Green Leaves

The Journal of the Barbara Pym Society **Vol. XVI, No. 1 Spring, 2010**

"A few green leaves can make such a difference." — Miss Grundy, *A Few Green Leaves*

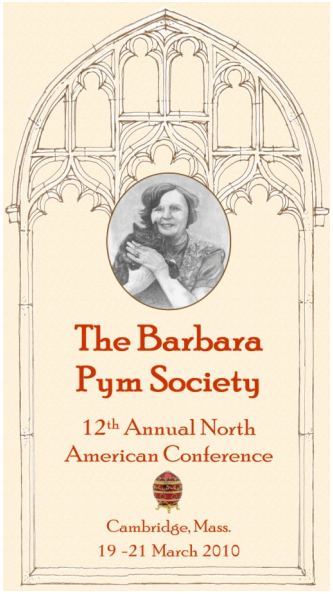
The Twelfth Annual Conference of the Barbara Pym Society North American Chapter, 19-21 March 2010

by Susan Bramson

I arrived in Cambridge at about 3:30 p.m. on Friday and after a little rest went to Boston for Evensong at the Church of the Advent. It was a lovely evening with unseasonably warm weather.

The church is in the English Gothic Revival style with outstanding stone and wood carvings, stained glass, and a peal of eight bells. The service was very "high," with Latin, kneeling, and incense. The choir, of which Tom Sopko is a member, sang beautifully, and the gorgeous contralto voice of Pym member Rita Phillips rang out from the pew behind us. During the service, the rector welcomed our group, saying, "One thing about Barbara Pym, she *gets it right*. And, especially, she *gets the church right;* sometimes, disturbingly so."

Afterwards we went down to the parish hall, where I particularly noticed the dark, polished wood wainscoting going most of the way up the walls. We had a delicious dinner and a sumptuous dessert, followed by much reminiscing with old friends.



Banner by Tom Sopko

The conference, held in the Barker Center for the Humanities, Harvard University, began on Saturday morning with introduction by Tom Sopko. He read a memorial to Ellen Miller and told us that she, single-handedly, started and ran the North American branch. There are now between 180 and 190 members of the Barbara Pym Society in North America, and about 80 of us were sitting in the room. Clemence Schultze, chairman of the Barbara Pym Society, welcomed us and read from George Herbert's poem, "The Pulley," from which the title *A Glass of Blessings* was taken.

Tim Burnett gave the first paper, "St. Mary's, St. Luke's and Great St. Bart's: High Church in London, Then and Now." Tim recently visited All Saints, Notting Hill (St. Luke's in *A Glass of Blessings*), and St. Gabriel's, Warwick Square (St. Mary's in *Excellent Women*) and compared them today with how they were at the time Pym's novels were written. He also contrasted them with Great St. Bart's, his own church, which does not appear in the Pym novels, but which represents another strand of High Church Anglicanism. Tim has a wonderful ability for mimicry and his ear for accents is perfect

After Tim's paper, there was a long discussion about High church, Low church, "going over to Rome," and what it all means.

Next was Yvonne Cocking's paper: "WHAT IS MY NEXT NOVEL TO BE?" In 1955, Barbara Pym wrote those words in her notebook. She knew what she would like the beginning and the end to be, "but what about the middle?" In 1955, she heard the phone ring in her church, and that became the beginning. There are very few notes and no complete drafts for this book, making it difficult to trace its development.

Pym wasn't pleased with the reviews of this book, saying that "none were wholly good." Maggie Parsons and Martin Rush, both from England, read these reviews and did an excellent job of recreating the "voices" of the reviewers.

I must add here that you *have to* come to a conference and *hear* the presenters delivering their papers. They're so lively and humorous.

Here, we broke for a boxed lunch. The weather was warm and sunny, a really gorgeous day, so some of us

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ate in the courtyard, sitting on the grass or on benches and basking in the sun.

After lunch, we heard Eleonore Biber's talk entitled "Celibacy of the Clergy Has Always Been Our Motto: The Clergy House in *A Glass of Blessings*."

Eleonore, an expert on Anglo-Catholicism, told us that the Anglo-Catholic church is the high church movement of the Anglican church, and that Pym's friend, Robert Liddell said, "Pymdom is a predominately Anglo-Catholic country." Anglo-Catholics have always advocated celibacy of the clergy, but clergy don't *have to* be celibate today, according to rules passed at an earlier time. However, marriage is frowned on.

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

The next paper was "Food and Fashion in *A Glass of Blessings*," presented jointly by Laura Shapiro, dealing with food, and Sandra Goldstein with fashion.

Laura began by saying that food and fashion are two recurrent themes in Pym, who could be inspired by a pair of shoes or a piece of cake. Dulcie, in *No Fond Return of Love*, eats what she likes and is fundamentally at peace with herself. She is the most Pym-like character in her food choices. In Pym's novels, food was often used as a social class marker. Wilf Bason tries to move up in the world through food like scampi, escargots, and coq au vin, but Bird's Custard Powder, Indian tea, and the pink iced buns that Wilmet didn't feel able to "tackle" are the preferred foods of the plebeian Fr. Bode on whom Sole Véronique would be wasted.

Sandra Goldstein spoke next and said that, like Wilmet, Pym had an abiding passion for clothes. She was tall and nice-looking and always loved clothes, even when she was older. She likes to tell you what her heroines wear. To illustrate the fashions of the time, Sandra showed us photos of "The New Look," created by Dior and Hardy Amies, and other contemporary styles, and displayed clothes of the period from her own collection.

Next came a tea and coffee break with wonderful cakes baked by Laura - enough for 80-90 people! - among them sponges "as light as Sister Dew's" sandwich cakes with strawberry and lemon fillings, and the "sticky ginger cake" Barbara ate when she had tea with Lord David Cecil.

Following this delightful break, Dr. Isabel Stanley led a group discussion of *A Glass of Blessings,* and the day's program ended with a showing of several films, including for the first time Ellen Miller's documentary *Out of the Wilderness*, which she produced in the early 1980s. *Tea with Miss Pym* and *Miss Pym's Day Out* concluded the day's events.

Sunday morning started with Kristin Kelly's paper, "Don't Get Too Comfortable: The Pain of Idleness Under Cover of Sleek Wealth." What an interesting title! A substantial abridgement of her paper is on p. 10.

In the discussion which followed everybody seemed to agree that Sybil is a wonderful character. Someone said that Pym had an ambivalent view of marriage. I wondered about how Wilmet and Rodney would do in the future because their marriage seemed so banal.

The final event of the conference was a reading of "Remembering Scampi," Tom Sopko's expertly dramatized extracts mainly concerning Wilfred Bason from *A Glass of Blessings*. The cast included Scott Herrick, Clemence Schultze, Martin Rush, Tim Burnett, Tom Sopko, Dan DiPietro, Ted Poland and Yvonne Cocking

The characters were portrayed to great comic effect. There was much laughing out loud at Yvonne's portrayal of Wilmet's inner voice and Tim, as always, got Mr. Bason perfectly.

The reading started with the meeting in the churchyard of Wilmet and Fr. Thames when he was looking for a housekeeper. Next was the wonderful scene of Wilmet and Rodney's visit to the Clergy House on Boxing Day, as Wilf Bason's guests. Then, three scenes involving the Fabergé egg - Mr. Coleman coming to tell Wilmet about its theft, her meeting with Bason in the supermarket, and the return of the egg. The play ended in the antique shop/tea room where the Forsyths met Bason again, and Wilmet, reflecting on the reinstallment of Mrs. Greenhill in the Clergy House, "couldn't help feeling a little sad, remembering scampi and all the lovely things they had" when Bason was there.

The audience showed its appreciation with heartfelt applause and shouts of "bravo."

We thanked Tom and his helpers for organizing the conference, and then – the good-byes. It's hard to leave the friendship and camaraderie of a weekend of being enveloped in Pym World.

Barker Atrium—Photograph by Leland Scruby

All About Evensong

by Tom Sopko

The Anglican services or "offices" of Morning and Evening Prayer have their roots in the worship of monastic communities in the middle ages, whose members chanted prayers at regular intervals throughout the day. These complicated services, sung in Latin to elaborate Gregorian chant tunes, were not designed to be understood or participated in by lay people. During the 16th century English Reformation a deliberate effort was made to simplify the Daily Office so that both clergy and laity could participate. The eight daily monastic prayer services were reduced to two in the English church's new Book of Common Prayer: Morning Prayer was drawn from the services called Matins, Lauds and Prime (Morning Prayer was often called "Mattins" in England) and Evening Prayer combined the services of

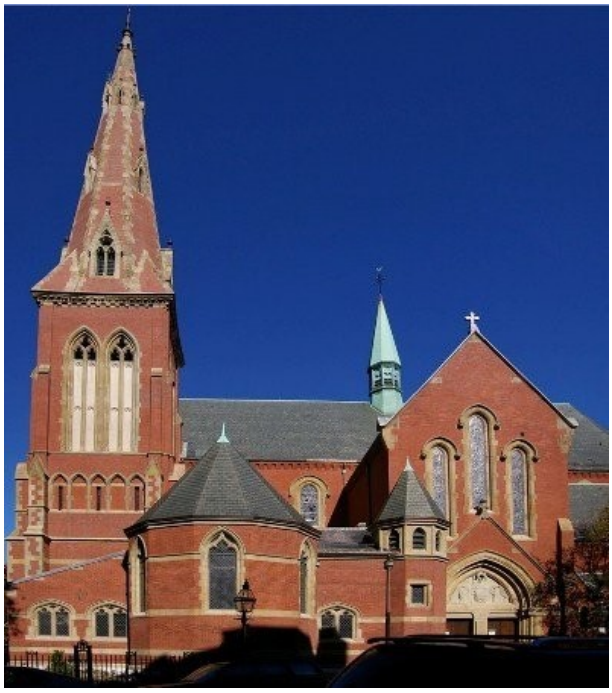
Photograph courtesy of J Bailey

Vespers and Compline. Both include a collection of fixed prayers and Biblical texts combined with cycles of readings from the Psalms and the Old and New Testaments. The services, often still read using the magnificent Elizabethan English of Thomas Cranmer, the Archbishop of Canterbury from 1532 to 1555, are conducted daily in many Anglican churches.

When characters in Barbara Pym novels speak of going to evensong, they usually mean a simple weekday service that is, paradoxically, not sung at all but rather read aloud by a priest or lay person. *Choral* evensong, where the service is actually sung by a cantor and choir, was confined to British cathedrals and college chapels that had resident choirs of men and boys until the late 19th century, when it became widespread on Sundays in parish churches as well. Musical settings for the service have been devised by great English composers since the Tudor era. The only mention of music in the 1662 Book of Common Prayer is in the orders for Morning and Evening Prayer: "In Quires and Places where they sing, here followeth the Anthem."

Psalmody is an important part of evensong. A different portion of the Psalter is said or sung every day according to a fixed schedule. The psalms are usually sung to Anglican chant, which was invented during the English Reformation and is similar to Gregorian chant in that most of the words of each verse are sung to the same repeated "reciting tone," to accommodate texts of varying length and meter. But unlike Gregorian chant, Anglican chant is in four-part harmony, and most of the chants have four sections. This mirrors the parallel structure of Hebrew poetry: each verse is divided into two halves, and the verses are in pairs, with the second verse answering the first. Longer psalms are often sung to more than one chant setting.

In Anglo-Catholic churches, the quintessentially English service of Evensong is often followed by Benediction of the Blessed Sacrament, a ceremony dating back to the 13th century which was specifically banned by the English Reformers but which, like many ancient Catholic practices, was reintroduced into the Anglican church by the 19th century "high church" Oxford Movement. Benediction involves the display of a consecrated communion host in a special vessel called a monstrance. The sacrament is treated with great reverence and is venerated with elaborate ceremonies, special chants and incense. The priest blesses the congregation with the consecrated host.



Kronos at Harvard

The Conference proceedings took place this year in the Thompson Room of the Harvard University's Barker Center for the Humanities, once part of the Freshman Union. On 20th December 1906 the following article appeared in the Harvard *Crimson* newspaper:

Statue of "Kronos" Unveiled in Union

At the reception to Freshmen in the Union last night, a statue of "Kronos," designed by F. E. Elwell, and presented to the Union by A. F. Elwell '10 and S. B. Elwell '10, was unveiled in the southwest corner of the Living Room. Mr. W. C. Lane '81, Librarian of the University, announced the gift and briefly described its significance.

The statue is a plaster model of a colossal figure exhibited at the Pan-American Exposition at Buffalo in 1901. Kronos is represented with out-stretched wings, symbolic of the apparently swift flight of time, but standing on the back of a turtle, as significant of its slow progress. The face is covered with a veil, emblematic of mystery.

According to the plaque on the base, "Kronos (Time) with veiled face, moves forward inevitably whether on swift wing or at the pace of a turtle. He holds in his hands all things that we know.

Photograph by Leland Scruby

Francis Edwin Elwell (1858-1922) was an American sculptor born in Concord, Massachusetts. He received his first instruction in art from Louisa May Alcott's sister, Abigail May Alcott. In 1881 he moved to Paris to study at the École des Beaux-Arts and later privately with Alexandre Falguière. Elwell later studied under Daniel Chester French and shared a studio with him in New York City. Elwell's works are numerous and varied. He exhibited at the 1893 World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago, and later served as curator of ancient and modern sculpture at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City.

A large bejeweled egg Fabergé-style egg had pride of place in the wine bar at the Friday night dinner, and mysteriously appeared in various locations in the Thompson Room during the conference. (Fr. Thames was unconcerned, sure that it would return to his study eventually.) The mixed-media egg, commissioned especially for the conference, was fabricated in the atelier of Sopko & Cie of Cambridge, Massachusetts, and has been donated to a private collector in London.

Photograph by Leland Scruby

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

St. Mary's, St. Luke's, and Great St. Barts: High Church in London, Then and Now

by Tim Burnett

The Anglo-Catholic Parishes of St Gabriel's Warwick Square in Pimlico, and All Saints Notting Hill in North Kensington are depicted by Barbara as St Mary's in *Excellent Women* and as St Luke's in *A Glass of Blessings*.

What do we know about St Luke's? "It was dark and warm inside the church and there was a strong smell of incense." Wilmet attends a social evening at the church hall which gives her a chance to assess the different strands in the life of the parish. "I noticed the lay people had arranged themselves in little groups… There was old Mrs Beamish… surrounded by various elderly ladies in yellowish-brown fur coats… I also noticed two well-dressed middle-aged women with a young girl…All three were chinless, with large aristocratic noses… In the middle of the room stood the three clergy."

Ceremonial is important at St Luke's. Celibacy is also an important issue. Mary Beamish, shortly before revealing to Wilmet that Father Ransome has proposed to her, exclaims, "I mean, it would be unthinkable to have a married priest at St Luke's."

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

On the first Sunday in Lent I went to All Saints Notting Hill. On the inside of the cover of the service sheet is written "All Saints Notting Hill / Church of England Diocese of London / A *Forward in Faith* Parish 'with a Vision for Unity and Truth' / Under the Episcopal Care of the Bishop of Fulham." *Forward in Faith* is an organisation representing that wing of Anglo-Catholicism which objects strongly to the ordination of women as priests, let alone bishops, and is not too keen on gays either. They are headed up by John Broadhurst, Suffragan Bishop of Fulham.

The Vicar, Father John Brownsell SSC [Society of the Holy Cross], is a splendidly Pymian figure with a large stomach under his chasuble, on top of which he could rest his joined hands, and an upper class accent. That was about all that remained of Barbara Pym's St Luke's. The congregation was about 80% black, including the assistant priest, and it was clear that the parish was not well endowed. The real sting, however, came in the tail. "Our bishops (presumably meaning those that adhere to *Forward in Faith*) have asked for a **Day of Prayer** to consider the future for traditional Catholic parishes such as ours in the light of the Pope's invitation to us to enter into full communion with the Catholic Church."

In *Excellent Women*, a less churchy novel than *A Glass of Blessings*, Mildred lives in a "shabby part of London, so very much the `wrong' side of Victoria Station, so definitely *not* Belgravia." Mildred had chosen St Mary's because it was `High'. When Mildred tells Rocky Napier about the church he exclaims, "High Mass – with music and incense? Oh, I should like that. I hope it is the *best* quality incense? I believe it varies… And have you dozens of glamorous acolytes?" "Well," hesitates Mildred, remembering Teddy Lemon, our Master of Ceremonies, with his rough curly hair and anxious face, and his troop of well-drilled, tough-looking little boys, "they are very nice good boys, but perhaps you should go to a Kensington church if you want to see glamorous acolytes."

On the third Sunday in Lent I attended the 10.30 am Parish Mass at St Gabriel's, Warwick Square. St Gabriel's is a much more Pymian affair than poor All Saints. There was even an elderly lady in a long black fur coat with matching beret. Everything was in immaculate order, and the congregation was overwhelmingly white and middle class. Despite what Mildred keeps saying about the ugliness of its interior, the church is a fine one, very wide and light. As at All Saints, the Mass stuck pretty closely to the text of Common Worship, but St Gabriel's, despite also being a *Forward in Faith* parish, appeared to be further from Rome. There was no mention of the Pope.

How do the contemporary parishes compare with those that inspired Barbara Pym? It is clear that All Saints has gone down in the world, socially speaking, while St Gabriel's has come up. South Pimlico is now perfectly respectable. All Saints, on the other hand, as described by Barbara, was then the really rather grand parish. It is, of course, one of the nobler aspects of Anglo-Catholicism that its churches were very often built in deprived districts, bringing beauty to those who had access to very little. With the passage of time the demographic can change.

A major concern of Anglo-Catholics which features in the novels and continues today is that of the Apostolic Succession. For *Forward in Faith* nowadays, only males may be validly ordained to the priesthood and episcopate. For Anglo-Catholics in Barbara's day, the concern

was the Church of South India, the result of the union of churches of varying traditions, Anglican, Methodist, Congregational, Prebyterian and Reformed.

I attend Great St Bartholomew's. It doesn't appear in Barbara's works, but it may be interesting as representing another strand of High Church Anglicanism. The Parish, being within the City of London, is non-residential, the congregation coming from all over London. They are overwhelmingly middle-class. The parish is very well endowed and funded, and the services are truly magnificent. The text of the service is in the stately language of the Book of Common Prayer, except that when parts of the service are sung to settings by the great composers they are in the original Latin – as, indeed, is the Nicene Creed. There is, however, no problem with women priests, and the Rector got into terrible hot water with the Bishop of London for blessing the union of two gay priests in a service that was dangerously close to the marriage service. The strand of High Church Anglicanism to which we adhere is, I believe, that called "Affirming Catholicism", which accepts liberal theology and the ordination of women, and has progressive attitudes towards homosexuality. It is thus very different from All Saints and St Gabriel's, and I believe that we are very unlikely to feel the need to "go over to Rome".

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2010-2011

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WHAT IS MY NEXT NOVEL TO BE?

by Yvonne Cocking

On 10th October 1954 Barbara Pym wrote, "Today finished my fourth novel about the anthropologists." Having had three well-reviewed novels published in the previous four years, Barbara embarked on her fifth with no misgivings about its acceptance by her publisher, but also with no clear idea of a subject. In May the following year she wrote in her notebook, in capital letters,"WHAT IS MY NEXT NOVEL TO BE?"

In answer she writes, "It can begin with the shrilling of the telephone bell in a church, and end with a flame springing up on Easter Saturday in the dark church ... But what about the middle?"

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

Barbara heard a telephone ring in St. Mary Aldermary church on 6th April 1955. The telephone call and speculation on its nature – a hostess asking one of the priests to luncheon or a cocktail party, perhaps – made an arresting starting point for *A Glass of Blessings.*

In the Pym Archive in the Bodleian Library there is only one small notebook relating to this novel, headed 'The Lime Tree Bower' (afterwards called 'A Glass of Blessings').

This notebook begins with a scene in a church

"It could be a lunch time mass in a City church, a sparse congregation of office workers glad of the opportunity to fulfil their religious duties without too much inconvenience, and to hear, through the incense and the Sanctus bell the shrill whine of the telephone."

Then she outlines a plot, a scene alternating between London and the Riviera, in which an Anglican vicar, taking over temporarily from a chaplain in France, brings a party from his own parish; some unpleasantness arises between his group and the resident congregation. This theme, however, was not pursued.

Next she considers some characters.

"The narrator – a widow or perhaps even divorced ... 39 years old, has lost her husband in the war and now grown used to her state." She works for a firm of publishers and printers of learned books ... "Three of them in the department, two women, one man. Miss Enright who has never married; I, who had married but had not borne children, and Piers Longridge, 'brilliant' because he had a degree ... Perhaps the narrator falls in love with Piers."

Fr. Thames, vicar of the church in question, is thought to have been based on Fr. Twisady, the real-life vicar of All Saints Church, Notting Hill, which also has a clergy house.

The new curate was at first to marry an 'unsuitable' wife, who leaves him for somebody else. Later he was to be "rather tiresome and unstable – wanting to go over to Rome, or to marry, or to enter a religious community."

After starting as a widow or divorcee, Wilmet soon emerges as the Anglo-catholic wife, with a "solid broad-church husband, an agnostic mother-in law, and a comfortable and idle life style."

Wilfred Bason was first conceived as Edward Herbert Gossage, a male cook-housekeeper of 'gentle birth', but Barbara crossed out this name, and evidently ditched the 'gentle birth' as well. But the idea of him as a petty thief occurred to her quite early.

Some characters are changed little from their first introduction. Piers, who has some likeness to an Oxford acquaintance, was a proof-reader from the start. Keith who is described as "a friend of Piers who shares his flat – crew cut and windcheater." And Mary Beamish, "a splendid little woman on committees, blood donor, church warden. Perhaps with an elderly mother who dies, then she is liberated,"

Actual incidents in Barbara's life often became embedded in her plots. One in this novel was the giving of blood. (She was Rhesus Negative). Another was the Portuguese lessons. After a holiday in Portugal, Barbara records her "first Portuguese class at Kings' College." Miss Prideaux's mauve cardigan that Wilmet had sent to a jumble sale can be compared with the notebook entry, "At the Women's University Settlement I see Miss Casson wearing a dress that I sent to the jumble sale some time ago – and very nice it looks."

After many changes of name, the main characters of the novel are established. The notebook ends with Father Ransome going to lodge with the Beamishes. There are no notes about later developments in the book. Barbara must surely have written several drafts, but they have not survived.

A Glass of Blessings appeared on 14th April 1958 to mainly lukewarm reviews, but Robert Liddell and Philip Larkin both praised it highly, and their opinion would have compensated for any lack for warmth from others.

"Celibacy of the Clergy Has Always Been our Motto."

The Clergy House of St Luke's

by Eleonore Biber

The all-pervasive influence of the Anglican church is a distinctive feature of Pym's work. *A Glass of Blessings,* which she originally called *The Clergy House,* is richly churchy. The plot of the novel revolves around the parish of St Luke's and its clergy house. Instead of *rectory, vicarage* or *parsonage* some Anglo-Catholics use the terms *clergy house* or *presbytery*.

Initially reserved, Wilmet gradually makes the acquaintance of the three clergymen of St Luke's: the epicurean rector Father Thames, "mild, dumpy" Father Bode and the strikingly attractive newcomer Father Ransome who lodges temporarily with the Beamishes. A new addition to the clergy house is Wilf Bason, a man of aesthetic interests and a gourmet cook for the priests.

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

In the Church of England the obligation to celibacy of the clergy was abolished in 1549, but Anglo-Catholics have always advocated celibacy. The strong, ideological norm that Catholic clergy should not marry is expressed in the Anglo-Catholic phrase "committing matrimony", suggesting an act not far short of adultery. Both Father Thames, the priest, and Bason, the layman, are staunch supporters of the celibacy of the clergy. When Father Ransome announces his marriage to Mary Beamish, Bason comments on the shock this has caused at the clergy house: "Celibacy of the clergy has always been our motto."

A number of details in the novel show that Pym's life and novels are linked in a complex way. The authentic portrait of the Anglo-Catholic milieu is mainly based on her church crawls with her friend Robert Smith. Pym treats the subject with her distinctive blend of detached humour and subtle irony.

Summary of a paper given at the North American Conference, 20th March 2010. Full text available on www.barbara-pym.org.

Fashion in *A Glass of Blessings*

by Sandra Goldstein

Wilmet Forsyth, the central character in *A Glass of Blessings,* tells us: "I always take trouble with my clothes, and being tall and dark I usually manage to achieve some kind of distinction. Today I was in pale coffee brown with touches of black and coral jewellery." Like Wilmet, the young Barbara Pym was tall and good-looking, and when she went up to Oxford in 1931 she indulged what her friend Hazel Holt called an "abiding passion" for clothes. Here is Pym's breathlessly enthusiastic description of an evening at a fashionable Oxford restaurant: "Went out to dinner at the George with Harry...I wore blue lace -- with three real red roses pinned on to the front. Also my long crystal earrings and make-up to match the roses. Very nice!"

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

A Glass of Blessings is set in the 1950s, a time of new beginnings and affluence in Britain. Wilmet, always immaculately dressed, exemplifies the elegance and sophistication that returned to fashion after wartime austerity. One cannot imagine Wilmet ever dressing casually, like *Less Than Angels'* Catherine Oliphant, who liked "flat-heeled shoes and loose jackets," or *Excellent Women*'s Helena Napier, "gaily dressed in corduroy trousers and a bright jersey." At the opposite extreme, Keith's "black jeans and a blue tartan shirt," which Wilmet found "absurd," represents the emergence of a fashion cult for young people, influenced by American styles.

Pym describes clothes not only as amusing vignettes, but as keys to character and personality. Wilf Bason's transformed appearance in his antique teashop underlines his innate silliness.: "He had grown a beard -- egg-shaped...to match his face -- and was wearing a loose blue smock, corduroy trousers and sandals." Miss Prideaux, in her old-fashioned hat and jumble sale cardi-on a Surrey roadside." She appears to take just as much pleasure in the spectacle of the occasion as in the occasion itself.

Invited to tea by Piers, Wilmet sets out in an elated mood on a sunny day in May: "I wore a dress of deep coral-coloured poplin, very simple, with a pair of coral and silver earrings, and a bracelet to match... I felt at my best now and wondered if people were looking at me as I passed them." She suffers a crushing blow when she meets Keith and realizes it is he, in his "absurd" jeans and tartan shirt, who is the object of Piers' affection. For a while her mood is subdued and she even confides to Mary that "perhaps it's one's demeanour rather than one's dress that matters."

In Pym's view, clothes do oft proclaim the woman. The more elegantly dressed characters are more confident and attractive to men than the dowdy ones. To Barbara Pym they also reflected character and personality, they conveyed a way of life, and with the right clothes one's life could go right too. But Barbara Pym's characters' lives, like her own, are not as two-dimensional as a fashion photograph in *Vogue*. Dowdy Mary Beamish, who has not found it necessary to change her appearance, sums it up when she tells Wilmet: "Life is perfect now! I've everything I want. I keep thinking it's like a glass of blessings."

Summary of a paper given at the North American Conference, 20th March 2010. Full text available on www.Barbara-pym.org.

Food in *A Glass of Blessings*

by Laura Shapiro

Sandra Goldstein and I met last year right here in Cambridge, and discovered within about a minute that we were each drawn to a particular passion of Barbara Pym's – in Sandra's case the detailed attention to clothes that runs straight through Pym's work, and in my case her fascination with food. And about one minute after that, we decided to work up a joint presentation for an upcoming conference where we could not only discuss food and fashion *per se* in Pym's work, but together make an argument for the power of these themes, and how strikingly they capture the social and emotional substance of a moment, a person, a past, a relationship.

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

Nothing irritates me more than the use of the word "trivial" to describe all those elements of daily life that enthralled Barbara Pym, that she observed and jotted down in her journals and wove into her fiction. When Pym puts a pair of shoes on the page, or a piece of cake, it's not just because they amuse her. It's because they inspire her. She's looking at them and seeing entire personalities captured in their precise time and place; she's seeing the delineation of a social class; she's seeing complicated emotional interactions that other novelists take pages to capture. These elements of the daily round – what people wear, what people eat – are the reason she's a writer in the first place. They're the fuel that keeps her imagination pumping, they're the ground she covfirst meet in a market where Keith brings up the embarrassing subject of custard powder. "'Custard powder?' exclaimed Piers in horror. 'Good God, whatever do we want custard powder for?'" Then we come to Keith's carefully laid tea table, with its doilies, and the paper napkins set across the plates, and the generic party food, as unappetizing to Wilmet as the cakes she had rejected at the parish hall; but which out of politeness and awkwardness she feels bound to eat.

Earlier in the novel Wilmet had been thinking how groups of people could be classified according to drink, for instance martini-drinkers – clearly they would be sophisticated, ironic, and charmingly dressed, like Wilmet – and tea-drinkers, who spent a lot of time at church functions and probably ran the jumble sale. By the end of the book she's become a bit more of a tea-drinker, though whether she ever develops a fondness for garish pink-and-white iced cakes is left entirely to our imagination.

Laura Shapiro *is a writer and culinary historian. Her books* include Perfection Salad: Women and Cooking at the Turn of the Century; Something from the Oven: Reinventing Dinner in 1950s America, *and* Julia Child. *This year she is a Fellow at the Cullman Center for Scholars and Writers at the New York Public Library. She started reading Barbara Pym more than thirty years ago and just never stopped.*

Summary of a paper given at the North American Conference, 20th March 2010. Full text available on www.Barbara-pym.org.

Photograph by Leland Scruby

Don't Get Too Comfortable: The Pain of Idleness under Cover of Sleek Wealth

by Kristin G. Kelly

At some point, life must be about more than tea and shopping. Most of us are forced into this realisation sooner rather than later, but Wilmet Forsyth at the dawn of her thirty-third year is just beginning to feel the pain of a life without any real obligations. *A Glass of Blessings* traces Wilmet's quest for purpose in life as she wearies of luxury and idleness.

Wilmet is sheltered by class and affluence, and by the infantilisation with which most of her friends and family collude. When she begins to question her own idleness and expresses feelings of worthlessness, those close to her, even the notoriously plainspoken Sybil, soothe her ruminations with observations such as "You seem to fill your days quite happily." Wilmet wanders throughout London's tonier shops and throughout much of her young life, often bored but usually unwilling to paint herself as such. She lacks adult experiences and openly chastises herself for being naïve. For example, when Mr. Coleman comes to speak to her about Mr. Bason's theft of Father Thames' Fabérge egg, Wilmet feels particularly useless, marking time until Sybil and Rodney return home so that she can share her news with them and ask for their more qualified opinions: "They, with their greater experience of what is known as the seamy side of life, would no doubt be able to decide what was the best course of action to follow. Sybil's work at the Settlement and Rodney's at the Ministry and with his men in the Army, had equipped them better than my sheltered years at home and my brief spell of gaiety serving my country in the Wrens. I began to be ashamed of my lack of experience—I had not had a lover before I married, I had no children, I wasn't even asked to clean the brasses or arrange the flowers in church."

She seeks to expand her experience by becoming acquainted with Piers' theoretically sad and seamy existence, and she yearns to be his saviour and the object of his adoration. Much to her chagrin, Piers does not allow her to play either role.

One May afternoon, she is to meet Piers in the park. Instead of having a romantic assignation in the balmy air, she finds that Piers is accompanied by his lover, Keith. When she expresses shock that he might actually associate with a magazine model such as Keith, the exasperated Piers explains that *someone* must pose for knitting patterns and women's magazines. Wilmet assents, but adds that it should not be "people one actually *knows*." Wilmet's classist ideals shake as Piers retorts: "Not people *you* know, you mean, but there *are* others in the world—in fact quite a few million people outside the narrow select little circle that makes up Wilmet's world.'

Once, considering extreme measures to combat idleness, Wilmet even imagines herself taking tea in regular intervals in a cosy office, but mundane office work is of course not an option. Wilmet is not enamoured of charity work either, and she is rather bored by the ritual goodness exemplified by Mary Beamish and others at the Settlement. In fact, Mary provides the most uncomfortable contrast to Wilmet's life of material luxury; she is a perfect foil. Yet however uncomfortable Mary Beamish makes Wilmet feel, Wilmet will not consider becoming Mary Beamish. She must find another outlet for self-expression other than blood-letting and serving fish to old people.

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

With Harry Talbot's infatuation and the promise of other afternoon walks in the park by the furniture depository with Piers, Wilmet's new year seems suddenly promising, although stating her new objectives bluntly proves awkward: (1) bask in the adulation of your best friend's husband and (2) continue pursuing entanglements with that same friend's brother. It is a problematic agenda but provides cheer all the same. Coupled with new promises to Mary to give blood, Wilmet sees herself coming alive again. "I had the pleased and comfortable feeling I used to have after parties in Italy when I had been admired and cherished ... There seemed at that moment no limit to what I could do."

Church provides another temporary antidote to ennui and misgiving, giving Wilmet a sense of connection and a taste of the everlasting. The happy circumstance of being able to suggest Mr. Bason, so unsuited for the Ministry, as domestic help for the clergy house excites Wilmet, who is hopeful that she might provide the solution to the priests' vexing housekeeping problem. She imagines the glories that will follow: "Father Thames might announce it from the pulpit one Sunday morning. How proud I should feel—as if there were some justification for my life after all!"

Perhaps Wilmet might have come to these musings about meaning and desire earlier if she had not been so entirely sheltered. But Rodney and Wilmet still live as children in his mother's house. This is not an altogether

unpleasant existence, but Sybil eventually pushes them out of the nest when she surprisingly decides to marry Professor Root. Then the children will have to find their own house, a fact about which they feel querulous at first. But Rodney and Wilmet get over their shock in time, and they purchase a home "a stone's throw from Sybil's house and a good hundred yards nearer the clergy house", and Pym implies the possibility of marital renewal. But first Wilmet must weather another shock.

Wilmet is stunned late in the novel when Rodney confesses he had taken a certain Miss Bates (Prudence Bates of *Jane and Prudence*) to dinner and had sat with her on an uncomfortable Regency sofa in her flat. Wilmet and Rodney share a great laugh about this, Wilmet managing to slip in the lunches with Harry and Piers she had likewise forgotten to mention, but then Wilmet's melancholy reappears: "I had always regarded Rodney as the kind of man who would never look at another woman. The fact that he could—and had indeed done so—ought to teach me something about myself, even if I was not quite sure what it was."

Wilmet's realization about Rodney is indeed a further catalyst for self-knowledge. She will be pushed into admitting that she knows, in fact, very little of the world around her; she must see that she willed herself into believing that Piers lived with a colleague from the press and not a handsome young man who fusses about him. She did not prophesy the impending marriage of Mary Beamish and Marius Ransome, and she certainly never imagined her husband sitting on Regency furniture with another quite young woman. Her flirting and wandering left her unprepared to imagine these happenings because they took place completely outside her purview. When she returns from the convent Mary Beamish senses Wilmet's disappointment and loss of confidence.

Wilmet remembered that Harry "had seen my air of sadness as something appealing. To have Mary notice it made me feel dreary and depressed." Then she cuts closer to the bone: "Life isn't all it's cracked up to be," I said rather frivolously. "And then sometimes you discover that you aren't as nice as you thought you were—that you're in fact rather a horrid person, and that's humiliating somehow." Suddenly, the novel has replicated in Wilmet's life what happens in so many others: first years of thinking well of oneself and one's charms, and then a painful realization that one is not the centre of the universe. It is possible to come back from these painful awakenings, as Wilmet will, but the journey will only begin with the new fire of Easter and a certain gratitude for blessings once discounted or completely ignored. Sceptical readers should remember that it is Wilmet who identifies the George Herbert quotation to which Mary alludes at Marius Ransome's induction. Mary is radiant: "Oh Wilmet, life is perfect now! I've everything I could possibly want. I keep thinking that it's like a glass of blessings—life, I mean."Wilmet knows that her life is potentially just as full. She has been offered a glass of blessings overflowing with beauty and pleasure, but God has wisely withheld the rest. Gradually, drawn as if by a pulley, she has come closer to authentic human experience not cushioned by indulgence and luxury. She, because of her restlessness and misplaced desires, has suffered humiliation and recognition in the sense of the Greek playwrights. She has managed to face her disappointments and has turned to her husband, actually not all that dull, and moved even 100 yards nearer her church. There will soon be a new vicar at St. Luke's, and Wilmet may enter a new season, strengthened by the New Fire and living out new convictions. The restlessness occasioned by idleness and luxury has had purpose in her life because she did not ultimately deny her waywardness and concomitant misery. God has drawn her closer to the possibility of a fruitful life as she has drawn closer to Him.

In "The Pulley" God says of Man,

> Let him be rich and wearie, that at least,
> If goodnesse leade him not, yet wearinesse
> May tosse him to my breast.

A Glass of Blessings is full of Wilmet's richness and weariness, but the novel ends with Wilmet's hope as she looks ahead to the days to come.

Dr. Kristin Kelly *teaches English at Gainesville State College in Oakwood, Georgia. She has been an obsessive Pym reader for at least a dozen years after discovering Pym while writing her dissertation on T.S. Eliot's conversion to Anglo-Catholicism. Her current research interest is particularly un-Pymish: the combat experience in literature.*

Shortened version of a paper given at the North American Conference, 21st March 2010. Full text available on www.Barbara-pym.org.

Save the Date

The thirteenth annual North American Conference will be held on 18-20 March 2011 at Harvard University in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

The conference will focus on **No Fond Return of Love**.

Call for Papers

The North American organizing committee is looking for speakers for the March 2011 conference. Preference will be given to papers dealing with aspects of **No Fond Return of Love**, *but other topics are also welcome.*

Please send a 100-150 word proposal to

barbarapymsociety@gmail.com

by 1 December 2010.

PD James at the Oxford Literary Festival – 27 March 2010

by Deborah Fisher

The day starts well enough. In good time I seek out my friend ("Disgusted, Tunbridge Wells") at the appointed place – "the coffee shop above the Newman bookshop, you can't miss it". You can, actually, since it's now a Chinese restaurant. Five minutes later, "Disgusted" rings. The train from T. Wells was delayed; I will have to leave her ticket on the door.

It seems so unfair, when I have heard PD James talk about Barbara Pym on two previous occasions and particularly wanted to share the experience. Thankfully, BP Soc members are here in force. The announcer apologises if the welcome is a little "too warm". (*She* wasn't at Oswestry!)

Two lines of poetry I was forced to learn at school come to mind: "Spare, nimble, Hawtrey-like/He climbed into the pulpit's dyke". Not that Phyllis – as we know her - looks anything like Saunders Lewis, but she certainly does look spare and nimble, and *incredibly* good for an 89-year-old. She begins in her usual modest, yet commanding style, claiming to feel inadequate in the presence of so many experts – by which, we suddenly realise, she means *us*, the members of the Barbara Pym Society!

Since three-quarters of the audience of 300 plus did not have the same level of expertise, much of the lecture focused on Barbara's life, and rightly so. It is essential to have some knowledge of her life to appreciate fully the way she used it in her work. From the moment she arrived at Oxford ("bouncing along", as one contemporary put it), every experience was turned into art. "Nothing that happened to her," said Phyllis, "went unexamined." From her failed romance with Henry Harvey to her traumatic affair with Gordon Glover, there was nothing that was not plundered for her works of fiction. If she has gone to a High Anglican heaven, it was suggested, her first thought must have been, "Plenty of material here!"

The story of her rejection by publishers in the early 1960s caused great indignation when it became publicly known in the late 1970s. PD had recently met Tom Maschler, who still finds it hard to understand why he is so widely blamed for Barbara's wilderness years, and had interrogated him on the subject. Many of the audience hoped out loud that she had given Maschler as hard a time as she gave BBC Director-General Mark Thompson on Radio 4 a few months ago.

Yet Phyllis is realistic in her admiration of Barbara Pym. The "literary immortality of a distinctive voice" was, she says, granted to Pym, but she does not consider her the equal of Jane Austen, with whom she is sometimes compared. Although they are both ironists, Austen's are novels of change whereas Pym's characters have only the hope or expectation of being taken out of their often humdrum lives.

For a woman born in 1913 (and Barbara was only seven years older than Phyllis, so she knows what she is talking about), marriage was considered a natural status. Did Barbara perhaps feel it would have interfered with her career? The female characters in Pym's books seem to expect little of life and marriage, and Phyllis suggested that none of the romantic anguish that Barbara felt in real life finds its way into her books – despite the fact that her characters are so unmistakably based on real life.

"Disgusted" eventually arrived shortly before the end of the lecture, saying she felt less deprived on the grounds that question time is always the most interesting part of such events. Nicolette Jones, hosting on behalf of the St Hilda's Media Network, asked Phyllis about the possible influence of Pym on her own work. The only resemblance our speaker would confess to is a concern with clarity of language, of which James and Pym are both exemplars.

Another member of the audience came up with a question I would have liked to ask. Did PD James think that Barbara Pym's work would endure? I was pleased with the answer, too. Like Austen, Trollope and other authors of past centuries, Pym's novels are becoming "period" literature, but the stories are timeless. If readers were going to lose interest in Pym on the grounds of her being old-fashioned (something she was already being accused of in the mid-1960s), they would have done so by now. The world today is comparatively alien and complicated, and becoming more so by the day. Pym, it seems, represents a beacon of permanence in such surroundings.

The Spoken Word

Two new unabridged recordings of Barbara Pym novels in three formats are now available from Magna Story Sound.

No Fond Return of Love, read by Maggie Mash, with a listening time of approx. 10 hours 35 minutes, may be had in 8 cassettes (£42.50), 9 CDs (£45.50) or 2 MP3 CDs (£45.50)

Excellent Women, read by Gerry Halligan & Jonathan Keeble, with a listening time of approx. 8 hours, may be had in 6 Cassettes (£31.95), 7 CDs (£39.50) or 1 MP3 CD (£39.50)

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NB. VAT will be added at the current rate.

From the Archives
Barbara's Box

by Yvonne Cocking

Barbara wrote in her diary on Wednesday, 3rd April 1940

"This morning I polished up an old box I found upstairs - it is of walnut with black and yellow inlay and a brass crest on the lid. It makes a beautiful box for relics – so in went all the letters, pressed flowers, Niersteiner corks, handkerchiefs, Tilia platyphyllos etc. It will still hold a few more letters, though it is quite nicely filled. I wonder what will happen to it. If I were to die tomorrow I should either have it sent back to him [Julian Amery] or buried with me [probably the latter] – but as it does not seem very likely that I shall, I daresay it may be in my possession for years and years, until one day it becomes junk again and the box returns to the place where I found it – perhaps with the relics still in it ... "

Barbara gave this box to Kay Phelps, a friend in Finstock, in the later 1970s, and Kay donated it to the Barbara Pym Society at the Conference dinner at St. Hilda's on 11th August 2007. It is now part of the Society's Archives and Memorabilia.

Photograph by Gloria Nakamura

Diary of a Provincial Pymmite

by Clemence Schultze

Awake at 5 am to light flooding through picture windows; realise that I am in Boston and the Barbara Pym conference begins today. Apartment on 34th floor provides magnificent view of sunrise over Charles River. Appreciate this for a time on my own; then rouse Husband (evidently less affected than myself by jetlag) and urge him to Appreciate It Too. Slight reluctance on his part is overcome by a good strong coffee.

Proceedings begin with impressive Evensong service: magnificent setting, ordered liturgy and fine singing. A truly Pymmian touch is added by the presence in the choir ranks of a noble and well-behaved dog, obviously accustomed to conducting his mistress there. This – like a telephone ringing in church – is not something one has often (if ever) encountered.

The entire conference runs with the apparently effortless ease which conceals months of rigorous pre-planning and much heedful attention on the actual days. Spell of brilliant spring weather adds to the enjoyment, and everyone is delighted by surroundings, papers, meals and appurtenances. (*Mem*. Could not UK Pym conference try to emulate its cousin in the stylish unity given by the display and graphic items?) And throughout both days, a superb 'Fabergé' egg comes and goes for 'those that have eyes to see'.

Rest of stay (spent in Washington DC) is devoted to Nature and Culture in equal shares. The former comprises cherry blossom, magnolias, orchids, and notable gardens (hard to believe everything was under deep snow two months previously!); the latter, opera, theatre, museums, galleries and – it must be confessed – shopping. Husband wonderfully patient throughout this, only occasionally asking Whether I Have Made My Mind Up Yet? Luckily, most important purchase is spotted by us both simultaneously at the wonderful Textile Museum, and becomes his present to me for a memorable Significant Birthday.

No Soft Incense: Barbara Pym and the Church. *Edited by Hazel K. Bell*

Catholic Herald, 17 June 2005: "Not since Anthony Trollope's Barchester novels has the Church of England received such minute and detailed treatment in fiction."

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Pym Gleanings

by Yvonne Cocking

Thanks to Alex Ward (at whose school Richmal Crompton had taught classics) for spotting this item from *The Times*, 14th November 2009, in an article about Crompton's lasting success with *Just William* 'potboilers' as compared with her 'adult' novels.

> *'Crompton regretted her forced retirement from adult fiction after Hutchinson's publication of* ***The Inheritor*** *in 1960. "There's not much call nowadays for quiet stories about families and village life – that's rather a vanished world", she apparently told a friend. Her bitterness echoes that of other women novelists, among them Barbara Pym and Dorothy Whipple, who found themselves victims of the market forces of the postwar social revolution.'*

Michael Wilson, our indefatigable scrutiniser of *The Daily Telegraph*, sent this item of 27th February 2010 by Christopher Howse, *A Barbara Pym village in Devon,* particularly apt in view of the recent Pym North American Conference highlighting *A Glass of Blessings.*

> *'After Gambier Lowe became rector of Throwleigh, Devon, the rumour went round that he rode a donkey through the church on Palm Sunday. For Fr Lowe was High, indeed an Anglo-Catholic, and anything, almost, could be believed of his services ...Gambier Lowe arrived in Throwleigh (the "ow" being pronounced like a cry of pain) in 1895 and stayed until 1933, when he died, only to be succeeded by an even Higher incumbent, that rare breed, an Anglican Papalist.*
>
> *Lowe's own life reads like a Barbara Pym novel. He was no slum parson, but remade the churchmanship of the Devon village of 300 people principally by building houses for prosperous worshippers glad to move to an "advanced" parish offering "Full Catholic Privileges", of the kind Barbara Pym found at St. Michael, Barnes'.*

Those interested in Anglo-Catholicism would enjoy the complete article, which includes the following: 'Fr Lowe's story forms a chapter in the estimable *Outposts of the Faith* (Canterbury Press, £22.99) by Michael Yelton, a judge by trade and a keen historian of the wilder shores of Anglo-Catholicism'.

Another regular contributor, Sheila Kane, noted this in Susan Hill's *Howards End is on the Landing* (Profile Books, 2009), writing on women's novels:

> *The sum of these women's novels is almost always greater than their parts, as was discovered when Lord David Cecil presented Barbara Pym to the world all over again in a* ***Times Literary Supplement*** *article about unjustly neglected writers. The poet Philip Larkin championed her in the same place and, as a result, she had a late flowering into bestsellerdom in the 1970s. They were precisely the kind of books my mother would have borrowed and better than many that she did. Pym's world of stuttering curates, wistful spinsters and awkward bachelors, of North Oxford and small country parishes, is superficially bland and narrow. What makes it of greater importance is her trenchant eye, her detached and sometimes mordant vision of these well-meaning, fumbling people at odds with so much of lif.e She is good on petty jealousy, hidden sorrow,, unvoiced love, genteel regret, middle-class poverty. And on curates. 'Would I like Barbara Pym? Where should I start?' Anywhere, really. Try* ***Quartet in Autumn****. On the other hand, start with* ***Jane and Prudence.*** *You will know within, say, thirty pages, whether she is your cup of tea or not, and if not, that is probably that ... if you like her, just read on.*

Sheila also sent in this piece from David Kynaston's *A Vanished Britain* (Bloomsbury, 2009). Speaking of the role of women in the 1950s he says:

> *The ideal ... of feminine physical attractiveness was never questioned. "How to Dress to Please Men" was the expressive title of a magazine series in the early Fifties, with a special emphasis on personal grooming – 'He likes you to be soft and silky'.*
>
> *Barbara Goalen was the British mannequin of the era, renowned for her haughty demeanour, delicate bone structure and wasp waist. For older women, the great exemplar was Margot Smyly, who posed in the pages of Vogue in her luncheon suits, cocktail dresses and fur stole.*
>
> *One shrewd observer, the novelist Barbara Pym, was horrified. Women, she thought, 'have never been more terrifying than they are now – the paint and jewellery, the exposed bosom. No wonder men turn to other men sometimes'.*

I was sent a copy, by the publisher Merlin Unwin Books, of *It happened in Shropshire*, 'a vibrant and compelling account of the county's diverse heritage' by Bob Burrows. Barbara Pym is one of the Famous Salopians*, whose lives are summarised in Chapter 2, along with Clive of India, Charles Darwin, Wilfrid Owen, Mary Webb, Edith Pargeter (Ellis Peters) and Percy Thrower, one of the earliest British television gardeners.. Of these, only Barbara and Wilfred Owen were born in, or directly connected with, Oswestry.

*Salopian : person from Shropshire, which was formerly called *Salop.*

Please send your 'Gleanings' to yvcocking@aol.com

Robert Smith
1923-2010

by Hazel Holt

Hilary wrote in her Index to ***A Very Private Eye,*** *Bob Smith was" a close friend in London since c.1950, introduced through Robert Liddell, whom he knew in Cairo during the war; Oxford graduate, became Associate Professor of History at the University of Lagos, Nigeria. He shared Barbara's interest in Anglicanism and churches."*

He arrived in Barnes as a messenger from Robert Liddell, bearing a box of Turkish Delight (presumably a gift from himself since it doesn't seem quite like Robert), and they soon discovered they had many more things in common. Churches, of course, and the churchy and gossipy side of religion, not really the theological side (though they did, once, almost have a quarrel about the Church in South India) and they greatly enjoyed what they called a Church crawl. High Church, of course.

It is appropriate that Bob, one of her greatest and earliest admirers, should have been the first to publish an article about her ("How Pleasant to Know Miss Pym") in the journal *Ariel.* Coming as it did in the wilderness years it gave Barbara immense satisfaction and support.

Bob had several other female friends but kept his various friendships in rigorously contained compartments, something that both amused and irritated Barbara. There was an incident, when he was in Nigeria, when Barbara went to check on some furniture he had left in store and was told that The Other Lady had already been to enquire. She seized on this with great pleasure as being splendid *material* for one of her books.

Bob was consciously old fashioned and was always shocked by the changes in London when he came back on visits. He was the only person I knew who always referred to *luncheon* and would enquire, when I visited him, if I had come in my *motor.* After Barbara died I used to visit him quite often at his flat in Kew to talk with him about her. Apart from Hilary, I suppose we were, then, the two people who had known her best.

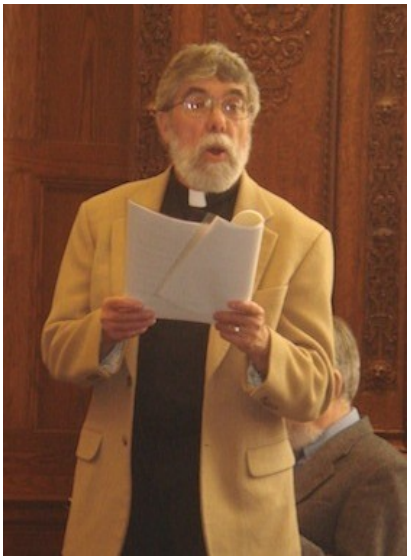
When Bob (who had been a Civil Servant for a while after the war) transmuted into an Africanist, specialising in African history, his connection with the African Institute provided another link and he became another of our 'Anthrops' in whom we took an abiding interest. They conducted a lively correspondence when Bob was in Nigeria, and, when he was in London, he used to pop into the Institute in the afternoon and take Barbara out to tea. It seems right that it was with Bob that Barbara visited Jane Austen's house, when she put her hand down on Jane Austen's desk and, finding it covered with dust, wished that some of that genius would rub off on her.

When Barbara achieved posthumous fame and became (how she would have smiled) the object of lit.crit., Bob enjoyed talking about her to the young, eager researchers, giving them all invaluable help.

There was a faintly melancholy aspect about him and his slow, unmistakable voice was often plaintive as if he felt that things always seemed to be going wrong for him, so Barbara would refer to him as "Poor Bob". But, she always valued his loyalty and their long friendship and "Poor Bob" was always balanced, with an affectionate smile, by "Dear Bob".

Isabel Stanley

?, ?, ?



Ted Poland

?, ?, Scott Herrick, Kristen Kelly

Scott Herrick, Ted Poland, ?, Tom Sopko, Yvonne Cocking

Lisa Goldstein
with vintage dress

Flower arrangement by Tom Sopko

Lunch al fresco

Thompson Hall

Celebrating Yvonne's
birthday

Clemence and Martin

Photographs by Gloria Nakamura and Leland Scruby