

## Australian Bush Dance, Saturday 19 March



Very soon, Linda – our caller – invited the first guests to move to the dance floor with a partner and the dancing began! Bill and a friend happily demonstrated the steps while Linda explained and very soon a great number of completely inexperienced dancers were skipping and bowing, barndance holding, spinning, and crashing into other people!

Last year's event having been such a successful one, there was no doubt as to whether the Bush Dance night was to happen again or not. Our Aussies Bill and Linda Paul were happy to take up the challenge again and call the steps for the Australian equivalent of the Scottish ceilidh or English barn dance. The night came, and the select 100 or so who were lucky enough to get tickets arrived in the wonderfully decorated room. A newcomer would notice straight away the cork hat overhanging the middle of the dance floor, with an inflatable kangaroo that would soon be part of a lucky raffle winner's possessions. Australian flags and napkins were also an integral part of the festive night.

After the guests were well warmed up, the meal was served. Homemade meat pie, peas, Cherry bars and Lamington cake constituted the exquisite and outlandish menu served by our catering committee. The raffle draw took place just after the meal, and, quite surprisingly, many prizes were won by the same people! (My friend won four prizes with only 10 tickets! How probable is that?!) Strip the willow and more classics then followed. As people got the gist of the steps and moves the dances got smoother, with the occasional couple forgetting what the steps were and causing a good laugh and guidance from others. The joy of dancing together and relaxing for an evening after what for some may have been a



tough week clearly shined through the evening, and many people who've been to one Bush Dance ask to be invited to the next one.

Tom Vincent-Sweet



Photos: Jean-Philippe Vincent

## Church Snow Day, Saturday 2 February

Unlike last year, when we cancelled because of a false severe weather alert, this year's Snow Day dawned fine and bright with a cloudless sky. The white powdery stuff was in very short supply, but that didn't stop an intrepid bunch from having a great day out at Chamrousse. The snowshoers did a beautiful, easy circuit of the Plateau d'Arselle (Fred, Lilan, Marian & Stephen pictured below), while the skiers hit the slopes at Roche Bérangère. Sadly the day wasn't without casualties: Lilia Ledent managed to sprain her ankle while watching her family sledging! Fortunately she has made a speedy recovery.



### DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

at St Marc's, unless otherwise noted

- April 24: 10h45 Easter Day Family Communion + drama
- April 25: 10h00 Ecumenical walk, picnic & prayer at Parménie
- May 1: 10h45 Family Worship (with a cello solo), followed by Church lunch  
19h00 Holy Communion in French
- May 7: 20h00 Cello concert by Nils Wieboldt, principal cellist with the Musiciens du Louvre orchestra
- May 18-20: French Archdeaconry Synod in Brittany
- May 21 or 28: Church Cycle Ride
- May 27: 18h30 St Marc's Centre Annual General Meeting
- May 29: 10h45 Service with Prayer for Healing
- June 5: 10h45 Family Worship, followed by Church lunch  
19h00 Holy Communion in French
- June 11: 15h00 Church Barbecue chez John and Nell Stinton
- June 13-17: ICS Chaplains' Conference in Switzerland
- June 21: Music Festival, with Christian groups playing around town
- June 26: Guided tour of Chambéry
- July 3: 10h45 Family Worship, followed by Church lunch  
19h00 Holy Communion in French

# ST MARC'S MATTERS

## Howard, Dona and Lilan return from China

*Howard reports back on their successful mission trip*



*We had a wonderful trip to China from February 22 to March 22. We were able to encourage fellow Christian workers there; visit with Lilan's parents; make new friends; and experience the sights and sounds of three very different cities: Shanghai, Kunming, and Lianyungang City.*

The highlight of our trip was the opportunity to share from the Scriptures at one of the churches in Lianyungang City. Dona and I, with Lilan translating, spoke to two different groups. We spoke to a small Bible study group of about 30 people, and later to a large group in the church of about 1000 people. Lilan did an amazing job translating our words into Chinese. It was a huge task.

I spoke twice to the Bible study group. I gave an overview of the Bible using Lev. 26:12 as the theme: "I will be your God and you will be my people." I gave the same message to the larger group. My second message to the small group was on prayer. After each session we had a "question and answer" time, something not usually done in these studies. People were hesitant at first, but slowly the questions came.

Dona spoke once to the same small group about serving God, based on the lives of Rahab and Abigail — Women of Faith and Action. She was asked to repeat her message to the larger group the following Friday.

The response was amazing. After Dona spoke at the Tuesday group, a number of women began to share from their hearts. One woman said the Lord had healed her, but she had not been serving him. She wanted to recommit her life to Christ and she asked for prayer. On Friday, after Dona spoke, she was mobbed by women all trying to speak to her at once – in Chinese! Lilan did her best to translate. It was overwhelming.

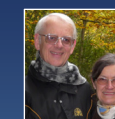
We also met with the pastoral staff of the church to discuss ways that we could help the church. One possibility is to set up an organization that would purchase art from artists in the church and sell it in Europe and the United States, with the profits going to the church in Lianyungang City to help them train pastors and workers and to provide social care for the church.

It was amazing to see what God is doing in China, and we were honored that we could share in a small way.

Howard Diehl

### EASTER 2011

#### Inside this issue:



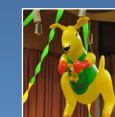
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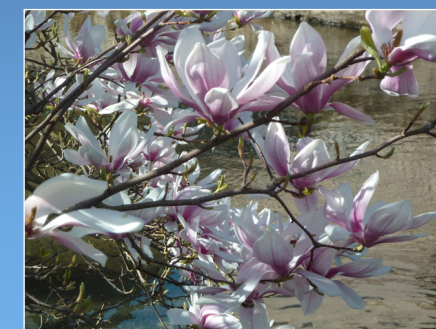
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*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! In his great mercy he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead (1 Peter 1:3)*

## From the Chaplain

We are grateful to Suzanne Bréant for taking on the editing of this publication and for updating its format and approach. We pray it will enhance our church's communication.

Communication is basic to all good relationships, whether marriages, families or friendships, and to all groups such as our church. Indeed so fundamental is communication that Jesus came from God as his ultimate Word. By his life, death & resurrection as well as his teaching Jesus shows us what it means to proclaim that God is love, and how that truth should shape our lives.

As we celebrate the good news of Easter we should be thinking about what it says

about God and our relationship with him. He invites us to share our daily lives with him and, as his children, with each other. Jesus shows that true love is invincible – not even death can defeat it. We may betray or even crucify our Lord, but he goes on loving us. His resurrection pledges that our death will not be able to separate us from God's love either.

So in Jesus God invites us to receive his love, as we turn our lives around to him, and to live life to the full in friendship with him and with those he brings across our lives day by day. We build our lives on the firm foundation of his unchanging love for us, which sets us free to love him and to reach out in love to others. It was this liberating experience which

enthused the first Christians and made them the dynamic people who turned the world upside up! The Holy Spirit who made this truth live in their lives comes to us to do the same. As we look towards and celebrate Pentecost he offers to fill our lives afresh with his life-giving presence, which Jesus likened to a spring of water welling up in our hearts (John 7 v37-39). He nourishes our lives so they can produce his fruit of love, joy, peace and the other qualities we see in Jesus (Galatians 5v22-23).

May God open our ears and hearts to receive the message he wants to share with us, that our lives may be transformed by his love.

Stephen.

*"God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life."*

John 3:16 NIV

*Message from the editor: I hope you like your new-look Saint Marc's Matters! Suggestions are welcome, as are contributions for issue 2, which will be published on Sunday 3 July. Please submit any items for publication to me by Sunday 19 June. The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editor and leaders of St Marc's English-Speaking Church.*

## CONTACTS

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Events committee chairman: John Stinton

Hon. Treasurer: Richard Sheppard, who can advise about all Church financial matters

EAST OXFORD COMMUNITY CHOIR  
AND ENSEMBLE VOCAL INTERLUDE

will perform MENDELSSOHN'S  
ST PAUL ORATORIO  
for soloists, choir and symphonic orchestra

On Sunday 24 April at 20:30  
On Monday 25 April at 17:30

At St Marc's Ecumenical Centre  
Tickets €15/€10 concessions

**Bach**  
IN the  
dark

**Nils Wieboldt**  
VIOLONCELLE baroque

**Samedi 7 Mai**  
à 20H30

Centre Ecuménique St-Marc  
6 ave Malherbe - Grenoble

Avec collation (refreshments provided)  
Places Limitées

Renseignements et réservations: 04 76 00 17 87 ou  
[tickets@grenoblechurch.org](mailto:tickets@grenoblechurch.org)

PLEIN TAUFF 15€, TAUFF REDUIT 10€, (collation comprise)

*I want to communicate to you what a profound impression Alison made upon me. (...) The hurdles she surmounted, the putting aside of herself, her pain, her inconvenience, her age, her "whatever-limitations-there-might-be" were NOT yielded to. She relentlessly demonstrated Christ's love. (...) She is my shining example, well, she in the wake of our Lord's stellar life. I have grown because of having observed and walked a precious few steps alongside this lady. She sets the bar so high. I am a better person because of her. In Christ's great love, Norma Fogelsong*

*It is a telling tribute to Alison that, despite not having seen her (...) in the 28 years that have passed since spending a student year in Grenoble, I am hugely moved to read of her passing (...). Warmth, hospitality, commitment, sparkle, fierce loyalty, matriarchal compassion, terrier-like tenacity in fighting for the underdog (...), all prompted, and enabled, by her love and devotion to Jesus, her Lord.*

*She was such fun to be with. What a privilege to be taken under her wing as a vulnerable teenager (...). Many are those, sadly, who fall off the Christian wagon for lack of an Alison Coulavin (...). I feel enormously blessed to have been the recipient of all that and more. I join countless others in giving thanks to God for her. Tim Grew*

Just two of the many tributes left by loved ones on the church website



## Alison Coulavin, 1930-2011: "her laugh is now ringing out in a better place"

*"Dearie, splendid photos provided by Lilia, all I need is a little excerpt to explain why they are there! Oh, I see you've done it, bravo, you ARE a brick!"*

This mail from Alison greeted my last (or perhaps last but one?) article for the magazine. It is so typical of her that I thought you'd all like it!

### "You were here before the world began"

This is a quote from a song we sing very often in our church. Of course it refers to our Lord but, for us in St Marc's, it largely portrays how we think of Alison! For one thing, Alison **was** here before most of us (on earth, and in Grenoble), and for another she was, with a few others, at the origin of our church: "the English-speaking church of Grenoble". Rightly thinking that, despite many excellent churches in Grenoble, especially her well loved Eglise Réformée, we English-speaking expats needed a place to worship God in our own language. Alison went about setting one up. Thus, "petit à petit" our church was born, first with visiting pastors from Lyon and Paris, then, as the congregation grew, with our own pastors.

Alison was such a pillar of our church. Indefatigable churchwarden for many years, Sunday school and crèche teacher (the Sunday before she died she was taking part in a crèche teachers meeting), synod representative, irreplaceable editor (*help! Ed.*) of the magazine "St Marc's matters", ... we cannot quantify all she has done throughout the years for our church.

### "Onward Christian Soldiers"

Above all, Alison was a militant! A Christian militant! Her faith in God never failed, and all her life she strove to put

into practice the teachings of our Lord Jesus:

- Defender of the poor and needy, she gave of her time to help feed them via l'Echoppe.
- Defender of the weak, she would demonstrate silently in favour of asylum seekers in the "cercle de silence".
- Defender of the persecuted, she would advertise for ACAT, relentlessly beleaguering us all to write letters and sign petitions! Alison was the "persistent widow", always fighting injustice, never giving up!

I have now run out of suitable hymn titles! Alison was also:

- An enthusiast: praising anything she thought was "splendid", and she thought loads of things were splendid, be it a concert, a sermon, a children's nativity play, a party, book or film.
- Fun! She had the most infectious laugh, enjoyed nothing more than a good joke, of which she posted literally hundreds by email!
- A friend: of the generation bought up to have a "stiff upper lip", she would only occasionally give vent to her emotions (except perhaps anger at the state of the world), but she would stand by her many friends, bringing help and comfort in her own practical way.
- A loving Mum and Grandma: We are all witness to her love for her sons and grandchildren. She was proud of them all: we would hear that Philippe had sung in a concert, that Marianne had ridden her horse in a contest, that James or Jude had said such a sweet thing...

We give thanks to God for snatching her up in the midst of her numerous activities, not letting her become disabled or dependant. We praise Him for her life, all she was and did, and we will miss her very, very much.

Elizabeth Cherhal