

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

FEBRUARY 2003



35p

For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

PURLEY ON THAMES

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BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

All enquiries should be made to the Rector.

www.stmarythevirgin.fsnet.co.uk

FROM THE LICENSED LAY MINISTER



Dear Friends,

As I write this letter early in January the annual festival of Jingle Tills is in its last phase, the January sales. I can't help feeling that this pressure and hype to make us spend more than we can really afford in the name of Christmas is rather trivial and unimportant when we look at the situation both locally and worldwide.

My thoughts and prayers have been for those in Purley whose homes have been invaded or threatened by the worst flooding in this area since 1947. Having lived through the blitz of the Second World War in Twickenham I know that adversity brings out in people qualities that they often didn't know they had. I am sure that this has happened in Purley in these past weeks, people will have spoken to and helped people they hardly knew before this disaster. I pray that stronger long-term relationships will be formed out of adversity.

The traditional greeting of a happy and prosperous New Year seems rather hollow when we reflect on the prospects locally, nationally and internationally. Locally those affected by floodwater face an uphill struggle to return their homes and their lives to some sort of normality. Nationally we are facing a rise in gun crime in our cities and industrial unrest with the prospect of more strike action by the firemen. Internationally we face the possibility of more armed conflict in the Middle East to add to that already going on in Israel, potential difficulties in North Korea and famine and drought in Africa.

To wish a happy and prosperous New Year may not seem appropriate but there is little point in entering a new year or a new day with the attitude that things can only get worse. We know from our studies of history over the last 2000 years that disasters and wars have happened and the human race has survived, in the Old Testament we see how the children of Israel survive all sorts of difficulties to come, eventually, to the Promised Land.

Let us therefore face the year ahead assured that whatever governments, dictators or military leaders may decide, God will ensure that the human race and this world, which we believe is his creation, will survive.

Yours sincerely

Wally Watkivs

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The APCM will be held on Tuesday 1 April (no joke!) at 8-00pm in St. Mary's Church.

In connection with this meeting, the Electoral Roll - i.e. official church membership list - will be revised during the period Sunday 16 February - 16 March.

All are welcome at the APCM, but you must be on the Electoral Roll to participate in any voting which may take place.

PARISH REGISTERS

FUNERALS

23 December 2002	Joseph Irving aged 72 years (burial at Beech Road Cemetery)
9 January 2003	Iris Harmer aged 74 years (cremation)
13 January 2003	Cyril Carter aged 76 years (cremation)
16 January 2003	Constance Hills aged 79 years (cremation)

FREEDOM OF CHOICE

Great store is set by freedom of choice in our country today, and we should never forget that we have a tremendously wide freedom of choice in so many different areas. We live in a multi-cultural and multi-faith society and no one objects if people make the choice of one belief or another.

In many mainly Muslim countries that freedom of choice simply does not exist, and if a Muslim decides to become a Christian he or she may face the death-sentence. The Times newspaper recently carried an article about this. In fact it was the testimony of a Muslim who did become a Christian and who faced much opposition from his family. The persecution of Christians is intolerable and they should be allowed the same freedom which Muslims enjoy in this country.

The Barnabas Fund which we support at St. Mary's is organising an Apostasy Campaign to make known to the world the suffering thousands of converts are enduring simply because they have chosen to follow Christ. It calls for a change to Islamic teaching on apostasy. If you care about this situation, get involved in changing it.

Further information is available from Roger Howell (0118 941 7727) or visit the Barnabas Fund website www.barnabasfund.org

CHURCH SERVICES

2 Feb	9:30 a.m.	All Age Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
	6:00 p.m.	Holy Communion
9 Feb	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship with Sunday School
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
16 Feb	9:30 a.m.	Family Communion with combined Sunday School
	11:15 a.m.	Morning Worship
	6:00 p.m.	Evening Worship
23 Feb	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
2 Mar	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship
	1:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
	6:00 p.m.	Holy Communion
5 Mar	8:00 p.m.	Ash Wednesday Service
9 Mar	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship with Sunday School
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion

Everyone is welcome at any service but those with children may prefer to bring them to the 9:30 services which often include Sunday School either in small groups or all together

LENT MEETINGS

All Churches Together in Pangbourne and District will be having a series of inter-church gatherings during Lent. The course will begin on Ash Wednesday with a service at St. Mary's Church, Purley (see above).

There will be study groups - arranged at various times of the day and evening, and covering topics of concern to Church and Nation - during each week of Lent, and we shall conclude with a service together on Wednesday 16 April.

If you would like to be part of one of these small groups please contact Anne Brown (941 7581) or Margaret Smith (901 0260).

A REFLECTION ON CHRISTMAS

I took my wife to a local supermarket in the days leading up to Christmas Day along with hundreds of others. Wherever I stood with the trolley I was in the way! In fact I found myself going round the fruit and veg. section in circles - trying to avoid causing an obstruction to others, but not realising that my wife was following trying to catch me! A new definition of Hell came to mind - supermarket shopping on Dec. 23rd!

The thought struck me - whilst one third of the world is queuing up to pay for food - much of which it does not need and will go to waste, the other two thirds are queuing up for hours to get enough food for survival!

Many of them will be in the same queue the following day and the one after that - but many others will not be there because they will have died! I couldn't help but notice that amidst all the celebrations of the Prince of Peace, the newspaper headlines talked of war!

And what about Christmas this year? We may well resolve to make it more simple, but it will be no good leaving it until December. By then the whirlpool of consumerism will be going at such a pace, and with such sucking power that it will be difficult to get out of its pull.

Roger Howell

TRASH INTO CASH



Did you know that Help the Aged can get £1 for used inkjet cartridges and up to £5 for used laser-jet cartridges?

For further information on this, contact Nicolette Potton on 0870 7700 446, or e-mail toners@helptheaged.org.uk



CHRISTIAN AID WEEK 2003

The people of Purley have been extremely generous, over many years, in response to Christian Aid Week. Collectors will be out with those red envelopes again this year (between 11 and 17 May). If you don't normally come to St. Mary's church but would like to help with the delivery and collection of envelopes, please let us know and we'll include you in the team.

Pam and Matthew Slingsby



The Community Council for Berkshire is administering a scheme on behalf of the Government Office of the South East (GOSE) entitled Community Champions.

The main objectives of the Community Champions Fund in the South East are:

- To support individuals who are already active in their communities by developing their skills through formal and informal training and access to information, wider networks and learning opportunities;
- To encourage more community involvement in regeneration activity by supporting key individuals who can drive forward community projects and pass on their expertise to others in their local communities;
- To support a high percentage of individuals from the Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) community;
- To support older people (over the age of fifty).

Funds are available to support all these types of initiatives (maximum grant £2000) and applications are invited by Friday 7 March. Further details and application forms are available from:

Wendy Dacey
Community Council for Berkshire
Epping House
55, Russell Street
Reading
RG1 7XG
Tel: 0118 9612000
Email: ccberks@aol.com

*Sarah Ward
Rural Networks Project Worker*

CONTRIBUTORS WATCH OUT!

March's issue of Purley Parish News is due out on 1 March. Therefore, I've had to make the deadline a few days earlier than normal to allow enough time for myself and the printers to get it ready for you. See page 26.

Matthew Slingsby

THE GREAT FLOOD?



It has been said that the Thames floods badly, on average, once every fifty years. The last serious flood was in March 1947, it came at the end of a great freeze that had lasted for almost three months. The ground was hard as iron and a lot of snow still lay on the ground. When the thaw came, it was rapid, heavy rains washed the snow into the streams that feed the river. The ground being hard with frost and unable to absorb water in the usual way, the river was soon full and bursting its banks.

The 1947 flood was on average one foot higher in Purley than this January's flood was. In November of 1894 it was two feet higher. There were some high floods in Purley during the nineteen fifties and several Purley residents, who were living here then, can remember rowing out of Wintringham and Colyton Way. So floods are nothing new to Purley and with predictions that global warming will make this country wetter, as the sun draws more water off the Atlantic, we must expect more floods.

What can we do to help the situation? One thing is for sure, we can't stop the rain! Some dredging may help, better warning, and we can prepare our homes as best we can, but nature will sometimes win.

I would like to look at some of the myths that exist in villages and towns along the Thames valley as they are the source of many of the questions I am asked about the floods.

Question: Does the river authority hold the water back to stop flooding further down at Henley and Windsor?

Answer: No, if I were to shut the sluices in the weir whilst the river was in flood, the water would rise very rapidly and flow over the banks into the fields to a greater depth than we had this time. Once the rain has fallen, there is only one thing that it will do, that is run to the sea and if it can't go through a weir, it will go around it.

Question: Does shutting the Thames Barrier cause the river to flood?

Answer: No, the Barrier is shut at low tide, to stop the next high tide from flooding London. There is plenty of room for flood water from inland to fill the space left behind the barrier, having kept the tide out, indeed it helps water from up stream to run away, this water is then released at the next low tide without flooding anyone. Purley is 125 feet above sea level; it will have to be a big tidal wave that gets to us.

Question: Will the new Jubilee River at Maidenhead help stop Purley flooding?

Answer: Possibly not, it's a way of getting all the water that we have sent down to them, away from Maidenhead, which has always flooded badly in the past. Water may get away from here quicker a few days after it has flooded, and this seems to have been the case, the floods disappeared very quickly this time.

Question: Where does all this water come from?

Answer: Out of the sky, it's all rainfall from the vast area of the Berkshire Downs, the Cotswolds and the Chiltern Hills that lie to the west of us. If it continues to rain after the river is full and the weirs are all open, we get flooded; it's as basic as that. The average yearly rainfall in this country is twenty four inches. We had on average, six inches in November, four inches in December and two inches of that fell from Christmas Eve until New Years Day, when the river was already full. Result, flooding. I hope that this puts a little light on a very gloomy subject.

*George Fielder, Lock Keeper
Mapledurham Lock*

CHANGES TO BUS SERVICES

Thames Travel, based in Wallingford, is revising the times from 10th February of all the services formerly operated by Chiltern Queens. Thames Travel stepped in at short notice in the summer to keep the services running. Now that they have been running for several months, the opportunities for changes and improvements have become apparent. This reorganisation has created an opportunity to improve services from Purley to Reading.

The main changes are:

- Hourly service to and from Reading on either 132 or 142
- Peak time buses to and from Reading enabling commuting by bus
- Regular service to Pangbourne, Whitchurch and Woodcote
- Comprehensive Saturday service to Reading including evening service on Saturday night; last departure at 23.20 from Reading Station.

The service runs Monday to Saturday. It does not run on Sundays or Bank Holidays.

We look forward to seeing you on our buses. Visit our website at www.busbook.co.uk for up-to-date timetables or call the office on 01491 837988 and we can send you a printed timetable or give you times over the phone.

Thames Travel acknowledges financial support from Oxfordshire County Council and West Berkshire Council for this service.

PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

We are still collating the names and addresses of those who may wish to stand for election to the Parish Council on 1st May so that we can ensure they receive details as soon as available from West Berkshire Council. Over the next few weeks we will be preparing information packs for those who have already expressed an interest in being a councillor. If anyone else is interested please contact me at the office in the Recreation Ground, near the tennis courts, or leave a message on 9844507. The office is usually open to the public on Monday evenings (5.45 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.) or Thursdays (9.00 a.m. to 3.15 p.m.). Due to another engagement it will be closed on Monday February 10th but will open the following evening instead.

Following our concerns about a misleading planning application letter, regarding 80 Long Lane, West Berkshire Council have written again to local residents with the correct information and extended the date by which they will accept written observations or objections about the 10 houses and 4 flats.

Whilst we are always happy to pass on details of highway defects to West Berkshire Council they will accept information direct from the public which may speed things up in urgent cases. The contact is Streetcare 01635 519080 (phone) 01635 519479 (fax) or streetcare@westberks.gov.uk (e-mail). There is a wealth of other information and an on-line highway defect form available for completion, on the West Berkshire website at www.westberks.gov.uk

*Brian J. Smith
Clerk to Purley on Thames Parish Council*

SPRINGTIME SPECIAL LUNCHPOT

Wednesday 9 April
Eat between 12 noon and 1 o'clock
St Mary's Church, Purley

WHAT'S IT ALL ABOUT?

Well, for years lunch was served once a week to anyone in the village who wanted to come along to Lunchpot. Now, due to other commitments of the Lunchpot team, we only hold 'Special' Lunchpots from time to time. So, if you are an old customer of ours, or someone new to this, you will be very welcome to come along. Everyone enjoys a good natter with other diners from a wide range of age groups. Toys and activities are supplied for children so they can go off to play once they have eaten, giving the adults peace to enjoy another cup of tea. A limited amount of high chairs will be available. The menu will include all the old favourites:- Homemade Soup & Roll or Jacket Potato with a variety of fillings, followed by a slice of one of Lunchpot's famous Yummy Cakes. Children can choose a smaller portion of the adult choice, or else opt for a Hot Dog. Hot and cold drinks will also be included in the price which is £3 adult / £1.50 child.

TICKETS MUST BE PURCHASED IN ADVANCE and will be available from Nicki Woodward 9841919 or at Church services. Any profit will be donated to St Mary's Church.

If anyone would like to help on the day by either setting up, or serving, then please 'phone Nicki.

DISTRICT NOTES – JANUARY 2003

It hardly seems possible that we have a new year upon us again but let me wish you all the compliments of the season.

In December West Berkshire Council was given its service rating by the Audit Commission and I have to say that in general I would agree with their findings. The overall assessment was 'fair' which puts West Berkshire right in the middle as far as unitary and county authorities are concerned. The several service areas were scored from 1 (poor) through 2 (weak) and 3 (good) to 4 (excellent) as follows:- Education 4, Social Care, Children 2, Social care adults 2, Environment 1, Housing 3, Libraries and Leisure 2, Benefits 2, use of resources 3, overall performance 3.

I was very pleased that our efforts on education were recognised as was the work of all our schools. The low score on environment was not, as local TV made out, a failure of refuse collection (which was rated good) but rather reflecting the dire performance on both planning and highways. Some drastic action has been taken to improve the planning service but it remains a very poor service pretty well at the bottom of the national league. The low scores on social care is primarily a reflection of being short changed when it comes to government grant and a department woefully strapped for cash that it can barely provide services for the most urgent cases let alone the bulk of the elderly population in need of that little bit of extra help which makes life that much better.

We were also given details of the changes in the spending assessments for next year. The 'Standard Spending Assessment' has been replaced by a 'Formula Spending Share' which at least is a more honest title as the government has now come clean and is openly saying that 'rich' areas should expect to pay a lot more in Council Tax than 'poor' areas. As a result of the changes we will be getting an assessment of £144M as our spending target (which relates to £128M for the current year or £117M on the old basis). However I must emphasise that this is what the government expects us to spend, not what they intend to give us by way of grant.

The Church Shop

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a **better deal**
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Producers

St Mary's Church
1st & 3rd Sunday
After all services

However, we are still awaiting details of how much grant we will actually receive, but the overall view is that Council Tax is likely to rise significantly over the next few years.

Network Rail has been fencing off the railway alongside the footpaths from the allotments to Pangbourne and has been quite crass in their choice of material. Galvanised metal for the section between Westbury Lane has resulted in a flurry of protest from all the users of the AONB – it really is an eyesore and our officers are pressing for it to be either repainted or replaced to match the section east of Westbury Lane.

You will no doubt have read in the papers about Reading's plans for expansion. It is my understanding that their final submission will not include Tilehurst and Purley. They expect however to consider us at the next boundary review due in 2010. The principal issue that has been the sticking point in recent years has been the difference in Council Tax levels for the same type of house. The difference is now much less than it was and indications are that by 2010 Reading is likely to see lower Council Tax rates than West Berkshire.

The new bus services seem to have settled down quite well. The 31 is taking an average of about 4 mins extra for the journey at off peak times and 10-15 min extra at peak hours with a lot of overcrowding. A few people have been very badly inconvenienced by the lack of a service down the Oxford Road but I have certainly found that changing to and from no 17s at the Triangle does at least enable me to get there.

Purley has a new tax base of 1777.33. What this means is that this is the number of band-D equivalent houses in the parish. We have 31 in Band A, 40 in Band B, 171 in Band C, 330 in Band D, 412 in Band E, 431 in Band F, 144 in Band G and 5 in Band H – a total of 1564 houses.

The government have announced their intention of transferring all licensing from magistrates to the council – probably a bill receiving Royal Assent in July 2003 to take effect in Feb 2004.

*John Chapman
West Berkshire District Councillor*

DAILY BREAD IS 65

Daily Bread, Scripture Union's best-selling daily Bible reading resource, is celebrating its 65th birthday this year, making it the longest running daily Bible devotional of its kind.

The Daily Bread team is committed to using new methods of reaching more people, using technology. Daily Bread notes will continue to be available online via the website: www.dailybread.org.uk, and are being launched for PDAs (Personal Digital Assistants) used by a growing number of young people, and often read on the tube and train.

WEST BERKS SCRABBLE® CLUB

On January 18th, The Barn in Beech Road was again the venue for the 3rd West Berks Scrabble Tournament. 90 participants attended the event on a fine winter's day – very different to weather conditions some 2 weeks earlier when the premises had been used as an evacuation centre for the villagers whose homes were flooded when the Thames burst its banks into the lower village area.

Although 90 were there at the end, not everyone was there at the beginning, with 2 people suffering from delayed trains and one having car problems. The car problem involved a player who had an accident within a few hundred yards of the tournament venue. Thankfully no-one was injured, but apparently there was a lot of bent metalwork and a garden retaining wall is missing a lot of concrete. Fortunately, as far as the organiser was concerned, the retaining wall in question was the one belonging to the house opposite his property!

The players were split into 3 divisions, each of 30 players, according to ability. In the A division, George Gruner from the London Scrabble League was triumphant, closely followed by Bob Berry, also of London. This division was decided by 'spread', which is the winning (or losing) margin and can be considered as similar to football's goal difference. In the other 2 divisions, the results were more clear cut, with Monica Stockwell from Basingstoke and Eileen Anderson from Reading, taking the honours in the B and C divisions respectively. Both players won all 6 of their games, although Eileen only beat her 4th round opponent, local player Len Choules, by a single point.

A trophy was also presented to the best player from the 3 participating Berkshire Scrabble Clubs, irrespective of the division in which they played.. That was won by Eileen Anderson. Both this trophy and the overall winner's trophy were kindly sponsored by Fujitsu Services.

All members of the West Berks Scrabble Club played some part in the day's proceedings, ensuring that the tournament went off without any hitches with competitors promising to come again next year and see some more of the local environment. With all administrative services being given free, including also a veritable banquet of home made cakes during the afternoon interval, the tournament was able to provide a donation of £511 to the Arthritis and Rheumatism Research Council, via Anne Rowell, the organisation's local fundraiser.

The organisers would like to publicly thank those people who donated their time, their services and raffle prizes, without which the tournament would not have been the success it was. Mattel, Chambers, Fujitsu Services and Astres Trophies of Tilehurst, all gave us their support.

The Club, which is Purley based and meets twice weekly, on Tuesday evenings and on Thursday afternoons, welcomes players of all standards, from beginners to experienced players. If you have a love of words then why not give us a try and come along to one of our meetings to see for yourselves what a friendly sociable club we are. For further information call Ian or Elizabeth Burn on 0118-984-5045.

Loving Father God, your gift of love in Jesus gives us such an abiding hope and so great a sense of peace that we are overwhelmed by joy. Help us to share our faith, hope and love with all around us. Thank you Lord. Amen.

Beryl Hunt



The 150 voices of the combined Pangbourne Choral Society and the Pangbourne College Choir together with soloists and the Philomel Orchestra under the baton of Darren Everhart will be giving a performance of Handel's Messiah at 7:30pm on Sunday February 9th in the stunning Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel at Pangbourne College.

At this concert the Choral Society will be saying a sad farewell to its Assistant Director of Music, Rufus Frowde, who is moving on to other roles including that of Assistant Director of Music at the Chapel Royal, Hampton Court Palace.

Many will have seen the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel recently in the BBC TV's Songs of Praise programme on Remembrance Sunday. Now is the chance for those who have not yet visited the chapel to experience this stunning and very moving building while listening to Handel's masterpiece.

There is ample free parking and easy access for any disabled visitors. Tickets: £7.50 (U-18s £1.50) from Premier Pet Store, Pangbourne High Street; on the door, or (with SAE, & cheque made out to 'PCS') by post from PCS Tickets, Swan View, 13 Shooters Hill, Pangbourne, RG8 7DZ.

Immediately following this concert the Choral Society will be starting rehearsing for their summer concert on a Coronation theme which will include Elgar's stirring Coronation Ode. The Society always welcomes new members. If you are interested in joining the choir just roll up on Tuesday February 11th in the Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel around 7:30pm. More information on membership and our concerts can be found at our web site: <http://www.pangbournechoralsociety.fsnet.co.uk>

LAUGHLINES

Q. How would you feel if you crossed a vegetable with a fruit?

A. Melon-cauli.

Q. How do vicars make telephone calls?

A. Parson to parson.

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

A.G.M.

The 25th Annual General Meeting will be held in the Purley Memorial Hall on Wednesday, 19 February, commencing at 7.45 p.m. It will be followed by an illustrated talk by Mr. Ben Viljoen on "Fragments of the Garden History of Purley". Members are reminded that any nomination for election as an Officer or Committee Member must be made in writing to the Secretary, Mrs. P. Brightwell, 99 Devonshire Gardens, Tilehurst, RG31 6FF by 12 February.

TRADING

The Trading Store will reopen at 10 a.m. on Saturday, 1 February and thereafter will be open each Saturday and Sunday between 10 and 11 a.m. until the last Sunday in October. Membership subscriptions for 2003 are now due and may be paid either at the Trading Store or at the A.G.M.

CHELSEA FLOWER SHOW

The Society has the option to obtain two tickets for either 22 or 23 May at the special price per ticket £19 (whole day), £17 (afternoon and evening), £13 (evening only). Any member of the Society who would like to go should ring Mr. G. Critchell (0118 9844185) immediately. If more than two members apply there will be a draw. Closing date: 9 February.

TALKS

The last talk this winter will be held on 19 March in Purley Memorial Hall commencing at 8 p.m. Mr. Bob Aggis will talk to us about House and Conservatory Plants.

PLANT SALE

If any members have any special requirements for the Sale to be held on 17 May, could they please let me know or contact the Trading Store?

Marion Dabbs
942 2349

PURLEY (BERKS) TENNIS CLUB

WINTER BERKSHIRE LTA LEAGUE 2002/03 RESULTS

Men: Won 2 and lost one

Ladies: 1st Team played 3, won 1 lost 2
2nd Team played 4, won 1 lost 3

Juniors: Played 1, lost one but played well

Mixed: Played 2, won 1 lost 1

COURT AVAILABILITY – CLUB SESSIONS WINTER

- Wednesday afternoons Club session 1.30 pm (all through the year)
- Saturdays - afternoon matches possible
- Informal free winter coaching started in October, 9.30 to 10.45am juniors - including competitions, and from 10.45am adults. For further information ring Colin Moses on 0118 984 5429. Members are encouraged to attend these sessions. If in doubt regarding the weather then ring first to confirm.

For membership enquiries please contact: Colin Moses (Chairman) 0118 984 5429; or Judy or Martin Dickins (Membership Secretaries) 0118 941 2399 - new members are very welcome.

Mary Brooksbank

Having a Party ?

Holding a Meeting ?

Need some extra space ?

Why not hire St. Mary's Church Hall?

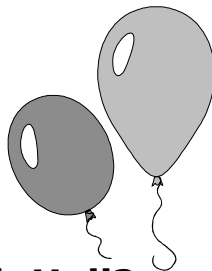
Ample Parking

Disabled Access

Basic kitchen facilities

Rates between £11 and £13 per hour
(Preferential rates for regular bookings)

Contact Sally Robertson on 0118 962 5978 for more details





PURLEY PATHFINDERS

After the indulgences of the festive season there is nothing like a good walk in the countryside to work the waistline. Add to this the freshness of the morning after days inside a centrally heated house, and the 'feel good' feeling lifts the spirits.

We celebrated the New Year with a walk around two local parks. Firstly we walked through Arthur Newberry Park, enjoying the wide open spaces, the winter outlines of the many fine trees, and the wonderful views to be gained from the high point. In contrast we climbed a twisting path within trees through McIlroy Park until we suddenly emerged onto an open area which gave us stunning views along the flooded Thames Valley towards Caversham. We ended our walk with an excellent Harvester meal in Tylers Rest while catching up on all the news.

Attractive country lanes led us from Theale High Street to the golf course. We crossed the course with a good view towards Englefield Church to be visited later. After a pleasant walk past the cottages of the hamlet of North Street we walked through the picturesque village of Englefield until we reached the village stores. Hidden behind the shop front we discovered the conservatory into which we were welcomed for morning coffee and cake. The owner told us of her plans for the conversion of a barn into much larger tea rooms and we look forward to visiting these in the future.

As it was, the 41 ladies on this walk spilled out into the garden and enjoyed the break none the less! After a visit to the parish church of St Mark's we entered the main drive of Englefield House, by kind permission of the Englefield estate. This meant we missed out a nasty piece of road later on. Instead we enjoyed a peaceful walk, spotting the deer in the deer park, as we made our way to the handsome gatehouse, built in 1862. We made our way back into Theale by way of playing fields, passing the lofty Holy Trinity church. We noted the architecturally interesting buildings along Theale High Street as we made our way back to our cars.

KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE PARISH MAG FOR DETAILS OF FORTHCOMING EVENTS!

In the pipeline:

Line Dancing Evening

Chocoholics for Easter

Springtime at CherryAcre

Springtime Lunchpot

Family Ramble & Tea
at Rushall Farm

If you have any ideas for future events please ring coordinator, Nicki Woodward 9841919.

For our next walk we were never far from typical Chiltern beech woods. Nuney Green was to be the first hamlet on our route. As we made our way through woodland either side of its' picturesque thatched cottages we were entranced by the striking outlines of the trees, and the contrast between their bare branches and the evergreen holly. We passed the delightful Alnutt's Almshouses, set in their cobbled courtyard, before arriving at Goring Heath where we noted the first snowdrops pushing their way up. Soon we were heading downhill to then climb up to Path Hill where we paused to take in the wonderful view across the broad sweeping valley. More beechwood paths took us to our next hamlet, Collins End and from here a pleasant track took us back to the King Charles Head where we enjoyed an excellent lunch, including some of the delicious Thai dishes on offer.

Seeing the emerging snowdrops on our last walk wetted our appetite for our February walks on which we will be walking in areas renowned for their breathtaking displays of snowdrops. If any ladies would like to join us on weekday mornings then do give me a ring for a programme.

*Nicki Woodward
9841919*

PROJECT PURLEY

The next meeting of Project Purley will be held at the Parish Office Goosecroft Lane, off Beech Road on Friday February 21st at 8pm. Alan Rosevear will give an illustrated talk entitled 'Local Turnpike Roads'

On December 6th members of Project Purley met at The Gatehouse for the Christmas Social Evening. The traditional ingredients of mulled wine and an excellent finger buffet supplied by members got the evening off to a good start. The competition for the best limerick with a connection to Purley caused much amusement and to-ing and fro-ing making comparison for the best verse from the 50 or so entries. The competition was won by overwhelming popularity by David Downs who penned:

If you travel the length of Long Lane
You will meet the occasional chicane
Their effect should be calming
But the outcome's alarming
The designer was clearly insane.

The welcome and atmosphere at the Gatehouse worked its usual magic providing another memorable Project Purley occasion.

Rita Denman



HOME-START West Berkshire

Calling all Parents and Grandparents

As a parent you will know just how tough it can sometimes be.

Do you have some spare time?
Ever thought about sharing your parenting skills
with others?
Would you like to become a volunteer?

YOU could have exactly the skills to make a
difference to a family living locally.

Home-Start West Berkshire is a voluntary organisation.

Our carefully trained volunteers offer
emotional support, friendship and practical help
to any parent with at least one child under five,
who may be facing a variety of difficulties including:
Loneliness, isolation, post-natal illness,
disabilities, ill health, relationship problems,
multiple births or bereavement.

A new preparation course is starting soon in your area.

If you are interested in finding out more

Please call Jo or Angela on

01635 528202

For an informal chat.

Registered charity no 1064347. Supported by the Community Fund

PURLEY MEMORIAL HALL

This year marks the 50th anniversary of the opening of the Purley Memorial Hall and as secretary I felt that it would be appropriate to update the present residents of the parish on its history and its future. As I understand it the hall was built with money raised by the residents of Purley for the benefit of the local community. The hall is a registered Charity with the accounts audited each year by a chartered accountant with a final report being passed to the Charity Commission. A committee was formed and continues to today with monthly meetings and an annual AGM. The members of the committee are drawn from two groups, the regular hirers of the hall and residents of Purley. During its life the hall has weathered several storms but came through unscathed under the management of Jo Hutching. As you may know Jo resigned a little under eighteen months ago leaving the hall in excellent condition and well financed. A credit to all her hard work!

I am pleased to report that the hall is in an excellent state of repair having been recently decorated. The external grounds have been tidied up and the committee is looking forward to the better weather when more external work can be carried out to improve the outside of the Hall. The Hall is booked Monday to Friday from 09:00 to 21:00 by various groups. These include a very active playgroup, several artists groups who display their work once a year in the hall, Karate , Yoga , Ti chi, WI, the Horticultural Society, Thames Vale Singers and various dance groups.

The committee is at present considering the future both long and short term. In the long term the question is of increasing the available space as the booking secretary is having to turn down requests for space. We are therefore in the process of having the annexe redecorated which will then be available for hire to smaller groups. While in the short term the committee feels that there are two possible areas of development. The first is the attraction of local service to set-up and use the hall facilities for the benefit of Purley residents. We have already had talks with a local chiropodist. The second area is to encourage residents of Purley to use their hall for family events at weekends. With this in mind the committee is proposing to restrict regular bookings to the weekdays only. This policy, the committee believes, returns the hall to its original aim of a local venue for local residents.

Do you have any ideas or comments? If so please drop us a line or better still, why not join the committee and help to shape the future for your hall.

*Mrs M Hoare
Honorary Secretary
16 Beech Road*

PANG & KENNET VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE PROJECTS

The Friends of the Pang and Kennet Valley Countryside Project has been set up to represent all of the people who care about the countryside in the two valleys. The events below are co-ordinated by The Friends and give you the opportunity to come out on practical tasks, learn new skills, meet new people and, above all, enjoy yourself. The tasks usually begin around 10am and finish by 4pm but you are very welcome to come for as much time as you wish to give during these hours. Please wear suitable footwear and clothing, and bring a packed lunch if you are coming for the full day. Hot drinks are usually provided, as are the necessary tools.

Conservation Tasks

- | | | |
|-------------------------|---|---------------------------|
| Tue 4 February | Barn Owl Box Repairs
Help the Barn Owl Project by helping to repair and replace damaged boxes. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm* at 10.00am. | Rushall Manor Farm |
| Sun. 16 February | Scrub clearance
Spend the day in one of the Valley's most attractive woodlands helping volunteer warden Dick Greenaway clear a 13 th Century Deer Park bank and ditch. Meet at the Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm* at 10.00 am or phone the project office for details of meeting on site. | Ashampstead Common |
| Sun 16 February | Hedge Planting
Come and help restore hedgerows in the beautiful North Wessex Downs AONB. We will be gapping up a boundary hedge to restore it. Meet at Kintbury train station. NGR SU386672 at 9.30am . | Holt Lodge Farm |
| Tue 4 March | Footbridge
Help to replace a footbridge and carry out other footpath maintenance at an attractive location in the Pang Valley. This task has been made possible by Pang Valley Ramblers. Meet at the Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm * at 10.00 am | Bucklebury |
| Sun 9 March | Glade creation
Spend the day in one of the valley's most attractive woodlands helping local resident Dick Greenaway clearing a 13th Century Deer Park Bank and ditch. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm* at 10.00am or phone the project office for details of meeting on site. | Ashampstead Common |

Bucklebury Heathlands Conservation

Sat 8 Feb
Sun 16 Mar

Heathland Management **Heathland Management**

Join us as we clear scrub and help encourage heather on Bucklebury Heathland.

For all tasks meet at Angel's Corner, by the Scout Hut on Bucklebury Common (Grid ref. SU 550688) at 10.00 am. Contact Tim Culley for more details on 0118 9714830.

Walks and Events

Fri. 28 February

PVCV Social evening 7.30-11pm Upper Bucklebury

Join the volunteer group for the annual 'Pang Valley Skittles Championship'. Cost £7.50 per person. Tickets include a buffet meal (please bring own drink and glasses)- available from Project Office. Meet at Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall (SU 545 684) for 7.30pm.

Sun 2 March

Yattendon Village 1-3pm Yattendon Estate

Join Dick Greenaway on a guided walk around this beautiful estate village in the heart of the Pang Valley. Dick will point out places of social and historic interest and will include a visit to Yattendons' new dairy with estate manager Alistair Jeffrey. Please wear wellies. **Booking essential** please contact the PKVCP office. Meet at the car park in Yattendon village (SU 552 744).

Sat 23/Sun 24

March Lambing Open Days Rushall Farm

Come and see the first lambs of the season at Rushall Farm, Bradfield*. The farm will be open from 11am to 6pm all proceeds go towards the Reading Multiple Sclerosis Society.

Sun 23 March

River Clean up Shaw/Newbury

The Rivers and Environmental Spaces Clean-Up Event is back! Come and help clean up part of the River Lambourn in Shaw as part of the RESCUE event. Meet on bridge in Walton Way off Turnpike Road at 10.00am.

Wed 26 March

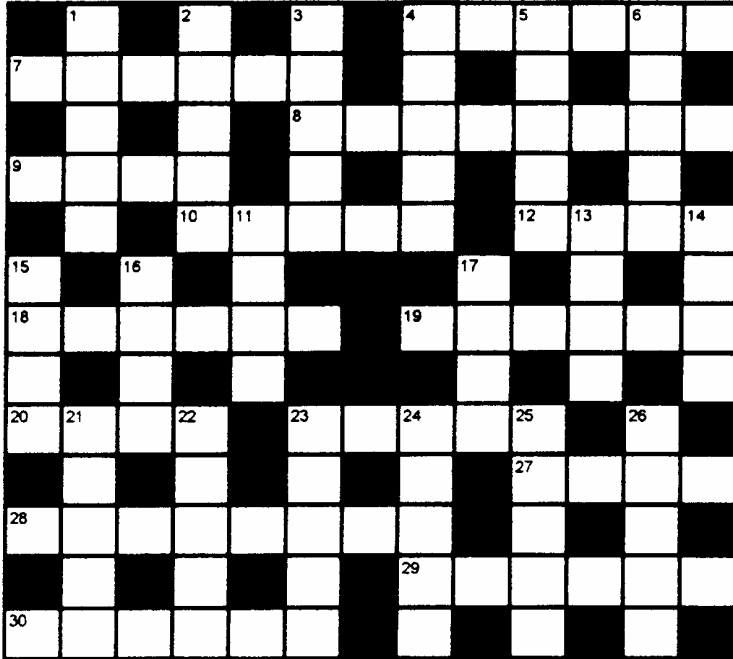
'Working with Water Voles' and Friends AGM

7.30-9.30pm Rushall Manor Farm, Bradfield

The AGM of the 'Friends of the Pang and Kennet Valleys' will be held (any items for the agenda please contact the office), followed by national authority on water voles Rob Strachan (Wildcru and Environment Agency). Meet at the Stables at Rushall Manor Farm, Bradfield*

*The Black Barn is situated off Back Lane between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield, to the west of Scratchface Lane (Grid ref. SU 583723).

CROSSWORD



Across

- 1 Old testament book (6)
- 4 Map (5)
- 9 To refrain (7)
- 10 God created man in his own (5)
- 11 Doctrine with divine authority (9)
- 12 Christmas carol (4)
- 13 You cannot serve both God and (5)
- 16 New testament book (4)
- 19 Official in charge of vessels and vestments (9)
- 21 Thoroughly proficient (5)
- 22 Last longer than (7)
- 23 What Christ did for our sins (5)
- 24 Belief contrary to the Christian church (6)

Down

- 1 Christian minister ranked below priest (6)
- 2 To settle snugly (6)
- 3 I will you, O Lord. Psalm (5)
- 5 Three persons in one God (7)
- 6 Like the first man (6)
- 7 Christ as God and man (11)
- 8 Sources available (5)
- 13 Make slightly wet (7)
- 14 Religion of the Muslims (5)
- 15 Consent to receive (6)
- 17 Assistant priest (6)
- 18 A forge (6)
- 20 Saltpetre (5)

Michael Dawney

The answers to January's crossword were:

Across: 1 Atheism, 5 Edgar, 8 Grace, 9 Sheep, 10 Deist, 14 Scrooge, 16 Herod, 17 Sleep, 18 Tornado, 22 Watch, 25 NAAFI, 26 Exeat, 27 Slave, 28 Natural

Down: 1 Angels, 2 Heal, 3 Iced, 4 Manifestation, 5 East, 6 Glee, 7 Rapt, 11 Money, 12 Jeans, 13 Gold, 15 Cole, 19 Obital, 20 Inns, 21 Saba, 22 Wise, 23 Heat, 24 Year

SPRINGTIME FAMILY RAMBLE ON THE FARM WITH TEA



SUNDAY 16th MARCH



Meet at The Black Barn, RUSHALL FARM At 1.45pm - walks start at 2pm Prompt!

Enjoy one of three walks, in delightful spring woodland, through primrose fields, or along one of the nicest stretches of the River Pang.

Choose a short amble, suitable for toddlers and the less able, with a Tractor/Trailer Ride back to the start; or a medium ramble suitable for families and bouncy children, or a longer walk suitable for the more able.



All the routes will include a visit to the LAMBING SHEDS where you will be encouraged to cuddle the NEWBORN LAMBS

Afterwards we will all meet up again for
TEA at THE BLACK BARN
With its wonderful views out across the Pang Valley.

TICKETS, which include a mug of homemade soup with rustic bread, or a hot dog (vegetarians catered for), will be
£3 Adult : £1 Child : under 3's Free

Available in Advance Only from
Nicki Woodward 984 1919 or Cilla Holt 941 4832

Hot and Cold Drinks and Yummy Cakes will also be on sale

Proceeds to St Mary's Church, with a donation to the John Simmond's Trust

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

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I welcome contributions from anyone to this magazine, particularly on local issues and events. Contributions can either be delivered in writing or, preferably, as a WORD attachment by email. Please note however, I reserve the right to edit contributions to suit space availability.

Comments and opinions expressed in this magazine do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editor or the P.C.C. of St. Mary's Church, Purley on Thames – publishers of Purley Parish News.

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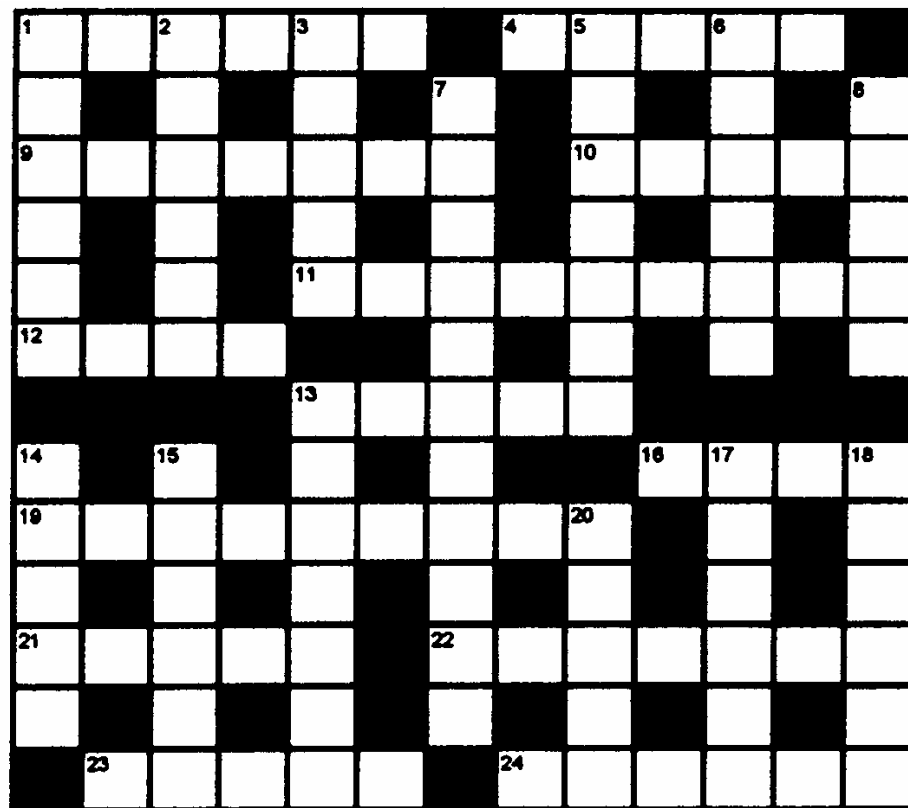
February 2003 – PPN Crossword

Unfortunately I did not have time to check the February crossword and so missed the fact that I had been supplied with the wrong grid.

Purley Parish News and Church News Service apologise for this error.

For those that would like to complete this month's crossword, here is the correct grid (or so I'm told).

*Matthew
Editor, Purley Parish News*



Across

- 1 Old Testament book (6)
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