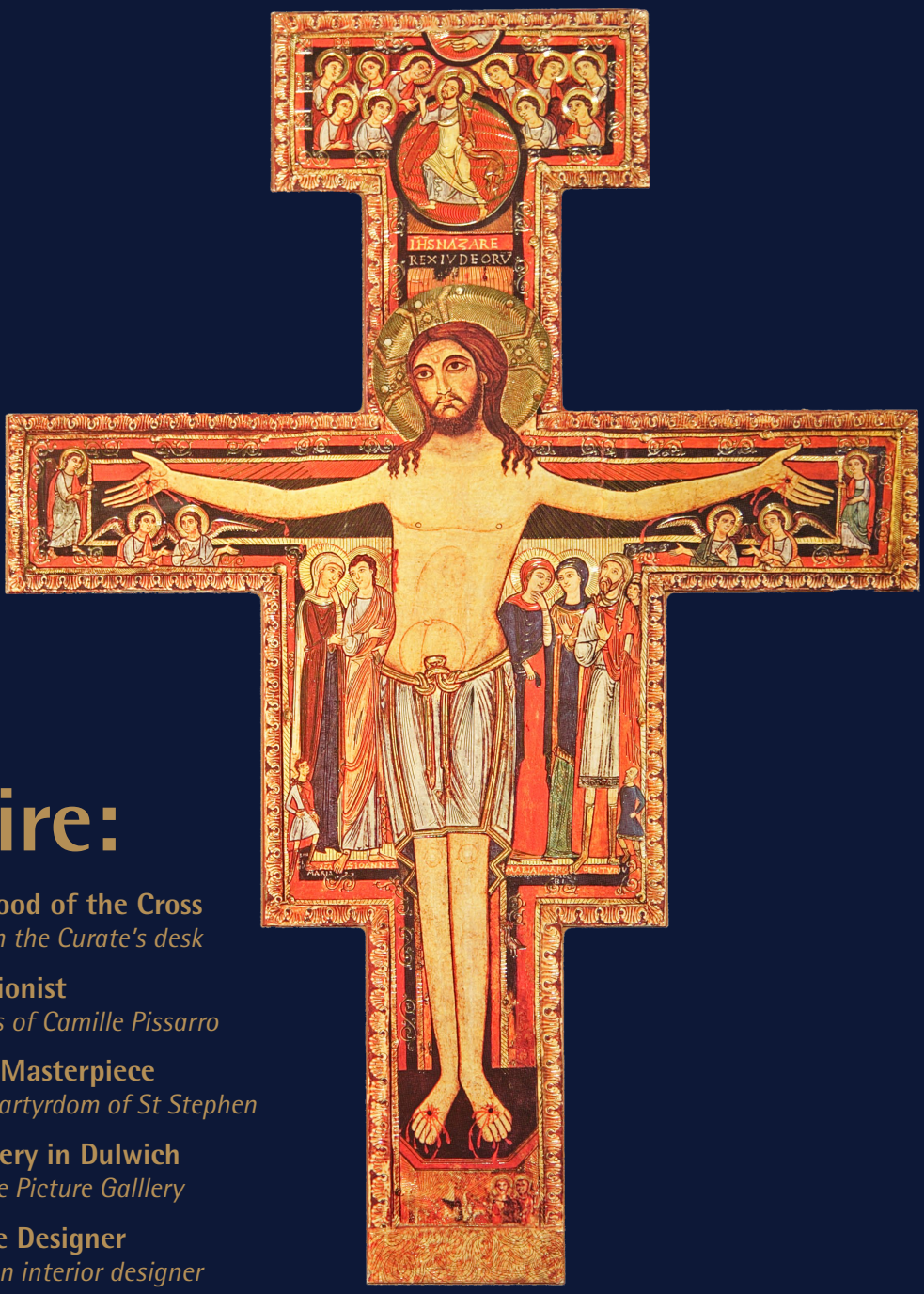
SPIRE

St. Stephen's Community Magazine
Easter 2011
Issue 8



InSpire:

Behold the wood of the Cross
A message from the Curate's desk

Local Impressionist
In the footsteps of Camille Pissarro

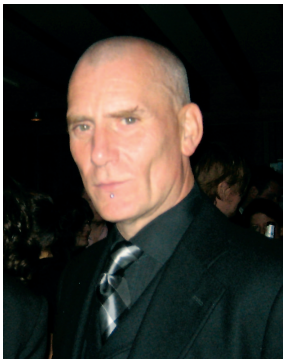
Our Church's Masterpiece
The Trial and Martyrdom of St Stephen

Our Own Gallery in Dulwich
200 years of the Picture Galllery

The Art of the Designer
At home with an interior designer

WELCOME

Peter Benton
Editor



Welcome to the latest edition of Spire, St Stephen's community magazine.

Marking the 200th anniversary of the founding of Dulwich Picture Gallery we have a strong artistic flavour to this issue. Jessica takes a look at Britain's first purpose-built art gallery, while Linda reports on Pond Cottages and guides us through this beautifully restored 17th century home that features in in the Open House London event.

St Stephen's itself is home to an impressive piece of art – Sir Edward Poynter's magnificent fresco of the Trial and Martyrdom of St Stephen, and Millie's article helps us to appreciate the grandeur of this neo-classical masterpiece. As well as containing works of art, our church itself features in the paintings of impressionist Camille Pissarro and Maria offers us a fascinating glimpse into the time when Sydenham was home to this world-famous artist.

Finally our curate Nick tells us of his pilgrimage to Assisi to see the beautiful San Damiano Cross, a copy of which will be part of our Easter Celebrations on Good Friday.

Full details of our Easter services, and those of our neighbouring churches can be found on our back cover.

Lent appeal for Leukaemia Research

Our own Paul Acers is running the marathon for this charity on Palm Sunday. To read about how Paul is living with Leukaemia, please visit his blog at:
www.livingwithleukaemia.co.uk
If you would like to give online please visit:
www.justgiving.com/paulacers1
You can also donate using the pink envelopes at the back of the church

Annual Family Fun Day 18 June

A *free* outing for the whole family.



See more of last year's fun at:
https://picasaweb.google.com/St.Stephens.SouthDulwich/Funday2010#

St Stephen's Festival

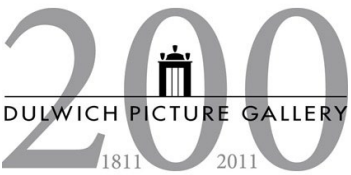
25/26 June - look out for details

Looking for a venue for you party or group?

St Stephen's Millennium Hall: available to hire from £35/hr. To book contact Mrs Joy Parkinson on (020) 8670 5373 or hallbookings@ststephensdulwich.org



Dulwich Picture Gallery



Masterpiece a Month: Presiding Genius

January: Sir Thomas Lawrence, Portrait of Sir John Soane

February: Diego Velázquez, El bufón don Sebastián de Morra

1 March - 3 April: Johannes Vermeer, A Lady at the Virginals with a Gentleman ('The Music Lesson')

5 April - 8 May: El Greco, The Vision of Saint John

10 May – 5 June: Paolo Veronese, Venere e Mercurio presentano a Giove Anteros ed Eros

7 June – 3 July: Rembrandt Harmensz. van Rijn, Rembrandt's son Titus dressed as a monk

5 July – 31 July: Jean-Auguste-Dominique Ingres, Comtesse d'Haussonville

2 August – 4 September: Vincent van Gogh, Self-Portrait with Felt Hat

6 September - 2 October: Thomas Gainsborough, Mrs. Richard Brinsley Sheridan

4 October - 30 October: John Constable, RA, The Leaping Horse

1 November - 4 December: David Hockney, Mr and Mrs Clark and Percy

6 December - 8 January: Domenichino, The Adoration of the Shepherds

Accompanying lecture each month

See page 8

www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk/exhibitions

St Stephen's Church
College Road, Dulwich, London SE21 7HW
Tel: (020) 8766 7281
Office open on Saturday 10.30-11.30
Vicar - Revd Bernhard Schünemann
vicar@ststephensdulwich.org
Curate - Revd Nick Davies
curate@ststephensdulwich.org
Reader - Mrs Trot Lavelle
t.lavelle181@btinternet.com
Churchwardens
Joan Greenwood & Patrick Robathan
churchwarden1@ststephensdulwich.org
Vicar's secretary - Gill Burdett
ParishOffice@ststephensdulwich.org

The team: Peter Benton, Nick Davies, Sarah Bucknall, Jessica Davies, Linda Christian-Edwards, Maria Anguita & Michael Goodman.
Let us know what you think at **Spire@ststephensdulwich.org**

Behold the wood of the Cross

Revd Nick Davies



Last autumn I went on pilgrimage to Assisi, the birthplace of St Francis. I was there for his Feast Day on the 3rd of October and the hilltop Umbrian town was packed with pilgrims.

Between services I had the opportunity to view the huge frescoes telling St Francis' life story. As so often with great art, one only has a sense of scale and impact when viewing the original. These twenty-eight images, each over nine feet tall, are a vivid account of Francis' life. But what I had really come to see was elsewhere.

It was a work of art which St Francis had also seen, the San Damiano Cross which is now to be found in the Basilica of St Clare. This is the cross before which St Francis had prayed. As he did so, he heard Christ calling him to "rebuild my Church". St Francis originally took this command literally and rebuilt the then ruined chapel of San Damiano. Later he realised that these words were a commission to lead a revival of the wider Church.

The cross is in a Romanesque icon style which originated in eastern Christendom and later spread west to Umbria around the year 1000. I had worn a copy



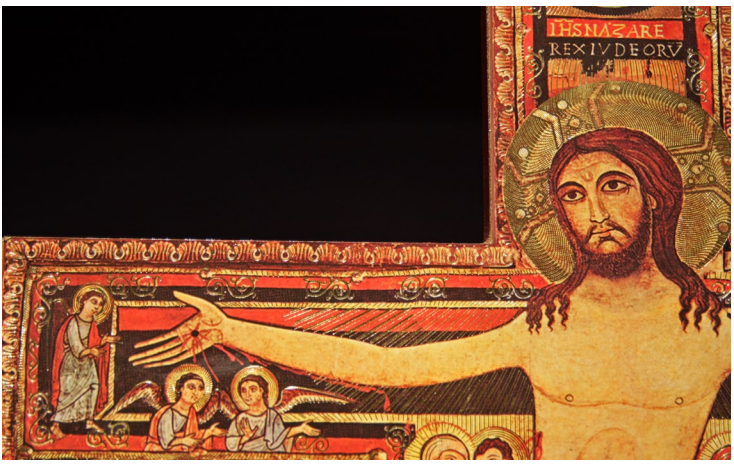
of it around my neck for many years but to see it hanging here in Assisi and to pray before it was a moving experience. This cross also spoke to me of Jesus' vulnerability and generosity – in the slightness of his frame and the breadth of his arms stretched wide on the cross.

For many today religious art still has the power to communicate; the power to move people emotionally and spiritually, even those who profess no faith. In our postmodern age rival world views are often traded with little mutual understanding. In such a world it may be that a renewed reverence for the truth-bearing quality of religious art may well offer a better basis for dialogue.

The cross is one of the most powerful symbols in the history of art. It is also at the heart of our Easter celebrations. On Good Friday, as we remember Christ's crucifixion, we will carry a cross into Church as a reminder of what happened when the love of God met the pain of the world. This year the cross that we will use will be a copy of the San Damiano cross which I bought in Assisi and had blessed within sight of the original.

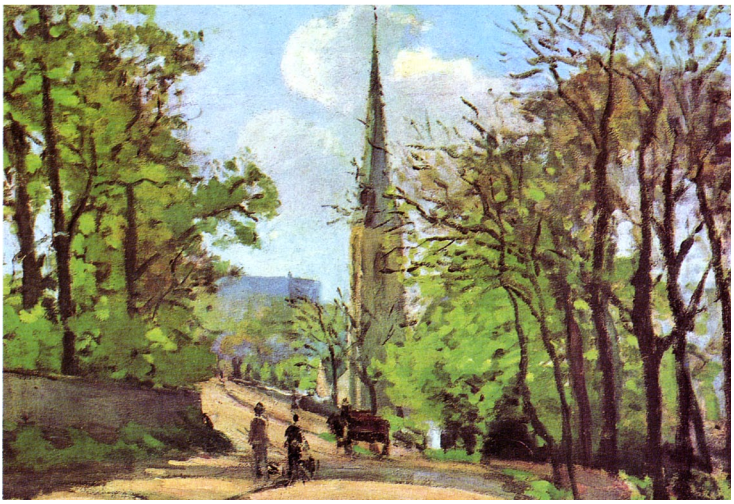
As we lift this cross we will proclaim, "Behold the wood of the cross on which hung the saviour of the world". As we do so, I hope it will once again speak to those who look upon it.





In the footsteps of Camille Pissarro

by Maria Anguita



St. Stephen's Church, Lower Norwood, 1870 Oil on canvas, 43 x 53 cm Private collection

Gazing at the picture of St Stephen's, the only clue that we have that this is not a modern view of the church is the improbable horse and cart and the distinct lack of cars parked on College Road. The sense of tranquility, freshness and of being within a sheltering wood remains unchanged. This painting from 1871 is by the impressionist Camille Pissarro (1830-1903), who painted mainly landscapes. The work was executed just two years after the church's consecration.

Pissarro was born in the Virgin Islands in the Caribbean. Attending school in Paris, he returned to the Virgin Islands only briefly before settling in France for good. In 1870, with the onset of the Franco-Prussian war, Pissarro was obliged to move his young family to London, where he lived until 1871. He settled in what is now Crystal Palace but was then known as Sydenham Hill, first in Westow Hill and later in Palace Road. It was no coincidence that he chose this neighbourhood as his refuge as both his mother and his brother lived locally in Rosendale Road and in Knights Hill, and he married the mother of his children, Julie Vellay, at Croydon Register Office in 1871.

Twelve oil paintings date from his stay in London. The scenes he immortalised are suburban landscapes, with people strolling or going about their everyday business. Although his depiction of St Stephen's Church is not far removed from what it is today, his painting of Lordship Lane station, with a handful of houses surrounded by green fields, could not be more unrecognisable. Pissarro was known for painting scenes of everyday French life, so perhaps he was inspired to portray London's suburbs which convey an equally powerful sense of domesticity. Whilst living in Palace Road, just off Anerley Hill, he would have seen the Crystal Palace on a daily basis, and immortalised it in two of his paintings. He recorded other local landmarks as well – in the spring of 1870 he painted the recently-built New College at Dulwich College, a view of All Saints Church in Norwood, a scene of trees just coming into leaf in Lawrie Park Avenue, with St Bartholomew's church in the background, and of course St Stephen's Church. His landscape of Fox Hill is a fresh and spontaneous view, with snow melting as winter turns into spring. Much of the painting of St Bartholomew's church was executed outdoors with only some indoor re-working.

Pissarro returned to Paris in the summer of 1871, but he visited London on subsequent occasions and these other visits are recorded in his paintings of scenes of Kew Gardens and Chiswick.

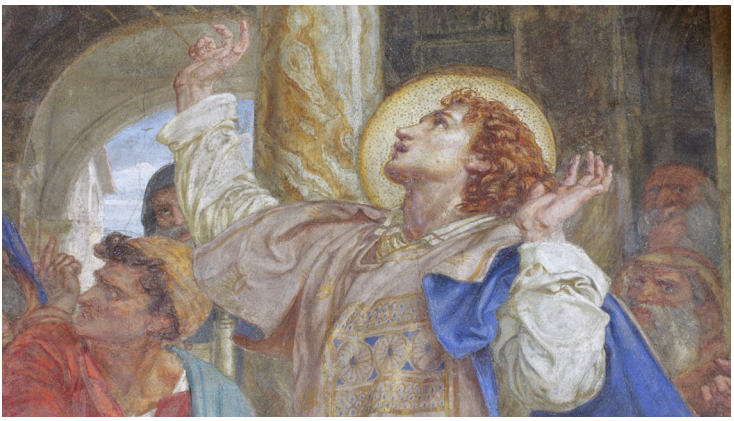
Pissarro not only left us a historical document of how south-east London looked in the late nineteenth century – if rumour is to be believed, on his return to France he took to wearing tweeds and eating marmalade for breakfast in homage to the English way of life.



Camille Pissarro, French, 1830-1903, The Crystal Palace, 1871, Oil on canvas, 19 x 29 in. (47.2 x 73.5 cm), Gift of Mr. & Mrs. B. E. Bensinger, 1972.1164, The Art Institute of Chicago. Photography © The Art Institute of Chicago.

The Trial and Martyrdom of St. Stephen

by Millie Stoney



Sir Edward Poynter trained in Rome with Lord Leighton and Sir Lawrence Alma Tadema, both giants of Victorian Neo-Classicism. All were deeply influenced by Raphael's work in the Vatican and Sistine Chapel, and this influence can be seen in the details of the fresco, which is located in the santuary. The work took 11 weeks to execute and we have Sir Edward's receipt for £565 for his services.

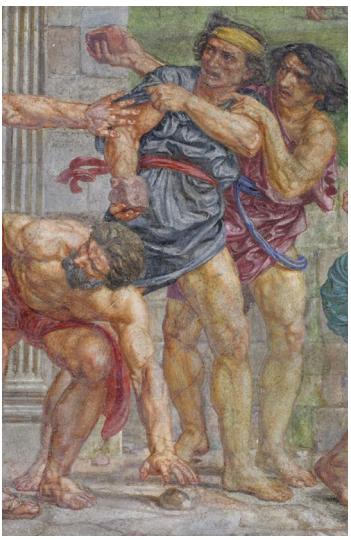
Fresco is "wet on wet" – fresh lime plaster is prepared daily and a water-based paint used which sinks in to the damp plaster. The design is incised from a scaled and squared master copy – the 'cartoon' – and transferred onto the squared surface of the wall. Fresco requires quick work and a sure and steady hand, as corrections are almost impossible. Damp and disturbance are fresco's main enemies, but even bomb damage and shocks to the church's fabric have not destroyed this splendid work.



The fresco is in two sections, arranged vertically. The larger, upper section shows the trial of St Stephen with the high priest and listening judges, two false witnesses behind Stephen and the Book of Law held by the group to his left. They all flinch from the sight of Stephen, as from an angel, as he declares "Behold I see the Heavens opened and the Son of Man standing at the right hand of God". This vision is symbolised by the rays of light apparent in the upper part of the image. All are dressed in period costume except Stephen, who has the vestments of a Victorian deacon embroidered with crowns – Poynter's wordplay on the Crown of Martyrdom and stephanos, Greek for crown. Stephen is depicted as fair-skinned and light-haired, younger and slighter than the others and with space around him to focus the attention on him.

The upper section is a study in static grandeur, in contrast to the lower depicting the actual martyrdom, which is all rhythm and movement. Here the populace are eager to stone St Stephen before reaching the execution ground, sited outside the city. Saul, later St Paul, in the left corner, holds the clothes of the false witnesses while Roman soldiers, representing temporal power, keep order – Poynter writes "one indignantly protects Stephen, pushing off a ruffian with the butt of his spear", while the other "resignedly drags Stephen along and clears the mob contemptuously out of the way". They are heading toward a green hill on which a violent death will occur – the link to Christ's crucifixion being plain.

The cartoon of the lower panel shows Poynter's skilled draughtsmanship, particularly in the angels in the lower corners, linked to St Stephen's vision of Heaven. The blue-clad angel on the left is holding the crown of martyrdom – "Be thou faithful unto Death" – while the orange-clad angel on the right is holding the victor's crown of gold and looks toward us.



Sir Edward Poynter retreated from large scale painting into art administration, finally becoming President of the Royal Academy, but sadly living long enough to see his work go completely out of fashion. He married into an unusual family of sisters, becoming the brother-in-law of Pre-Raphaelite painter Burne-Jones and uncle to Rudyard Kipling and Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin.

Two hundred years of the Picture Gallery

by Jessica Davies



Two hundred years ago the founders of Dulwich Picture Gallery, Noel Desenfans and Francis Bourgeois, a Frenchman and a Swiss, stipulated that their exquisite collection be made available "for the inspection of the public". And so began the unique story of our local gallery, the first purpose-built art gallery in Britain, which manages to combine an intimate, community spirit with a justly-deserved international reputation.

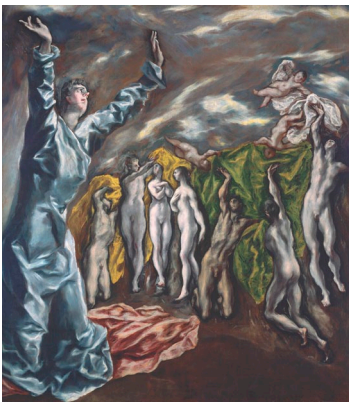


Sir Thomas Lawrence (1769–1830), Portrait of Sir John Soane, 1828–29, Oil on canvas139 x 110.5cm, Sir John Soane's Museum, London, By courtesy of the Trustees of Sir John Soane's Museum

This year, bicentennial celebrations capture that duality – The Big Bang in January was a day of family activities, featuring performances by musicians from Dulwich schools and with food laid on by local eateries; by contrast, the rolling year-long "Masterpiece A Month" exhibition, which showcases exceptional art loaned by galleries around the world, is testament to the international esteem in which the Dulwich Picture Gallery is held. "I see it as very fortunate that we have very, very strong community links as well as a global reputation," says Ian Dejardin, Director of the Gallery.

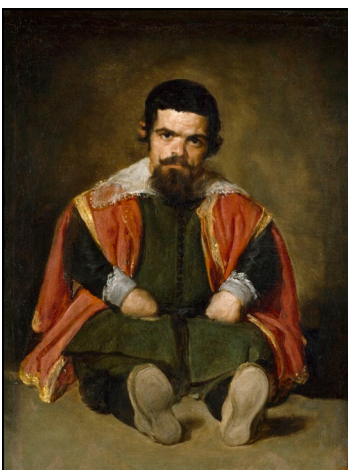
He began working on plans for Masterpiece A Month when he took up his post in 2005. The idea was to exploit the perspective of the famous long gallery, designed by Sir John Soane. By placing one exceptional work of art at the end of the gallery, Dejardin believed that people would be drawn in "like magnets" to the rest of the museum. He adds: "I wanted a project that wasn't just another exhibition. We had already decided that the Bicentenary would be a year-long celebration. So the idea was that it would be like a calendar unfolding. These loans would effectively be a tribute from other institutions to Dulwich."

Dejardin's search for his twelve paintings started at Madrid's Prado museum (where he secured the loan of a Velázquez) and The Metropolitan Museum in New York, who offered him El Greco's Vision of St John – "which I wouldn't have dared to ask for!" This success convinced him that his idea would work, and he subsequently went on to bag paintings by Vermeer, Constable, Van Gogh and Hockney among others. He attributes the relative ease of acquiring such extraordinary work to the Gallery's international standing: "We aren't just the oldest in this country. We are also recognised as the absolute archetype in terms of art gallery design by curators around the world. Sir John Soane designed the building in the simplest and most effective way, and he got it right first time."



El Greco (Domenikos Theotokopoulos) (1541–1614), The Vision of Saint John, 1608–14. Oil on canvas, 222.3 x 193 cm, The Metropolitan Museum of Art, Rogers Fund, 1956 (56.48), Image © The Metropolitan Museum of Art/ Art Resource/ Scala

So what would the original founders make of today's Gallery? Ian Dejardin laughs ."I think they might be surprised by how much extra activity there is. For them it would have been enough to have a building that had pictures for people to look at. Now you have to tempt people in with a restaurant, an education department, exhibitions. But they would recognise the quality of the paintings – and that they are still hung in an historic manner."



Diego Rodríguez de Silva y Velázquez (1599–1660), El bufón Don Sebastián de Morra, c. 1646, Oil on canvas, 106 x 81 cm, Museo Nacional del Prado, Madrid © Museo Nacional del Prado - Madrid - Spain

At home with an interior designer

by Linda Christian-Edwards



Can we really make the case for interior design being Art? Is art Old Masters and inpenetrable modern pieces, or can a skillfully designed home or public space be a work of art? I spoke to Julie Hailey, a local interior designer to get her opinion.



In the 1990s interior design and home make-over shows were everywhere. Julie says that for our parents and for previous generations, the things in homes were a functional mishmash, but nowadays homes have become become an expression of the owner's personality.

Julie studied Display and Design and then worked for Hamleys and Selfridges producing the famous window displays (it was as much fun as you think). She became interested in interior design when she bought her first flat and redeveloped it. She then teamed up with a photographer friend and became a freelance interior designer. The project was actually used to demonstrate, step by step, how to do a make-over on a budget.

Julie and her husband David now buy run-down properties and revive them. Indeed, part of the passion they have for the work is in taking a ruin and sypathetically realising its potential. They have complementary skills – an added bonus is that David is able to carry out much of the work himself.

I saw this for myself when I visited their late seventeenth century house at Pond Cottages. Not only has Julie reintroduced the character of the property, she has also brought a new practicality with a modern extension and the balance between the two is both harmonious and beautiful. Although the cottage had been, "..tarred with a 1960s brush," the use of similar materials and colours connects the different areas of the cottage – everything is well thought out and sympathetic to the age of the building.

Of course beauty is in the eye of the beholder, but I am sure we can agree that art is something that both enlightens and





removes us from the everyday world. Although I cannot offer a knowledgeable design critique, I can tell you how her house felt – like a real family home. The ablility to create a space that meets all a familiy's needs yet still looks beautiful might well be Art.



Julie and her family participate in the Open House London event, which takes place on 17 and 18 September this year. This event allows entry to private buildings of interest for one weekend alone. Julie's and David's website showcasing their work can be found at **thewoodpidgeon.com**.

Easter at St Stephen's

A journey from death to life

Palm Sunday

17 April

10am Procession together with St Margaret Clitherow and Kingswood Baptist Church Donkeys, samba band, brass group and blessing of palms. Assemble next to the shops on Lyall Avenue 9.45

Maundy Thursday

21 April

7.30pm Passover meal and Eucharist in church hall. Afterwards the Church will remain open for prayer until midnight.

Good Friday

22 April

10-12am All Age Workshop for Good Friday
2pm Good Friday Liturgy with choir and Veneration of the Cross

Easter Sunday

24 April

5am Easter Vigil Service, with lighting of Easter candle and sung Exultet

8am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer)
10am Choral Eucharist for Easter Day

Regular Services

Sunday:

8am Holy Communion (BCP)
10am Sung Parish Eucharist with Sunday School during term time

Monday to Friday:

8.30am Silent Prayer followed at 8.45am by Morning Prayer

Wednesday:

9.45am Holy Eucharist



St Margaret Clitherow RC

4 Kingswood Drive, SE19 1UR
Fr Sean Hearty (020) 8670 1639

Palm Sunday
10am procession followed by Mass 10.30am

Maundy Thursday
7.30pmMass of the Lord's Supper

Good Friday
3pm Solemn Liturgy
7pm Stations of the Cross

Holy Saturday
9pmEaster Vigil Service

Easter Sunday
10.30am Mass

Kingswood Community Baptist Church

Langbourne School Gymnasium (entrance in Bowen Drive)
Pastor: Mawuli Doe

Palm Sunday
10am procession followed by 10am service in Langbourne

Maundy Thursday
7pm Fellowship and Communion gathering KETRA Rooms, Telfer House

Good Friday
10am Service

Easter Sunday
10am Service

Further details: Sandra Surrey 07986 002389

