

# ANNUAL REPORT



HOCKLEY & HAWKWELL METHODIST CHURCH

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## Minister's Report



In September 2024, I took over from Rev'd Calvin when he relocated to Malaysia. At the start of this report, I would like to extend my heartfelt gratitude to all the Stewards/Leadership Team and numerous helpers for their unwavering dedication, always being prepared, and going the

extra mile. One of my highlights of being with you all is witnessing the way this church comes together in fellowship, special events, and Welcome Wednesdays.

During my time here, I have had the opportunity to meet with families in Brightstar's and Messy Church, which has been an amazing experience. These interactions have not only enriched my understanding of our community but also highlighted the importance of our mission outreach programs. In our upcoming Annual Church Meeting, we are going to dedicate time to focus on families and children's mission within our church.

This intentional focus on mission outreach to families and children is crucial, and I believe it will help us build a stronger, more connected community.

However, while we are actively focusing on mission outreach, I would like us to also start thinking about our own spiritual growth. Engaging in Bible studies and prayer meetings is fundamental to nurturing a living church. These activities provide the spiritual foundation we need to continue our mission and grow in faith together.

We continue to wrestle with the challenge of finding sufficient volunteers to run the work of the church effectively. The dedication of our current volunteers is commendable, but we need more hands to ensure that our programs and initiatives run smoothly. The question of pastoral care is also one of the key issues we'll be reflecting on together. Providing adequate pastoral care is essential for supporting our congregation and fostering a sense of community.

As we look to the future, I am confident that, with collective effort and a focus on our spiritual and community growth, we will continue to thrive and make a positive impact.

Thank you once again for your unwavering support and dedication. I am truly blessed to be part of such a wonderful community.

***Rev Agnes Sam  
Minister***

## **Stewards' Report**

(including Pastoral Committee, Outreach and Mission Planning)

Since the last Annual Church Meeting, the main events have been The Party on the Green, saying goodbye to Rev Calvin Samuel and hello to Rev Agnes Sam and her family.



The Party on the Green for Pentecost was the big event of the summer, planned by the Churches Together, led by the ministers of Hawkwell Baptist and Parish Churches, Hockley Community Church URC and Hockley

Methodists. Us Methodists were responsible for the children's activity tent as well as being there to help with the set up and clear up. We found and booked the face painter. The Gospel Choir, which uses our church for weekly meetings also took part. Prior to the event there were sessions making headbands and packing the paper carrier bags for the day, where volunteers from the involved churches worked together.

The most time-consuming part of the planning was filling in the form required by the local authority to show that it would be a safe event and comply with all necessary regulations. For this the Churches Together could draw on the experience of Hawkwell Parish Church and their Carols on the Green event but it was a frustrating process. However, that groundwork will stand us in good stead for this year.

This was an open-air event, the sun shone and was regarded as a big success. It was very well attended and many stayed on for the picnic. It was estimated about 200 people were there, all of whom are looking forward to more of the same. As a result, it will be repeated this year, planning is already underway and this is now part of our Mission Planning.

May to July was focused on farewells for Calvin both here and in the Circuit with a final one at Rayleigh in July. He had a very packed schedule in the month or two prior to leaving. He led worship for our Church Anniversary and Gift Day. His last Church service was on the 14<sup>th</sup> July when we took the opportunity to thank him for his ministry and to wish him well. A monetary gift of £250 was presented to him as well as a framed picture of all his friends at Hockley. On the 21<sup>st</sup> July there was an inspirational and much enjoyed section

service at Rayleigh Methodist when each of our churches thanked him once more.

Calvin had one more important service to lead on Monday, 22nd July which was the funeral of Glynis Teare who had been a church steward at our church in the past.

In August we invited Agnes to a Welcome Wednesday and our journey with her began, following the pattern of services set by Calvin. There was a reunion style service in September, when we invited all our members and friends both past and present to join us. The Harvest Festival came next with a Parade when food donated went to HARP and then Remembrance Sunday in November when we also lost Shirley James, a long-standing member and Hockley activist.

In December, the Toy and Gift service was a Parade with the donated gifts (which completely filled a car both the boot and inside!) going to the Safe Steps Southend domestic violence charity. There was great joy when the Christingle service saw numbers return to something like pre-covid levels. There was a retiring collection for Little Havens which raised £120. Christmas Day was a joint service with the Community Church URC but was not well attended. £270 was donated in lieu of sending each other Christmas cards and this will be used to purchase extraordinary gifts through All We Can. Thank you for your generosity.

In January, Methodists share in the Covenant service which is a reminder of the commitments we take on as members and friends. February saw a united service at Great Wakering which was well attended. United services are now a regular part of our worship routine as there is a shortage of local preachers. Each church has to have one service a

month when a Worship leader, (in our case this is Anne) takes the service or the stewards have to organise an alternative. Once, during the last twelve months we used a service from a Methodist Church in Marlowe which was on Youtube.

Special thanks must go to Peter as our only organist since John went to work in Egypt and to Anne who does a service every month for us filling in when no preachers are available. Gill checks on supplies for services like Palm Sunday, Easter Day, Mothering Sunday and Christingle. All of these are much appreciated.

The stewards, who are all Pastoral visitors, have taken on the role that Carolyn relinquished over twelve months ago. Kay had passed away and subsequently Vivien Allmey told us that she was moving to Eastwood so we are two pastoral visitors short. The groups were reorganised so that no-one was left out, and split between the three of us, but it would help if someone could take on the secretarial role of calling meetings twice a year, co-ordinating with Nicola in keeping the list of the members and friends list accurate and letting Agnes know of any needs or where a visit is required.

We have been pleased to welcome into our Sunday congregation Gill and Pam. Ann Baucutt and Valerie Wallace have agreed to help out with the Sunday refreshments and Adam has agreed to be a door steward for All Age Worship. Keith fills in when needed and when he can. There have been a couple of extra volunteers for readers too so thank you to all for your support.

Welcome Wednesday has continued each week except for during August, when the Day Centre used our premises three days a week for three weeks whilst a new kitchen was installed

in their own building. A change to Wednesday afternoons in September didn't suit the majority of Wednesday friends so from early this year, we have reverted to meeting on Wednesday morning from 10-12 noon. Welcome Wednesdays provide a warm welcome for chat, tea or coffee, a biscuit and possibly cake! It is a good talking shop!

Thanks must go to all those who volunteer for jobs to keep everything running as smoothy as possible and are willing to stand in at a moment's notice.

We look forward to our relationship with Agnes growing ever deeper and to her helping us to develop our role in our community.

***Anne, Gill and Muriel your Stewards***

## **Messy Church**

We have shared many good sessions with our families. Our numbers vary but we have a core group of 8 or 9 families who try and come regularly.



We said goodbye to Calvin. Unfortunately, he was not able to be at the farewell we had planned. We know he would have loved it.

We then welcomed Agnes and her lovely son, Samuel and enjoyed sharing fellowship with them.

At the moment, Messy Church still has a regular structure which starts with activities related to the story, the telling of the story and worship followed by sharing a meal together.

Our nativity is organised chaos but it allows all the children and adults to share in the wonderful magic of the Christmas story. The tea party that follows is also much enjoyed.

However, some of the children were babies when we began and now they are going on to Senior School! Also, some of us are also getting older!! This really means that we need to explore making changes to what we are offering. We are planning to talk with parents of the older children and the children themselves so watch this space for new ideas. We are hoping there will be a chance to try a few new initiatives.

Thanks go to Colin A, John, Sandra, June, Lianne and Clare who help in so many ways and Muriel and Gill who come when they can.

I would like to add special thanks to Lianne who has been organising our time in church and preparing the activities and much more.

***Anne Sains - Messy Church Leader***

## **Treasurer's Report**

Once again, I would like to express my thanks to Stan Rae for his continued support. It was sad news that Stan was admitted to hospital and, as at the time of writing of this report, that





is where he is now. We all pray for his speedy recovery.

I am pleased to be able to report that standing orders from our regular givers have once again increased, from £835 per month at the time of my last report to £915 per month. Thank you to all the regular givers.

Thank you to all those who helped to make the Christmas Bazaar such a success. The amount raised was £600.50, a splendid effort by all those who organised this fund-raising event.

Offerings are now more regularly part of our Sunday Service. Over £1000 has been received from these offerings since the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2024. I would encourage this to continue. We are also trying to get up and running a Wi Fi card machine so that, in this increasingly cash-less society, offerings can be made by debit or credit card. However, this is proving more difficult than we first thought and is still a work in progress.

There has been a small reduction in our Circuit Assessment, only £400 per year, but every little helps!

The Church made a loss £4366 in the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024. Apart from the Circuit Assessment, nearly all of our costs are rising with inflation and I am therefore anticipating a loss for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2025, although a smaller loss than in the previous year.

Gift Aid will help. If you have not Gift Aided your regular offerings, please consider whether you can do so. If you let me know that you wish to gift aid, I will provide you with the

appropriate form. If you would like to make a monthly payment by standing order please let me know and I will

provide you with the necessary bank details. Please either speak to me next time you see me or email me at [hmethstreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:hmethstreasurer@gmail.com).

I would like to thank Nicola, for the part she has played in assisting me and Stan, David Clarke for continuing to collect and pay in offerings and other monies, and Ros Hayman and Anne Sains for their assistance with paying out monies for bills. Finally, I would like to thank the Auditor, Chris Davis, for his work on last year's accounts, as well as for agreeing to continue as Auditor.

Here's a copy of the balance sheet for the year ended 31<sup>st</sup> August 2024 and a full copy of the Standard Form of Accounts is on the coffee room display board.

### ***Patrick Smith - Church Treasurer***

#### **Hockley & Hawkwell Methodist Church Balance Sheet as at 31st August 2024**

<b>Current Assets</b>	<b>2023-2024</b>	<b>2022-2023</b>
Bank Account	9,642.97	9,361.25
CFB Accounts	3,831.69	11,346.04
TMCP	<u>66,201.74</u>	<u>62,983.94</u>
	<u>79,676.40</u>	<u>83,691.23</u>

#### **Representing Accumulated Funds**

Church Fund	-1,405.97	-2,054.83
Property Fund	9,021.96	3,342.24
Building Reserve Fund	6,727.12	10,570.22
Benevolence Fund	316.81	282.43
Mission/Youth Fund	1,545.11	725.11
Administration Fund	2,589.70	7,585.38
External Funds	606.49	256.74
Trust 22071 William H J Potter	<u>60,275.18</u>	<u>62,983.94</u>
	<u>79,676.40</u>	<u>83,691.23</u>

## Property

In January 2024 a defibrillator was installed at the front of the Church on the outside of the building for use by both the local community and Church users. A grant was obtained from London Hearts and the shortfall was raised via fundraising by the Church. We'd like to thank everybody involved with obtaining the grant, fundraising for the shortfall and installation of the defibrillator which is an asset for our congregation, hirers and the local community.



The regular servicing of items has been carried out as usual and we instructed our fire extinguisher servicer, Barry, to carry out a fire risk assessment in July 2024 which detailed some recommendations to make the building safer. These items are currently being investigated by the committee.

The Church wall was finally repaired in July 2024 but shortly after, was struck by a vehicle again! After numerous discussions regarding protection to the wall and buttress, it was decided to repair both and install metal on both to protect the wall and building if any vehicles do strike again. The builder has been instructed and is waiting for a fair weather day to carry out the works.

The Finance & Property Committee currently has 5 members and we'd like to thank them all for their hard work and commitment.

***Nicola on behalf of Stan***

## Cradle Roll

Cradle roll children continue to be involved in our Church life, through Brightstars and Messy Church. Attending and taking part in All Age Worship services, helping to decorate the Church for Harvest and Christmas.



Our Cradle roll families form a very special part of our Church life. I continue to remember their birthdays also by sending them a small gift and card at Christmas.

***Gill Cross - Cradle Roll Secretary***

## Eco Church

The Methodist Church has a target of becoming a net zero emissions church by 2030. The Eco Church awards are a way of making progress towards this goal.



In the last couple of years we made some excellent progress and became a Bronze Award Eco Church. The Church Council agreed that we should continue with our work and aim to achieve a silver award.

Since that decision was made Eco Church have introduced a new survey which we will need to complete.

We need to tackle this new survey to identify the specific areas we need to focus on to achieve our silver award.

This report is very brief as no decisions have been made about how to make a start on this work.

***Ros Hayman***

## **Fundraising**

### *Pancake and Coffee morning*

Our very popular Pancake and Coffee morning took place on the 17<sup>th</sup> February 2024. It was a lovely happy morning, seeing so many friends, a lot of pancakes

teas and coffees were enjoyed! Grateful thanks to the team who all helped on the day or came along to support it.



This year's Pancake and Coffee morning will take place on Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2025 from 10am – 12 midday in our Church hall.

### *Christmas Bazaar 2024*

The Bazaar took place on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2024 and was a very happy and sociable morning, lovely to see so many folks enjoying the bazaar. Grateful thanks to Church friends and members. Also to our new minister Rev Agnes Sam and baby Samuel for their help with drawing the Hamper raffle and to Hockley Co-op for donating biscuits and cakes for the hamper and cake stalls.

Special thanks to the hard-working team who gave their support to the at the Christmas Bazaar however they helped. Thanks also to those who donated items for the hampers, cakes, toys, jigsaw puzzles and Christmas cracker stall.

**Thankyou to:** June, Sandra, John, Graham, Lianne, Colin, Claire, Mike, Muriel, Anne, Eleanor, Nicola, Ivor, Linda, David, Shirley, Dianne, Ann B, Brightstars families, our junior stall holders; Tyler, Jessica and Amelia. Also the Rainbows, Brownies, Beavers and Cubs and their

uniformed leaders. A lovely happy and busy morning. **Hard work – and only possible thanks to your hard work. Thank you all.**

***June Parkhurst and Gill Cross***

## **Church Hire**

The income from the hire of the hall generates a vital source of income for the Church.

We currently have 8 regular lettings which include 2 choirs, a drama group for

young people and a number of keep fit classes for a variety of age groups. In addition, we have the Rainbows, Brownies and Beavers run their activities from the hall as well as our weekly toddler playgroup, Brightstars, which is very well attended. The total amount of income the lettings have generated for the Church this financial year is £10,810.



Since Carolyn stepped down managing the lettings, Patrick, Muriel and Nicola have reviewed the lettings processes and hirer agreement documents and have re-issued the updated agreements to all regular hirers. The keyholder agreements were also reviewed and re-issued to all regular hirers and all updated information recorded on a spreadsheet enabling us to manage the lettings more effectively and forecast future income more easily. Thank you to everybody involved in the above process.

Now the updated arrangements are in place, the management of regular and one-off hirers is being maintained by Nicola with the support of Church Trustees.

***Nicola on behalf of Stan***

## **Thursday Club**

It has been another busy year for our club with visits to many local places of interest.



Sadly, we lost Shirley James last year and we will miss her greatly as she had been a member and great supporter of the club for many years.

We do try to keep busy and have had a number of differing events throughout our year's programme. We do love our teas/coffees and cakes and that is why we do like visiting the garden centres of Hyde Hall, Morleys and Meadowcroft.

Seems to be a theme here as we have also visited various eateries for a lunch time meal.

We can certainly recommend Stambridge Lakes, Thomas Kemble P.H., Royal Oak P.H. and The Cock Inn. I think I might have to organise some training sessions to walk off these extra pounds.

The Palace Theatre in Westcliff has put on some really good shows and we were lucky enough to see the following productions. Footloose, Grease, 9 to 5, and Whistle Down the Wind.

More visits are planned in the near future.

Being an intellectual group we have also tested out our brain power with quizzes and board games.

What next? Maybe an application to enter a team in University Challenge.

We end our year's programme during July with "A Strawberry Tea" which is normally held at the home of Chris

and Olive. You have probably recognised that food does play a big part in our programme.

Many thanks to everyone who has hosted our meetings and we would welcome any new members.

*Ray Williams*

## Communications and Publicity

This report's heading now includes 'Publicity' as it more accurately reflects its content.

Although those of us who comprise the Communications and Publicity Team - David, Billy, Nicola, Ray and I - don't meet as such, but together we try to keep members and friends in touch with events at the Church and Circuit, publicise Church activities and present services on the multimedia.



We mainly communicate with members and friends by email but still have a few who can't access emails, so Ray takes round paper copies whenever possible. The Link and regular Notices are also circulated mainly by email and Ray Mail.

We try to promote the Church and its activities in the local community via posters, our website and Facebook with Nicola maintaining our presence on the last of these by regular postings, not only of our own activities but also items from the Methodist Church of GB and other websites. Take a look at <https://www.facebook.com/hockleymeths/>.





We continue to be grateful for Billy's contribution to our posters, leaflets, etc. Some time ago Church Council agreed that all Church publicity material and public documents should include Billy's double H motif so that it becomes a recognisable logo for the Church and we've continued that.

Billy and I run the Digital Distance Design Service as he can be anywhere when we need a poster or image – I send the details and the artwork arrives over the ether for editing and printing. We replace the large poster on the roadside Notice Board a couple of times each year.

The Notices continue on a 2-3 week cycle, mainly distributed by email but with Ray still distributing a few paper copies. The Link is only published before the principal festivals – one will be coming out before Easter; again, it will be mainly distributed by email but with Ray again distributing a few paper copies. You can also see the latest edition on the Church website

<https://www.hockleyhawkwellmethodist.org.uk/>.

The website has recently been redesigned by the host, Church Edit and has not been wholly successful – it still works (except for a few annoying bits) and sorting it out is on my job list! The online Calendar on the website is however fully functional and kept regularly up-to-date. Apart from letting enquirers know what's going on it tells possible hirers what time slots are available and helps Colin arrange the heating.

David and I are still sharing the preparation of services on the laptop and presenting them in Church and a couple of occasions have been glad of Graham, Lianne and Tyler's help when we're both away. We try to make the

presentations legible and clear – if you have comments or suggestions on them please speak to one of us. We have made increasing use of material provided by the Methodist Church of GB, e.g. the Advent Liturgy, and by All We Can as the quality of their material has improved recently. The multimedia equipment also occasionally gets used for non-Church events.

Thank you again to David, Billy and Nicola and Ray for their contributions.

***Mike Pregnall***

## **Brightstars**

Following a welcome summer break we re-opened Brightstars for another year on

Monday 9th September 2024. Our doors opened and in they all came eager to return and enjoy a morning at Brightstars, and that was just the Mums. The children of course were happy to return to play, eat snacks and sing along together at the end of the morning.



When we report numbers, it is strange that looking back over recent years they in fact always seem to return to the same level of approximately 40 adults and 45 children. There are slight swings up and down but very often this is a typical number which keeps us busy and is manageable especially with the hall being more of a buggy park.

Our toys are rotated each week as well as the crafts and high on the popularity list is Dinosaurs and Toy Story plus

the Fire Engine with its Blues-n-Twos sound reverberating around the hall.

Our donations continue to contribute towards the incidental purchase of supplies for the Church as well as new blinds for the kitchen.

As always, we sincerely thank our valuable helpers Lianne, Clare and Ray for all the support they give us each year.

***The Brightstars Team  
Sandra, June, Colin and John***

## Flower Arranging

Linda has once again produced some lovely displays this year using a variety of silk flowers and foliage supplemented with fresh flowers for some special occasions throughout the year. We received a donation of £30 this year and have spent £26.94 adding to our collection of realistic silk flowers.



The balance in our flowers account is £218.06

**Mothering Sunday:** Linda arranged the silk Tulips in the large vases with some of the spring flowers we already had.

**Easter:** Linda used the two floor- standing artificial arrangements of spring flowers and grasses which stood at the front of the church. We added fresh daffodils on the windowsills.

For the summertime vases Linda used some beautiful artificial yellow roses which she combined with some of the purple spring flowers, they looked very realistic.

**Harvest:** Linda created our Harvest celebration display scene at the front of church including her daughter's hand painted rural scene and our scarecrow made his annual appearance. Linda did a fresh fruit and veg display in front of the pulpit our new sunflowers were displayed in the big vases.

**Remembrance Sunday:** Just as we did last year, we used the paper homemade poppies which some of our young people had helped to make.

Although these are fragile, they are easy and inexpensive to refresh for next year.

**Christmas:** Linda arranged the two big vases with beautiful dark red Poinsettia flowers and some sparkly foliage, she has kindly donated them to our stock for use in future arrangements.

Once again, we are very pleased that the silk flower arrangements have worked so successfully this year. Linda's arrangements have provided colourful and seasonal displays.

Costs have been significantly reduced as we have a built up a good stock of artificial flowers.

*Ros Hayman and Linda Clarke*

## 1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Beaver Colony

1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Beaver group have had another busy year. We have been busy earning badges, helping in the community and having lots of fun.



Over the past 12 months, the Beavers have worked on various badges, including the Experiment Badge and First Aid. They have practiced their skills in knot tying, den

building, and many more. An exciting visit to the local fire station allowed them to learn about fire safety, and everyone had the thrill of using the fire hose. You may also have seen the 1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Scout selling Poppies in the high street for Remembrance Day.

Our Beavers have actively participated in several district events this year. Four Beavers proudly represented 1st Hockley in the spring swimming gala at Lubard's Farm. In May, they attended the Annual Fun Day at Belchamps, where they took part in the Renewal of Promise ceremony and enjoyed a lively campfire sing-along. Some of our brave Beavers even spent the night in a tent for the very first time.

Throughout the year, the Beavers have reflected on their Scouting promise and found ways to help others in the community. They decided to host a tea party to support a local homeless charity. In the summer, they invited their families and friends to the Church for a Coffee and Cake Sale. The event featured a toy tombola for the young ones, a raffle for the adults, and carnival games for everyone. The sale was a tremendous success, raising a fantastic £172.68 for The HARP Charity.

***1st Hockley Beaver Leadership Team***

## **2<sup>nd</sup> Hockley Brownies**

2nd Hockley Brownies continues to meet at 17:30 – 19:00 hours each Wednesday evening during Term time.



We currently have four adult leaders, a unit helper, two recently qualified young leaders and a young volunteer working towards her Bronze Duke of Edinburgh Award.

This year we have enjoyed supporting the Church Parades and the Christmas Fete at the Church.

We have 25 girls currently enrolled with a very healthy waiting list. And we are running at capacity.

We have been working towards the girls First Aid Stage 2 Badge this term. Teaching the girls how to call for help and basic first aid skills. They have really enjoyed these sessions, and we know they will remember these life skills for years to come.

We are looking forward to our 2-night Pack Holiday in June to Guidewoods in Hockley. We will be having campfires, lots of adventures in Hockley Woods and working towards our special secret agent/spy badge.

Thank you for your continued support of our unit it is greatly appreciated.

***Kat & team***

## **1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Rainbows Unit**

We currently have 26 Rainbows aged 4 – 7 years old at our weekly meetings with a long waiting list. As the Rainbows move up to Brownies, we are able to have new girls start with us.



We have once again been on our Rainbow sleepover at Guidewoods, with all the Rainbows sleeping in tents inside. They completed lots of indoor and outdoor activities including cooking and washing up which was a new activity to many of them! Being able to run and play in a safe outdoor environment seemed to be a highlight for many of them.

As we moved towards Christmas the girls took a few weeks to make and decorate Christmas cards, these were a labour of love and each one unique with their hand and footprint forming the picture. They were also able to make hot chocolate cones to take home and enjoy.

As we enter the new year we are focusing on birds and where they live. As we break up for Easter we will be delivering and installing at Guidewoods a new bird box hand crafted by the Rainbows. This will be installed, and they will be able to hopefully see residents move in when they attend future events at Guidewoods. The Rainbows will be making organic bird feeders to accompany this.

Each week we couldn't meet without our army of adult volunteers that give up far more than just an hour a week. Some come weekly and others come when an emergency call goes out as a leader is working or unwell. But behind the scenes the accounts are kept up to date, the programme is developed, and badges all arrive at the right time. Our group scarves are made, and resources appear from lofts, garages and sheds. Our young leaders do an amazing job running games and supporting those Rainbows still developing in confidence and needing just a little hand to hold.

We would like to thank the church for their support as the parents are able to use the coffee room whilst they wait for the girls to sit and have a chat with other parents. It has proved invaluable especially during the colder periods of the year.

If anyone would like to add their daughter to the waiting list or find out about other groups in the area, this can be done by registering with Girlguiding. <https://www.girlguiding.org.uk>

**Sally-Ann Elkington**  
**Unit Leader 1<sup>st</sup> Hockley Rainbows**

**Thank you to everybody who has  
contributed to this year's Annual  
Reports, particularly to Nicola for  
assembling them  
to Muriel for proof reading  
and to Billy for the front cover.**

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