

LETTER FROM THE CHAPEL

Under the heading 'Is anything as hopeless as New Year resolutions?' a national newspaper encouraged us to 'forget it; leave it till Lent, a cleverly designed stretch of 40 days when you'll probably have God (or the fear of God) on your side. Be it cigarettes, sweets, swearing or sex that sometimes works. It may not do you any good, but at least it proves you can do it.' The thrust of the rest of the article was - is a year too long or why stop after a year if the resolution is right?

Whenever we decide to work on a new approach it is easy to lose heart, especially if we feel alone in this decision. Another recent article spoke of the pain of recycled memories that only unsettle, stopping us from moving on confidently able to leave behind our own past foolishnesses and mistakes or the hurts inflicted by others.

Thankfully help is at hand in all these areas where we struggle, and that help comes from the one person who loves, cares, understands and offers the release of forgiveness to each of us, Jesus.

When you and I focus on the cross of Jesus, where the Saviour of your world and mine gave His life for our sins we can know the joy of our sins both forgiven and forgotten and the strength to tackle New Year / Lent resolutions. Why not read the Apostle Paul's guidance in Philippians Chapter 3 of the Bible?

Easter Day will soon be upon us with its thrill of resurrection life celebrated throughout Christian communities, not just on April 4th 2010, but every Sunday throughout the year. Like those resolutions if it is worth starting it is worth continuing! As I typed this 'what a friend we have in Jesus' began on my accompanying CD. Indeed - Friend, Saviour, Lord and best helping hand of all time, right into eternity!

God bless, Gillian

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A TRIBUTE TO DORIS JONES

My grandma first came to Goxhill in August 1948. She travelled over from Liverpool to meet the family of the man who was to become her husband, my grandfather Ronald Jones. It was like an alien world to her. She had spent time in several places round the country during the war, but had never seen anything like Goxhill was then.

Ronald's grandparents John and Selina Foulston had worked Glebe Farm down Horsegatefield Road until retirement, when they had moved into Highthorn closer to the village, handing the farm to their youngest son Frank. Sadly, earlier that summer John had died and the family were still in mourning, so she did not meet them in the happiest of circumstances. Nonetheless, what shocked her was how they lived off the land, with cows for milk, chickens for their eggs and a pig kept for Christmas. Coming from urban Merseyside, my gran had never seen anything like it.

For both grandma and her soon-to-be in-laws, there was also the language barrier. My gran came with a recognisable Scouse accent and met a family adept at the Lincolnshire dialect. They all came to rely on Ronald to translate!

By the time she came to live in Goxhill in the mid-1990s, after 45 years living in Grimsby, all traces of my grandma's Liverpool upbringing had long since stopped being evident in her voice. Goxhill too had moved on. Glebe Farm had passed through several families since, and had had running water and electricity for decades. All the same, gran strongly remembered those early visits and never quite got used to the ways of life in a village like ours, past or present.

She would see me, my brother Simon, or Mum every day; she was active with the chapel; and for the best part of 10 years walked around Goxhill on constitutionals. She made friends and lived comfortably, but I know she still looked on the village with an outsider's eyes.

In trying to find the best way to pay tribute to my grandma, following her death on February 8th, these memories became increasingly important. Ultimately, it has to be her family - in my parents, who have lived in Goxhill for almost 35 years and been involved in the community for all that time, in Simon and my childhood here and continued sense of the village as home, and, dare I say it, in this newsletter, which I hope for five years represented her while I was editor. It is my gran who gave me the sense of how Goxhill had changed and would continue to do so, who shared a love of the countryside without familiarity with agricultural processes, who came in some way to speak the language of the area. I got my love of words through Gran (via my mum), attention to detail, certainty about what is right.

My gran had three children and six grandchildren. For her, like most of you, who may not have done much exciting in life, been on a few holidays, but always come home, the only thing that counts is the people you leave behind. The number of people who attended her funeral made the family proud, and now we will do the same in the years to come. From Merseyside to Humberside: just one more step in a story bigger than us all.

God bless, Grandma!

Adam Ellis