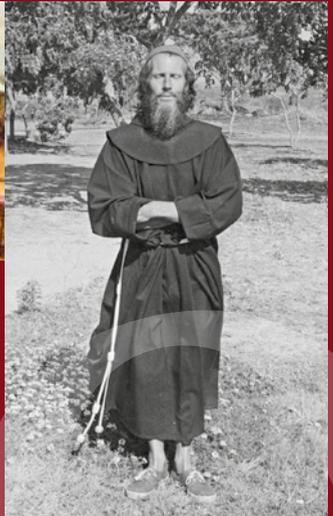




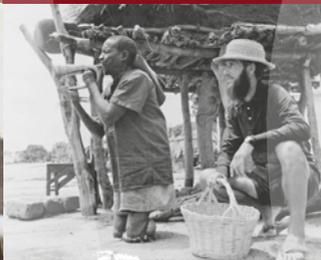
# JBMS NEWSLETTER

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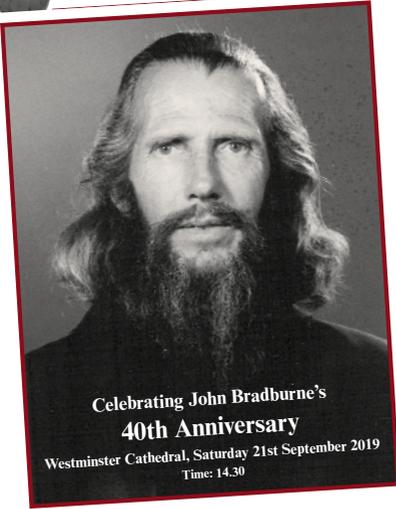
SUMMER 2019



40th  
ANNIVERSARY  
John Bradburne  
1921-1979



JBMS was founded in 1995 to support the Mutemwa Leprosy Settlement in Zimbabwe in the name of its late warden.



## 40th Anniversary Celebrations

This year we celebrate John's 40th Anniversary. It will be 40 years since he was killed in Zimbabwe in 1979. We will be holding a celebration event at Westminster Cathedral on 21st September. There will be a mass to start at 1430 in the Cathedral followed by refreshments, talks and an exhibition showcasing relics of John and his story. Please do come along all are welcome. It is set to be an important event for our charity and the work that John did. Please go online to order tickets: [www.johnbradburne.com](http://www.johnbradburne.com) or email us for more details: [info@johnbradburne.com](mailto:info@johnbradburne.com). You can also phone us on **01568 760632**.

## John's Cause

There has been great movement with John's Cause for Beatification and we are delighted to announce that the whole Episcopal Conference of Zimbabwe unanimously gave its support for the beginning of the Cause of Canonisation of John Bradburne.

Enrico Solinas with Archbishop Ndlovu and all the Bishops of Zimbabwe



## Zimbabwe Trip



We are thrilled that after 40 years, John's three wishes – be buried in the habit of St Francis, to serve leprosy patients and to die a martyr will hopefully be fulfilled.

The postulator of John's Cause, Dr Enrico Solinas and members of JBMS went out to Zimbabwe in April to interview and meet various people who knew John when he was alive. We needed to paint a picture of John as a man, his virtues and character and the history of his time out at Mutmewa Mission and what he achieved whilst he was alive and the legacy that he has imprinted on the Zimbabwean nation. It was a very fruitful trip and we met many generous, wonderful Zimbabweans, some who knew John, some devotees and many clergy who support the Cause for his Beatification.



Colleta Mafuta, who was born at Mutemwa and knew John

Our visit to Mutmewa was unforgettable. As we drove down the dusty track, we were greeted by wonderful singing and music from the community welcoming us all. They seemed so happy that the process was finally happening for John although many asked why has it taken so long? It was wonderful to see faces old and new there and to see that the atmosphere that John helped create is still very much alive today.

The postulator, Enrico with the community at Mutemwa Leprosy Care Centre



## FUNDRAISING

**During our visit we noticed that there is much work to do at the Mutemwa Care Centre and this is where your help and support is so vital.**

### *Solar Panels*

We need to replace the solar panels at Mutemwa, which helps run the hot water and electricity. With abundant sunshine, this is the most ecological and cost effective way of producing power. As you can see from the image, the previous panels have been ruined and don't work at all. **We are looking to raise £25,000** to get new solar panelling on the roofs of buildings.

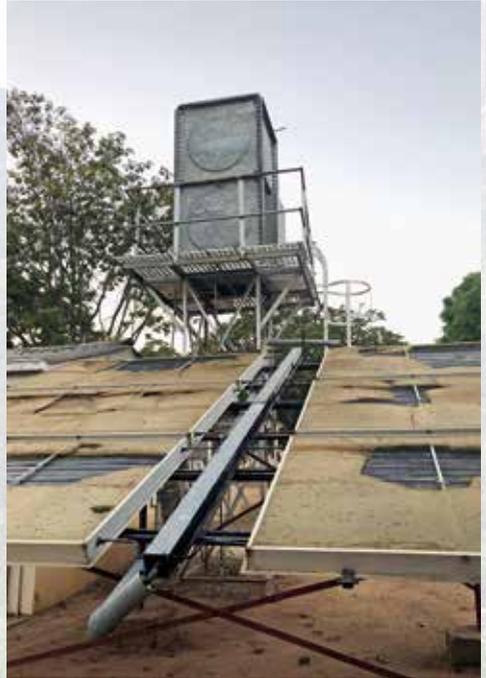
### *Clinic*

This is the most immediate task at Mutemwa. Not only does the clinic serve the patients and their families, but it also serves the local community. The clinic is in need of plastering the ceiling, painting, new hospital beds, tiling the bathrooms, putting down lino flooring, getting in stretchers to transport patients, buying new refrigerators to house all the medication and new medical equipment. **Budget is £10,000**



### *Patients Rooms*

The 37 patients at Mutemwa who all have varying needs, from leprosy and/or physically and mentally disabled. These people are what JBMS is all about. John cared and tended to their needs and it is important that their



living standards are both hygienic and gives the patients a sense of pride that they have a space that they can call their own. **We are looking to raise £5000** to transform their living space.

### *Ambulance*

We have had a very generous donation from The Sisters of the Holy Family, London but we still need to raise some more money to buy exactly what we need. **We are looking to raise another £5000.**

*We would appreciate any contribution you can make towards these projects. Without your continuing support Mutemwa wouldn't be the place it is so thank you.*

## John Bradburne A Persistent Search for God by Fr David Harold Barry SJ

### HOW DOES HIS LIFE SPEAK TO US TODAY?

Luke alone gives us the striking command of Jesus to his close disciples: 'put out into the deep!' We recall Peter's immediate response; 'that's crazy! We have been fishing all night (the best time for fishing) and caught nothing. What makes you think we will do any good now in broad daylight?' But then he has second thoughts. 'Still, if you say so, we will give it a try'.

Can we see this scene as a mirror of what many of us experience? We say we are Christians and we are! But do we feel there must be more to being a follower of Jesus than what we live each day? We keep the commandments. We are good people. We pray. Maybe we go to church. Yet there is an ache within which thirsts for more. We may not know what we are looking for, and perhaps we do not pay much attention to our search, but we are looking all the same.

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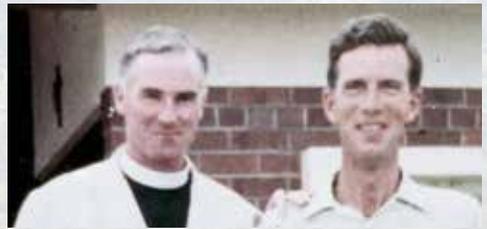
The question is; 'how are we looking?' and it is here that John Bradburne can help us. It is clear from the accounts of his life, given to us first by Fr. John Dove and later by Didier Rance that John was searching from an early age. As a boy, he liked to wander on his own and climb the tallest trees. He rebelled against the conformity expected of school boys and even in the army he sought his own space. His search finally brought him to a monastery where he asked to be received into the Catholic Church.

He soon discovered this was only a staging post on his journey. He yearned to go deeper but those who accompanied him advised him to circle round his desire for a while: Be a forester! Be a fisherman! Be a teacher! He obediently did all these things but they only left him more restless than before. With a few pounds in his pocket he set out for Jerusalem. He wanted to spend his life there and 'convert the Jews'. Ignatius of Loyola had done the same four hundred years earlier. John, like Ignatius, met a blank wall. 'You cannot stay here'. Four times John tried to join a religious congregation. Each time he met the same answer, 'you cannot stay here'.

Would he ever find a 'place to stay' where he would be at home? He tried a loft in Perugia and

a country house near London but always there was the verdict, 'you cannot stay here'. Then he thought of John Dove, his friend from India, now in Africa. He came and stayed first with the Franciscans, for he was one, but after a time they said, 'you cannot stay here'. He moved to Silveira House to be with John Dove and was happy there for a while until he heard his inner voice saying, 'this is not your place'.

Wherever he was, as his many letters testify, he felt at first he had found his home: 'I think I have



Fr. John Dove and John Bradburne  
when he first arrived at Silveira House

found my place. Who knows, maybe I will stay here forever.' And then, after a few years, that voice would come telling him it was time to move on.

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1969 put an end to all this restlessness. He arrived in Mutemwa. He was to stay there until his death ten years later – the longest time he stayed anywhere in all his 58 years of life. Heather Benoy, who knew John well, drove him there to show him the settlement where people living with leprosy stayed. John had been offered the job of warden and Heather's idea was he would go and have a look and see whether he liked the offer. But John didn't think about it; he was immediately glued to the spot and decided to stay there and then. He knew instantly this was where he was meant to be. Fifty years later Heather recalled the moment with utter clarity. She told me John not only knew he was to stay at Mutemwa 'forever' but that it would eventually lead to his death. At that moment, John knew that his prayers of many years were now going to be answered and he trembled at the reality of it. It was a trembling akin to that of Jesus when he reached Gethsemane; Mark

tells us “a sudden fear came over him and great distress. And he said to his disciples, ‘My soul is sorrowful to the point of death.’”

Mutemwa was not an attractive place in 1969. The people crawled rather than walked and had been told to cover their distorted features with sacks. So, deprived were they of limbs or help they would eat from the dishes like animals. They could not wash and no one helped them change their bandages. It was a bleak grim place and yet John stood there rooted to the spot. Heather had immense trouble getting him to go back and collect his belongings at Silveira. In the end, she had to blackmail him: ‘It is towards evening. Do you want me to drive back alone? If I have an accident, who will help me?’ Eventually he gave in and returned with her but he set his heart on returning as soon as he could.



It was in this place for the abandoned (Mutemwa means ‘you are cut off’) that John was at last happy. He became the friend, nurse, provider and defender of the people. He burnt their sacks, washed their wounds, provided medicine and food and gave them back their dignity. When they were dying, he nursed them and when they died he buried them. Mutemwa became a place of peace and hope.

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But then the prowling ‘bulls of Bashan’ (Psalm 22:12) were gathering and there was the beginning of troubles. John’s kindness to the people was out of tune with the dominant Rhodesian way of treating Africans, which was one of strictness and letting them always know who was master. John came to know each person at the

leprosy settlement by name. He knew their joys and sorrows, their anxieties and fears and he responded to them. His way stood out as an accusation and there were those on the Rhodesian Leprosy Association (RLA) who wanted to get rid of him. They looked for charges they could use to dismiss him. He was wasting money, spoiling the people. He was not keeping the books correctly. John was eventually dismissed and banished from the settlement. Accompanied by the people he had come to know he climbed Chigona, the mountain overlooking their homes, and settled there in a tent. His exile was painful to him but he knew it had been the same for Jesus who could ‘no longer go into a town openly but stayed out in the country’. (Mark 1:45)

After months on the mountain, after his tent was shredded by winds and leopard’s footprints were spotted in the vicinity, John’s friends provided a tin hut for him at its base just outside the perimeter of the settlement. He began to visit sick people in the camp at night, ignoring the order not to step foot there except for his duties as chaplain, which he still had – from the Archbishop.

John knew his own time was coming. Many tried to dissuade him from returning to Mutemwa but he ‘set his face to go to Jerusalem’ (Luke 9:51). He was determined to finish what he had started. He knew his climax was approaching.

We know what happened. They came for him in the night and led him away. There was a trial and the guerrilla commander, like Pilate before him, said, ‘I find no case against him’. (John 18:38). But they didn’t listen. They killed him anyway. He died in what the Church has always called ‘triumph’, that is, he died not just with his mission accomplished but with his persistent search fully achieved.

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It is now forty years since these events and the witness of John’s life has not grown dim but gathered brightness with the years. The challenge for those of us who either knew him or are familiar with his story and the place which will be forever associated with his name, is how to make him known so that people can draw inspiration and courage for their own search.

*This is an abridged version of an article by Fr. David Harold Barry SJ, please contact us if you would like a full copy.*

## The Official Launch

John's Cause for Beatification will be launched this year at The leprosy Catholic Care Centre at Mutemwa in Zimbabwe. There will be an official mass followed by the 40th Anniversary celebrations which will include refreshments, entertainment, guest speakers, pilgrimage walk up Mount Chigona and merchandise for sale. We know that many of John's supporters in Zimbabwe will be there in their thousands but we are keen for as many of our supporters from the rest of the world to please come out to the launch of the Cause in Zimbabwe if possible and see where John dedicated the last 10 years of his life to those in need. It is set to be a very special event for us personally at JBMS as this has been many years of working to this point and at long last 40 years after Johns death, we see progress with his Canonisation

## Testimony by Sue Guthrie, South Africa

Frank and I met during the Zimbabwean war of Independence. Like every young male at the time, upon finishing school he was immediately conscripted into the army and transferred into the Rhodesian Light Infantry.

Frank's father, Alistair Guthrie was a close friend of John Bradburne's and by the time Frank was sixteen, he would often visit John in Mutemwa with Alistair. he loved and admired John's easy spirituality and closeness to Mother Mary. Frank wanted that evident spiritual essence that John had but conscription took him to war.

In 1983 Frank and I decided to move from Zimbabwe to South Africa because our baby daughter was born with some medical problems that no one in Zimbabwe could resolve. We had our second child, a son whom we named Bradburn, in honour of John.

When Frank left the army, there was no such thing as Post Traumatic Disorder. Very gradually his drinking became heavier and slowly his personality began to change. He became restless, irritable and discontent. From being a happy couple who had survived a war and tried to never take each other for granted, the unpredictability of alcoholic driven behaviour dropped us into the insanity and chaos that comes with the disease. Gradually I gave up on God. He never answered my repeated prayer which was "Fix Frank. Fix Frank. Please fix Frank."

Our son begged to go to boarding school to escape the insanity and our daughter became an over-achiever in an effort to garner some positive

attention from the alcoholic. Our lives had become unmanageable in every sense, we were physically, mentally and spiritually bankrupt.

In 2002, I was reading about John online and noticed that he is able to intercede and reconnect families with lost children. It dawned on me for the first time that Frank, my lovely, charming, clever, kind and funny Frank, was lost. He was a lost child. I knelt down next to my bed for the first time in a long while and instead of instructing God to fix Frank, I told John that our Frank was lost and I asked him to please find him. That is all I said. I went to bed and had the best night's sleep I'd had in years.

When I awoke in the morning the name of a man I had not seen for over a decade and barely knew, was in my head. About twelve years prior, we had been at a business function and Ted had poured everyone at the table some wine. He then poured himself a cool drink and told me he did not drink at all because he was a member of a 12 step program.

I turned to Frank the morning after my appeal to John and said he should call Ted about his drinking. To my amazement, Frank got up immediately, and began to phone people in our industry until he located Ted, in Johannesburg. Frank went to his first meeting on 21st June 2002. One day at a time, he has not had a drink since. John found lost Frank. Alcohol took us both away from God. John found us and showed us a way back.

*For a full copy of this testimony please get in touch.*

## Thank you's

Thank you to Anne and Roy Lander for their contribution with the Way of the Cross booklet, it has been a very popular item. Without your input and time, the booklet wouldn't have been such a success.

Our trip to Zimbabwe would not have been possible without Ruby, Robert and Tino Tombindo's help who kindly donated their time transporting the JBMS team around Zimbabwe. Thank you so much.



Ruby Tombindo, Valerie Brierly, Tino Tombindo, Mattia Ianello, Enrico Solinas, Kate Macpherson, Robert Tombindo and Fr. Patience

Thank you to all those people we met both in the UK and in Zimbabwe whilst we gathered testimonies from people who knew John personally. Your time and information is invaluable to the Cause process.

Fr Patience Tigere does a fantastic job of heading up Mutemwa, carrying on the work that

John started. He generously devoted his time accompanying us around Zimbabwe on our trip.

Thank you, Sisters of the Holy Family, for your generous donation towards the ambulance.

Thank you to Mr & Mrs McNicol for the donation of tea lights that have been given out to local churches raising funds for Mutemwa. Your ongoing support is truly appreciated.

A huge thanks must go out to all of you donors who have helped raise money for both John's Cause and Mutemwa. Without your ongoing support nothing would be possible. We couldn't do it without you. Thank you.

We would also like to show our gratitude to the amazing Italian team. Fr Gabriele Pesce (Vice Postulator), Dr Enrico Solinas (Postulator) and Mattia Ianello (translator). Their dedication to John's cause is truly appreciated by all at JBMS.



Fr. Gabriele Pesce, Enrico Solinas, Fr. Patience Tigere & Mattia Ianello

An enormous thank you must go to everyone who volunteers their time to help fundraise and spread the word of John in Zimbabwe.

## Dates for your Diary

**21-24 June 2019**

**Discovering John Bradburne at Boarbank Hall in Cumbria.**

Contact Sister Margaret Atkins on **015395 32288** or email **margaret@boarbankhall.org.uk**

**21st September 2019**

**John Randal Bradburne 40th Anniversary Celebrations at Westminster Cathedral**

Special Mass at 14.30 followed by talks, exhibition and refreshments.

Order tickets online at **www.johnbradburne.com** or email us **info@johnbradburne.com** or **01568 760632** for more info.