



FROM THE PARISH ARCHIVES

Number 10 May 2011

FOUR OF OUR VICARS

Welcome to the tenth edition of "From the Parish Archives". We hope that you will enjoy reading about the history of the Parish. This is especially so with the 150th anniversary in 2011.

The "From the Parish Archives" aims to be factual. However, any opinions expressed are personal and may not be necessarily shared by other parishioners.

Geoffrey A Sandy

Introduction

On the west wall of our church is an Honour Roll of the vicars of our Parish. It has 25 names including our present vicar Elizabeth Delbridge. There are a few historical inaccuracies with the Roll. Issue 3 of this series was devoted to the sorry tale of our first vicar Robert Mackie. This issue features four others on the Roll. The biographical notes on each come from a variety of sources and are acknowledged where relevant.

Tamillas Robert Mappin 1931 -1940

The Reverend Tamillas Mappin undertook his tertiary education at Trinity College at Melbourne University and Kings College in London. He obtained his Licentiate in Theology from the Australian College of Theology in 1925. He was ordained Deacon in 1923 and ordained Priest in 1924 by the Archbishop of Melbourne Harrington Clare Lees.

Whilst at Eltham he served as Chaplain of Mont Park and Bundoora Mental Hospitals. He also served from 1936 as Chaplain to the Military Forces. Indeed he has an interesting military background. Prior to coming to Eltham he had ministry at St Georges Malvern 1923-26 and then the church at Aspendale 1926-31.

Reverend Mappin was educated at Camberwell Grammar School and The Argus Newspaper¹ reported the annual Anzac service for students of the Camberwell Grammar School that was held in St. Mark's Church, Camberwell on Sunday the 26 April. It was in conjunction with the Old Camberwell

Grammarians' jubilee service. The newspaper reported it was conducted by the Reverend T Mappin, an old boy of the school, and the school chaplain the Rev. J. A. Schofield. Colonel E. F. Lind, also an old boy, gave the address

Tamillas Mappin was born in 1892 and his father was W S Mappin. At the age of 23, single and described as a student he enlisted on the 30 August 1915 as a Private in the Army Medical Corps, Special Reinforcements.ⁱⁱ He embarked from Melbourne on board the HMAT A63 *Karoola* on the 7 March 1916 as a Lance Sergeant, 4th Division Artillery. He served on the western front and was awarded the Military Medal, British War Medal and the Victory Medal. The citation for the Military Medal reads:

“For conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty as a stretcher bearer during operations near Zonnebeke east of Ypres on 13th October, 1917, especially under the following circumstances: on the afternoon of date mentioned whilst the enemy was very heavily shelling the area between the Railway Dump and the loading post of the Ypres Zonnebeke Road, this soldier very courageously repeatedly formed one of a squad to carry numerous wounded requiring immediate evacuation through this heavily shelled area, which it was impossible to avoid, and over exceedingly difficult ground owing to shell craters, which fact rendered it practically impossible for an unencumbered man to make headway. He with great endurance and bravery continued to do this notwithstanding the fact that he, himself, was wounded in the thigh, which was causing him great pain and with which he might quite reasonably have been evacuated. His steady devotion to duty was a wonderful example of self-sacrifice to his fellow bearers.”ⁱⁱⁱ

Our parishioner Shirley Burns remembers as a very young child that Tamillas Mappin was a small man who wore a Biretta and assumed he was very “catholic”. Her recollection is accurate as there is a photo of him at St Margaret’s on the occasion of its 75th Anniversary surrounded by children and wearing a Biretta^{iv}. She also recalls during the time Mappin was Vicar when there were no men available so the collection was not taken up.

Ronald Lindsay Dowling 1979-1989

The Reverend Ronald Dowling completed a Trained Primary Teachers Certificate in 1966 and was formerly a primary school teacher. He undertook tertiary education at St John’s College, Morpeth in New South Wales, and he holds the Licentiate of Theology from the Australian College of Theology and the Bachelor of Arts from Melbourne University in 1977. He also holds a Master of Arts from the Catholic University of America, Washington District of Columbia, and the Doctor of Ministry from CDSP, Berkeley, California, USA. He was ordained Deacon in 1973 and ordained Priest in 1974 by the Archbishop of Melbourne, Frank Woods.

Prior to Eltham he had ministry at St Georges Malvern 1973-76 and was Priest in Charge at St Linus Merlynston (under direction of the Bishop of the Western Region) in 1976-79. The Reverend Dowling was on leave during 1978-80 and ministered in the Diocese of Washington, DC during that time.

He was appointed Incumbent of St Margaret's Eltham in June 1980. The letter inviting him to be vicar of the Parish is stored in the Archives.

The website of a recent Parish where he served as priest ^v states:

"He has served on General Synod for Melbourne, Perth and Adelaide, and has been a member of the General Synod Liturgy Commission continuously since 1982. He has also been a member of the International Anglican Liturgical Consultation and served as its Chair from 1995-2001. He is devoted to music (especially opera), cinema, and travel and has been known to enjoy the odd glass of wine."

Parishioners today remember Father Ron as a Priest dedicated to the liturgy, especially the Sacrament of Baptism, and one who was Vicar of a vibrant Parish with Children's and Youth Ministry and many and varied small groups. The St Margaret's Patronal Festival with a picnic lunch on the lawns and the theatre dinners in the Mud Brick Hall is fondly remembered. The Reverend Dowling has recently returned to Melbourne.

Valentine Hilary Rogers 1989-1996

The Reverend Valentine Rogers was born in Ireland in County Sligo. He received a Bachelor of Arts from the National University of Ireland in 1968. He attended St Columban's College (Columban Fathers) in Navan, Ireland during 1965 to 1972. He had a number of pastoral appointments within the Roman Catholic Church during 1971 to 1983. He had been posted to the Philippines but found the climate intolerable. He persuaded the authorities to send him to Australia (New South Wales). He was ordained Deacon in 1971 and ordained Priest in 1972. He was received into the Anglican Church by the Archbishop of Melbourne, David John Penman as a Priest in 1988. He served as an Assistant Curate at St James Dandenong 1988-89. He was appointed Priest in Charge, under the direction of the Regional Bishop, to St Margaret's Eltham in September 1989.

He left the Roman Catholic Church primarily because it does not allow its Priests to marry. Father Val wished to marry Josephine a former catholic nun from New South Wales. There is no such impediment within the Anglican Church. He wished to continue his priestly ministry and be received into the Anglican Communion. However, this was scarcely possible in the Sydney Diocese controlled by the conservative evangelical Church Union. Thus, Father Val was welcomed by the Archbishop of Melbourne.

Many existing Parishioners remember Father Val but we should reflect on what a courageous decision Val made to embrace Anglicanism and eventually become our 23rd Vicar. Valentine had been raised in the staunchly Catholic and Gaelic –speaking west of Ireland. He was ordained a Catholic Priest and attached to the Columban fathers. The English and the Church of England had inflicted many wrongs on the Irish people and its church over many centuries. This is acutely felt in west coast Val's birthplace. Josie's decision to marry Val and embrace Anglicanism was equally courageous.

Val is fondly remembered by many Parishioners' today as a Priest who had great pastoral gifts and was a great example of how one lived your life as a servant of God because you are truly a servant of others. The same is said of Josie, his wife. As a postscript Val and Josie are now serving the Anglican Church (the Church of Ireland) in Westport close to Val's birthplace.

Erica Ann Mathieson 1997-2001

The Reverend Erica Mathieson was raised and educated in Sydney. She obtained the Bachelor of Science at Sydney University in 1973, the Bachelor of Theology, with first class honours, in the Australian Capital Territory in 1981, the Diploma of Social Science from the University of New England in 1990 and a Master of Arts from Macquarie University in 1997.

The Reverend Mathieson was ordained Deacon in 1989 by the Archbishop of Sydney and ordained Priest by the Archbishop of Melbourne, Keith Rayner in 1997. The latter was not possible in the Sydney Diocese and remains so.

Her former ministries in the Sydney Diocese, before being appointed to St Margaret's in 1997, included Parish Sister Doonside with Quakers Hill 1982-84, St Andrews Wahroonga 1984-89, and St James King Street 1992-97. She was appointed Priest in Charge under direction of the Regional Bishop to St Margaret's Eltham with The Church of the Transfiguration Research in April 1997.

The Reverend Mathieson was our first woman priest appointed to the Parish. She was enthusiastically welcomed by members of the Parish who were long-involved in the Movement for the Ordination of Women (MOW), many in leadership positions. Unfortunately illness forced Erica to resign her post after a few years. Parishioners give thanks she has now recovered and she has been the Rector of Holy Cross Anglican Church, Hackett, since 2008.

She is a visiting lecturer in pastoral studies at St Mark's Theological College, Charles Sturt University; and an Honorary Associate at Macquarie University. She is a member of the Executive of the National Council of Churches in Australia and a member of the Ethics Committee of the Royal Australian and New Zealand College of Ophthalmologists. Prior to her current appointment at Holy Cross she was engaged in research at Macquarie University in the fields of papyrology, early Christianity and women in antiquity.^{vi}

ⁱ The Argus Newspaper Monday 27 April 1936, p10.

ⁱⁱ The AIF Project, UNSW@ADFA, 2008

ⁱⁱⁱ The AIF Project, UNSW@ADFA, 2008.

^{iv} The Sun News Pictorial Monday July 20 1936.

^v St Mary Magdalene's Parish <http://www.stmarymagdalene.asn.au/staff.htm> date accessed 10 August 2101

^{vi} http://www.radford.com.au/news/Assets/Term1/CES_Forum_March.pdf