

Jim Barron 1926 - 2008

The death in August of Jim Barron, a long-standing member of the congregation at St Nicholas was reported in the September magazine, 2008.

Jim was a stalwart member of our choir at St Nicholas, singing tenor with Joe Hogg, and those of the congregation who were not sure who was who beyond the rood screen might recall that he appeared 'front of house' each week before the 10.30am Mass to put the correct hymn numbers on the display boards which hang each side of the centre aisle. Jim also took upon himself the task of filing, cataloguing and organising the choir's sheet music, scores, etc, and had an encyclopaedic knowledge of the music library at our church.

He was also a great contributor to our annual Christmas Fairs and, helped by his sister Lilian, always manned a well-stocked stall selling an eclectic selection of videos, records, CDs, etc.. Even when he was less mobile he managed to pack a large number of boxes with his stock and lug them from his car into church, then home again afterwards, ready for next year's Fair. He was a great DIY buff too and often did odd jobs for St Nicholas and would take broken items home to repair.

He was born in Hammersmith, living in the same house most of his life, and was a pupil at Latimer Junior School. As a small boy he was encouraged to go to Sunday School which he attended until the outbreak of war, when he was evacuated to stay with an aunt in Wiltshire. On his return to Hammersmith at the age of 14 he entered on an apprenticeship with a local engineering firm; he was later called up for National Service, being stationed in India for much of his time in the forces.

Before being called up he was encouraged to attend St Mary's Church in Stamford Brook (now converted into flats). In a short time he was asked to join the choir and this was the start of his love of music. St Mary's choir was quite small and unable to do much in the way of music for special occasions so, when these occurred, our own St Nicholas choir would be contacted for help. When St Mary's Church was closed in 1982 this connection with our church prompted Jim to join the choir at St Nicholas.

In the 1950s he joined the Scout movement and was appointed an Assistant Scoutmaster in 1956. Between 1956 and 1964 he rose through the various ranks to become a Scout Leader. But then music began to take over more and more of his life. He was an avid listener to music on the radio and he started what was to become a massive collection of CDs and DVDs.

He left behind his sister Lilian who continued to live in the home they inherited from their parents. Jim's quiet dedication to St Nicholas and especially its musical life was much missed. His generous legacy to the Friends of St Nicholas Church was used for the restoration and rearrangement of the organ, a use he would have appreciated.