

MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's Community Church Newsletter

October-November 2020

Our Mission in this parish is to demonstrate the Love of God through Christ Jesus, and to prayerfully encourage all people to follow Him

Our people and their stories: Sue Donovan

Sue says her life story is “all about the music”. Whenever anyone needs an organist or a pianist, Sue is there. She still plays regularly for the worship times at Continuing Care, and when needed, fills in for us at St Andrew's. Born into a Presbyterian home in Fendalton, Sue's parents were both musical. Her mother loved the classics, but Dad encouraged Mum to sing Scottish folk songs.

“I have always loved the classics, but young people today don't have that appreciation.

“When I was two years old, Mother ordered a piano from England. It was a Chappell rosewood upright, straight from the factory. It cost a hundred pounds. That piano has been my faithful friend throughout my life, and I still have it today. From the start, I couldn't leave that piano alone. When I was 6 we moved to Lower Hutt, and my parents paid for piano lessons. I'm so glad they did that. It can't have been easy for them. At St Stephen's, Lower Hutt all the kids loved singing at the Sunday School Anniversaries and in church I sat fascinated, watching the organist's fingering.

Back in Christchurch at age 12 Sue was already accompanying the Dulcet Junior Choir at Knox Church and singing second soprano as she played. They performed classics at the Christchurch Cathedral (“A cold place, they should pull it down.”) War broke out when Sue was 15.

In the Christmas holidays she taught herself to play the organ at St Ninians, Riccarton. At age 16, she was paid ten pounds to play for a wedding at St Ninian's. “I thought I was rich!”



Sue trained as a school dental nurse at Willis Street, Wellington during the war and played piano for the students on piano in their lunch hour.

"I was always popular at parties. The Jitterbug was all the go, and '*In the Mood*' was a favourite piece." Wherever Sue worked after graduating, the music and the parties carried on.

In her dental health lessons at Avondale Primary Sue wrote little ditties for the kids to sing, about looking after their teeth. "They loved the music, and I was no longer the big ogre dental nurse."

For eight years, Sue played the organ at St John's Presbyterian in Mt Albert. "I went to several Billy Graham rallies in Auckland, and I just loved the music. I still love to play from the Billy Graham Songbook. The rallies were very emotional, but I never went forward or 'made a decision' at those meetings. My faith was inborn and I have always been confident with it. I loved Jim Reeves' singing. He didn't come to NZ but I had all his records." Friends in the Auckland branch of Hamilton Girls' High Old Girls got Sue to take part in their Christmas events. They all joined the Spinsters Club, where they went to dances with the war boys. "At age 19 I met a Navy boy from *HMNZS Leander*. We got married, but that didn't last very long and we parted ways."

Sue was friends with Chas Morcom's wife Myra, and was invited to stay at the Morcom home at Flaxmill Bay. "Their son Toby was mates with Geoff Donovan. His family had a dairy farm at Whenuakite. They were working hard to get on top of the blackberry and gorse."

Sue married Geoff in 1964 at St John's, Mt Albert and moved to the farm. She lives in the same house to this day.

Geoff attended the Baptist fellowship in Whitianga, in the days when they shared the Community Church (now St Andrew's) with the Presbys. Sue played for the Baptist services, and for years she played for the Presbyterian Services at Whenuakite Hall. She was then called on to play for the Anglican services at Hahei. "Denominations didn't matter to me, as long as I could play for them. I prefer to play the organ in church, but the piano is my real love.

"We used to put on Gilbert and Sullivan operettas at Whenuakite Hall. Heather Stephenson sang the leading role as Yum Yum in *The Mikado*. "They were good times. Heather and I were always on call for weddings and funerals." Sue's life was full, raising two children and catering for the men on the farm, but she also took a leading role in the Golf Clubs at Purangi

and Mercury Bay, as well as the Garden Circle, Women's Fellowship and Women's Division.

Geoff Donovan died in 1991, but Sue has always kept busy. Her children, Craig and Mary produced five grandchildren. Sue now has nine great-grandies and two great-greats. And she always has her music. "There is music in the hymn book for every situation in life. Those hymns are written from personal faith experience, and they are set to real music. I really can't get along with the new choruses, repeating the same line over and over..." Reading her life story, it's hard to count all the churches where Sue has played for services, but it's evident too, that she loves to entertain, wherever and whenever she can. After worship at Continuing Care, Sue breaks out into the old favourites, *Mockingbird Hill*, *Fur Elise*, *Danny Boy*. "People love music, and I like to see their faces light up."

Thank you Sue, for your marvellous contribution to our churches and community.

Speaking of pianos.....

Our lovely grand piano, donated by the Stephenson Family shortly before Heather's death last year, has been suffering from the cold in church. The piano tuner told us that the heat pump above the piano, only used Sundays, caused too much temperature differential.



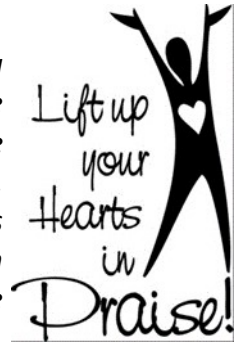
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The advice was to move the piano to the other side of the chancel away from the heat pump, and to invest in a humidifier-heater for the instrument. Consequently there were a couple of Sundays when we didn't turn on the heat pumps and everyone was cold. John Stephenson has now kindly moved the piano away from the heat pump, and we have purchased a fitted protective cover. The heating equipment has arrived, and has been installed by the specialist. In the meantime, we have received some very generous donations to help pay the \$2,000 combined accounts.

Thank you, generous people!

Thank the Lord we can now SING in Church!

Many of us have been frustrated at not being able to sing in services, due to COVID precautions, but Julie has done a great job finding videos to bring us music. We have been able to watch and listen to great cathedral choirs, children's voices and inspiring landscapes. This also has had the advantage of being able to listen and learn totally new hymns and songs without having to struggle through them!



One hymn that Rev John introduced last month was new to many of us. Linda Stephenson (keeping distance) sang it as a beautiful solo. As with many hymns, the words are a declaration of the author's faith, and share God-given, inspirational insights into the nature of God:

*Meekness and majesty, manhood and deity
In perfect harmony – the man who is God.
Lord of eternity dwells in humanity,
Kneels in humility and washes our feet.*

*Father's pure radiance, perfect in innocence,
Yet learns obedience to death on a cross.
Suff'ring to give us life, conquering through sacrifice,
And as they crucify, prays 'Father, forgive.'*

*Wisdom unsearchable, God the invisible,
Love indestructible in frailty appears.
Lord of infinity, stooping so tenderly,
Lifts our humanity to the heights of His throne!*

*O what a mystery - Meekness and majesty.
Bow down and worship – for this is your God!*

This is your God! ***Graham Kendrick.***

*Even as we give thanks for our deliverance from the worst of the Covid virus, we are warned to still be aware of Covid safety – keep ourselves and others safe – and **CONTINUE TO HOLD IN PRAYER** all of God's people around the world, who are still living with grief and fear*

The Beatitudes for those who care

(From the Inter-church Council for Hospital Chaplaincy.)

*Blessed are you who listen to others,
Especially those with constant complaints,
for you have the ears of Christ.*

*Blessed are you who speak kindly to others,
Especially those plagued by fear and anger,
For you possess the mouth of Christ.*

*Blessed are you who see the hurts of others,
Especially those overlooked by friends and family,
For you possess the eyes of Christ.*

*Blessed are you who touch others gently,
Especially those bruised by violence and insensitivity,
For you possess the hands of Christ.*

*Blessed are you who think prayerfully of others,
Especially those alone and discouraged,
For you possess the mind of Christ.*

*Blessed are you who show love to others,
Especially those with chronic illness,
For you possess the heart of Christ.*

*Blessed are you who persevere in your ministry,
With compassion and love for all people,
For you possess the healing presence of Christ
And yours is the Kingdom of Heaven.*

.....

From an old church newsletter: 'Lest ye be judged.....'

*I dreamed death came the other night, Heaven's gate swung open wide.
An angel with a halo bright ushered me inside.
And there, to my astonishment, stood folk I'd judged and labelled
As 'quite unfit', 'of little worth' and 'spiritually disabled'.
Indignant words rose to my lips, but never were set free,
For every face showed stunned surprise – they weren't expecting ME.*

Parish Register

In the past two months we recorded the passing of three Church members, all representing long-time residents and greatly respected local families:

Barbara Lee - Memorial Service

*The memorial service for **Barbara Lee** will be held at St Andrew's on Saturday October 10th at 10:30, led by Rev John Twemlow.*

Barbara died on March 22nd during lockdown, and was cremated in Thames. Bill and Barbara have been communicant members for many years. In the early days Bill served as a community Trustee for 'Whitianga Undenominational Church' and was the last remaining Trustee when the Church Centenary was held in 1998.

In 2000 ownership of the church passed from the Trust to the Presbyterians and we became St Andrew's. Our sincere sympathy and love goes to Bill and the family.

Phillip Wharton Funeral

*With deep sympathy we note the passing of our friend and long-time church member, **Phillip Wharton**.*

Phillip died on July 31st. He was 80. Phillip's funeral at St Andrew's was conducted by Rev John Twemlow on August 7th, followed by burial at Whitianga Cemetery.

Our heartfelt love goes to Beryl and the family.



*In Our
Thoughts
and Prayers*

Richard Simpson Farewell

*Sadly, we also note the passing of our friend **Richard Simpson**, who died at Continuing Care on September 14th. His farewell was held at the Mercury Bay Game Fishing Club on September 19th. Richard was part of our Church family, greatly respected in in the community, and represented another founding family in Mercury Bay*

Annual Congregational Meeting Sunday October 11th

Meeting to commence at 11:30 after shared brunch.

Please attend if you can. This is our chance for brainstorming as a congregation. The Parish Council is asking YOU to think about our work as a church in this community:

- (1) What could we be doing better?**
- (2) What is your vision for the future?**

Worship @ St Andrew's - Sunday 9:30am

Children are welcome in our Fellowship. There are quiet toys in church for the young ones, and Bible-based activities for the older ones.



- Oct 4th - Communion - Rev John Twemlow
11th - Rev Shirley Barker - **shared brunch & Annual Meeting to follow**
18th - Alistair Rogers
25th - Dorothy Preece - **shared brunch & packing Christmas boxes**
- Nov 1st - Communion - Rev John Twemlow
8th - Kevin Pringle
15th - Bible Study Group
22nd - Bill Woodward
29th - Rev John Twemlow
29th - **Combined Churches Service @ Crossroads Church**
Light meal at 5:30pm, service at 6pm

Operation Christmas Child - Sunday Oct 25th after service we will be packing Christmas boxes

for children in the Pacific Islands. The boxes and information brochures are in the hall for those who want to pack their own, and goods are also being collected at church for the group packing activity.

We will have a shared brunch on this day.

www.samaritanspurse.org/operation-christmas-child/pack-a-shoe-box



Parish and Community Information

Information correct at time of printing, but please check with organisers

AA DRIVER LICENSING - all day 2nd Friday of each month. See notice board for dates

CANCER GROUP COFFEE & CHAT - first Friday of every month. For those diagnosed with cancer, and their carers. Contact Penny 027 684 0004

CHURCH OP-SHOP opens Tuesday-Saturday 8:30-12:30, now with EFTPOS! Enquiries, ring Madeleine 866 0169

COMMUNITY MEALS served in the Church hall from 5-6pm every Monday. Meals phone (attended Mondays only): 021 0294 2234

ENLIVEN (Presbyterian Social Services for seniors) every Thursday, by arrangement only. For more information, ring Jenny 866 0556

HALL BOOKINGS contact Dorothy Preece 869 5452

LADIES BIBLE STUDY Wednesday at 10am. Ring Julie for further details on 021 169 1637

PARKINSONS SUPPORT meets every 6 weeks. Contact Keith 027 459 8683 or Raewyn 07 866 2609

SCRAP BAGS (Quilting) every Wednesday from 11am in the Hall.

STITCH N' CHAT every second Tuesday in the Hall. To join this friendly group, ring Julie 021 169 1637

UPRIGHT & ACTIVE Friendly exercise sessions for seniors, held in the Church hall
Mondays, 9:30am - exercise for more active seniors // Tuesdays, 10am - exercise for the less active

WHENUAKITE WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP For venue and times ring Beryl 866 3739 or Annie 866 3711

Church and Parish Donations: Mercury Bay Co-operating Parish
BNZ Whitianga: **02 0496 0062562 00**

Monday Meals Donations: Mercury Bay Community Support Trust
Westpac Whitianga: **03 1578 0108901 00**

St Andrew's service 9:30 every Sunday

MERCURY BAY CO-OPERATING PARISH

St Andrew's By the Sea Community Church

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