

St Stephen's News

ST STEPHEN'S ANGLICAN CHURCH · TIMONIUM, MARYLAND

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FROM THE RECTOR

Chairman Mao Tse-tung: A case mistaken identity

The feline Chairman Mao Tse-tung came into my wife Charlotte's life – and, by extension, my own – at the very time that the all-too-human Chairman Mao Tse-tung was approaching the point of departing from his.

China was still in the throes of the Cultural Revolution, a political cataclysm that had turned Chinese society on its head, destroying great swathes of its economy, committing millions of its citizens – many of them intellectuals – to harsh “re-education” camps and directly causing the deaths of millions more.

To diplomats, intelligence analysts and foreign correspondents, the obsessively secretive nation remained an enigma. Yet at the same time, it was clear a political upheaval was underway, destabilizing the body politic in a way that presaged radical changes at the very top.

Senior bureaucrats were running around like headless chickens. Even so desperate, but not wholly convincing, efforts were being made to persuade the outside world that, politically, all was stable, and that the “the Great Helmsman” (as Mao was obsequiously dubbed) was still calmly, but resolutely steering the ship of state.

In a bid to quash rumors that Mao was on his death bed, photographs were circulated to the media purporting to show “the Great Helmsman” swimming serenely in the Yangtze River.

This, in fact, did nothing to quell the speculation that Mao had shuffled off this mortal coil because whoever produced the pictures made an amazingly ham-fisted job of it. Even the most gullible could see they were simply cutouts of the Great Helmsman's head pasted on photos of the Yangtze.

That's the trouble with cultural revolutions: It's hard to find folks with essential skills when you need them. They are either dead, in “reeducation” camps, or undergoing “reeducation” up to their knees in the muck and night soil of rice paddies in remote rural villages.

At the time all this was going on, thousands of miles away, the other Chairman Mao – the Great Ratter, not the Great Helmsman – was settling into our new *pied-à-terre* in London's Belgravia district, just around the corner from Harrods, the famous department store.

As we both worked as foreign correspondents at the Financial Times headquarters just opposite St Paul's Cathedral, the location was ideal for both of us – a mere 10 minutes on the “tube” or, if we were feeling flush, a two dollar cab ride.

It was a spacious apartment on the third floor of an imposing brownstone, with plenty of things in it to keep a young cat's mind occupied. But Chairman Mao, being an adventurous fellow, wanted to go exploring. And he got his opportunity when a friend, visiting London from the U.S., inadvertently let him out of the front door.

When the friend telephoned to report Mao missing, Charlotte had just finished work for the day at the Forbes magazine bureau and was planning to join me in the FT's bar, prior to attending a diplomatic reception at the Romanian Embassy, a couple of blocks from our new home.

In those days all of the major London daily newspapers had bars on the premises, presumably to save

editors the bother of scouring local watering holes to locate absent staff.

The in-house bars were convivial places with a long-standing tradition for hospitality. Newsmen and women customarily entertained not only “news sources” but also large numbers of colleagues from competing dailies and other news media.

Mao's disappearance was deeply worrying. He was an “indoor cat” with absolutely no experience of city traffic and our apartment was on Pont Street, a busy thoroughfare that crossed the even busier Sloane Street, a favorite destination for fashionable shoppers.

Beside herself with anxiety, Charlotte dashed down to the FT bar. “Mao's gone!” she announced at the top of her voice.

I understood exactly what she was talking about. We had repeatedly warned her ditsy friend not to leave the door to the apartment open when she went downstairs to collect the mail.

Parish Prayer List

Our Prayer Chain offers prayer daily for people on the Prayer List and guests of the Joseph Richey Hospice. To add a name to the prayer list, or visiting list, or to join the Prayer Chain, call the parish office (410) 560 6776.

FOR RECOVERY: Catherine, Richard✘, Janis, Parisa, Daniel, Judy, Leona, Charlotte, Rachel, Elizabeth, Kim, Dorothy, Donna, Skip, Dan, Sarah, Betsy, Edie, Heidi, Alan, Terry, Helen, Linda, John, Neal, Stephen, Nathan, Hobie, Betty, Helen, Jan, Bobby, Lee, Cary, Marie, Jim, Joanna, Kendall, Ian, Gloria, June, John Tom, Michell, Jack, Lewey, Stephen, Pamela, David, Wade, Sifa, Eileen, Ravi, Theresa, Lisa, Larry Ricard, George & Scott

FOR LIGHT, STRENGTH & GUIDANCE: Caroline, Karen, Ardis, Mavis, Michael, Melba, Sam, Vinnie, Doug, Chip, Elizabeth, Ian, Lisa, Carey, Jacob, Casey, Beth, Kath, Rebecca, Colin, Christian, Catherine & Elizabeth

IN MEMORIAM:

THOSE WHO MOURN:

ON ACTIVE SERVICE: Lt. Col. Charles Bursi, Lt Nicholas Clouse, USN; Lt Col. Harry Hughes; USAF; Cpt Fiodor Strikovski, US Army.

The other journalists in the crowded bar, however, were quite unaware there were two Mao Tse-tungs in the worlds, one of them living in London.

Utter silence followed Charlotte's announcement. Then, in a flash, the bar emptied as, drinks abandoned, the denizens raced back to their own offices glean details of the Great Helmsman's demise from the news agency tickers.

“Oh gosh,” exclaimed Charlotte ruefully, surveying the empty bar and abandoned glasses, “What have I done?”

When we arrived home, we found Mao curled up unharmed at the bottom of the outside basement steps. The only real damage arising from the episode was that done to my wallet – the cost of the drinks our friends had abandoned in their madcap dash from the bar.

It was also inevitable, I suppose, that when eventually the other Chairman Mao went to his final reward in Beijing, colleagues called to warn Charlotte that she couldn't get away with the same prank twice. GPH✘

FROM THE RECTOR

Annual Parish Meeting

The Annual Parish meeting will take place on Sunday, November 17th between the 9.15 and 1.00 AM services. The rector and officers will present reports on the parish's progress during the year past and elections for the vestry will also take place.

Retiring vestry members offering themselves for re-election are: Mrs. Tracey Collins and Mr. John Cobb. Vestrymen Mr. John Karlsen and Mr. Brice Richardson have resigned and Mr Jai Seunarine and Mr. Thomas FitzGerald have been nominated to replace them.

FROM THE TREASURER

Please help repair the roof

The time has come to replace the flat roof over the Cadwalader Room. The cost of replacing it will besome \$29,0000. The Vestry has appealed for donations to cover the cost. To date we have received checks and pledges totaling rather more than \$14,600. So we still

have a long way to go. Please prayerfully consider helping us keep the roof over our heads by sending your contribution to The Treasurer, St Stephen's Anglican Church, 11856 Mays Chapel Road, Timonium, MD 21057.

COOKIE WALK 2019, Saturday, December 14th

More recipes for you to try

CHINESE CHEWS

- 3/4 cup cake flour
- 3/4 cup baking soda
- 1 cup granulated sugar
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1 cup finely chopped dates
- 1 cup finely chopped walnuts
- 2 large eggs

Sift together the dry ingredients. Add dates and nuts. Add eggs and beat thoroughly. Place mix in a shallow greased 9 inch by 12 inch pan and spread as thin as possible. Bake in a 350 oven for 30 minutes. Cut into 1 inch squares as soon as the pan is removed from the oven. Roll each square a ball, roll in sugar and cool.

St Stephen's Anglican Church

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Vicar: 410 878-5275 · Pastoral Care: 410 252 8674

www.ststeve.com

The Very Rev. Guy P Hawtin, Dean & Rector
The Rev. John Novicki, Vicar ·

Associate Rectors:

The Rev. Michael Belt, The Rev. C. Daniel Bursi,
The Rev. Dr. Norman Flowers,
The Rev. M. Wiley Hawks & The Rev. Mark Newsome,
Mrs Happy Riley, Director of Pastoral Care
& Wedding Coordinator

SUNDAY SERVICES

8am: Said Eucharist

9.15am: Sung Eucharist (with Nursery & Church School)
11 am: Sung Mattins (1st Sunday: Sung Eucharist)
Choral Services (as announced) – evensong.ststeve.com

WEEKDAY SERVICES

Wednesday, 6pm: Evening Prayer
Friday, 12 noon: Healing Eucharist
Saturday, 5pm: Family Eucharist

Calendar of Events

WEEKLY

Monday, 6.30pm: Bridge Club
Thursday, 10am: Knitting Circle
Noon: Bible Study
Friday, 10.30am: Bible Study

MONTHLY & SPECIAL

The Cookie Walk

*Cookie Walk will take place in the Parish Hall at
9.00 AM, December 14th*

The Vestry Meeting

Wednesday, 7.00 PM, October 30th

Ladies Who Lunch

*Noon, Wednesday, November 20th
Venue: To be announced*

Information: Call Sara Douglas at 410-560-9026

The Annual Parish Meeting

Sunday, November 17th

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

St Stephen's Anglican Church
11856 Mays Chapel Road
Timonium, MD 21093

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