



St Barnabas Bulletin - New Year 2023

A New Year, A New Vision: Exciting Times

As you know, the College has been helping people in need for almost 130 years, guided by our Founder's desire and determination to help victims of clerical poverty. Times are changing and the College needs to adapt if we are to keep helping those in need of care and support.

That is precisely why we are developing an exciting new vision, to help motivate and guide us in making the College what it needs to be in the years ahead so that it and to enthuse new residents and supporters.

Working towards making the vision a reality will create new opportunities as the College becomes an acknowledged expert in ageing and faith, as it embraces its Victorian and Edwardian built heritage, as it acts on its commitment to Christian stewardship and its secular responsibilities for caring for our environment, and as it respects its founder's concept of a Christian Almshouse.

No doubt we face difficult days and months ahead, particularly on the financial front, but whatever the challenges there is now a buzz of optimism as the new vision inspires confidence that we can and will overcome any barriers before us, bringing new and better benefits for our residents.

Maturing Together Rejoicing In Christ

St. Barnabas: a relative's perspective

By Adrian Johnson.



Adrian Johnson (inset, left) is a trustee of the College. His parents, Harold and Muriel came to live at the College of St. Barnabas in the 1980s and spent their final years here.

I write this piece in the hope and expectation that it will resonate with those of you who have had family or loved ones who have resided here at The College of St Barnabas.

These are challenging times, not least for Christian organisations, reliant on the generosity of donors just to keep going.

My parents, Harold and Muriel Johnson became residents of the College in March 1983. My father, after graduating from Exeter College Oxford and subsequently attending Cuddesdon Theological College, became a curate in Coventry before becoming Priest-in-Charge of St Marks, Wimbledon (1940-7) followed by livings in rural Northamptonshire near Oundle, and the Parish of Waldron near Heathfield in East Sussex.

After a few years of retirement in Eastbourne, at my mother's initiative, they moved to the College where they spent, in the case of my mother 13 and my father 17 happy years.

Maturing Together Rejoicing In Christ

My parents are the classic example of what the College can offer from early retirement. They started in married quarters in Morley House, took advantage of all the College facilities in terms of social interaction with likeminded people, a collegiate environment and the ready availability of a place of worship in the form of the chapel . At the same time, they enjoyed a degree of independence through their accommodation. This allowed for having visitors and the occasional trips to me and my family in Wimbledon. They even kept a car in a garage on the premises until such time as my father could no longer drive.

My mother became ill in the early 1990s and was a regular occupant of the Nursing wing (now the Care wing, but then known as sick bay).

She was wonderfully looked after, with the occasional hospital visit, and passed away peacefully under the caring watch of the nursing staff.

After her passing, my father moved into single accommodation in the cloisters. He was well looked after until his passing in August 2000.

Both my mother and fathers' ashes are buried in the garth at the back of the College. This is a peaceful area of consecrated ground and there are an increasing number of former residents buried here, which provides a reminder of the history of the College and its people. It is a very special part of the College which deserves to be properly looked after and kept tidy and clean.

More than 20 years on, there has been much change in the world outside. Economic, financial, regulatory, and social changes mean that for an institution such as The College of St Barnabas, the pressures increase.

Furthermore, the Covid pandemic caused serious disruption. The Board of Trustees led by our Chairman David Williams together with our new CEO, Monty Erskine and his team are addressing these issues in what is a challenging environment.

Mike Herbert, who many of you will know, works tirelessly in raising funds so that the College can continue to run and necessary improvements can be made.

Maturing Together Rejoicing In Christ

What are the key challenges?

Costs of maintaining the lovely old building that is in a wonderful rural setting.;

Costs of compliance with regulatory requirements;

Costs associated with an inflationary environment and full employment;

Making the College known to a wider audience.

The College has two main sources of income to meet these challenges, namely fees from residents and charitable donations.

Both sources are under pressure, particularly in the current difficult environment which also creates intense competition for charitable funding from grant-making bodies.

How can we meet these challenges?

The College needs to have occupancy levels from fee paying residents at above 90% to maintain financial viability at an operational level. This was the case for many years although it dipped at the time of the pandemic.

The Trustees recently broadened the entry criteria to allow non-Anglican Christians to become residents. An effective marketing programme costs money as does refurbishment to make the building as attractive and as welcoming as possible to potential residents.

Whilst high-profile, big budget cancer, animal rescue and children's charities seem to attract funding such that they can afford retail space in expensive high streets and prime-time TV advertisements, a more niche charity based on Christian values and shared tradition struggles to attract wider attention.

Maturing Together Rejoicing In Christ

I appeal to those of you with personal connections to the College to help in any way you can. Financial support is vital as is maintaining a steady flow of new residents, so please do spread the word.



Harold and Muriel Johnson

The College of St Barnabas is a very special place. What it has to offer should be preserved and maintained for future generations in the same way that our relatives have benefitted in the past. I hope you all agree.

Please do feel free to contact me with any thoughts: -

Adrian Johnson
Mob 07843777372

Email arb@arbjohnson.com

Maturing Together Rejoicing In Christ

Traditional fundraising?

Someone said to me recently, as something of a veiled criticism “well, it’s not traditional fundraising is it? I could have asked my interlocutor what “traditional fundraising” looked like. Standing on a street corner with a collecting tin? Going door-to-door with little envelopes, perhaps? A row would have achieved little, so I declined to pursue the matter. But it did get me thinking.

One thing is certain. Some fundraising is indeed incredibly traditional. The idea of committed, regular giving, for example, is, nothing new. In fact it is St. Paul himself who gives evidence that dates from the 50s AD.

While journeying around the eastern Mediterranean on his missionary travels almost two millennia ago, Paul learnt that the people of Jerusalem were being afflicted by a catastrophic famine. His response has been preserved in his letters to the Corinthians.



It is striking in its modernity. You will surely agree that its relevance resonates across the centuries.

Paul asked the different churches to collect money to send off to help the famine victims. But crucially, in his first letter to the church he had founded in Corinth (1 Cor. 16, 1-4), he asked them to set aside a proportion of their income each week, so more would be achieved than through a single one-off request for help. He explained that the church in Galatia (modern-day central Turkey) was doing this already - and that was a region devastated by military conflict and much poorer than the prosperous port city of Corinth.

In the second of his letters to them (2 Cor. 8-9) Paul gives a longer theological explanation of the importance of Christian generosity and the grace of God. He compares the first efforts of the Corinthians with those of the churches in Macedonia (modern northern Greece), even though they, too, were suffering from extreme poverty.

You may remember that Paul tells us Christian charitable giving is a practical response to God’s generosity to each and every one of us. Indeed, his

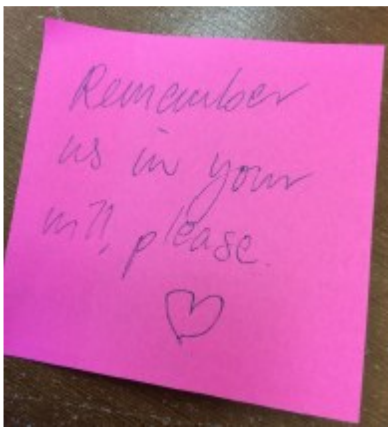
teachings on Christian generosity in his letters to the Corinthians constitute the cornerstone of two thousand years of Christian giving. He advocates that giving should be first to God, proportional to income, sacrificial and regular.

You probably won't be surprised by research that shows average giving levels of active members of faith communities to be significantly higher than those of non-faith people. Nowadays more and more of you honour this commitment by making regular donations by Standing Order or Direct Debit to your preferred causes and charities, using a modern method to share in a tradition of giving that spans two thousand years.

If you read the "Bulletin" regularly you will know that donations by Standing Order are particularly important to the College. They are safe and secure for you, they provide us with a reliable stream of income, and the administration and processing costs are very low.

When you next consider making a donation to the College please do think of helping us in this way.

Money Matters.



The help that you give is vitally important to our residents and is always urgently needed. If you haven't yet responded to our recent appeal for funds, please do so now.

Without your support we are quite restricted in the help we can give to our residents.

Thank you.

**WILL YOU HELP CARE FOR
SOMEONE WHO NEEDS IT?**



REMEMBER A CHARITY
IN YOUR WILL

Festive Fun

Caption Competition



Just what did our trustee Cynthia Taylor say when she encountered a certain red-nosed reindeer at the College recently?

No prizes, but we'll publish the wittiest replies in the next Bulletin. Answers on a postcard, please, to the usual address!