joined in too! Since the Day, many more children have been skipping throughout their playtimes and Year 6 Health Ambassadors ran a skipping competition—length of time children were able to skip and the number of skips on the junior playground. **DAISY DUTTON** was the overall winner of the backwards skipping and **SEB ROBERTSON** was the winner for the length of time he could skip. A big thank you to Mrs Farley-Hills for organising the event and to the PTA who paid for a School Pack of ropes as well as two long playground ropes.

[How about a Parishioners Skip to Be Fit Day.....?]

“The war was a prolonged interruption of the normality of my life. But I would not have missed the experiences it brought”

Philip Diamond was Headteacher of St. Peter's School during the 1960's and was much loved and respected by his teaching staff, parents and pupils. What emerged after his funeral last year, was his written record of his activities during the Second World War, where he served in the RAF. *Montage* is privileged to continue reprinting extracts from this document.



Flying Asses

The Squadron, having played its part in the re-occupation of Europe, was despatched to Tulihal on the Imphal plain in Assam in August 1945. Its function was to supply outposts difficult to reach by any other means, with survival needs. Rice formed the largest part of the loads which were dropped into postage-stamp sized dropping zones tucked into deep valleys. Some of the flying near the ground in these places was quite hairy. The rice was packed into double sacks. The crew built a wall of these sacks 5 to 6 feet high in the open doorway, and on the green light pushed out as big a cluster as possible. Other supplies went down on parachute, including live stock - asses.

Orphans—one result of war

Some 300 miles south of Tulihal was a small detachment and it was from there

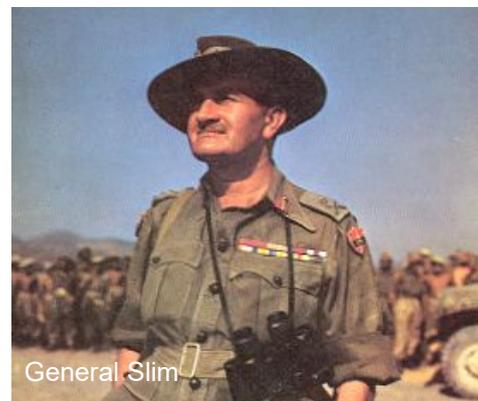
that I did most of my Eastern flying. The strip was small and made of perforated interlocking metal plates. There were no permanent buildings, everything was tented. Our chores were taken care of by a few young Burmese boys with top-knots who smoked cigars and played draughts with enormous skill. The moment your aircraft appeared overhead they brewed the tea. These boys, aged around 11, were war orphans and had no home or family. They fed from our cook-house and slept under the fly-sheets of our tents.

Buddhist monks one-way ticket!

One day two saffron-clad Buddhist monks turned up and wanted to go flying. It was explained to them that they would be expected to work for this favour. They were not prepared to do this. No crew would take them. However the next day they turned up again and as it happened a Dakota came in from Rangoon on route for somewhere well north of us! They begged a flight, the crew agreed, and away they went not realising it was a one-way trip! I can only assume some monastery up north took them in!

An apology from General Slim

The Toungoo flying strip was not fenced off. A dirt road, cut through thick



scrub, crossed one end and led into our camp and the near-by village. Water buffalo occasionally had to be chased off the strip by the most fearsome means at our disposal—a taxying Dakota. One day I was on my final approach—very low—when a small convoy of jeeps drove across my flight path causing a hasty overshoot and a nervous tic! On landing, as I taxied in, I passed the jeeps pulled up near the camp and I shook my fist at them! I parked and hopped out to be faced by a very smart Military Policeman who informed me that General Slim would like a word. I was dressed for very hot flying, no hat, no shirt, just shorts and shoes. I was jeeped over to the General and his posse of properly dressed officers and accepted his apology with as much decorum as I could muster!



There's more to Lent than Giving Up Chocolate

Food for Thought [condensed from Fr. Paul's Newsletter]



From the time we were children, our first question for Lent was often: “What are you going to give up for Lent?” Giving something up for these 40 days is a custom that, when we were younger, helped us to enter into the season with a sense of purpose and a greater awareness. But as adults, perhaps we might want to consider looking at Lent in a deeper way?

Lent isn't simply about us “giving up” something. The real grace is when we recognise that Lent is a season when God wants to give *us* something. It is much easier for us to simply choose something to give up...then we can dismiss Lent. “I'm

giving up TV for Lent”, or “I'm giving up being nice to my little sister!”

Asking what we would like to change about ourselves this Lent requires a little reflection. Each of us can think of something that gets in the way of our being loving and self-sacrificing. What patterns of behaviour in our lives need changing? Patience? Unselfishness? More loving behaviour towards my family? What would it cost me to change? As we reflect, we may realise that changing a particular way we live is coming as a call from God—so we don't have to do it alone.