



SAINT JAMES' IN THE CITY

ANGLICAN/EPISCOPAL

EVER ANCIENT | EVER NEW

THE FIRST 100 YEARS



Interview with Ingrid and Carleton Ralston

They travelled quite a distance before they met each other. Ingrid was born in England, moved with her family to Paris for a couple of years, then to Mexico City, and then to Shanghai, China where she was raised. In 1941 the outbreak of hostilities in the Pacific theatre during World



War II forced Ingrid and her parents to evacuate to the United States. "Our ship was followed across the Pacific by Japanese submarines," remembers Ingrid. "We landed in San Francisco, then took a train to New York when we joined my mother's sister. Then a cousin died and his widow wanted someone to drive to California with her. "I had nothing better to do and thought it would be fun, so here I am," says Ingrid. "That was 1953. I moved near Saint James' Church, joined the choir, and the rest is history!"

Carleton's journey wasn't quite so far ranging. He was born in Brooklyn, New York in 1913, and then moved with his family to Los Angeles four years later. His sister, Esther Ralston, became a famous actress in the silent movies. It was at Saint James' Church that Ingrid and Carleton's paths crossed.

For many years the church sponsored the 125 Club, in which singles could meet and socialize. That's where they met. "I made the first move," reports Ingrid. "I invited Carleton to be the fourth in a game of tennis." "It was a wonderful club,"

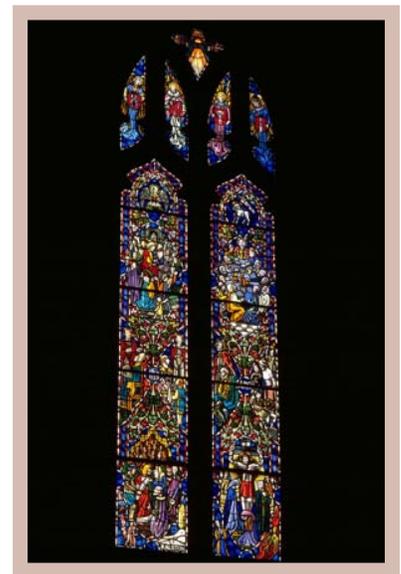
remembers Carleton. "Over 80% of the members found their future spouses there." Ingrid and Carleton were married at Saint James' in 1956, but not until Carleton had to face a special tribunal comprised of two bishops and several priests. He had been married previously and had to petition for permission to marry in the Saint James' chapel. Fortunately his petition was granted. Carleton brought his two children, Mark and Wendy, to the new family. Later they would be joined by a brother, Brad.

Over the many decades, Ingrid and Carleton have played important roles in the life of the church. Carleton served two terms on the vestry and was a junior warden. He used his skills as a building inspector to ensure that the Saint James' School was built to the highest standards.

Carleton also served two terms on the school board. It is nearly impossible to imagine a time when Ingrid hasn't played an essential role at Saint James'.

Ingrid has been the parish secretary, president of the Women's Guild, president of the Altar Guild, served two terms on the vestry, sang in the choir for 40

(Continued on reverse side.)





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(Continued from reverse)

years, and was the very first female chalice bearer at Saint James' in 1984. Most remarkably, Ingrid is beginning her 22nd year as the clerk to the vestry.

As they approach their sixth decade at Saint James', what are the greatest changes that they've seen? For Ingrid it was the move from Low Church style of service to High Church, which began during Kirk Smith's tenure. "The day we were married," remembers Ingrid, "we had to arrive early to receive communion in the chapel. "In those days communion was only given once a month."

They both agree that the building of the school was an important and mighty endeavor. "It didn't bring in as many new parishioners as we hoped,"

says Ingrid, "but it was and remains an important part of our mission." Carleton continues to be impressed by the ambition of the parishioners who in 1926 built our current gothic church home. "That was a great undertaking and took enormous nerve. I respect that." As for the future, both Carleton and Ingrid are in accord. They both want Saint James' to continue down the path of inclusiveness.

If you would like to see a loving tribute to Ingrid and Carleton's service to Saint James', go to the epistle (right) side of the church and count back four stained glass windows and look up to see the Crucifixion window. Brad Ralston raised most of the funds for this window and it is dedicated to his parents.

