

## TIMES REMEMBERED

**This oral history exhibition has been made possible by drawing on the memories of some members of our church community**



Not long after joining St. Mary's, a fairly new member of the congregation commented on the extraordinary number of people doing jobs within the Church. When told that this was probably the case in most Churches, they said that this was not so and it had not been their experience in the previous Churches to which they had belonged. And so, looking around St. Mary's with this in mind, one notices that it is amazing how many members of the congregation contribute to the life of our Church in one way or another.

Prior to mounting this oral history exhibition, we invited Church members to come forward and be interviewed. We had very little response. We then started to tentatively approach certain members of the congregation who had had many years of life experience and asked them if they would like to talk about their lives. Once asked, people were happy to talk to us, and it has been a fascinating and very rewarding project.

But here is where we found it hard. Once we started identifying people who might be interviewed, we realised that there were whole swathes of people who were just as worthy as interviewees, but we had neither the time nor the space to include them. We originally started interviewing older members of the congregation, and then the age got lower as we interviewed some of those in key roles. But still we have missed people out. We are acutely aware of these omissions and would like to continue with more interviews at some later date. In an ideal world, we would like to include everyone.

We have interviewed previous Vicars, Churchwardens, and PCC members. But there is a wonderful team of Pastoral Assistants, an excellent Reader, a valued and experienced Parish Administrator, a superb Treasurer, a very hardworking Safeguarding Officer, Chalice Assistants, Servers, Sidesmen, candle makers, washers of linen, a catering team that has provided wonderful parish meals, a team of highly accomplished flower arrangers, the gardening team, the most wonderful caretaker we have ever had and her husband, various incarnations of social and fundraising committees, Sunday School teachers, a dynamic Director of Music, a small music group, the Estates Committee, the Standing Committee, St. Martha's Guild. The list goes on . . . but we hope that everyone, whether interviewed or not, feels truly valued.

The overriding theme that has come through the interviews is that of belonging to a family. We are all members of a wonderful Church family who love and support each other and work for the glory of God.

Sara Tomlin

Annie Eales

