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Ranmoor, Sheffield**



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Matthew 6.21

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St John's Church, Ranmoor

Parish Office, Ranmoor Parish Centre,
5 Ranmoor Park Road, Sheffield, S10 3GX

Tel: 0114 230 1199

Website: www.stjohnsranmoor.org.uk

St John's Church is a community whose vocation is to extend to all people the same welcome that we ourselves have received from God in Christ. Our worship, enriched by our strong musical and choral traditions, is at the heart of our community's shared life. The gospel calls us to lives of discipleship, informed by reflection and marked by care for one another, by a passion for justice, and by a commitment to the service of our local and wider community.

Contents

- Foreword - 4
- From the Editor's Chair - 6
- Red Shoe Walk - 7
- Scissors, Paper, Stone - 10
- Eco Church: Churches Count on Nature - 14
- Eco Church: A Rocha Uk Monthly Tips - 15
- Church on Holiday (Part 3) - 16
- Parish Registers - 18
- Church Calendar - 19
- Restaurant Review: The Silver Plate - 22
- Rambling on - 26
- Quiz - 30
- Contacts - 32
- Groups and Activities - 33

Cover photo by Philip Walshaw

Large print versions of Inspire are available

Foreword



As we approach the end of another academic year and look forward to the summer holidays, I reflect on the past few weeks which have been busy but very rewarding.

Towards the end of June, we sadly say goodbye to our lovely final year students as they graduate and move on to pastures new. They have very much been part of our congregation and we will miss them. We wish them all the very best for their futures and send them on their way with God's love and blessing.

Once again, we say a big thank you to our choirs for leading us in worship over the past year. We are blessed to have such wonderful music. They will have a break over the summer but it's not all rest for them! Our choirs led by Philip Collin and our team of organists will be singing the services in York Minster between Monday 17th and Sunday 23rd of August. There will be a coach going to York from St John's on Saturday 22nd August, leaving church at 9.30am and returning after Evensong. This will give an opportunity to explore the beautiful City of York and support our choir as they sing Evensong in the Minster at 5.30pm. The coach will cost £15 and tickets can be bought from Ticket Source or from the Parish Office.

I do hope that you all will have chance over the summer to have a time of rest and relaxation, taking time to step aside to quietly be with God. Maybe that will be on holiday, or enjoying your garden or just going for a walk surrounded by the beauty of God's creation.

With all good wishes,
Alison



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From the Editor's Chair



Sixty years ago, in July, I spent a camping holiday, walking around Jersey with two friends. It was during the 1966 World Cup and we had a transistor radio to keep in touch with what was happening. For the final game, we were outside a pub in St Helier (we couldn't get inside) when England's winning goal went in and it was absolute pandemonium! By the time you read this, we will know who the winners of this year's World Cup are, but it has been interesting to watch the Group stages and see how some of the less

fancied nations have caused upsets against the major ones, in what we see as David and Goliath confrontations.

There will be occasions when we have, or have had, the opportunity to face our own Goliaths, for example in standing up or speaking out for what is right. How many times do we shy away from an opportunity, or a challenge because we think it will be too hard, too different, or we might not like it? Far safer perhaps to do what we normally do and not take ourselves out of our comfort zones. And yet, when people reflect on their lives, they often talk about those things they tried, even if they did go wrong or were hard, as opposed to continuing with those things that were easy and familiar. In other words, disadvantages can be advantageous; we can turn struggles to successes because we learn from them and develop.

Perhaps all of us need to reflect that if we are in the position of Goliath, if we are apparently aligned with the majority, we would do well to listen to opposing views; views which question why things have always happened that way, why we can't do things differently. Likewise, if we are a David; if we feel that the establishment is against us or we think something needs to change we might just have the right way to do things that others haven't thought of yet. We are all much more capable than we believe and, as I always said to my children, you never know what you can achieve until you try it.

Philip Walshaw

Red Shoe Walk Sunday 2nd August 2026 by Wendy Weeks



We were all very proud of Matthew in April for completing the extremely challenging 192 mile Coast to Coast Walk and raising about £21,000 for the Spire Restoration Fund. My impending challenge of 2k along the riverbank at Meadowhall and back to the start through the shopping mall appears insignificant in comparison and, indeed, it is if Matthew's distance (very long) is compared with my proposed distance (very short), and

his effort involved (major) is compared with my effort (minor) involved. What the two walks have in common, however, is the intention of each walker to raise money for what they regard as an important cause. As many of you will know, I believe that doing our best to enhance the lives of those with dementia and their carers is an important cause.

Last year I joined the newly devised Red Shoe Walk, whose focus was to raise money for the Sheffield Hospitals Charity. This ring-fenced money raised from the walk was to be used to improve facilities for people with dementia in our hospitals and the community. As I had been very involved in working with people with dementia in my NHS work, I felt that this walk (all of 3k then) was something I undoubtedly had to do. Bearing in mind that I am what is classified as "elderly" and, as I had a heart attack not so long previously, my daughter and my son took strict control of my "training" which consisted of regular return walks through Endcliffe Park. Fortunately, the park is as flat as anywhere you will find in Sheffield.

As a result of not terribly serious training and my children's encouragement, I lined up with about 400 others on Sunday August 3rd, 2025 in a car park at Meadowhall. There were not many red shoes visible but people of all ages were wearing red T shirts. Slowly from a seething mass of red in a car park emerged a long red snake which worked its way alongside the river and back. It was quite surreal, so many people showing their commitment to improving facilities for those with dementia and chatting cheerfully, exchanging personal stories and their reasons for being there. It was a humbling experience and a privilege at the same time. Over £10,000 was raised that day in that 3K walk. Thanks to the generosity of St John's people and my family I was able to donate £683 to the Sheffield Hospitals Charity (ringfenced for dementia). This amounted to about £840 with Gift Aid.

As a result of the success of that inaugural Red Shoe Walk, another similar family walk has been planned for the first Sunday in August this year. Of course, my sharp-eyed daughter has already seen the advance information on the internet and I am now registered to start this year's (for some reason less arduous) route of 2k! (This is one and a quarter miles in old fashioned measurements). Daughter Emma (who runs regularly) has again appointed herself as my "trainer" and has decided to accompany me on the day. She informs me that my training schedule must commence on July 1st and will improve my stamina level. My not very regular walks in Endcliffe Park will have to become more regular she says,



and the whole walk will have to be completed *without a stop!* There will be no defaulting training on account of the weather. Time is irrelevant, no 'PB' here - it's not a race! But, she continues, no sneaky visits to the park café for a coffee and a sit down (but what about the cafes along Sharrowvale Road I wonder? - I could be tempted!). There will be no sedentary sessions of duck contemplation from the benches by the ponds. I quite looked forward to those periods of duck and other pond

avian life observation and reviewing kingfisher sightings with other pondside sojourners. I believe that I was starting to become quite knowledgeable about duck behaviour but it must be suspended for a few weeks. Any duck observation must be undertaken in *passing not in pausing* she adds. I must keep going!!!

You may have realised by now that this article is both to amuse and inform and will hopefully achieve some sponsorship for this very worthy local cause which does not have the same appeal factor as some of the other local charities. If you would like to support me, donations can be given to me in church, preferably in Gift Aid envelopes or to Claire in the office. Thank you, or perhaps you might like to enter yourself and we may encounter each other in training treks in Endcliffe Park!



Scissors Paper Stone

Blog 34:

Edgar Allen: 'A Man from Sheffield'

This is an edited version of part of a talk given by Sue Roe for Scissors Paper Stone at St John's Ranmoor.

In 1894, the Illustrated Police Budget used this misleading headline when it covered his divorce case, a cause célèbre at the time. Edgar Allen was not from Sheffield and in many ways, he is difficult to place. Even where he sat at church on Sundays is puzzling. In 1890 he rented only two seats in St John's. Both seats were near the back, on the dark north side. I would have expected the owner of an international company to be near the front with fellow industrialists like Henry Steel. I had to find out more about this apparently self-effacing man who had offices and agents across the globe.



A Man from Sheffield (Illustrated Police Budget 24th March 1894)

The first record I found of his existence was in the 1841 Census, when he is living with his aunt, Mary Ann, and his grandmother, Mary Ruselhoff in the East End of London. The Ruselhoffs or Rudelhoffs were from Germany. There were many foreigners in that area of East London so he would have heard different languages, as well as speaking German at home. No wonder he became an accomplished linguist. The Rudelhoffs had a reputation for good looks, to which, as you can see from his photograph, aged 13, he certainly contributed. His aunt married William Ovenden in 1848 and they settled in Camberwell. Shortly afterwards

Allen was enrolled at College Chantal Paris. He then worked his way round Holland, Germany, Italy, Spain, Portugal to learn the languages.



Edgar Allen, aged 13. (Edgar Allen News: Sheffield Local Studies)

He returned to England in 1857 to take up a position in a shipping office in Liverpool and, in 1858, he became foreign correspondent for Ibbotson Brothers & Co. Ltd. Globe Steel Works in Sheffield, a firm making steel and edge tools. In 1868, he left Ibbotsons to go into business with George Jones, spending 10 months of the year on the Continent chasing orders. He knew the languages, had already established personal contacts, was dashing, cheerful and a good mixer. He accepted orders for anything, steel-related or not! Pears Soap, sea-sickness remedies, hammers, steam rollers, bicycles, salt water in barrels, glass tumblers, a pack of fox hounds, two pointer dogs, as well as tools of all kinds and much more. He saw himself more as a merchant, than a manufacturer.

After 14 years however he parted company with Jones. There were several reasons for this: Jones took issue with what he regarded as Allen's extravagant expenses whilst travelling. Also, Jones had suggested he bring his three sons into the firm. This didn't go down well with Edgar Allen - still single and childless. He could envisage his family name being lost to the firm. This led to argument which turned physical. An office boy, Charles Everitt (later chairman of the firm), witnessed the two men "bleeding freely, collars were twisted and torn".

This breach may have precipitated his romantic venture. Another reason might have been the death of his aunt in 1887. When her husband had died in 1864, he decided to rent Manor Cottage, a twelfth century house, in Worksop for himself and Mary Ann. After her death, he built a large memorial over her grave in Worksop Priory.

This was made of red granite with beautiful Italian mosaics, installed by artisans he had brought over from Italy. While mourning his aunt he met



Mary Ann's memorial grave, Worktop Priory 1887. (Edgar Allen News: Sheffield Local Studies)

Maud Charlotte Sarah Shaw, an attractive woman in her thirties in Scarborough. They were engaged, and eventually married in 1890, despite concerns from some of his friends about her history. Very soon relations deteriorated. Maud had fits of uncontrollable temper and on the second of March 1892 they finally parted.

The divorce case was reported the length and breadth of the country. The plaintiff's case was that she was "subject to extraordinary variations in temper and conduct" and had been unfaithful. She accused him of being an old roué, claiming cruelty and connivance (neglect). The Illustrated Police Budget - which seems to be much like the late News of the World despite its semi-official title - reported it at length including salacious details of her affairs with appropriate illustrations. Things turned nasty: in a letter read out in court, Maud called him "A true specimen of a harlot's progeny without a manly trait in his character." He was granted a divorce in 1894 and never re-married.

Allen's marital disaster does not seem to have affected his career. Edgar Allen's became a byword in the construction of tramways and railways across Europe, South Africa, the Far East and the Americas. I came across a photo on Facebook of a railway line in Argentina with his name on. In the 1910 Railway Exhibition, Buenos Aires, Edgar Allen and Co. won a gold medal for their railway crossings!



Track in Argentina with Edgar Allen trademark (Facebook)

Allen was clearly an outstandingly capable individual: cosmopolitan and charming. His skills enabled him to build up an international company. But distinctive though his background is, it is important to note that he was not unique. Despite Sheffield's parochial reputation, the merchants and industrialists could not afford to be inward looking. They too had agents and representatives abroad, making contacts and looking for orders. In that same exhibition in 1910, other Sheffield companies like Hadfields, Vickers, George Turton Platts, Laycocks were represented and some also won medals.



*Edgar Allen, merchant, aged 23
(Edgar Allen News: Sheffield Local*

In the 1890s, Allen was spending less time in the business due to ill health – he suffered from severe rheumatism and a lung condition. He spent winters abroad in warmer climates such as the West Indies, India, Egypt, but in 1915 he died, as he predicted, “alone with probably only a nurse.” He was cremated and ashes were placed in the vault with Mary Ann Ovenden in Worksop Priory, in accordance with his will.

His fortune of £271,000, equivalent to over £35 million today, was distributed with considerable generosity to friends, staff, workers and servants. He never forgot his humble origins: the majority of his bequests went to charities for poor children and single women. For instance, he left £5000 to the Sheffield House of Help for destitute young women and £2000 to the Orphan Homes at Crookes. His legacies also reflect his cosmopolitan life and his travels: Waldensian Churches in Italy, Italian hospitals, the Society of Lepers in India, a school for teaching trades to poor boys in Turin, were all remembered.

The story of Edgar Allen doesn't end here, thanks to Eric Simons, the Publicity Manager at Edgar Allen and Co. – a man nearly as interesting as Edgar Allen himself. What Simons discovered about Edgar Allen will be revealed in my next blog.



Report back on Churches Count on Nature

by Cathy Rhodes



Our last Eco Church Group article was on Churches Count on Nature and we're pleased to say the juniors and choristers of St John's did our nature count on 8 June. Thank you to Claire Eaton for help with organising this. We spotted loads of flowers including buttercups, achillea, lesser trefoil alongside grasses including Yorkshire fog! The children also enjoyed drawing pictures especially of the bee orchids which have been higher in number this year than ever before.





A Rocha UK monthly Eco Tips: July and August

by Cathy Rhodes

As I write this the UK just recorded our hottest June day ever, reaching 35.7C in Surrey. It's timely to think about looking after wildlife in the heat with the heatwave in the summer months. Sadly, the build-up of fossil fuel emissions has formed a heat retaining 'blanket' on the earth which is increasingly affecting our climate. Times of heat, drought and dryness can be dangerous for wildlife as well as people. You can help by providing water for birds and insects - put a dish of water out to help wildlife stay hydrated. Insects, small mammals, birds, and even badgers, foxes, and deer could benefit. A stone in a plant saucer helps bees to perch and drink without drowning. These small actions make a big difference and are just some of the ways we can live out our calling to care for God's creation.

A Rocha has a blog on looking after wildlife in the heat. For more warm weather eco tips go to arocha.org.uk/looking-afterwildlife-in-the-heat/. Or visit arocha.org.uk for more!

In Plastic Free July this year we're thinking about laundry, a top source of microplastic pollution. Fibres from synthetic clothes (like polyester, nylon, and acrylic, which are all derived from petrochemicals or fossil fuels) shed tiny fibres during washing and drying. These microplastics enter the sewage systems, are hard to filter out, and flow directly into rivers and oceans. They damage marine ecosystems and enter the global food chain, including our food and drinking water. To reduce microfiber loss into nature, wash clothes only when really needed and do full loads on colder, quick cycles using liquid detergent to minimize fabric friction. Capture shedding fibres with a specialized wash bag or an external washing machine filter, and if possible dry your clothes on a washing line. We can all do our part! Or even better, check the label and try to avoid these fibres if possible. More info at plasticfreejuly.org/get-involved/what-you-can-do/plastic-free-laundry/ and more about this year's campaign at plasticfreejuly.org.

Church on Holiday (Part 3)

by Jane Dalrymple

This is the final instalment of churches that we encountered on our travels around the North Lakes and Borders area last year. The churches below and their contents bear witness to the tumultuous history of Christianity in the last 500 years.

The RUTHWELL CROSS stands in a small church in the village of Ruthwell, just south of Dumfries, and close to the Solway Firth. The Cross is an amazing seventeen feet four inches tall and is reputed to be the most important sculpture from Anglo-Saxon Britain and arguably from early medieval Europe. What struck us initially is that it is located in what is essentially a hamlet, in a small church, which has been completely ordered to



accommodate the cross. You can easily see the elaborate ornamentation and inscriptions in both Latin letters and Anglo-Saxon runes, apparently it is unusual to find runes on a Christian monument. The Cross probably dates from 750 AD, but the Cross has had a painful history. Originally set up outside, the weather must have played a part in the eroding of its physical shape (before the Cross was moved into the church). The Cross escaped ruin during the general destruction of religious artifacts that accompanied the early Reformation, but in 1662 the General Assembly of the Church of Scotland ordered that all idolatrous monuments erected and made for religious worship had to be destroyed, and the Cross was destroyed by Presbyterian iconoclasts in 1664. It was restored in 1818 by Henry Duncan and in 1887 moved to its current location in Ruthwell, where you can admire it encased in a specially built apse.

The scenes elaborately depict the life of Christ, with vine-scroll designs inset with birds and animals and carved scenes showing Christ and

various other religious figures. Though scholars agree that it was probably used as a preaching cross, there is some debate about exactly what these scenes are. Another image shows Mary Magdalene washing Christ's feet, and it has been suggested that the cross was probably originally painted.

SHAP ABBEY was founded in the late 12th century in a secluded and beautiful valley of the river Lowther. It was one of 32 religious houses in Britain of the Premonstratensian order of canons, also known as the White Canons due to their distinctive white woollen habits. Though never a large community, it was wealthy, owning lands throughout Westmorland. This religious group was known to build their monasteries in quiet out of the way places, and Shap certainly ticks all the boxes! After the Suppression of the Monasteries by Henry VIII, the building was demolished in the main. Parts were used as a farm which is very much in use adjoining the main ruins today. The lead roof and a lot of the stone was used to help build other now notable buildings, e.g. Shap Market Hall and much of the exquisite carved stone went into the building of Lowther Castle. The land of Shap Abbey, since the dissolution, was handed down via Thomas Wharton to what is now the nearby Lowther Estate and Lowther Castle (somewhere else we visited!). Shap was a relatively small community, only about 12 canons, governed by an abbot, but it was rich, with lands donated by powerful northern families such as the Vieuxponts and the Cliffords. Apart from some Scots raids causing damage in the 14th century, its history was largely uneventful until the Dissolution of the monasteries.

It was a beautifully calm and sunny day when Andrew and I approached the abbey via the winding lane from Shap village, and what a view to behold as it comes into sight. As with other monasteries, they were located in sheltered locations, next to running water, and surrounded by farmland. Dating back to the 13th century, during the 15th century the presbytery was lengthened and a tower begun over the crossing. The additional weight, however, caused structural problems, so the tower seen in the photo was built at the west end of the building instead in about 1500. This imposing tower was most probably commissioned by Abbot Redman, who may have employed the same masons who built

the towers at the Cistercian abbeys of Fountains in North Yorkshire and Furness Abbey in Cumbria. You can still see fragments of a pavement floor in the surviving nave, and the bases of columns where the monks would have stood at services. You



can wander round the remains of other abbey buildings round the cloister like the storerooms, day room and infirmary, most of which were built during the 13th century. The remains of the infirmary, where sick and elderly canons were cared for, now form part of the neighbouring farm. Shap Abbey was a lovely, peaceful and spiritual place to visit, and somewhere that we more or less had to ourselves, surprisingly, as it nowadays forms part of the Coast-to-Coast Walk. It is well worth visiting and spending the time reflecting on its present-day peace and yet turbulent past.

PARISH REGISTERS

Weddings:

Please remember Alexander Elgar Osborne Turner and Hannah Emily Grundy who were married here recently.

Baptisms:

We thank you for the gift of the lives of Soren Ben Wilson Toren, James Wilson, Iris Collins, Clara Mirembe Morris, Max Louis May and Alex James May who were baptised here recently.

Our thoughts and prayers are with all the friends and families of those names listed.

ST JOHN'S CHURCH, RANMOOR

JULY CALENDAR

Wednesday 1st July

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Lunch Club

5.30pm Choral Evensong:

The Fitzwilliam Service - *Sarah Cattley*; Responses *Aston*; Psalm 91

Anthem - And now another day is gone - *Leonard Blake*

Saturday 4th July

7pm Gala Concert in aid of the SOS appeal. Tickets from ticketsource

Sunday 5th July: 5th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am All Age Service

6.30pm BCP Communion

Wednesday 8th July

10-12.30pm Foodbank Collection from the Church Drive

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Lunch Club

5.30pm Evening Prayer

Thursday 9th July

10am Toddler and Baby Group

Friday 10th July

5.30pm Mission Partner Weekend – Board Games Evening in the Parish Centre

Sunday 12th July: 6th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion with

Confirmations led by Bishop Leah

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Choir finish for summer break until 30th August

Wednesday 15th July

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Lunch Club

5.30pm Evening Prayer

Thursday 16th July

10am Toddler and Baby Group

Sunday 19th July: 7th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion

12.30pm Baptism

12.30pm Sunday Social

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Monday 20th July

7.30pm PCC meets in the annexe

Wednesday 22nd July

10-12.30pm Foodbank Collection from the Church Drive

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Lunch Club

5.30pm Evening Prayer

Sunday 26th July: 8th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion

12.30pm Baptism

6.30pm Sung Evening Prayer

Monday 27th July

7.30pm Sanctuary, in the side chapel

Wednesday 29th July

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

12.30pm Lunch Club (last one before summer break)

5.30pm Evening Prayer

AUGUST CALENDAR

Saturday 1st August

1pm Marriage of Dominic Dakin and Sarah Pedley

Sunday 2nd August: 9th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am All Age Communion

6.30pm Evening Prayer

Wednesday 5th August

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

5.30pm Sung Evening Prayer

Sunday 9th August: 10th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Evening Prayer

Wednesday 12th August

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

5.30pm Sung Evening Prayer

Sunday 16th August: 11th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Evening Prayer

Wednesday 19th August

10-12.30pm Foodbank Collection from the Church Drive

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

5.30pm Sung Evening Prayer

Saturday 22nd August

Coach trip to York to visit the City and the St John's Choirs singing evensong in York Minster. Tickets £15 from the office or ticketsource

Sunday 23rd August: 12th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Evening Prayer

Wednesday 26th August

11.30am Holy Communion in the Parish Centre

5.30pm Sung Evening Prayer

Sunday 30th August: 13th Sunday after Trinity

10.30am Parish Communion

6.30pm Choral Evensong

Services during the week:

Holy Communion: Every Wednesday at 11.30am in Parish Centre

Morning Prayer: Monday to Friday 9am in Church and on ZOOM

Footsteps: A Sunday school children's group that meets during the Sunday morning service. Children are welcome at all of our services.

Lunch Club: meets every Wednesday in the Parish Centre. All Welcome – please book with the Parish Office

Sunday Social: Meets straight after the morning service on the 4th Sunday. Please book with the Parish Office.

Toddler Group: meets every Thursday in the Parish Centre during term time. 10-11.30am

Our Sunday Services are always in Church and on YouTube

www.stjohnsranmoor.org.uk 0114 230 1199

administrator@stjohnsranmoor.org.uk

**The Parish Office is open Mondays, Tuesdays, and
Wednesdays 9.30am-2.30pm**

Restaurant Review: The Silver Plate, Granville Road, Sheffield S2



I think you would probably agree that the most conventional, and easiest way to make a dining reservation at a restaurant is to phone the relevant contact number, speak to whoever answers, and agree a date and time for the proposed reservation. Or for the techno-savvy person, via the relevant web site. Unfortunately, traditional booking techniques don't actually work with the Silver Plate restaurant. This particular culinary establishment is part of The Sheffield College - a higher education establishment - so the whole culinary process is part of an academic system. So what do you do if wish to book a table - and why bother anyway?

Actually, on viewing the Silver Plate web site, the booking technique seems pretty normal. An appropriate phone number and web site are provided with instructions to choose which date (or dates) suit - then contact as per instructions. Unfortunately, all attempts to obtain a reservation for any date (or dates) usually fails. This is due not to any malfunction of the booking system, but a combination of very few evenings when the restaurant is actually open - and an amazing demand from the Sheffield gourmet fraternity trying to avail themselves of what is without doubt the best value dining experience our noble city can offer. I suppose that explains all "the best dining" bit - if you actually read the last paragraph - and why it may be worth persevering with a booking attempt. So no need to continue reading unless you fancy wading through the meal details, student staff service etc. Actually, might

be worth hanging on in as I may possibly be able to offer some tips on booking techniques in the “Verdict” bit at the end.

The Meal (part one)

A surprise call from Silver Plate offering a table for two at their next Fine Dining evening was received with some fair amount of delight (by me and G). The date, as always, is specific – no “can we come next Friday” discussion. So, cancel any arrangements previously made for that evening, and cheerfully accept the need to arrive at 6pm for prompt 6.30 pm start. The menu is also completely specific; no choice relating to any of the courses offered, and no concessions as to dietary complications. Actually, I suppose allergy considerations must be in the frame otherwise things could become somewhat problematic!

Duly arriving at the allotted time as instructed, G and I were guided to our allotted table by a smartly attired young student who very cheerfully chatted about the catering course she was part of, whilst taking our initial drinks order. The dining area, room or whatever is impressive. Basically, a fairly large room with multiple tables replete with linen table cloths, good quality cutlery, and comfortable dining chairs. The “staff” were all final year students immaculately attired in classic uniforms appropriate to any of our higher echelon restaurants. So, onto the meal!

The Meal (part two)

The ubiquitous bread was the first arrival via our “waitress” who explained the three (made in house) varieties - which was speedily followed by a selection of canapes. The canapes included an eclectic assortment of miniature items with an amazing gravlax crusade, a tiny cube of cheese shortbread and a superb blini topped with prawns. The next course consisted of a soft boiled egg, mushroom parfait, cherry miso and hazelnut brioche. After a short interlude we received the fish course which presented as fillet of place enveloped in a sauce which included mussels, tomato and wild garlic. Wow!! We were now into meat course territory. A beautifully presented plate of new season lamb accompanied by spring vegetables and a potato galette duly arrived. I’ve

just remembered drinks. We both had a glass of an excellent house white with the first couple of courses, then moved onto an equally good house red with the meat course. Can only remember colour - no idea of country or price (drinks not included in the fixed price of £32.50 per person). Still more! Next course – pudding – was a banana and passion fruit tart with raisin ice cream, followed by a hugely impressive finale of petit fours.

Verdict

Without doubt The Silver Plate presents the best culinary offering in the city. The cost of £32.50 per person for an evening of superlative dining with a “staff” of students who are learning the elements of commercial catering in all its complex forms is incredible value. An evening which is such a genuine tour de force is well worth the somewhat tricky elements of actually making a reservation. I know I haven’t offered any tips on how to arrange an evening at the Silver Plate, but c’est la vie as our French colleagues so succinctly put it. Best of luck – it’s worth the effort!

Roy Stanley

John Heath & Sons

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Rambling On

with Philip Walshaw



Towards the end of last month, I made the now annual (second year!) pilgrimage to the north western highlands of Scotland with my two sons. This year we stayed in Shieldaig, in Wester Ross, rightly described as one of the most picturesque villages in Scotland. If you don't realise how far up north that is, look at where Stornaway is shown on the BBC Weather forecast chart and the village is adjacent. On the north side of the island onto which our accommodation looked out (shown above) is home to a resident pair of white-tailed sea eagles, marking a remarkable success for the reintroduction of the species in the UK. Unfortunately, they didn't seem to want to fly around the south side, so we didn't see them.

Our journey up to the highlands took us about 9 hours and what better thing to do before checking into our self-catering accommodation late afternoon is to do a four hour scramble up and down a mountain trail in the Bein Eighe Nature Reserve overlooking Loch Maree? Well, we did it because we could, knowing that



it doesn't go dark up there until around 11pm this time of year. And I did it, because I'm fortunate that at the age of 77, I still can!

After a good night's sleep, notwithstanding the inevitable cramps and no lie-in, we drove to our starting point for our full day's attempted conquest of Beinn Eighe (a Munro standing at a mere 3,661 feet above sea level). We couldn't see the summit because it was beyond and round the first ridge and we couldn't see the first ridge because it was covered in mist. As we slogged it up the initial slope for a good two hours or so and then onto the steep scree, we met two separate parties of walkers who were coming down with reports of thick mist, rain and howling gales on the tops that had encouraged them to abort their ascents. Were we disheartened? Did we turn back? Of course not! We were well prepared and were not foolhardy (my two sons wouldn't have it any other way with an elderly father to look after!). We decided to aim for the high ridge somewhat short of one of the summits and make a decision then whether or not to plod on.

On reaching said ridge, it wasn't looking good. In fact, it wasn't looking anything, but we were buoyed by a weather forecast that predicted clearing skies mid-afternoon. Optimistically, we plodded on towards the summit, but still no views as we were now being buffeted by the wind with rain and hail firing into our faces. We decided to go no further and returned to the main ridge, starting to descend the steep valley below, when suddenly we could see the mist clearing above us and blue sky appearing.



We hurried back up to the ridge to be rewarded by magnificent views of the Torridon mountains with Liatach (as shown) in the foreground. I wasn't around at the parting of the red sea, but the sun parting the clouds here must rank as a close second! After marvelling at the views, we decided to have our lunch in a sunny sheltered space. (It was 4pm after all). With three hours of descent below us, we eventually reached



our accommodation late evening, stopping on our way to catch the beginnings of a setting sun (as pictured, with Rum and Eigg in the distance). This view was only bettered by the sunset seen from our accommodation and featured on the front cover of this magazine.

The following day, we made a more leisurely (is that an appropriate adjective to use in Scottish mountaineering?) ascent up the stalkers path around the backs of Liatach and Beinn Eighe to a loch beneath the stunning triple buttress of Cioire Mhic Fhearchair (it means "Corrie of Farquhar's son", if you needed me to translate it, but you can pronounce it yourself!). Rain, hail and strong winds accompanied us on our return to base, but who cares when you have seen the views that we had? We plan to return next year, as long as my legs will still carry me!



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Quiz: Woods and Forests

compiled by Philip Walshaw



The answers to the clues below are well known woods and forests in Britain. The first seven are mainly local and the last eight further afield. Send your entry by email to ipwalshaw@gmail.com or by post to 19 Cairns Road, S10 5NA to reach me by Monday, 17th August, 2026.

1. Cakes everyone (9)
2. Shed next to steep edge (9)
3. Women jump out here (6,6)
4. Found in the green rural east - not overgrown in the beginnings (5)
5. Lithe yew transplanted here (8)
6. Sounds unclear (7)
7. Colourful clanger (8)
8. Dore Show to be rearranged (8)
9. Pig pen very messy (6)
10. Like changes in red (7)
11. Inhabited by sorceress, we hear (8)
12. Roof fastened in new design (6,2,4)
13. Not an old administrative area (10)
14. Drill, not grill, pork (7)
15. Recent tree plantation? (3,6)

Answers to last month's quiz: 1. Seeded bap 2. Mother's Pride 3. Wholemeal 4. Kingsmill 5. Warburtons 6. Sourdough 7. Pumpernickel 8. Emmental 9. Goat 10. Manchego 11. Stilton 12. Black Bomber 13. Parmesan 14. Applewood 15. Cottage

Entries were received from: Janet and Malcolm Anker, Helen Baxter, Ruth Cheshire, Pam and Ian Dall, Michael Hannon, Alex Heaton, Lynn and Steve Lawless, John and Brenda Staniforth, Janet Twigg, Paul Walshaw, Barbara and Peter Wozencroft and the Coffee Club at the Notre Dame School Staffroom.

The winner was: Janet Twigg, who receives a box of chocolate biscuits.



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District Explorers (14 to 18 yrs)

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Inspire

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Contributing to Inspire:

As always you should feel free to contribute to the magazine: articles, news, photographs, and anything else that you feel might be suitable. We cannot guarantee that everything we receive will be published.

The deadline for contributions to the September edition is Monday, 17th August, 2026.

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