

Remembering that Spring has Come!



Susan Crosthwaite remembers

Of course Spring 2018 has come and gone, but last weekend I was reminded that the **cosmic "Spring has come eternally"**. It was one of those deeply special memories that came to me when I was preparing some welcoming words for those who would come to celebrate our 36th Blessing Anniversary at a luncheon held at Livingstone House, Chislehurst. I thought back to July 1st 1982, **gathering in the basement (or 'green room' as MC David Rennie grandly put it)** of Madison Square Gardens – 2,075 brides and grooms. Someone broke the hum of nervous and excited chatter with lovely calming strains of the hymn **"Song of the Banquet"** the poetic words of which remind us to **"Tell all the world Spring has come eternally; Hallelujah! Glorious day of joy!"**. **We'd all walked from the New Yorker a few blocks away in the early morning.** Taxi drivers were cheering us on with **"God Bless!"** and **"Good luck!"** as they realised that there was a mass wedding taking place in New York City. The newspaper headline later in the day read **"Honeymoonies !"**

Today I even found an article written in a website called "purple clover" in the 'relationships' section headed, **" THE HONEYMOONIES:I was in the band when Reverend Sun Myung Moon married more than 2,000 couples at Madison Square Garden 35 years ago by Rich Prior, Saturday, June 24, 2017"** An online search revealed that, **"Purple Clover is a site for people over 50 who have no sense of age. Explore how we live today, what we've learned from the past & how to navigate the future."**



The writer who played in the small orchestra during the wedding, ends the piece by saying , "I went on to play plenty of gigs in a successful musical career that included Broadway shows, national tours and recordings but none could hold a corsage to this wedding Now 35 years later, I'd love to know how many couples I serenaded are still married. Will they celebrate by exchanging traditional jade or "Rocky" DVDs?"

A quick count shows that from 38 couples who attended that Blessing Ceremony who now reside in the UK, have sprung 109 children and 6 grand-children so far. In answer to Rich Prior's question, 35 of those couples are still married. In an age of relatively high divorce rates it's a number to be proud of I would say!

Here are some pictures to show how we appreciated one another and celebrated as a community of UK couples.



Suzuko Wood was our hostess, sharing some funny stories about being Japanese in the UK



Linda Brann played Chopin for us with extraordinary expertise



David Rennie was our enthusiastic M.C.



Thanks to our jolly and talented chef, Anthony McGwiggan for a delicious meal!



and Mrs Beata McGwiggan for the delicious cake!!

Two original moving true love songs by Richard Raineri



*Nigel Barrett entertained us with his famous quiz – “what is Hagrid’s first name?”
and I sang “Garden of a Promise” accompanied by pictures of Ashley’s beautiful garden*

