



St. Mary's Dalton Holme Newsletter

Volume 6 Issue 4

February 2020

Church Wardens

The Lord Hotham 01430-810771
Mr. Giles W. Peacock 01430-810254
Mrs. J. Creaser 01430-810662

Services for February



2nd	Fourth Sunday after Christmas	9.30 am	Morning Prayer (Said)
9th	Fifth Sunday after Epiphany	9.30 am	Matins with Hymns
16th	Sixth Sunday after Epiphany	9.30 am	Morning Prayer (Said)
23rd	Transfiguration Sunday	9.30 am	Choral Matins

St. Valentines Day

The history of the St. Valentine's Day celebrations appears to have its roots in a pagan fertility festival known as Lupercalia. Celebrated in ancient Rome between 13 – 15 February, the festival is said to have involved lots of naked folk running through the streets spanking the backsides of young women with leather whips, supposedly to improve their fertility.

Like many of the old pagan festivals, the early Christian Church appears to have highjacked the celebrations, sanitised and then reissued them with a certain amount of shall we say 'spin'. In the two centuries that followed the death of Christ, at least two separate accounts record how early Christian martyrs, all apparently called Valentine (or, in latin *Valentinus*), met with their ends on 14th February. In 496 AD, Pope Gelasius appears to have come clean by formally declaring the 14th February to be St. Valentine's Day, now rebranded as a Christian feast day!

The first real association of St. Valentine's Day with romantic love, or 'love birds', derives from Geoffrey Chaucer's *Parlement of Foules* (or, 'Parliament of Fowls'). Dating from 1382, Chaucer celebrated the engagement of the 15 year-old King Richard II to Anne of Bohemia via a poem, in which he wrote: *For this was on St. Valentine's Day, when every bird (fowl) cometh to choose his mate.*

True to form though, it was a Frenchman who is recorded as sending the earliest surviving Valentine's note to his sweetheart. Charles, the Duke of Orléans, was writing to her from his prison cell in the

Tower of London following his capture at the Battle of Agincourt in 1415. In the poem the duke talks of his love for his wife and refers to her as "my very sweet Valentine".

By 1601 St. Valentine's Day appears to be an established part of English tradition, as William Shakespeare makes mention of it in Ophelia's lament in Hamlet: *To-morrow is Saint Valentine's day, All in the morning betime, And I a maid at your window, To be your Valentine.*

The passing of love-notes between sweethearts appears to have become standard practice, as in 1797, *The Young Man's Valentine Writer* was first published. This contained gems of sentimental rhymes and ditties for those young gentlemen who were obviously so much in love as to not be able to think clearly enough to compose their own verse.

Although the Royal Mail Service had been made available to the English public since 1635, it was not until the introduction of the Penny Post in 1840 that the postal service became affordable to most ordinary folk, thus making the sending of the anonymous St. Valentine's Day cards possible. All over the country printers started to mass-produce the *mechanical valentines* that we recognise today, complete with

pre-prepared verses and pretty pictures. That said, the anonymity aspect of being able to send your Valentine Day cards was also responsible for introducing daring and racy verse to the otherwise prudish Victorians.

In 1847, Esther Howland of Worcester, Massachusetts, first introduced this quaint English tradition to the American public and the rest, as they say, is history...In the US alone, approximately 190 million valentine cards are now sent each year; worldwide the figure is estimated to be closer to 1 billion.



March Issue

The closing date will be Tuesday 18th March. Articles should be sent to me in word format only at rac.pfl@btinternet.com.

Robert Coates 01430-810504

South Dalton Ladies Club

February 6th 2020 - 7.30pm . A reflection on his travels in the middle east entitled "Arabian Odyssey" will be given by Robert Coates.



Roy Edwardson

6th August 1948 – 22nd November 2019

If evidence was required of the influence of a man within his family, his friends and wider circle of professional colleagues then the attendance at Roy's funeral was testament enough. The church has a seating capacity of some 240. You can therefore imagine my dilemma when faced with a non-stop arrival of mourners which eventually numbered 350 or so – a record attendance!

Roy and I first became acquainted six years ago during his search for Red Kites in the woods adjacent to my house. During conversations our mutual treatment for cancer emerged. We had both been informed that we had a life expectancy of three years or so. One answer was

that we made a wager as to which of us would be likely to outlive the other! I have won but, sadly, I am unable to collect my winnings. Over the years we talked of many matters and soon discovered our mutual dislike of left wing politics and politicians, bureaucrats in general and BBC presenters in particular.

A warm tribute to Roy was paid by the very good friend of Roy and his wife Philippa, Adrian Cawood. He spoke eloquently of Roy's life quoting from Abraham Lincoln "and in the end it is not the days in your life that count but the life in your days". Adrian confirmed that his days allowed Roy to do everything that he wanted to do; sometimes more but never less and he generously shared it with his family and friends. He continued by giving us a picture of Roy's life, his family and the importance he placed upon his three children and three grandchildren. He stressed the significance and importance of Philly in his life and the vital support she has given to him through all aspects of his life. If I felt that I knew Roy slightly previously I certainly knew more about his life after Adrian's tribute to a loving and generous man.

In addition to Adrian's remarks the service was enhanced by a poetry reading by Rob Vickerman "Stop the Clocks". The sublime singing of Kate Sweeting of *Pie Jesu* and *The Flower Duet* added to the poignancy of the occasion and moistening many an eye in the congregation. At the specific request of Roy Reverend John McNaughton conducted the service. The family asked that the proceeds' of the retiring collection should be divided between The Game and Wildlife Conservation Trust, Ward 10 of Castle Hill Hospital and St Mary's Building Renovation Fund. Donations raised in Roy's memory amounted to £2,100.00.

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Roy loved visiting the **Pipe and Glass** and it is fitting that the following friends wished to add their contributions:

"Roy was a true gentleman, and a valued personal friend to both myself and Kate, who was always there with wit and wisdom. He was a genuine and generous man, not least when dishing out the sloe gin at his own house, a true purveyor of hospitality himself. He loved the Pipe and Glass and regularly frequented our establishment, always remembering the staff names and sparing time for chat and banter with them. He will be sadly missed by all his friends at the Pipe and Glass. Roy, we raise a glass of Guinness to you. Cheers!"

James and Kate Mackenzie.

"Arriving at St Mary's on the occasion of Roy's funeral, was a day of many firsts, I have never struggled to find a seat in the church and today all of the pews are filled to capacity. Jane and I eventually find a seat and we look around the church and see many familiar faces and whilst we reflect on the sad occasion that brings us to St Mary's on a cold December morning, the number of mourners continues to grow eventually reaching a record number for a funeral at our village church. They came to pay tribute and celebrate the life of a man who lived a life in the very best of ways. A fitting tribute to Roy and one that his family can be rightly proud of.

The service passes in a blur as we all reflect on our memories of a man who touched each of our lives in such a positive way. Memories which are shared at the Wake convince me that we are all the better, for knowing Roy. He was caring, interesting, a good listener, knowledgeable, funny and a great friend all adjectives that can be used to describe Roy. The stories told in conversation are for others to share, but in their telling they paint a picture of a man that lived a life his family can be very proud of.

Jane and I met Roy and Philly in the Pipe and Glass on many occasions. And in one conversation we described our interest in purchasing electric bicycles. Roy quickly confirmed we could borrow their bikes. So off we set from the Pipe. Twisted the grips to increase the speed and away we sped. What an experience we quickly accelerated to 30mph and on our return to the Pipe we were speechless and Roy was chuckling away having seen our pale and terrified faces. Roy had forgotten to mention he had asked the supplier to modify the limiter, thereby increasing the top speed to scary heights. Have you tried 30mph on a bike?

Kevin and Jane Moore

In my own small, very limited, way I have also been privileged to have known Roy and regret that I did not know more of him. Nevertheless I will always remember him for his acerbic wit, his grumbling, his muttering, his no-nonsense disapproval, his laughter and for being such a likeable old curmudgeon.

He will be missed. May God rest his Soul.

RAC