



St Ronan's Presbyterian Church
Eastbourne

Record

March 2024

3 March	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
10 March	Reg Weeks.....	9.30am
17 March	Informal worship service.....	9.30am
24 March	Gill Burke.....	9.30am
31 March	Diane Gilliam-Weeks (Easter Day).....	9.30am
7 April	Informal worship service.....	9.30am

In this issue

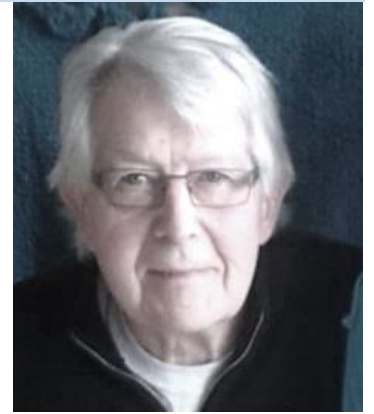
<i>Childrens' Day</i>	2
<i>Clerk's corner</i>	4
<i>Rood Screen</i>	5
<i>Maundy Thursday / Eastbourne for Peace</i>	6
<i>Shlomo Sand</i>	7
<i>Blessings for Palm Sunday</i>	9
<i>Triumph and tragedy on the Ice</i>	10
<i>Power Hour – Remembering Granny Ann</i>	14
<i>Phil's Photo – "It's a Long and Winding Road"</i>	15

Power Hour – Sundays 9.30am
Breakfast Prayer – Tuesdays 8.00am
Mainly Music – Thursdays 9.15-11.15am

For pastoral care needs, please contact one of the Local Ministry Team
Rev Reg Weeks 027 491 5947, Simon Shaw 562 8772, Colin Dalziel 562 7238 or Sandy Lang 562 8753

Childrens' Day

Did you know that in New Zealand the first Sunday in March is Childrens' Day? And that every month from January to December, Childrens' Day is celebrated somewhere in the world? In New Zealand, Children's Day, or *Te rā o ngā tamariki*, has been celebrated on the first Sunday of March from its inception in 2000, based on the suggestion made by the first Childrens Commissioner, Ian Hassell, in 1991. The Kiwi Families website reports 'On that day New Zealand comes alive with activities and events designed to bring families together and show how important children are in our community.'



In this, New Zealand is following a tradition begun by the Reverend Dr Charles Leonard of Chelsea, Massachusetts, who held a special service dedicated to the children of the community on the second Sunday of June in 1857. The first country to declare a national holiday to celebrate children was Turkey, in 1920.

While St Ronan's is now an aging congregation, it has long fostered a ministry to the children of the community. The church was established in 1903 by elders from both St John's and Kent Terrace in Wellington who had holiday homes in Eastbourne; but the first Sunday school in Eastbourne was started in one of their homes a year earlier, in 1902.

A continuing focus on the families of the community led St Ronan's to initiate the *Toy Library*, established in the late 1990s under its own trust.



Then came the *Mainly Music* (MoE playgroup) set up for toddlers and their parents and caregivers, to provide a warm and safe environment for the children to sing and dance, and later to enjoy a range of toys, while the adults have the opportunity to enjoy a cuppa and socialise with old friends and make new ones.

Mainly Music turned nineteen in October 2023. The accompanying photo was taken on the occasion of their 10th birthday in 2014.

The St Alban's *Pop in and Play* (MoE playgroup) has operated from the same venue for the last 7 or 8 years catering for a similar group but with a complementary and slightly different emphasis.

With the regular and growing presence of small children at St Ronan's, the decision was made to install a toddler-proof gate and fence near the front of the property. With the support of the *Hutt City Council*, the *Eastbourne Lions Club* and the (then) *Rotary Club of Pencarrow* we set up new play equipment in 2017. This transformed our small lawn into a safe 'mini-park' where strolling mums or dads could enjoy our lawn, our 'cottage garden' and a seat in the shade, while their offspring clambered, swung and slid to their hearts content.

And youth were not overlooked. It was felt a broader based community group was needed to support young people and their families and to provide a forum for young people to develop socially and spiritually. So, in 1995 St Ronan's and St Alban's founded the *Eastbourne Youth Worker Trust* with support from San Antonio. That same year the trust appointed Chris Casey as a full-time youth worker to develop and coordinate youth programmes in the local community.

If anyone should ask you why a church would put so much time, energy and money into activities that are not intended to add members to the church, perhaps the shortest answer is because of the example of the one we follow.

The story is told by Matthew, Mark and Luke, and there's reason to believe that Mark's version, the earliest, goes back to Peter. Mark tells it this way...

"...people were bringing children to him in order that he might touch them, and the disciples spoke sternly to them. But when Jesus saw this, he was indignant and said to them, 'let the children come to me; do not stop them, for it is to such as these that the Kingdom of God belongs. Truly I tell you, whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.' And he took them up in his arms, laid his hands on them, and blessed them."

Can we do any less?

[Note: Matthew chose to omit "*whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God as a little child will never enter it.*"]

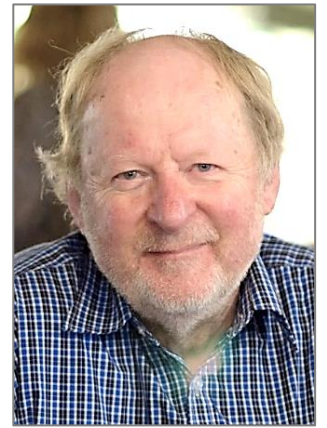
Reg Weeks

Clerk's corner...

Late: The *Record* is late yet again – I have been on holiday in the South Island – back now – no excuses for the next issue...!

Clive Blair: It was with great sadness we were advised on 29 February of the death of Clive Blair after a long illness.

Clive and his wife Janet and their family were members of St Ronan's for many years. Clive was an elder and also served as session clerk from 1986 to 1991, and Janet was involved in many of the congregation's activities.



Clive and Janet will be well remembered by our older members for their warm hospitality and sense of fun, Clive in particular is remembered for his loyalty, integrity and hard work for St Ronan's. It was some years ago that they moved to Bribie Island, Australia.

Due to Clive's failing health, their daughter Wendy Manson, flew over to join the family for his last days. He passed away peacefully at his home as he had hoped to do. Our prayers are with the family.

Judith McDougall: Sadly, Judith (Jude) has had to leave her Eastbourne home of many years and move into care. Meanwhile Lucy and her little dog Diesel have moved back to their home in Whanganui. Lucy will be back with us from time to time as she sorts things here and gets the Eastbourne house ready for sale. We should keep both Judith and Lucy in our prayers as they each adjust to their new situations.

New minister at St Alban's: Eastbourne resident Sue Brown, most recently 'Lay Minister' at Ngaio Union Church has been installed as 'Lay Minister in Charge' at St Alban's. Sue's Installation was at 7pm on Wednesday 7 February 2024 at San Antonio church. The installation service was led by the Dean of the Cathedral, while Bishop Justin gave the sermon and representatives of St Ronan's and San Antonio also participated in the service.

Sue's installation service was attended by a good number from St Alban's congregation (obviously) but also from the congregations of San Antonio and St Ronan's. Reminding us of the close relationship between our three congregations. Lastly, repeating in case you've not caught up with the change, St Alban's Sunday services are no longer at 10:00am at Wellesley College but at 9:30am at San Antonio Church (San Antonio congregation does not use its church on a Sunday – they have a Vigil Mass at 5:30pm on the Saturday).

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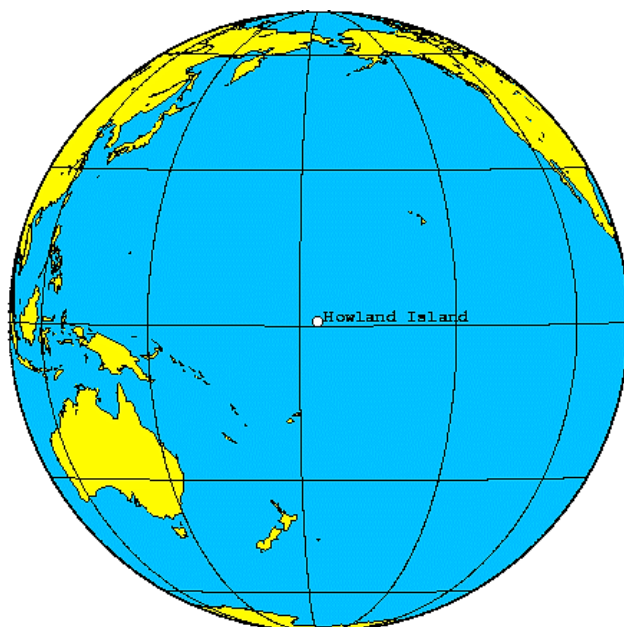
Sandy Lang

Rood screen – Fredrick Joseph Noonan 1893–1937...

Frederick Joseph "Fred" Noonan (right in this photo) was an American sea captain who sailed round Cape Horn seven times – thrice under canvas. In WW1, he was aboard three separate ammunition ships that were sunk by U-boats. He was an aviation pioneer, who first charted many of the commercial airline routes across the Pacific Ocean during the 1930s. He was also the navigator on the inaugural Pan Am Sikorsky S-42 China Clipper flight between San Francisco and Honolulu.

But perhaps his most famous mission was serving as the navigator on Amelia Earhart's Lockheed Electra on her around-the-world flight.

Not only has his name been forgotten, but if you ask most people, they believe that Amelia was alone in the aircraft. It is like he didn't even exist...!



Amelia and Fred were aiming for the minute sliver of land known as Howland Island (the central white dot in the blue sea in the photo - left) before they were lost on 2 July 1937. It is testimony to Fred's exceptional navigational skills with the tools available at the time, that they got so close to the island that they were able to make radio contact with a ship in the immediate vicinity. Their last message was that they could not get a visual on the island due to cloud cover.

The sad thing is that Earhart is a household name while Noonan is largely forgotten. And yet, in the words of that beautiful song that Bette Midler made popular in 1988, in many ways, he was 'The wind beneath her wings'.

It is a fact that more heroes are unsung, than sung...

Every now and then, I lead a church service and so my name appears on the order of service. It also appears in the notifications of upcoming events. But what about all the other people who are vital to a service of worship?

We know who our wonderful musicians are, but how many of us know the name of the person who cleans the church each week? Or who opens the building and puts on the lights and heaters before we arrive on a Sunday morning? Or who compiles the PowerPoint? Or who counts and banks the collection? Or who pays the bills?

Our local church would not / could not function without these people. The wider church would not / could not function without these people. And you are one of those people, even if your name doesn't appear in lights. But God knows who you are. And God blesses you.

In Matthew 10:29, Jesus reminds us that if God is aware of every sparrow that falls, how much more he knows us and cares about us.

May God bless you for what you do.

John Harris

Maundy Thursday 28 March...

Morning (Catholic) at San Antonio church.
10:00am Silent adoration
11:00am Maundy Thursday Service

Evening (Anglican) at San Antonio church (in foyer).
6:00-7:30pm Lenten study with fellowship meal.

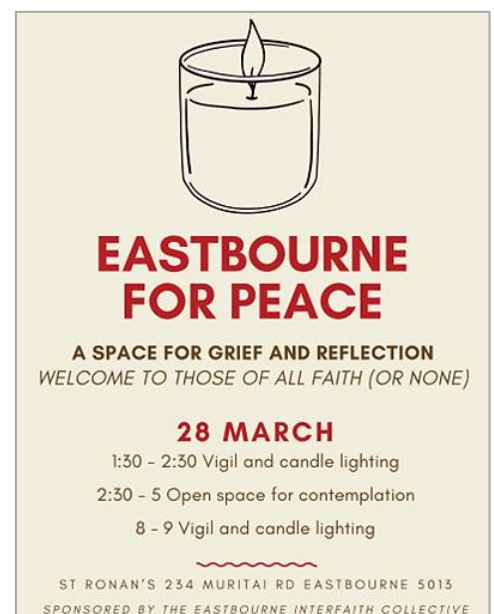
EASTBOURNE FOR PEACE at St Ronan's church
A space for grief and reflection.
Those of all faiths or none are welcome.

1:30-2:30pm *'Eastbourne Community Gathering for Peace in the Holy Land, especially Gaza'*
Vigil and candle lighting.

2:30-5:00pm The church will remain open for contemplation.

8:00-9:00pm Repeat of *'Eastbourne Community Gathering for Peace in Holy Land, especially Gaza'*
Sponsored by *Eastbourne Interfaith Collective*

Everyone is invited to any/all these observances.



EASTBOURNE FOR PEACE

A SPACE FOR GRIEF AND REFLECTION
WELCOME TO THOSE OF ALL FAITH (OR NONE)

28 MARCH

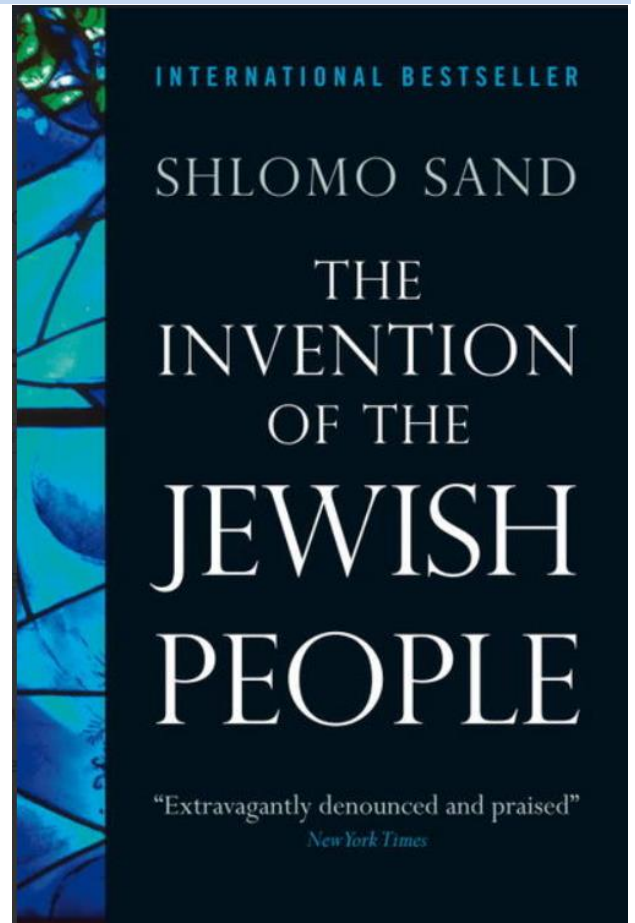
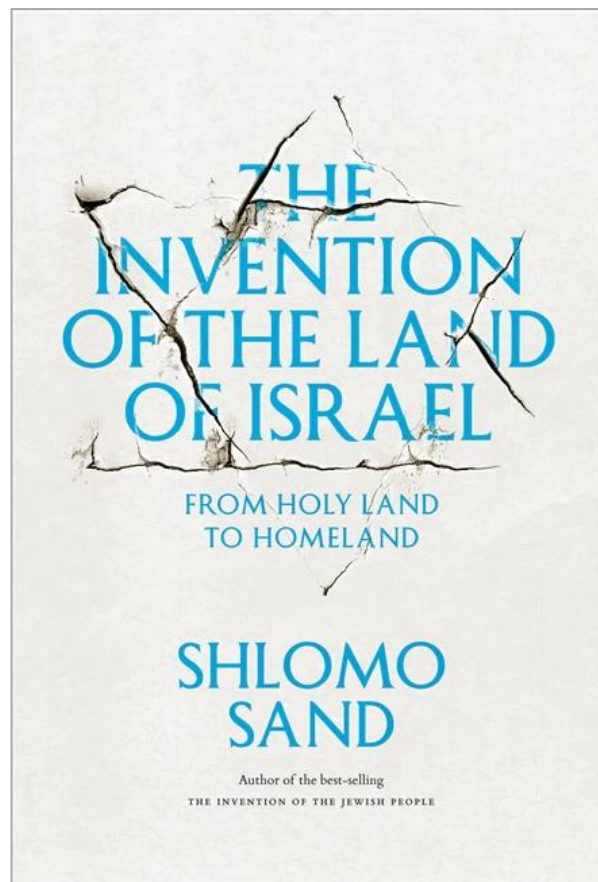
1:30 - 2:30 Vigil and candle lighting
2:30 - 5 Open space for contemplation
8 - 9 Vigil and candle lighting

ST RONAN'S 234 MURITAI RD EASTBOURNE 5013
SPONSORED BY THE EASTBOURNE INTERFAITH COLLECTIVE

Shlomo Sand

Shlomo (Solomon) Sand¹ is a professor of history at Tel Aviv University.

He was born in the 1940s to a Yiddish-speaking family in Europe but soon went to Israel. His first language became Hebrew. He has written several books including *The Invention of the Jewish People* and *The Invention of The Land of Israel*. These were originally written in Hebrew, and it is evident that translators found rendering the dense Hebrew into English a challenge.



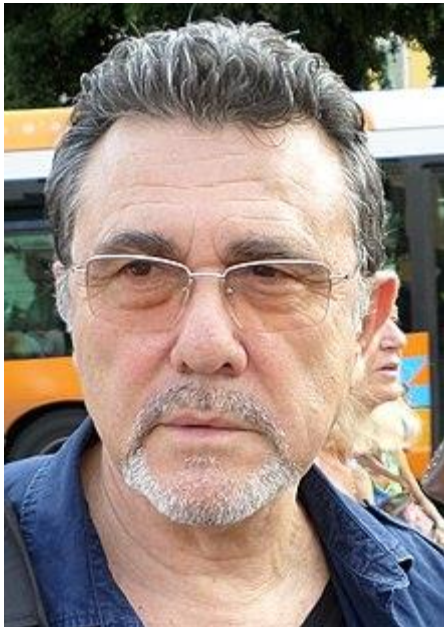
The traditional story, and the one taught in Israel’s schools and universities, is that in about 1800 BC the Jews’ forefather Abraham was led to the land of Canaan. God promised him that this would be the homeland of his descendants for all generations. Subsequently, after a period in Egypt where they were enslaved, Moses led the chosen people back to the Promised Land and, together with Joshua, conquered it. The Israelite tribes thrived and in time, under their great kings David and Solomon, built an extensive kingdom centred in Jerusalem. Solomon, in particular, was a great trader and builder constructing palaces and a magnificent temple.

In 587 BC the Babylonians, under Nebuchadnezzar, conquered Israel/Judah, destroyed its temple and palaces, and bundled all its inhabitants off to Babylon. Fifty years later Babylon itself was conquered by the Persians, and the Israelites were able to return to Jerusalem under the guidance of Ezra and Nehemiah. In 330 BC Persia was conquered by Alexander of Macedon; thereby Israel/Judah and Egypt came under Greek control. Then, 200 years later,

¹ See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shlomo_Sand

Greece was supplanted by Rome. In 71 AD the Judeans rebelled. The rebellion was quashed by the Romans; the new (not yet completed) temple was destroyed and the people sent off into exile, to all corners of the known earth.

But the exiled Jews never forgot their background, and looked forward to the day when they would reclaim their rightful heritage. The opportunity came in the 20th century when a combination of actions by the British, Russians, Americans and Germans made possible the return of the Jewish Diaspora.



But Shlomo Sand (left) says that the great kingdoms of David and Solomon are a myth. Archaeologists have found no evidence of Solomon's temple and palaces; that Solomon and David were at best local leaders of a tribe of a few thousand pastoralists. The exile of the refugees in 71 AD never happened; they just blended into the surrounding populations.

Where did the great colonies of Jews in North Africa, the Middle East and Eastern Europe come from? They are the results of conversions. During the Greek and Roman periods, there was enormous religious ferment with competing traditions of Rome, Greece, Egypt and Persia. The Jews held their own in this ferment and made many conversions. In subsequent centuries, whole nations/tribes in Yemen and Scythia (Ukraine) adopted the Jewish faith.

Hence Shlomo Sand contends that the notion of a 'Jewish people' is a myth, as is the notion of a 'Land of Israel'. The occupation of Palestine by Jews in the past 150 years is simply another manifestation of the colonial mindset that dominated European policies in the 18th and 19th centuries, as seen in the Americas, Africa and the South Pacific.

Geoff Mann

[NB: Shlomo Sand's books are not available in the Lower Hutt libraries but are on the off-site shelves in Wellington; you have to ask for them.]

A Blessing for Palm Sunday

Oh God, you are interrupting me with eternity.
And I'm not sure I'm ready.

Take hold of time and order it once again.
Let me keep pace with you.

On this Palm Sunday, time is marked as one small
donkey plods towards Jerusalem.

One with a face set like flint, feet almost grazing the
ground, walks forward
toward the eastering of all sorrow
- not in the power of horses
and swift victory,
but in small, steady steps.

toward the mystery
that through suffering, healing comes,
that through shame, dignity is restored,
that through the cross, powers are
disarmed, and death done away
with forever.

Blessed are all those walking forward
into the great, small work they do:
in hospitals, homes, grocery stores,
classrooms, churches, and cubicles.

And blessed are we joining the crowds
waving palm branches
to shout ourselves hoarse:
"Hosanna! Save us! Save our world."

*God, have mercy. Christ, have mercy.
Spirit, have mercy. Amen.*

From:

The Lives We Actually Have

Kate Bowler & Jessica Richie

Gill Burke

Triumph and tragedy on the ice...

"How was your trip to Antarctica?" people ask.

"Mind-blowing," I say, "Overwhelming, transformative, frightening, beautiful." But words feel so inadequate to describe an experience that has changed my view of the world forever.

I divide my experience into thirds, each third as pleasurable and informative as the others. Firstly, there was the pleasure of being on the beautiful *Heritage Adventurer*, an ice-strengthened expedition cruise ship built in 1991 in Finland. It's about the size of the Interislander ferry *Kaitaki*.

Then there were the exciting encounters with wildlife – in particular, visiting several huge colonies of Adélie Penguins, the spotting of Weddell, Crabeater and Leopard Seals on the icefloes, glimpses of Emperor Penguins



An Adélie Penguin checks out a Weddell Seal

reach the South Pole or cross the Antarctic continent, as Shackleton attempted to do during his Imperial Trans-Antarctic Expedition of 1914–1917, required enormous courage and determination. Their pioneering efforts are equivalent to exploring outer space and landing on the moon in our era.



**Monument to the three who died in 1916
Mount Erebus in the background**

in the midst of their catastrophic moults, and watching killer whales spy-hopping and fishing between the ice cracks.

The last third was understanding some of the history around the heroic age of exploration. This began in the late 1800s and ended with Ernest Shackleton's death in South Georgia in 1922. Most people know something of the ground-breaking scientific achievements of Robert Falcon Scott and Shackleton. Trying to

We were lucky enough to visit both Scott's Terra Nova Expedition Hut at Cape Evans, and Ernest Shackleton's Nimrod Hut at Cape Royds. The restoration of these huts and others by the Antarctic Heritage Trust is remarkable - quite eerie in fact. You might almost imagine some of these early explorers trudging in from the snow, seeking warmth, food and comfort after weeks away laying supply depots, maybe helping an ailing companion suffering from dysentery, scurvy or frostbite.

Our visits to these huts coincided with wonderfully clear weather. Mount Erebus, the only remaining active volcano in Antarctica, 3794 metres high, dominated the skyline. Captain James Ross named the volcano after one of his ships, the *HMS Erebus*, in 1841. Mount Terror, named after his second ship, is Erebus' companion. Erebus was first summited in 1908 by five of Shackleton's men during his earlier and very successful Nimrod Expedition. Three of Shackleton's men reached the South Magnetic Pole in 1909.



Inside Shackleton's Hut at Cape Royds



Inside Scott's Hut at Cape Evans

On a hill above Scott's Terra Nova Hut stands a cairn and cross, a monument to three men, members of Shackleton's Trans-Antarctic Expedition northern party, who perished in 1916. In the fascination with the incredible survival of Shackleton and his men after their ship *Endurance* was crushed in the ice on the other side of Antarctica, these three are largely forgotten. They were Captain Aenaes Mackintosh, leader of the northern party; Victor Hayward, a general assistant; and the Rev Arnold Spencer-Smith, chaplain and photographer, who had served as an episcopal priest in Scotland before joining the expedition.



Supplies of seal blubber at Scott's hut

The seven survivors, who were stranded for two years after the loss of their ship *Aurora*, were rescued from Cape Evans in January 1917.

Mount Erebus, Mount Terror and the Transantarctic Mountains looked benign and beautiful during the four days we spent in the Ross Sea around Ross Island. But for the New Zealanders on board the *Heritage Adventurer*, the stunning vistas were marred by painful memories of the Air New Zealand sightseeing Flight 901 crash into Mount Erebus on November 28, 1979. All 237 passengers and 20 crew, 180 of them New Zealanders, were killed. It remains our worst civil disaster.

Rodney Russ, founder of the Heritage Expeditions company, was on our trip and led a moving tribute to those who died on the mountainside. We also remembered

the efforts of the recovery crew who worked in two shifts, 24 hours a day, with 60 people on site at any one time, living in polar tents, recovering and bagging body parts for later identification. Many of them were young policemen who had never been on a mountain or encountered snow before. They also fought a grisly and constant battle against the marauding skuas, swooping down to feed on the remains.

In late 1979, a wooden cross was erected on the mountain above Scott Base to commemorate the accident. It was replaced in 1986 with an aluminium cross after the original was eroded by low temperatures, wind, and moisture.

A memorial for the 16 passengers who were unidentifiable and the 28 whose bodies were never found is at Waikumete Cemetery in Glen Eden, Auckland. An enduring home for a National Erebus Memorial is still being explored.

In 2004, on the 25th anniversary of the Erebus disaster, a commemorative ceremony was held at Scott Base. During the service, Sir Edmund Hillary read *Erebus Voices* by New Zealand poet Bill Manhire.

Erebus Voices

The Mountain

I am here beside my brother, Terror.
I am the place of human error.
I am beauty and cloud, and I am sorrow;
I am tears which you will keep tomorrow.
I am the sky and the exhausting gale.
I am the place of ice. I am the debris trail.
I am as far as you can see.
I am the place of memory.
And I am still a hand, a fingertip, a ring.
I am what there is no forgetting.
I am the one with truly broken heart.
I watched them fall, and freeze, and break apart.

The Dead

We fell.
Yet we were loved and we are lifted.
We froze.
Yet we were loved and we are warm.
We broke apart.
Yet we are here and we are whole.



**Scott's Hut and *Heritage Adventurer*
(old supply cases in foreground)**

Anne Manchester

Power Hour – remembering Granny Ann

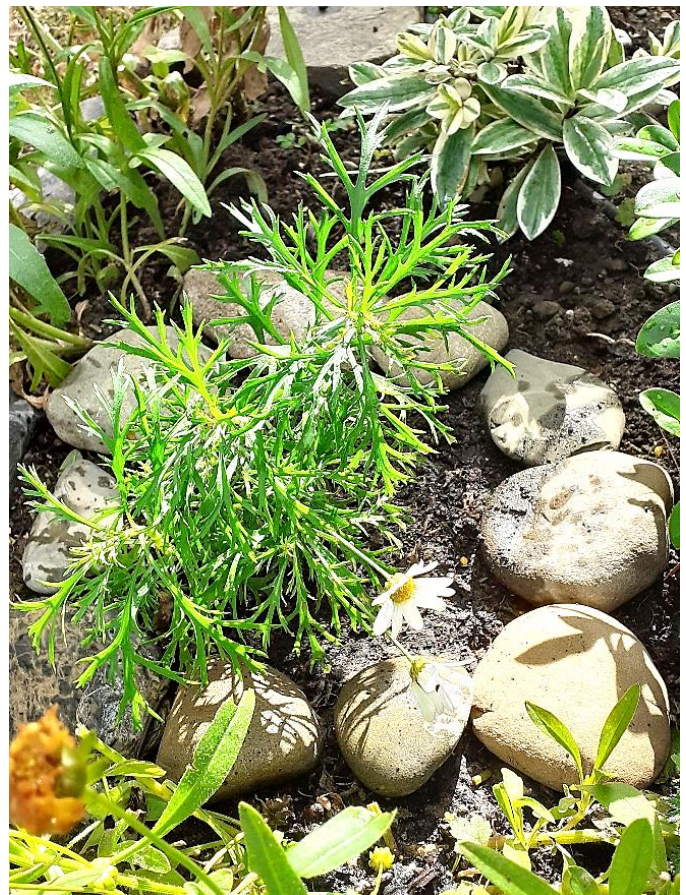
Sunday 18 February was an auspicious day for our Power Hour children. On this day the children honoured their 'Granny Ann' by planting and blessing a new memorial daisy for her in St Ronan's garden.

The day was auspicious because there was a conjunction of Granny Ann's anniversary date of passing (9.02.2013), Ash Wednesday (15.02.24) and remembrances of those who have passed, and the maturing of cuttings taken from Granny Ann's former memorial daisy in St Ronan's garden.

The planting came about because Granny Ann's original memorial daisy had to be uprooted earlier this summer when the garden was turned upside-down to install a new storm water soak pit. I felt this special plant should be saved, so I rescued it by making cuttings, so these 'daughter' plants could be later be reestablished in the garden.



This memorial daisy plant had been in the garden for several years, always blooming and bearing vibrant yellow flowers. Over the years it had been



picked by many in the congregation for happy occasions. In a way, this daisy was like Granny Ann herself - a strong person, giving love to everyone. She brought much joy and help to others. Indeed, she was a disciple of Jesus.

It was a wonderful moment on this Sunday to come together with the immediate families. The children dug out a hole, added water, lowered the

'daughter' daisy plant into place, packed down more earth around it, and gave it another drink. Finally, the children shared their personal blessings.

It should be noted that defining simply what is a blessing, let alone to write a blessing for a person, when one would not remember her as a babe, was a challenge for our children. But they managed well, expressing their blessings by lots of drawn love hearts, thanks and references to stories known about Granny Ann.

To conclude our planting and blessings, we explored the garden taking in the sites of Granny Ann's memorial plaques on a nearby wall and bench, and then enjoyed refreshments of pancakes.

Susan Connell

Phil's photo – "It's a Long and Winding Road"



For quite a number of years now² I have been writing a column named "Phil's Photo" for the St Ronan's Record. This year I will reach a significant milestone in my life and the joy of this challenge is for new and exciting adventures and activities to be made. Accordingly, this will be the last "Phil's Photo" that I will write.

It has been a great pleasure and fun to select images taken from Eastbourne, New Zealand, Australia, Asia, United Kingdom, Ireland, Europe and South America for this publication.

"Thank you" for your support and feedback - it has always been appreciated and valued and now with

my ancestry "It's a long way to Tipperary" and places beyond.

"fer' wel" (Gaelic)

Phil Bengie

[Phil, your contributions will be sorely missed. We all echo that well known Gaelic/Celtic blessing, "May the road rise up to meet you and the wind be always at your back." – Ed.]

² Starting in May 2014, so over 100 columns.



Our God calls us to worship and grow together and to show the love of Christ through serving our community.

Directory

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Parish Clerk	Sandy Lang
Hall Bookings	Sandy Lang

Contributions for the 'Record' are most welcome.
Please email them to lesmolloy7@gmail.com
Phone (04) 568 3377

The views and opinions expressed in this publication are those of the authors.
They do not necessarily represent those of St Ronan's Church.

**And the closing date for our next *Record* for April 2024
is Sunday 31 March 2024**