Elspeth Fearn writes: As PCC Secretary I met Canon Robert Titley regularly to discuss meetings, agendas, minutes, and various issues in the parish. At our last meeting, shortly before his departure to Salisbury, we cleared the decks of all that important but sometimes slightly dry stuff, and I interviewed him for TEAMtalk, reflecting on his time as Rector and looking ahead to his new role at the Cathedral.

Robert said that it had been 'an extraordinary privilege to serve in the Richmond Team Ministry (RTM) these last five years and to be invited into the lives of its wonderful people and also into the life of the town'. Richmond was 'blessed in all its institutions and organisations' and he highlighted some of those he had been involved in such as the various almshouses, Street Pastors, Christ's School and the Richmond Business and Retail Association. He would miss all of these, and especially RTM’s clergy and congregations once he ceased to be Rector.

Robert also commented that it was 'Remarkable and unusually good how each of the three churches in the Team can call upon people of real giftedness and courage to fulfil quite demanding roles within RTM. The Team also shows the way in which the Church of God can be sensitive to the people and their patterns of life, but also, at the same time challenge them.'

He did however regret that sometimes, when talking to him in St Mary's, a few people referred to 'your church' or 'your windows' as if these belonged to him personally and were nothing to do with the congregation. He hoped that in the future we would always say 'our church' and 'our windows'.

At Salisbury as Canon Treasurer (a role he also held in the past at Southwark Cathedral) Robert will have oversight of the last stages of the Major Repair Programme, fundraising, a
programme of social responsibility and the ministerial life of the cathedral. He will be responsible amongst others for the stonemasons and the glaziers and remarked that he has always admired people who can make things. Salisbury Cathedral is an iconic cathedral as cathedrals go and is unusual in that most of it was built over a period of just 38 years so it is almost entirely in Early English Gothic style. Salisbury also has one of the four surviving copies of Magna Carta which is housed in the Chapter House, so 2015, being the 800th anniversary of Magna Carta, has been a very special year.

Robert will obviously be extremely busy in his new role but what about interests outside of work, I asked? Did you know that Robert was a Kent Young Archaeologist of the Year back in the 1970s? Wiltshire and Dorset, now right on his new doorstep, are crammed with archaeological sites and treasures (Old Sarum just up the road and Stonehenge 8 miles away to name but two of the more famous sites) so he hoped to spend quite a lot of his free time exploring some of them. One thing however that Robert was going to find difficult to adjust to, having spent all his working life in London was not being able to just jump on a Tube train to go anywhere.

My final question related to the famous spire at Salisbury, some 404 feet or 123 metres high. Many of us will have seen those vertigo-inducing films of some poor soul climbing right to the very top of the spire to replace the batteries for the red aircraft warning lights. As the spire, along with the rest of the Cathedral fabric, would now be Robert’s responsibility, was he expected to climb to the top of it at least once during his term of office? No, he said, he had been told that was too much of an insurance risk, but he nevertheless aimed to go as high up the spire as he could safely and legitimately do so.

We wish Robert, Caroline, James and Julia all the very best for the future and thank them for their great contribution to our Team and Parish and to the community in Richmond.

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**Installation at Salisbury Cathedral**

*Elspeth Fearn*

On Sunday 15 November around 60 people from Richmond Team Ministry travelled to Salisbury Cathedral by coach or by car, to attend the choral evensong service for Robert’s formal Appointment and Installation as Canon Treasurer. The weather outside was overcast and drizzly but inside, this great building was warm and welcoming. As there was a little spare time before the service, people went for a cup of tea in the refectory, visited the shop or walked around the cloisters. *(continued opposite)*
The service itself began at 4.30 pm and took place in the Quire. Although there were many people there the seats generally had a good view of the proceedings and the atmosphere was very special. The congregation also included people who had come to support Jackie Molnar who was being admitted as the new Chapter Clerk at the same service. Caroline Titley read one of the lessons from Daniel 3 and Jackie the other lesson from Matthew 13. After his Appointment by the Bishop of Salisbury, Robert was robed in his cope and then led to the Treasurer's Stall, which with the other stalls dates from 1236.

At the end of the service light refreshments were served in the South Transept which gave everyone a chance to talk with each other and to say goodbye to Robert and Caroline, before going home to Richmond. It was a privilege to be able to attend this special service and to give Robert support as he moves into this new phase of his ministry and working life.

Gerard Manley Hopkins

Pied Beauty

Glory be to God for dappled things
For skies of couple-colour as a brinded cow;
For rose-moles all in stipple upon trout that swim;
Fresh-firecoal chestnut-falls; finches' wings;
Landscape plotted and pierced – fold, fallow, and plough;
And all trades, their gear and tackle and trim.

All things counter, original, spare, strange;
Whatever is fickle, freckled (who knows how?)
With swift, slow; sweet, sour; adazzle, dim;
He fathers-forth whose beauty is past change;
Praise him.

New Director of Music at St John the Divine

A new Director of Music, Mark Laflin, has been appointed at St John the Divine. His first Sunday as Director was in September.

Mark was educated at the Royal College of Music and the Universities of Oxford and Cambridge. Having held organ scholarships at All Saints Margaret Street, W1, and Keble College, Oxford, Mark has subsequently enjoyed a career as a teacher and performer. He is currently Director of Music at the Godolphin and Latymer School in Hammersmith and was previously Director of Music at Putney Parish Church.

Mark has recorded several commercially available CDs and is proud to have featured on Radios 2 & 3 as a soloist, accompanist and conductor. Aside from his work on both the classical and theatre pipe organ, Mark enjoys family life and lives in Barnes with his wife Faye and baby son Henry.

Speaking to TEAMtalk, the Revd Neil Summers, Team Vicar at St John's, said: ‘St John's congregation extends a very warm welcome to our new Director of Music, Mark Laflin. He follows in the renowned footsteps of two Matthews – O'Sullivan and Searles – so we are gradually working our way through the Gospel writers! Mark has already made a very positive impression both at St John's and the wider musical life of the Team. We hope it will be a very long time before we have to start looking for a Luke or a John!’
New Zealand hits ‘Rugby Pinnacle’, Australian credibility rises

John Owen-Davies

In a stunning show of international rugby at its best, New Zealand reached on 31 October a pinnacle unlikely to be overtaken in the near future. Despite this, the All Blacks still had a struggle with Australia to gain a 34-17 win in the 2015 Rugby World Cup final.

New Zealand’s head coach, Steve Hansen, called his captain, Richie McCaw, the “best All Black we have ever had”, with fly-half Dan Carter a near second. From the Australian side, high praise went to David Pocock among others.

As Australia’s new coach, Michael Cheika made his mark, helped by emerging from this World Cup with considerable credibility after some difficult years for the squad.

Of all the many matches in the competition spread over some six weeks, another major one involved Japan, hosts for the World Cup in 2019. Japan arrived in England without a win since 1991, while its first 2015 match was against South Africa, the 1995 and 2007 World Cup winners.

With eight minutes of the match remaining, South Africa equalled the scores at 29-29. Japan then laid siege near the ‘Boks line to score a famous 34-32 win. Japan, however, missed a place in the quarter-finals from its Pool grouping, which went to South Africa and Scotland.

Namibia, in different circumstances, had the last word in a 19-64 defeat by Argentina. Namibian prop-forward Johnny Redelinghuys was given a late shot at goal – something he had never done before – in his final major match. His kick fell short but it raised a big cheer in Leicester’s stadium.

Meanwhile, New Zealand and Australia worked through semi-finals on consecutive days at Twickenham, with respective wins over South Africa (20-18) and over Argentina (29-15).

A quarter-final between Australia and Scotland ended in controversy. Australia scraped home 35-34 with a late penalty. Minutes earlier Scotland had a 32-34 lead with a try that seemed to have won the day. At the final whistle South African referee Craig Joubert sprinted down the players’ tunnel. It appeared that the late penalty should not have been given.

During a compelling match, Wales lost after an 18-19 lead before South Africa’s killer blow sealed a 23-19 victory, while New Zealand put on a powerful 62-13 performance against France.

Argentina stunned Ireland with a powerful display. Argentina was 17-0 up within 13 minutes. Ireland, without injured players Paul O’Connell and Johnny Sexton, came back to 20-17 before Argentina roared ahead again 43-20.

Earlier came the World Cup Pool stages. England planned to go through the stages but came to a halt against Wales (28-25) and then Australia (33-13). Jason Robinson, one of the English winners in the 2003 was quoted as saying: ‘Making England consistently successful is paramount... At the moment I don’t know what our identity is as a team.’ (continued opposite)
Later, Australia beat Wales (15-6) at Twickenham but both had been assured of entering the quarter-finals.

Minutes after the match, Australia’s Adam Ashley-Cooper raced to a private box area to see an old friend, Guy Grinham, who was suffering from cancer; Guy had travelled from Australia to see his beloved “Wallabies” in action. Tragically, he died three days later.

On the bright side, one of the most welcoming places near Twickenham was the “FanZone” in Richmond’s Old Deer Park. It had live match screenings, talks by ex-rugby players, music, food, drink and fairground rides. “The atmosphere is great and everyone is friendly,” said Gemma, one of many hundreds of people to pass through the FanZone gates.

Rugby Festival
Mary Ricketts

I am not a massive rugby fan; interested in the odd match but that’s about all. However, I live very close to the RFU in Twickenham so I was anticipating the World Cup with mixed feelings. In the event I am happy to say it was all very positive.

The atmosphere surrounding the stadium and indeed Twickenham and Richmond town centres, was definitely festive. So many banners and flags fluttering in the wind, so many happy faces and so many excited and jolly people all day every day! The RWC bunting was all over London, of course. Even the trains on the Waterloo and City line sported flags of the competing countries and RWC banners.

The local council together with Transport for London and the RFU produced a traffic management plan for the local area, which worked. Such a relief to the Twickenham residents!

I visited the Fanzone in Old Deer Park which was also great fun. Huge screens showing the matches around the country, and plenty of entertainment. And bartenders literally shoulder to shoulder ready to serve their customers. I didn’t make it onto the big wheel, but Paul Velluet told me that it was most impressive.

So many jobs were created - the majority just for the six weeks of match days. Each morning the buses arriving at the stadium disgorged hundreds of (mainly) young people ready to work as stewards, traffic controllers, catering staff and security. And for many weeks before and after the event hundreds of building workers were preparing the stadium and grounds.

Richmond had its fair share of stewards, helping the crowds cross the roads safely and directing the public to the Fanzone, to buses and to the stadium itself. I am sure that visitors to the town felt very welcome.

The Singalong in Richmond was definitely a high point in the programme. It was such a colourful and exciting day with the band of the HAC performing outside the station, on the green and finally inside St Mary Magdalene which itself was brilliantly decked out with the flags of the rugby nations. The singalong was very moving with the church filled with members of the public as well as our own congregations singing the national anthems along with the band. Thank you so much to Charles Stiller for organising this.
What did you do before joining RTM?
We had lived for three years in Southern California. Jim [Teresa’s husband] was asked to work over there as an IT specialist. I was a lunching, golf-playing, tennis-playing housewife. My excuse was that I didn’t have a work permit!

Did you think when you started in RTM that you’d be here for 20 years?
Not really. I thought it was going to be quite a lonely job down in The Vicarage basement. I thought it might not give me enough social contact.

Did you like the job from the off?
Yes, my fears were immediately put to rest as it turned out to be the ideal job for me. There weren’t actually that many designated duties at first but they increased considerably as people got used to the idea of there being a parish administrator and I got to know and make friends with many people over the years.

What have you enjoyed about the job?
The variety. I meet so many people. I’m always busy and I’m not stuck at the desk so there’s no chance to get bored. I’m often interrupted [we were interrupted several times during the interview]. I like to be busy but sometimes it’s difficult to get out of the door.

Are there things we can do better?
We could be better organised but that is difficult when the job is so busy. There are new ideas for administration which should help. At the moment I tend to be more re-active as I have so little time to be pro-active and to think in advance.

Is there anything you’ve not enjoyed so much?
Not really. I get the odd testy email but you get that in any job. I can’t think of anything I haven’t enjoyed, although property management can be quite demanding.

Any advice for your successor?
I think that the person should probably be easy-going and accept that it’s never going to be a neat and tidy job. You’re always trying to keep lots of balls up in the air as people come at you from every side. I find it hard to say no but it is impossible to do everything so maybe there should be more boundaries.

What have been the biggest challenges?
Things tend to go wrong all on the same morning and when I took over weddings administration a few years ago I was out of my comfort zone for a while. It can be very time consuming as people often change their minds about what they want and you need to get it right, otherwise you could ruin the most important day in their life.

What are you planning to do in your retirement?
There are many places that I would like to visit – I would like to see more of Europe, Italy especially – and return to the States to see friends. Then there are art galleries, the theatre, singing in a choir, voluntary work. I learnt the piano when I was young. Maybe I might take that up again.

My impression is that things are busier than they used to be. If that’s the case, why do you think it is?
It is the case but the world is busier for everyone. I’ve taken on more things over the years. For instance, I now attend the weekly staff meeting and there’s preparation involved for that.

Are there things we can do better?
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Anything else you’d like to say?
Working for Richmond Team Ministry has been more than just a job. It has been fun, demanding, amusing, frustrating but never dull. It has been a privilege.
The 31 October saw the joyful occasion at St John the Divine of Effie Otoo's wedding to the Revd Dr James Lawson, which was conducted by the Revd Neil Summers. Around 230 guests attended the ceremony and came from many countries across the world – Ghana, the United Kingdom, Palestine, USA, Trinidad and Tobago, Denmark, UAE, Italy Belgium, Portugal, France, Ireland, Brazil and Kenya. That international flavour was also reflected outside the church where rugby fans from far and wide were gearing up for the World Cup final between New Zealand and Australia that day.

Speaking to TEAMtalk about her main memory of the day, Effie said, 'There are so many! Unexpectedly beautiful weather, the nuptial mass was beautiful – solemn yet warm and informal (random breaks of applause from the congregation and the never-ending greetings during the peace), colourful – the church and the guests, seeing St John's filled up with loved ones, and the rugby world cup finals round the corner. The reception was vibrant and fun with the scene set by African drumming & dancing.'

Madge Thorns’ 90th Birthday

Madge Thorns celebrated her 90th birthday in style on Saturday 26 September at St Matthias, with a tea party of sandwiches, cakes, birthday cake, tea and 'bubbles'. Around 40 people came, of all ages, friends from home and from church, from the Sunday and Thursday services at St Matthias – Madge has always said that the church is her family. Looking, as she always does, very smart, Madge made a brief speech and cut her birthday cake. Thanks go to Tina Bland who organised the whole event. Unfortunately the following Tuesday Madge was knocked down but after severe bruising and lots of stitches is now back to her sparkling self. We wish her all the very best.
Who’s who?

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Our Churches

St John the Divine
St Mary Magdalene
St Matthias