



The College of
St Barnabas

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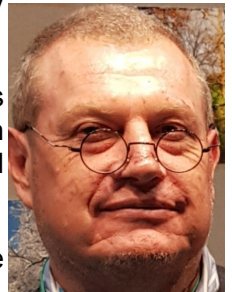
Sponsored Walk Success!

Mike walks 125 kilometres to mark 125 years of care at the College.

College Fundraising Manager Mike Herbert (inset) completed 125km—that's 78 miles in old money—of the Wealdway at the end of March. The Wealdway is a long-distance footpath running from Gravesend on the Thames Estuary to Eastbourne on the South Coast.

Completed just before the country went into total coronavirus lockdown, Mike hardly encountered a soul during his hike, which he finished in two half-days and two full days of walking, and describes his journey as a few days spent in “splendid isolation”.

Although the endeavour has raised getting on for £13,000 for the College,



Mike's real hope is that it will encourage others—coronavirus permitting—to organise and deliver their own personal or small-scale fundraising event or activity in their own community to help the College. Events like these are not only good for raising much-needed cash, they are also great opportunities for increasing awareness of the College and what we do.

Caring for retired Anglican Clergy

Characters from the College: The Burts: A Family Connection

By Douglas Smith

Imagine, if you will,, a College of St. Barnabas where children played on the lawns, where limousines drew up in the drive to take brides to their wedding at the Parish Church, and where a huge family celebrated its Christmases around a blazing hearth.

This was part of what was “Barnie’s” some 70 years ago, when the Head Gardener, Reginald George Burt, lived in. He and his wife, May, and those of their 11 children still at home occupied the ground floor of the wing which now looks out onto the putting green.

Bombed out of their own house in the village in the 1940s, the Burts were a big part of the engine—and quite a few of the wheels—which transported the then Homes of St.Barnabas through the following two decades and beyond.

Reginald’s sons, Reg junior and Graham, worked alongside him in the gardens. Daughters Win and Ivy were Housekeeper and Head Cook respectively, and four others –Pam, Marjorie, Davina and Christine—served either in the kitchen or as nurses and carers.

The working day began at 07.30—or at 6am in the winter, when the coal-fired boilers had to be started up first thing. Under the leadership of ex-Royal Artilleryman Reginald, the gardeners nurtured virtually all the crops to meet the College’s needs, mowed immaculate lawns, trimmed laurel hedges, and hoed amongst the Michaelmas daisies and pink and blue lupins of the flowerbeds.

“It all had to be perfect” reflects Graham, who retired from the College just 13 years ago,at the age of 75. Davina, in her late 80s, and Ivy, now over 90, are also still with us, together with a host of grandchildren, great– and great-great-grandchildren.

Grandson Douglas—the author of this piece– says “What the Burts gave Barnie’s as a family is probably unique in the 125-year history of the place”

“But what Barnie’s gave to us” continues Douglas, “was nothing short of sublime. As well as the joy we found in the beauty and serenity of the house and grounds, we were awakened to the presence of that deeper peace which sustains everything there and which has remained with us through the years.

Before the Coronavirus outbreak, the College had planned to erect a commemorative plaque and to plant a rose to acknowledge the Burts’ incredible service and commitment to the College and its Residents. This will now be taken forward as soon as circumstances permit.

More on our Founder...

The article in the last edition about the establishment of the College and the life of our founder, Canon William Cooper, prompted Bulletin reader & College supporter Nick Jackson to undertake some research, uncovering some new information...

We are still on our quest to find an image of Canon Cooper. We know that he spent large parts of his life overseas, but given the age in which he lived, we find it hard to believe that there isn't a single photo of him that can be found! In the meantime, we are indebted to Nick Jackson and his detective work for some more facts to whet our appetite!

Cooper's first wife, Anne, was 6 years his senior, and died in 1891 or 1892. By this time Cooper, aged 56, had already met Evelyn Faithfull, a 33-year old hospital nurse.

As luck would have it, the 1891 Census, which was taken on the 5th April 1891, shows that Evelyn Faithfull was a visitor to the Coopers' home in St. Mary's Road, Willesden, on that date. Clearly both Canon and Mrs Cooper knew her. We can only surmise, but is it too far-fetched to suggest that as a nurse she was looking in on Mrs Cooper, whose health is known to have been failing at this time?



Evelyn Faithfull was the daughter of clergyman George Faithfull, Curate of Horsmonden in Kent and possibly a schoolteacher. She and Canon Cooper were married on the 1st August 1892, at St. Stephen's, Kensington.

It is interesting to speculate on how much influence she had, as a hospital nurse, on the decision to establish the Homes of St. Barnabas as a convalescent home just 3 years later.

Canon Cooper died at St. Luke's Hospital for Clergy (the other charity he founded) on the 13th April 1909, while Evelyn Cooper continued to live at their home in Worthing, where she died on the 3rd December 1936.

This time last year...

It was around this time last year, you may remember, that we unveiled our plans to replace our annual gala dinner with a great non-event which we invited, most cordially, all of our supporters not to attend.

“The non-event” some said “is a weird idea”. But many of you got right behind the idea and gave it your wholehearted support, with positive feedback and donations far outweighing the handful of negative comments the idea drew. “But of course” some said “even if it works, it is the sort of thing that you can only do once” Unfortunately, the emergence of coronavirus has devastated our best-laid plans.

This year, to mark our 125th anniversary, we had a number of events on the drawing-board, more open events and on a larger scale than anything we have attempted before. We really wanted to make the most of this opportunity to showcase our work.

But apart from the “125km for 125 years” sponsored walk in March, it looks as if—at the time of writing—our entire programme for this year has become one big non-event. That, of course, is a huge deal for us as it affects both our fundraising and our ability to attract new Residents

So perhaps we should tag this year as the Not-The-125th-Anniversary-Celebration, cordially invite everyone we know not to take part, and instead next year celebrate 126 years, rather than 125.

But sadly I would have to refrain from walking 126km to mark that anniversary!

So if, in the interim, you would not like to take part in what is fast becoming the biggest non-event in the entire world history of non-events...well, you know where to send your cheque!

It has been our policy for many years not to use this Bulletin to ask you for donations, but we find ourselves in exceptional times, so I would just like to use this space to let you know that we will be having a Summer Appeal this year, which should reach you in about a month's time, in addition to our usual Christmas Appeal.

Like many charities, we are struggling to deal with the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Not just because of the challenges of caring for particularly vulnerable people at a particularly difficult time, but also because of this disease's effect on the lives of you, our supporters and on the support that you are able to give. These are difficult and uncertain times for all of us.

It has never been truer that every penny raised will make a difference, so please keep an eye out for our Summer Appeal letter, and when you receive it, please do respond as positively and as generously as you can, to ensure that our residents continue to receive the best care possible in these most difficult times.