

# JBMS NEWSLETTER

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## LIFE AT MUTEMWA, 32 YEARS ON.

By Ben Bradshaw.

I was incredibly privileged to have been present at Mutemwa for the John Bradburne anniversary celebrations on the weekend of 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> September.

On the morning of Saturday 3<sup>rd</sup> September I made my way to the Cathedral in Harare where I met my guide for the weekend, Fr Liam McCarthy OFM. Fr Liam made me feel welcome instantly and I am eternally grateful to him for the amount of time and effort he gave to me so as to ensure I visited all the places that were important to John and to meet all the people who were special to him.

I travelled to Mutemwa in a minibus with Fr Liam and a group from his congregation; throughout the trip we sang hymns, said prayers and recited the rosary. It was an uplifting experience and by the end of the journey my heart was

firmly tuned in for a weekend of praise and thanksgiving to God for the life of his servant John Bradburne.

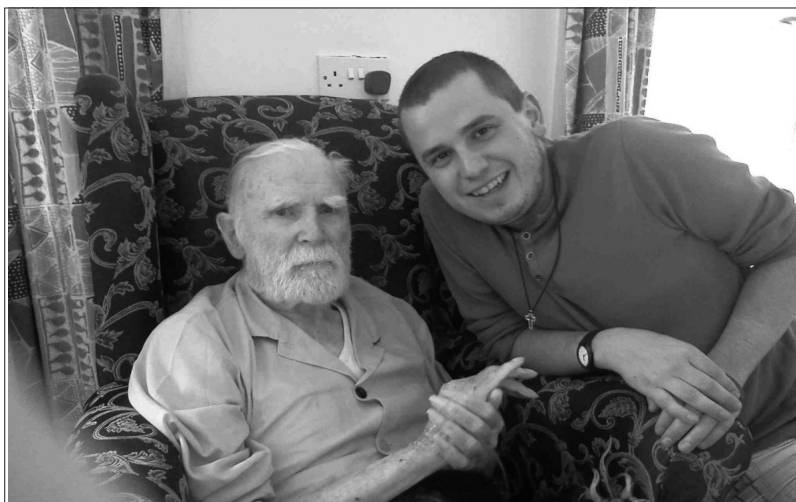
We were one of the first groups to arrive at Mutemwa but there were still a few hundred people at the site getting organised for this unique and spiritual weekend. Fr Liam showed me John's hut, 'Piper's Vale' and also the guest hut next door where John had decided to sleep on the night he was abducted. It is difficult to describe the powerful emotions I felt as I entered the two huts and said some prayers. It is hard to imagine that only 32 years ago, on that exact same spot, John was getting along with his life of work and prayer all to the glory of God.

As the crowds started to increase I decided to make the short walk from John's hut into the

settlement to meet some of the current staff and residents of Mutemwa. Both the staff and patients that I spoke to were happy, friendly, and very welcoming. I met Marge Chigwanda who is the manager of the settlement and Rose Chihota the chairperson of the Mutemwa committee; both were eager to show me the improvements that have been made at Mutemwa thanks to the funds we give to the JBMS. I said some more prayers in the beautiful chapel at the settlement which still looks incredibly similar to the photographs of how it was back in John's day.

I then returned to John's memorial site and huts which is located just outside the Mutemwa settlement fence. Thousands of people were now at the site and more were still coming in. I found a quiet corner to say the Evening Office before deciding to make the climb up the steep and looming Chigona Mount. On my only previous trip to Mutemwa I had also made this climb, and as I stopped for a breather halfway up the Mount on this occasion, I wondered what had possessed me to attempt this steep climb for a second time in my life! How John managed this climb on a daily basis and even lived on the Mount for a short time is incredible.

I reached the summit of Chigona at sunset and the views from the top were simply breath taking. By the time I had climbed down the mount darkness had set in, and so I made my way back to



Ben with Father Dove

the memorial site which by this time was full to the brim with people. Thousands of Zimbabweans had made the long journey to spend a sleepless weekend commemorating the life of John and giving thanks to God. I cannot stress enough just how important John Bradburne is to the Christians of Zimbabwe. They all recognise the saintly life of John and they all pray for his intercessions. By nightfall the queue to enter John's hut had stretched to contain many hundreds of people. Each person in the queue; man, woman or child was happy to spend two or three hours waiting patiently just to snatch two or three minutes of prayer in John's little tin hut.

Throughout the evening and into the night we had various services and also a Mass. We also had a holy hour where thousands upon thousands of the gathered people got on their knees and prayed in silence. It was only at 1.30am that the services at the memorial site came to an end and I was kindly shown by Marge to the little guest room where I was to sleep that night. I did not have the stamina of the many thousands of worshippers who at this point were climbing Chigona to spend the rest of the night at the top of the Mount singing praises to God- Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

At 6.30am on the Sunday morning there was a final Mass at the memorial site and afterwards the crowds started to depart; each and every one of them had forsaken sleep, preferring instead to spend the night in prayer. By mid-morning there were only a handful of people left, and I was again able

to spend some quiet time praying in John's hut.

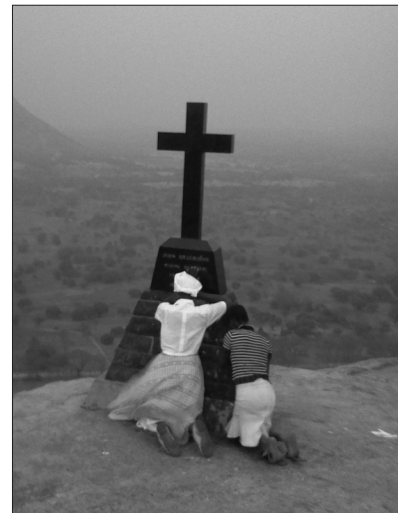
After visiting the staff and orphans at the next door Mother of Peace Community I departed with Fr Liam at 1.30pm, stopping on the way back to Harare to visit the site where John was murdered. Marked only by a simple wooden cross by the side of the road, this location was incredibly solemn and was for me, a time of powerful contemplation. While I was standing by the roadside I considered the call by God on each of our lives. A call we cannot ignore, no matter where it might take us, even as it was for John, to death.

Monday 5th September was to become one of the most special days in my life to date. I received a call from Fr Liam at lunchtime asking if I would like to accompany him to visit Fr John Dove SJ- John Bradburne's lifelong friend. Fr Dove is now very frail, having been blessed with long life and is cared for in a nursing home. The 15 or so minutes I spent with Fr Dove will stay with me for the rest of my life. He was so pleased to meet me, but the honour was all mine. He apologised to Fr Liam for not being able to get to Mutemwa for the recent celebrations, but he was very happy to hear about what a great weekend it had been. He also thought John Bradburne would have been most amused by the events of the weekend. I will never forget how Fr Dove spoke to me with tears in his eyes about his dear best friend, John.

After meeting Fr Dove, Fr Liam took me to visit John's grave at Chisawasha. At the grave side in true John Bradburne fashion, two

bees decided to come and buzz all around Fr Liam and me! It was only at that point we realised the 5<sup>th</sup> September was the anniversary of John's death. After visiting the grave we went to visit Fr David Harold-Berry, another close friend of John's. Fr David was able to tell me about some of the wonderful more human tendencies of John, about some of John's struggles and difficulties.

I thank God for the many blessings I experienced over those days in the first week of September. I am eternally grateful to Fr Liam for making it all possible and for Celia Brigstocke for putting me in touch with him. The powerful sense of John's peaceful presence when I quietly sat in his little hut was incredible and very emotional; my prayer life has grown, deepened, and developed since my time at Mutemwa. John Bradburne remains an inspiration for me, showing us all how we can walk in the footsteps of Christ.



*Ben is to be ordained next year, and during this summer undertook a fundraising walk from Mirfield in Yorkshire to Buckfast Abbey in Devon. He raised £1,000 for JBMS.*

## John Bradburne on BBC Radio 4

John Bradburne featured on the BBC Radio 4 programme, 'Something Understood' presented by Fergal Keane on November 13th who had been inspired by reading 'Strange Vagabond of God' the memoir of John Bradburne this was a philosophical and spiritual exploration in which John Bradburne's work was used to explore the theme of 'Outsiders'. This can be accessed on the BBC website.

# JOHN BEE'S BUZZ ON BEES

A message for our present world  
by Didier Rance

John Bradburne was born in the days of the resurrection of honeybees in England, nearly destroyed all over the country by acarine disease and saved mainly by Brother Adam, a lay monk of Buckfast Abbey. But his first personal contact with the buzzing family, as recorded by him, happens only in 1945, in India, finding a Railway Station office filled with hornets, he asks Station Master if he is not afraid to get this answer : " There is no need to fuss, we do not speak to them nor they to us... We trust them, they'll never do us ill".

After his return to England, John meets at Buckfast Abbey, and helps a little, Brother Adam. He learns from him basic knowledge about bees. In 1948, once he has become a Catholic and has been stricken by the poetic muse, he copies out a notebook of hymns and poems from various authors for his friend John Dove, several mentioning bees : Shakespeare's *Tempest*, Shelley's Hymn of Pan, Yeats's *The Lake Isle of Innisfree*. The next year, while still at Buckfast Abbey, one of his first poems tells of bees, in a characteristic half-comic, half serious tone:

In a pub, I was told that a message  
had come,  
Marked "Urgent! From all Abbey  
bees" ...

`Twas as follows: "Dear Bard, tho'  
we sing not, but hum,  
Our life is not given to ease.  
If you look in the Sanctuary, you will  
observe  
There burns near the Altar a flame:  
'Tis fed by a pillar of flowers and  
herbs -  
A wax candle - our title to fame!

*(A song to Our Lady of Buckfast  
for the resurrection and ascension  
of Our Lord )*

Later on, when he stays in Italy,  
it is at Candlemas 1953 - a feast  
traditionally associated with  
beeswax candles - that he embarks  
on his mystical marriage with Our  
Lady.

John will find again bees once  
in Rhodesia, where the Motopo  
caves drawings bear evidence of a  
ten thousand year old alliance

between bees and men, and at a  
moment when honey production is  
on the verge to boom (from five  
tons in 1963 to one hundred three  
years later). At Chivhu mission, he  
learns closeness with beedom :

Busy bees may hum  
Round the barrel where I dwell

(Posthorn, 01/1963)

The decisive meeting takes  
place in 1966, the day when Arthur  
and Kit Law drop in at Silveira  
House. Father Dove is absent, but  
John welcomes them and as soon  
as he understands the goal of their  
visit - they are looking for a place to  
put their hive, he bursts out with  
enthusiasm. Soon the hive is set

which glory be to God and thanks! I  
think that bees are very deep  
psychologists and if one is not at all  
aggressive towards them, neither  
will they be". On August 3rd the  
situation has developed: "The bees  
came in force about lunch time and  
had a good feed of fruit juice till at  
least 4.30; happily they all flew  
away before sundown, whereas on  
several evenings some of them  
missed the bus and spent a very  
dreary night in my room which they  
hated because it is not their hive -  
YET!". But soon it will be their hive!  
Under the table, with John legs as  
buffer for the entrance. His friends  
react differently to this novelty.  
John Dove is scared at first, then  
gets used to it. Heather Benoy



*Bee Photo taken by John Bradburne's niece*

up, the bees "keep the estate", and  
the three of them have become  
friends. Arthur will come regularly to  
take care of his hive, and John will  
assist him. Next step occurs in  
1967, when John, ill at ease with  
constant visitors disturbing his  
solitude, starts to pray for a swarm  
to come and protect him from  
unwanted visits. And, on July 25<sup>th</sup>,  
he writes to his mother: "For the  
last four or five days I have been  
fairly preoccupied with bees: off  
and on during the last few months  
odd bees, or in twos and threes,  
have been visiting my cell, where I  
live in the day and do my typing  
and have my meals; [...] At the  
moment of typing this there must be  
fifty to seventy bees buzzing all  
around my cell, and they seem to  
consider me as Mine Host, for they  
have not so far stung me at all, for

could not stand to enter the room  
and the two friends spoke together  
from either side of the door.

The bees will stay up to  
Christmas, then will disappear.  
When John returns from Holy Land,  
the following year, the flow of  
visitors pulls him once more to pray  
for bees to come. He is already  
discussing his departure to  
Mtemwa when, on April 29<sup>th</sup>, 1969,  
the bees return to his cell and he  
writes to Pep Muspratt-Williams:

There must be fifty thousand bees  
at hand  
And they are settling down inside a  
hive  
Two feet from where I'm typing this,  
- all planned  
By God I trust it is (I'm still alive!).

He puts up a hive under the  
table, then leaves for St Patrick

Cottage where he is doing night watch. When, at 3 a.m. the same night, he returns to Silveira House,

Within my cell a low but slowly growing hum  
Tells me why I have come, to be betimes ere dawn.  
Barely two feet from where I tap and type this rune  
There is a hive wherein are bees whose lowly tune  
Close to the floor is opening the door to dawn:  
They must to me and I to them become immune.

(Maybe for longer, 30/04/1969)

He writes to his mother on May 25th: "It seems my mission is to bees only, to tell them that we men want to forget their stings and our own fear and avarice (which gives us guilty consciences) and to be friends with bees and the rest of creation. Of course my confidence could be profoundly shaken in a very short while!". In July, Colin Carr, a teacher, goes up to Silveira House to say goodbye to him and finds the bees once he is already in the room. When he leaves, it strikes him that "a miracle had taken place in that room; I had sat there with John and thousands of bees in a small space, and hadn't been the slightest bit afraid. I had been at least temporarily a resident in the peaceable kingdom where the wolf lies down with the lamb".

Mutemwa will quickly appear for John a "Paradise for bees", and for poetry about them. They are everywhere near him, in the trees, especially the bluegums, and sometimes enter the old butchery where he lives. In March 1970 he will gaze at bees "landing on the moon" – in fact a photograph he has put on a box. But they will prefer outdoor places to live in. In September the same year, Shirley James, of the Mutemwa Committee, is arriving in Jacaranda avenue when she catches sight of John advancing towards her : his halo is composed of hundreds of bees all around his head. In August 1972, he tries to follow their example to restrain from alcoholic beverages. In 1973, he transforms his box for poems in a potential hive, with no great success, but never mind:

No bees within my hive but God be praised  
They wax the Candles Tall for Jesus raised!

(Ave, Saint Anne, 26/07/1973)

Up to his last year, he will write about bees and beedom and go on signing *John Bee* or *John Bee (drone)*.

### A Summa poetica

The corpus of John's poems (and letters) devoted to or alluding to beedom is important – several hundred lines - and he must be the most prolific poet on bees in XX<sup>th</sup> century England. Deeply rooted as well as frankly original, it belongs to a poetical tradition originated in Virgil and carried over centuries, through Shakespeare's *Henry V* and *Tempest* (John quotes eleven times the line of Ariel song "Where the bee sucks, there suck I") or Tennyson ("The buzzing of innumerable bees"/ Is someone else's memorable line / But I may make it somewhat also mine / By sharing with a swarm my cell at ease", writes John in 1969 ). Even if fancy and wordplays are not absent from this poetical corpus, sheer observations and reflections are its main qualities. John could "publish a book on the habits of bees" from what he watches, from his privileged vantage point, of bees behaviour, feeding or way of communicating, A entomologist could discuss these observations which fill poems and letters and John's empathy method, and distinguish between serious observations and poetical fancies (e.g. when he is speaking of the "smile of bees), but his statements are usually well observed – the cleaning business at awakening, the night buzz ("The night-sound of a hive is like the fall / Of fairy raindrops on the tops of time / Or it is like the breeze in pine-trees tall /Or else like ocean's call to distant clime" – 1973), or a fierce battle between bees and ants (described in *Nascent Apiary* -1973).

### A Summa religiosa

Above those poetic and objective qualities, John's observations and reflections on bees are ordered to a higher level, the contemplation of God and of the Queen of bees and men by the soul (for St Bernard, the bee is a "picture" of human soul and for St Francis de Sales its "symbol". For him, we have to learn spiritual lessons from beedom :

Their presence is to me the voice of God.  
Insistence of a bee exceeding near  
(So it would seem) to stinging nose or ear  
Bids me search conscience as at Yahweh's nod! [...]

A hive of bees residing in one's room  
Sweeps ceaselessly the soul - a wholesome broom

(The buzzing of innumerable bees, June1969)

Know more of bees, grow to know more of God;  
The keenest, most compact community  
On earth is beedom...

(A Ballade of a True Commonwealth, April 1975)

His religious reflections on bees are not so much biblical than hagiographical. He writes in a May 1969 letter :

First may I say that honey-bees  
Live lives like lives of saints, -  
Their only joy and only ease  
With heart that never faints  
(One Heart, the Hive's)  
Is to ensure, with pure intent, it thrives.

Several saints linked with bees could be quoted here, but John roots his care and love of them mainly in the Franciscan Tradition. In his great poem on St Francis and St Anthony, he writes about the first one :

From ease he sped and led God's glees: like  
bees to him they swarmed!

(Il Poverello, 03/10/1978)

St Francis ordered honey and wine to be set out for the bees (Celano, II, 165) : John leaves friends during a common walk because he remembers he has to give water to his winged friends. St Francis bowl becomes a hive in his cell (Celano II, 128) : John's table the same. And even if John mocks himself as being a drone, he is anxious not to fall under St Francis condemnation of the "lazy and sterile hornet" (Perugia Legend, 62).

But John, who owes his discovery and love for bees to a Benedictine Abbey, links them also with monastic life, more precisely with the kind he longs to live, associating community and solitude :

I think these bees are cenobites,  
and yet  
Meseems that each a solitary dwells  
[...]  
These bees are larger than the worker-kind,  
Perhaps to contemplation is their call,  
(Of a Sunday in Lent 22/02/1970.)

# THE COMPLETE ANGLER

## - An Update

*'Many men go fishing all of their lives without realising it's not fish they are after.'*

- Henry David Thoreau

Divinely charged with celebrating, refreshing and amplifying *The Compleat Angler* – one of the most consistently reprinted books in the English language – Leonard Markham accompanies its resurrected authors Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton on a mystical journey to discover the power that has kept the printing presses rolling for over 350 years.

Part travelogue, spiritual pilgrimage and exposition of human and environmental relationships, this journal of a weeklong odyssey of three friends, follows paths made famous by the great book along the banks of the River Lea in London and the River Dove in Derbyshire.

Passionate, compelling, entertaining, enlightening and humorous, *The Complete Angler* is a text for our times, the positive messages that ring loud from its pages on the need to harmonise with nature, protect the environment, nurture friendships and identify the real sources of contentment and happiness never having been more relevant, topical and uplifting.

ISBN 978-0-349-12321-9  
UK £9.99

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*The Complete Angler*

LEONARD MARKHAM



*Being a discourse on life  
and the art of fishing between  
Piscator, Ephemerator and a Pedestrian*

LEONARD MARKHAM

Foreword by The Izaak Walton League

In the summer newsletter, I wrote about my intention to publish my book based on one of the most famous and regularly printed publications in the English language. My publication imagines my weeklong sentimental journey with Izaak Walton and Charles Cotton, the resurrected twin authors of *The Compleat Angler* published in 1676, we three friends following hallowed riverside paths in London, the Home Counties and Derbyshire.

The book seeks to tease out in lively banter and interrogation, the reasons why *The Compleat Angler* has appealed to generations of readers for over 300 years, its grand purpose aiming to refuel, amplify and reinterpret its timeless messages for the new millennium.

Jaunty, humorous, thought provoking and ethically challenging, this book will appeal to anglers and non-anglers alike, all profits helping to sustain two charities – The John Bradburne Memorial Society and the Izaak Walton League which campaigns to protect soil, air, water, woods and wildlife worldwide.

Beautifully illustrated with numerous period etchings, the book is priced at £9.99 (please add £1.50 for postage and make your cheque payable to Len Markham) and may be purchased direct from me at 47 Moorlands Avenue, Kenilworth, CV8 1RZ, Warwickshire. Telephone 01926 259359. Email: [lenmarkham@hotmail.com](mailto:lenmarkham@hotmail.com)

# REMINISCENCES OF JOHN BRADBURNE

## by Teresa Thorp



I had the great privilege of knowing John Bradburne as a friend when I was a young girl in the 1950's. At the time of meeting I had left my convent school and was living with my parents just out of Sidmouth in Devon. I was studying the piano for a year with a view to going to Music College in London.

John was playing his lovely tenor recorder to collect money for the restoration of the beautiful medieval church of Ottery St Mary.

One Sunday after Mass in Sidmouth, we noticed John playing away outside our church. My mother said "He looks so nice, let's go and have a chat with him." John ended up coming to tea with us; so our friendship began.

We would go for long walks through the lovely Otter valley, play recorders (John was a superb performer on his) and sing. Sometimes my older sister Susan would accompany us. I remember putting up a little shrine to Our Lady in Harpford woods. We would stop, and, as John described it, 'wet the whistle' with good Devon cider at one or other of the little country pubs.

John was always laughing, joking or singing and writing verse. Deep down he was very serious.

He felt called to help the Jewish people come home to their Messiah, preparing for His return.

He would frequently say "Roll on the Kingdom."

John was the Lord's Fool. "Jester of Christ the King" and, of course; as we know, had a very special relationship with Our Blessed Lady the Mother of Christ. I remember when expecting his 33rd birthday he thought he would meet death; "That Jesus' Fool would not live longer than his Master", hence the verse 'Come sweet death on Wednesday, if you will and if you may'.

In 1953 I left for London to start my studies at the Guildhall School of Music and Drama. As John put in his verse 'Forsaking for heaven her castle in Devon' (He explained that this was in no way meant I was to have an early death!) He would come up to London from time to time. We would usually meet at Westminster Cathedral for morning Mass following up with a delightful day 'vagabonding' around London with the recorder. John would send a crazy postcard with words such as 'Cuckoo is a cummin' up'. Sometimes he signed himself 'Hornbeam' a nickname he picked up when a schoolboy.

There was never a dull moment with John. He would 'busk' with the recorder at Street Corners, and speak about Jesus and his Mother while I held the big brown leather book in which he continually wrote his verse.

We went to the Jewish Quarter, 'White-Chapel' and made friends among the Jews. They were interested in the special ribbons that dangled from John's recorder. These had a Jewish significance from Israel. John would ask if they believed in their Messiah? On one occasion a young Jew, Eddy Mantus, whom we met in Petticoat Lane, took the trouble to see me home on the tube, all the way to my hostel in Kensington.

Eventually John came up to London to work in various jobs, ending with that of '5th Sancristan' at Westminster Cathedral.

We continued to meet at the Cathedral which he loved. He used to be amazed at the cross-section

of people coming and going there, very much as it is today.

On one sunny Sunday morning John had decided to wake me up for Mass with his recorder. I was staying at More House, a hostel in the Cromwell Road (now the University Catholic Chaplaincy). I woke early this Sunday morning to the sound of 'Greensleeves'. I looked out of the high window of my room to see John walking up and down by the Natural History Museum playing his favourite song. You can image the talk amongst my fellow students, not one had ever been so delightfully serenaded!

All this time I think John was searching. Young as I was I sensed that there was something very special for him to do in life. Perhaps he would be called to martyrdom?

I needed to let him go on his way.

One holiday he called in on us in Sidmouth to collect the brown leather book of poems which he had left in my car. He intended to entrust this to his niece. He said goodbye to my parents and set off on his way to Prinknash Abbey.

In 1959 we met in London. John told me he was going to Hertfordshire to look after Hare Street House for Cardinal Godfrey. We said goodbye on the station platform.

I never saw John again, although I had the opportunity while working in a school in Sussex, I knew he needed to continue on his search alone. We corresponded from time to time, and I heard from him later from Africa.

Our friendship was joyful, innocent and memorable. It was to be years later that I would learn what a grace this friendship was.

I had settled in New Zealand and had become busy with a family of six, when I heard from my parents in England enclosing an article about John by Father John Dove S.J. in the little Jesuit publication "Christian Order". My

mother suggested "this must be your John Bradburne?" Of course it was. It was the first time I knew of John's "martyrdom" in Zimbabwe. I looked at the name 'John Dove', and a memory came back to me. I still had a card that John had sent me before he left for Africa. He was about to say farewell to his "very great friend Fr John Dove". John wrote prophetically, I quote "Remember the name John Dove. A marvelous man, one marked for God's own greatness, and he is as humble as he is great." What a wonderful compliment.

The result of this discovery was a correspondence with Fr. Dove who was most interested in my memories of John. He asked me if I would try to get John known in New Zealand, so I contacted a number of bookshops etc. and also spoke about him at 2 churches within our Parish community.

Later I was able to contact Dorothy Coup, a reporter on our

'New Zealand Catholic' paper. Dorothy was very interested and helpful. She put together a feature for the paper on John Bradburne. However "God works in mysterious ways his wonders to perform".

It is in recent times that John has become quite well known in this country. This is due to the immigration to New Zealand of people wanting to escape the troubles in Zimbabwe, among them a number of Catholics. I have already met a man who knew John in Africa, and a dark Zimbabwean who had heard about him. Dorothy Coup numbers among her friends in Auckland Zimbabwean Catholics. I hope to get together with some of these as well.

In 1994, on a visit to England, I was given the privilege of meeting Fr John Dove.

I travelled from St Albans one Sunday morning to attend his Mass at the Jesuit Mission house in

Wimbledon. My brother thought that I would never 'make it on time'. Our Lord arranged things otherwise. I arrived just as Fr Dove was vesting for Mass.

In his homily he described the beautiful miracle of the multiplication of the hosts at Mutemwa. Some Zimbabwean friends were also in his little congregation. After a cup of coffee, I spent a wonderful morning with this saintly Priest. We visited Westminster Cathedral and talked about John. After lunch we said 'goodbye'. Fr Dove said "See you in heaven". I hope and pray that this will happen on day. Meanwhile I am so grateful to God for giving me this friendship and to John for all his help and prayers for me and my family over the years.

Teresa Thorp  
New Zealand

## YOUR LETTERS AUTUMN 2011

Please find enclosed a donation for JBMS in response to prayers answered.

My daughter was very unhappy at school and we desperately needed to move her to another one. We made a novena to John that a place would become available and we received the news on the second to last day of term that a place had become available at our requested school. My daughter has started at her new school and is loving it and has made so many new friends. She has again become a happy and confident girl who has started to giggle and make jokes again.

We are all so relieved and can only attribute this to our prayers being answered by John.

Keep up the good work and may more people come to believe in the power of prayer.

**Heather Robertson**

I have been having great trouble for some time with my right leg and suffering great pain. I've been unable to walk any distance, barely a few hundred yards.

Recently I prayed to John Bradburne about this problem and I

can now walk a couple of miles, a dramatic improvement. The leg is still painful at times but at least I can walk on it, thanks I know to John Bradburne.

**Br Aidan Beuman**

It is with sadness that I am writing to inform you of my mother's death. She passed away peacefully in the hospice in September.

John Bradburne gave her great comfort during her last few months, and she held his picture close to her at all times.

Her funeral was on Tuesday and it made me smile to see a small bee hovering over the grave as we said our farewells. I know my mum felt that John was with her in the hospice when a bee came in and I felt that same presence last week.

**Frances Parrett**

Recently we had some bad forest fires with high winds. Our daughter Audrey lives at the edge of the forest and in the path of the fires. They came really close and an old lady lost her home, it was burnt to the ground. Thankfully the lady escaped unhurt.

Audrey asked for John's help to prevent the fires burning her home. Suddenly her bee windmill went still

and the winds calmed. Her family and all the animals were kept safe and out of harms way.

**Jean Reynolds**

At last we have good news for you and all who ask for John's help.

The London Borough of Lambeth has agreed to fund Ellen's stay in Doncaster. She will be 19 and has to move to adult accommodation. A flat has been made available for her and adapted for her special needs, in the adult village about 5 miles from her present school. She knows the area well, it has a shop where she and her helpers can buy snacks, so with John's help she will soon settle down.

Her father and our son went to see her. She is well and happy and took them for an hours walk around the grounds, taking great pride to show them the newly installed bouncy castle, which she loves.

**Margaret Parks**

John came to Gandachibuva when I was only 8 years old. My brother Ignatius was 17 and he used to spend a lot of time with John going to the village and sometimes he went back to John's cabin which was a garden shed on

a rocky hill near where the Sister's convent is now built. I remember well sitting on top of the hill where the convent is now, with John and my brother, and John was admiring the beauty of the countryside and describing the hills which stretch from the Mpatsi Village to Wedza mountains. He looked in detail at what most of us just glance at. He would show one how the shape of the hills far away were shaped like a huge sleeping lion. John was a man who chose to live in poverty and he had great generosity, for he is still remembered in the village for giving one old woman his only blanket after learning that everything she owned was destroyed in a fire in her hut.

John would walk barefoot for months after giving his shoes to some stranger if he felt they needed them more than he did. He lived in a garden shed because he chose not to worry about earthly riches

and comfort. He chose to live a hermit life devoting much of his time to prayer. It surprised many of the young people and puzzled the elders how a white man could live such a life of poverty in Rhodesia. My brother now lives in Waterfalls, Harare, but the old lady John gave the blanket to passed on in the late 1980's.

**Jerome Govere**

Many thanks for all the great work you do.

I feel John close to me every day. I have been praying to John re my son who has been unemployed and he has now started a good job, the office looks out over the moors in Devon. I shall have to ask my son to look out for bees!

I am due to see the doctor tomorrow to see if there is any chance of seeing a specialist for the

problems that are making me feel ill, so if you could join me in prayers I would be most grateful. Appointments are always stressful but I always ask John for his help.

**Mrs E. Jack**

I am utterly convinced Baba John's intercession was responsible in curing our 17 year old granddaughter of 4 years of ghastly anorexia. The moment I turned to John in prayer an improvement took place. A Spanish therapist was the instrument to help her, who came at the same time I asked John's help, and it took 7 months of weekly sessions to turn a sad little girl into a lovely vibrant seventeen year old, full of joie de vivre and enthusiasm for life.

God does work in mysterious ways!

**Anonymous**

**Mutemwa – Your Help Needed** Tim Brigstocke, Chairman

The John Bradburne Memorial Society (JBMS) exists solely to raise funds for Mutemwa Leprosy and Care Centre in the name of its late Warden. Indeed our charitable objects state: "To relieve people in the area of Mutemwa, Zimbabwe, who are suffering sickness, hardship and distress from Leprosy or other causes, through the provision of supplementary food, medicines, medical care, clothing and shelter, with the object of improving their conditions of life."

Since JBMS was set up in 1995 by John Reid and Celia Brigstocke at the request of Fr John Dove SJ, we have been very fortunate that so many people have donated so much to help us with our work. Quite simply without your assistance Mutemwa could not survive.

However, the past year has seen a huge change in our finances. As reported in previous Newsletters, we have paid for a major renovation project at the Settlement. This has made an enormous difference to the community. It has given them the added incentive to more self-sufficiency, and greatly improved their quality of life. This one-off payment, combined with our regular monthly donation, has called for the transfer of over £105,000 to Zimbabwe in the recent 2010/2011 tax year. This has had a significant impact on our financial base. Coupled with the dire global economic situation, we now find ourselves short of funds for Mutemwa. The improved economic situation in Zimbabwe has helped us ensure food and other staples are available, but utilities, notable electricity supplies, continue to be a major problem. In particular the state run electricity company, ZESSA, is seeking a large back payment for bills not previously paid.

We get regular and detailed monthly reports from Marge Chigwanda, the General Manager at the Settlement, and from Rose Chihota, the Chair of Mutemwa Leprosy and Care Centre Association, so we are well informed of what needs to be done. For example, there are now active small scale farming projects involving pigs, poultry and the more efficient production of crops, but there remain a number of one-off tasks which still need funding. These include repairs to the grinding mill and the Mitsubishi Colt Vehicle and the erection of suitable buildings to house the growing pig herd.

So JBMS continues to face significant financial demands. Any help that members can give, however small, would be hugely appreciated. For those of you who pay tax and have not signed a gift aid form doing this in its self would be very helpful since for every £1 donated we can claim back 25p from the Inland Revenue.

You will read elsewhere in this Newsletter that Mutemwa continues also to be a place of Pilgrimage, with an estimated 3,000 people attending the annual John Bradburne Anniversary Celebrations last September. At the same time John's name and work is becoming much better known throughout the world. We are so grateful to all of you who help promote his great cause.

The Trustees of JBMS thank you all for your help, and wish you a very Happy Christmas and prosperous New Year.