

Dear Friends

As you be aware, there is a very special exhibition taking place this month in Headcorn Church. It is entitled, "Headcorn at War: an exhibition of remembrance". I know beyond a shadow of a doubt that it is going to be well worth a visit as the organisers, Sam, Flick & Amy have been working very hard gathering all the things they need to ensure that it is as good, informative and engaging as possible. In particular, they have spent a great deal of time visiting folk who remember the war years, listening to their stories and gratefully borrowing photographs and artifacts.

Indeed, it is clear that all these stories and items have made a really big impact on our terrific trio – each time I see them they recount another story or impart another piece of information. For example, the time when the people of the village banded together to make sandwiches for the troops coming back from Dunkirk.....thousands upon thousands of sandwiches.....they had a real production line going. Or the time the doodlebug landed on the Chantry blowing out all the windows of the Black Horse Pub. Then there are the photo's, which capture so brilliantly the scenes and moods of the times – there are several people in the village who can remember those times and can name all those involved. It's not surprising that only today, Sam told me that she is really excited about the whole event.

Of course she has every right to be excited, because as a result of all the things they have managed to gather, they have enabled this bit of history to come alive again – not just for themselves but hopefully for everyone else who visits the exhibition. But, I wonder, why is it that these stories and photo's are coming alive in such a spectacular way?

Perhaps there is a very simple answer – it's because there is a personal element to them. We know many of the folk who were there at the time, we regularly walk past the places where significant things happened and of course, the stories that we are hearing are coming from those who lived them first hand and are recounting them with an energy and enthusiasm that can only come from those who are still living them today. In short, we are getting emotionally attached and involved, it's both exciting and rewarding.

Well all this got me thinking. I am in the very privileged position of being able to listen to lots of peoples stories – good and uplifting stories and also other, perhaps more challenging stories – yet always stories that I get the impression that the teller wants to tell and always ones that I have been pleased to hear because of this. Indeed, I often feel as if I have got to know folk from the past quite well simply because someone who shared special times with them has then recounted those times to me and my life is always enhanced as a result.

But of course, I don't just listen to other peoples stories and experiences, I also have my own to tell. In particular, ones that concern someone with whom I have a very special personal relationship and someone who I know would like to have a similar one with all of you. Jesus Christ. We tell his story in church every Sunday and we would love for you to come along and listen to it, to engage with it and to get to know him through it. But I am also happy to tell it at any other time if you would like me to, all you have to do is ask.

With every Blessing for a good and fulfilling month.



Fiona

