

A day of unexpected conversations

I went along to the Vineyard group as I normally do on Sunday mornings at 10 a.m. for a so called super Sunday. This is when newcomers and children are invited. There is no actual service. I arrived about 10:10 ish; there were very few adults available to speak to so I just hung around a bit and took the proffered coffee.

I went into the church meeting room itself which had a full-size bouncy castle for the younger children. There I met someone called Rachel after butting in a conversation that she was having with someone else. I found that she had lived in Dulwich / Herne Hill for some years and then moved to California for 12 years and then returned to Yeovil in Somerset, where her family roots were, to pursue a career in the retail trade. I admired the courage and faith of this single lady. I discussed with her the features of living on one's own which I have done for most of my life. I said the main thing is to get married to yourself and the rest is easy.

The Bible says that you should love your neighbor as yourself in other words don't love your neighbor and hate yourself. I found the conversation stimulating and I hope to meet her at some future time, possibly inviting her round to meet my wife.

My second meeting was with a very strapping man called Sean. He was a farmer and knew a lot about cars especially American cars and was a very good natural metalworker. He makes ornaments to order. He was very glad to show us on his mobile phone all the things he had created. His enthusiasm for life was obvious.

However, there was more to come. He worked as a marshal at the Glastonbury Festival. Recently he found that there was too

much abuse from the general public who think for example they can get in without paying. He said that there are ticket producers outside the gate who will print off a fake ticket that is indistinguishable from the real thing and so he estimates that instead of the maximum 250,000 permitted people there were closer than 350,000 people and as a result you can hardly move. Some people die standing up and you only discover them after the crowds have melted away.

He said that working for the organization was no longer a joy and the sort of music was not his; he preferred smaller more local festivals. Recently he had a disagreement with a Glastonbury organizers and told them they could stuff their offer to him or words to that effect. It sounds like Glastonbury is now too big and too commercial for its own good. Anyway this lovely man Sean had his 13 year old whom he clearly loved dearly.

Here was me expecting just another normal morning and I had met two outstanding people.

During the afternoon we went to to a small parking area on the canal / railway /walking track system in the pre Beeching era. We walked along the long rail track starting at the **Hope and Anchor**, a pub near Twinhoe. The walk terminated at Bath. Along the path we met a man with his dog staring at a castle once whom he told us was once occupied by the actor Nicholas Cage.

The man told me he had lived there once in the annexe in the 1980's and it was haunted but he said he "didn't believe in all that rubbish". While we were talking, along the road came a lady from Italy who had a very good English accent. She was at the beginning of a 3 years in history in Bath and was just exploring the area. Were able to give a lot of tips to her and was very glad to have met her. She held herself with great composure.

After some brief conversations we went to the Hope and Anchor

pub for a drink. For a medium Merlot, a pint of cider and some crisps I paid £11.18, close to London prices if not beyond but the atmosphere was very good and the pub nestling in a Valley is well worth a visit. The price of a main course meal is around £20 and they are open from Thursday to Sunday. I would say a meal for two with wine would be about £80 to £90.

I would like to walk right to Bath from Midford (the pub) and I discovered there is actually a bus service Bath to Frome that stops outside the pub. We can go to Bath, do the 5 mile walk, bus back to Bath then another bus home. It is the D2. I love bus timetables.

Bath Bus Station (Bay 8)	10:12	12:12	14:12	16:12	18:12
Wells Road St Mary's Buildings (W-bound)	10:13	12:13	14:14	16:14	18:14
Wells Road Hayesfield Park (S-bound)	10:14	12:14	14:14	16:15	18:15
Bear Flat (C)	10:15	12:15	14:15	16:15	18:15
Bloomfield Devonshire Buildings (S-bound)	10:15	12:16	14:16	16:16	18:16
Bloomfield Wellsway (S-bound)	10:16	12:16	14:17	16:17	18:17
Bloomfield Wayside (SW-bound)	10:17	12:17	14:18	16:18	18:18
Odd Down Corner (SW-bound)	10:18	12:18	14:19	16:19	18:19
Odd Down St Martin's Hospital (SE-bound)	10:18	12:18	14:19	16:20	18:20
Odd Down St Martin's Court (SE-bound)	10:18	12:19	14:20	16:20	18:20
Odd Down Cross Keys (SE-bound)	10:20	12:20	14:21	16:22	18:22
Midford Hillside (E-bound)	10:23	12:23	14:25	16:26	18:26
Midford Hope and Anchor (NE-bound)	10:23	12:24	14:25	16:27	18:27

I started the day feeling a little bit low but was considerably cheered up not only by the bright sunshine but by

all the lovely people we met. This is the life that we should live every day giving thanks and sharing. Think of the people in Turkey. No family left. No house. No job. Little food. We don't know what suffering is.

A day to remember with affection.