

The Gattton Passion



The setting of Gattton Park was a perfect location for *The Passion* – the production by the Gattton Community Theatre in July.

Rev. Mick Hough reports:

The baptism of Jesus in the lake (photo right), the arrest under the trees in 'Gethsemane' and, in particular, the intimate setting for the resurrection all added to the sense of 'being there' as the events unfolded. The open-air setting enabled the audience to follow Jesus and listen in as he taught his

disciples, to be present as he healed a blind woman, and to have a share in both the horror of the cross and the spine-tingling joy of the resurrection.

Matthew Rutherford, the only professional actor in the cast, played Jesus with charisma and passion, and the portrayal of Judas by Matthew Donald (recruited, like most of the cast, locally) was also powerful and thought provoking.

The dialogue, some of which was borrowed by the director Anna Thompson (daughter of the late Bishop Jim Thompson), from *'The Passion of the Christ'* and the BBC's recent production of the Passion, carried us from the childhood of Jesus through to

the resurrection, and gave the audience plenty to reflect on.

One memorable exchange involved Jesus asking Judas the same question three times: 'Judas, do you believe in me?' to which Judas could only find unsatisfactory, evasive answers. One powerful effect of the production was to remind the audience of the humanity of Jesus: the son of a mother, and involved in a network of relationships. The humiliation, the flogging, the agony of the cross were real – as was the sense of triumph as the resurrected Jesus walked among us again.

I'm not sure that the play set out to be evangelistic, yet it portrayed Jesus as the man of history who can't be ignored, and I left Gattton with my mind stimulated, my heart warmed and my faith strengthened.



Rev. Mick Hough is Priest in Charge of St Peter's, Woodmansterne

Southwark Cathedral remembers the victims of the Marchioness disaster



Southwark Cathedral commemorated the 20th anniversary of the sinking of the Marchioness on Thursday 20 August

The names of the victims were read at morning and midday Requiem Eucharists and at 5.30pm, the nave was full for a Choral Evensong led by the Dean, the Very Rev. Colin Slee. Canon Robert Titley read out the names of the victims.

The lessons were read by Canon Linda Ali and Magda

Allani (a Marchioness survivor). Linda Ali is a Lay Canon of York Minster, General Synod member for York Diocese and Chair of the Board of Trustees of USPG - her daughter was one of the victims.

An Act of Remembrance was sung by the Cathedral's Merbecke Choir who were especially recalled during the holiday season for the service.

Throughout the day many others came to the Cathedral to make their own personal commemorations and lay flowers at the Marchioness memorial.

20 years ago...

On 20 August 1989 at about 2am the pleasure cruiser Marchioness was struck and sunk near Southwark Bridge by the dredger Bowbelle - with the loss of 51 lives. All of the victims had been at a birthday party on board.

The public inquiry and the efforts of the Marchioness Action Group led to improved safety on the Thames, including the launch of a coastguard and RNLI lifeboat service in 2002.

Left -Margaret Lockwood-Croft (l) and Odette Penwarden (r) lay wreaths on behalf of the bereaved families and survivors at the Marchioness memorial

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