

ON THE GRAPEVINE

By John Bartram



Daphne Clifton, your new Editor, comes across a lively and determined lady full of energy and drive, so readers of the new look Messenger should be in for an exciting ride. Her vision is to make the magazine more available to a broad readership in the parish and she also wants to bring the outside world more into St Michael's.

So why volunteer when she already works fulltime as an executive business coach, a trainer and motivational speaker and does youth voluntary work on the Ferrier Estate? "I've got a passion for people and the community and I want to get people involved." She aims to give the magazine a lighter touch, introducing more names and photos and this new layout. Better quality paper, and a new typeface and printer come with the package.

From now on the front page will run a by-lined, more serious article and the two inside pages will be in a regular six column format so you know what to look for. These are the On The Grapevine people column, a book review, Special Events, Crossing Cultures focussing on international aspects of St Michael's work, a Business Perspective column that will also examine ethical issues and Agony Aunt Mo who will stir up a more satirical look at life. The back page will be more familiar, listing services, prayers, practical information and a regular competition carrying a £5 prize. So who is this lively lady? Daphne, 47 and a single Mum with a 16-year old son, calls herself a committed Evangelical Christian who comes from a Plymouth naval family. She failed her A levels, started work, got bored and decided to try the senior service herself. A hectic 18 months included a radar systems course, office work at Faslane, home of the Trident nuclear submarine, and officer training in Dartmouth where Prince Andrew was on the same course. But she threw up her chance for the fairytale ending. "He was a sweetie but I knew I never had a chance and that was why we got on well. Some of the other girls were creepy." She found the course too academic and says she deserted in 1980.

Then came her main 25-year career as a sales executive for outdoor media advertising. She went freelance (www.cliftonconsulting.com) and found time to write a book, Network with Confidence, published six months ago. "I think I have a wealth of common sense and life experience that I can apply to any situation. I'm a people person, I'm practical and I've also discovered that I enjoy writing." She'll be running the magazine with a small editorial group and she's very good at persuading people to do things. So beware, Daphne may be after you soon as well John Bartram.

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