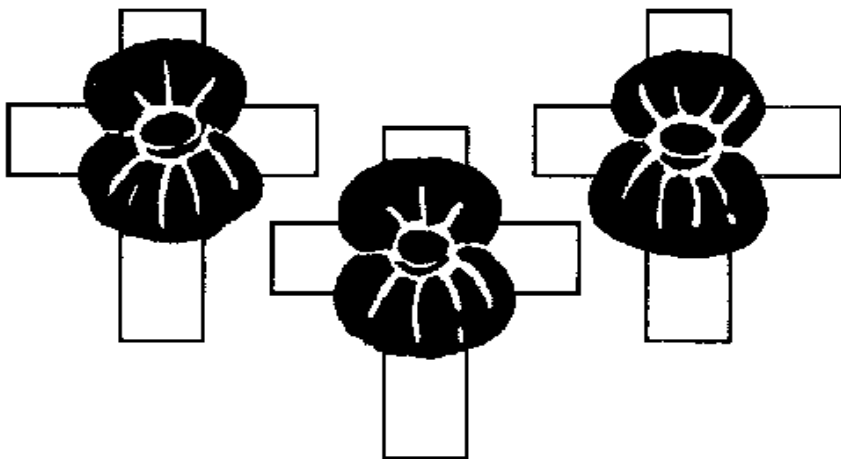


# PURLEY PARISH NEWS

**NOVEMBER 2003**



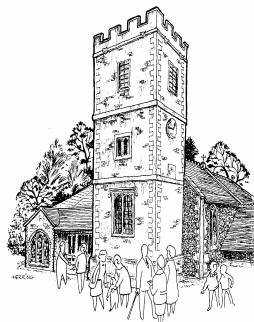
**35p**

For the Church & Community of  
**PURLEY ON THAMES**

# ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

## PURLEY ON THAMES

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### RECTOR

Rev. Roger B. Howell  
The Rectory, 1 Westridge Avenue  
Purley on Thames  
Tel: 0118 941 7727  
Email: rbh@bradean.fsnet.co.uk

### CURATE

Rev. Jean Rothery  
"Oaklea", Tidmarsh Road  
Tidmarsh  
Tel: 0118 984 3625

### ORDAINED LOCAL MINISTER

Rev. Andrew Mackie  
12 Church Mews  
Purley on Thames  
Tel: 0118 941 7170

### CHURCHWARDENS

Sally Robertson	Lorna Herring
Tel: 0118 962 5978	Tel: 0118 942 1547

### CHURCH HALL BOOKINGS

Lorna Herring  
Tel: 0118 942 1547

### BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

All enquiries should be made to the Rector

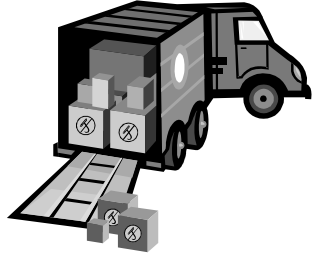
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[www.stmarythevirgin.fsnet.co.uk](http://www.stmarythevirgin.fsnet.co.uk)

# A LETTER FROM BRISTOL

Dear Friends

It does not seem, as I write this letter in the middle of October, that we have been here in Bradley Stoke for over six weeks. It has been a busy time for us apart from the move since complications with our daughter Fiona's appendix operation have meant that we have made several return visits to Reading. Now all appears to be well perhaps we can settle to life here in Bristol.



First I must thank everyone for your generous gift on my departure I took the hint and bought some new golf clubs which seem to have a beneficial effect on my game.

The church here has welcomed us, it is only a minute's walk from the house, and is a modern, having been consecrated in 1991. It could not be more different from Purley as it is a fully flexible modern building. The basic worship area, which we experienced when we came to an Ascension Day service before we had bought the house, is similar in size to the main body of Purley Church but can be tripled in size by the removable screens, which is what seems to happen every Sunday. There is only one service in the morning at 10.00am, which will be either Family Service, Holy Communion or Morning Worship and one service in the evening at 7.00pm, which will be said Holy Communion, Prayer and Praise, Holy Communion with prayer for Healing or Evening Prayer. Obviously we have not had the opportunity to experience all the services yet, but having only one service in the morning does mean that all ages are represented which gives a family feel to the service.

This is my overall feeling about the church here, that it is a family and there are groups or events for all ages but everyone is happy to worship together. Also my feeling is that the building in which one worships is not that important. When one worships in one place for 36 years it does seem to be the only kind of building that you should worship in, but that is not so. It is not the building that is important it is the love of God that is in the hearts and minds of the worshipping family in that place that matters.

We have been welcomed into the choir as an answer to prayer as one couple who used to sing in the choir have just moved to Newbury!

Our many years in Purley Church will mean that it and the congregation will always be in our prayers.

Yours in Christian Fellowship

*Wally Watkivs*

## **COMMUNITY HARVEST SUPPER**

This event held at the Barn, Beech Road catered for 100 guests and provided a two-course sit-down meal topped and tailed by a glass of wine and tea/coffee. After the meal we were entertained by Bill Ayling, who had written some harvest poetry for the occasion and Michael Adnett, who appeared as a Somerset country yokel and sang for us. Geoff Williams was our auctioneer and sold some fifty donated items, which raised £440.

Together with some donations, we gave the grand total of £465.40 to the Air Ambulance via Purley Sports and Social Club whose chosen Charity it is this year. My thanks go to the group who planned this event and organized it so efficiently, and also to "Classic Crocks" who supplied the crockery, glassware and cutlery and washed it all up at the end.

*Roger Howell*

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## **SENIOR CITIZENS' TEA PARTY**

As in previous years St. Mary's Church will be holding a pre-Christmas Tea Party for our Senior Citizens. The date is Sunday December 14th at 3-30pm and the event will be held in the church hall. We shall be sending out invitations to those who have attended before, but this will by no means cover everyone. If you would like to come to the tea party, please let one of the following\* know by the end of November. Don't let a lack of transport keep you away – we can help with this.

\*Sheila Adnett (962 5760), Roger Howell (941 7727)

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## **MUSIC THROUGH THE AGES**

Do you enjoy listening to music of different kinds? Hymns from across the years? Songs from shows? The organ played with passion?

If yes, then put this date in your diary now:

**Saturday 7 February 2004, 7.30 p.m.                      St Mary's Church**

For an evening of music through the ages provided by the singers and musicians of St Mary's with guest organists.

Tickets £1 with light refreshments and all proceeds going to the Children's Society.

**More information coming soon!!**

## CHURCH SERVICES

2 Nov	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship	} Barnabas Fund speaker
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion	
	6:00 p.m.	Holy Communion with the laying on of hands	
9 Nov Remembrance	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship	
	10:55 a.m.	Holy Communion	
11 Nov	10:50 a.m.	Remembrance Service <b>at Brimpton War Memorial</b>	
16 Nov	9:30 a.m.	Family Communion with the laying on of hands	
	11:15 a.m.	Morning Worship	
	6:00 p.m.	Evening Worship	
23 Nov	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship	
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion	
30 Nov Advent	10:30 a.m.	Holy Communion for all the family	
	6:00 p.m.	Advent Carols <b>at St James the Less, Pangbourne</b>	
	8:00 p.m.	Evening Worship Extra	
7 Dec	9:00 a.m.	Family Worship	
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion	
	6:00 p.m.	Holy Communion	
14 Dec	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship	
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion with the laying on of hands	

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

## CHRISTIAN MINISTRY OF HEALING

We continue to have the laying on of hands for healing on a monthly basis at St. Mary's. The next services will be on Sunday 2 November at 6:00 p.m. and on Sunday 16 November at 9:30 a.m. We are always willing to pray for those in need - please let us know and come to church on one of these Sundays, or on any other Sunday.

## CHILDREN AND BEREAVEMENT

When children lose their parents, it is always a very difficult time, and to know how best to handle the new situation can be puzzling. The Mothers Union has produced a useful leaflet called Children and Bereavement. If you would like a copy, please contact the Rector (941 7727)

# THE YORK NATIVITY PLAY

For the 47<sup>th</sup> year the York Nativity Play will be performed in Aldermaston Church from Monday 8 December to Sunday 14 December

For free tickets send SAE to V. Hall, The Gables, Church Road, Aldermaston, RG7 4LR.

If you have not seen this play, you have missed a treat!



## DO YOU VALUE YOUR FREEDOM?

Yes, of course we do! We take it for granted in this land, and think nothing of it. But in many countries this is far from the case. People from mainly-Muslim countries who come to live here are welcomed and enjoy the freedom to practise their own faith without hindrance from anyone else. That is how it should be, but it is not like this for Christians who live in many other countries! Those who decide the change their beliefs and become Christians but remain in many mainly-Muslim countries are hounded and persecuted, and their lives are under threat – sometimes from their own families. The Barnabas Fund is working to change this situation so that Christians enjoy the same freedom in other lands that Muslims and others have here. If you think this is a good for which to work, then please help by signing the petition to urge Parliament to do something about it. There is an Early Day Motion which so far has attracted signatures of 61 MP's. The text of the motion is:

That this House supports liberal Muslims, human rights campaigners and others who are calling for an end to cruel traditional punishments for apostasy; recognises that in Christian and Jewish communities there has been a turning away from barbaric forms of punishment; and urges governments and religious communities everywhere to recognise that freedom does not exist where people have not the liberty to convert and practise faiths without extreme duress from family, community or religious law.

**Our MP Martin Salter has not signed this motion. Write to him at – House of Commons, Westminster, London, SW1A 0AA and urge him do so please.**

**Many people are concerned about issues such as this, but do nothing about it.**

**CONCERNED ABOUT JUSTICE? Then, do something!**

*Roger Howell*

## DISTRICT NOTES

A new service for people who want to use the libraries but are housebound has been established. This is in addition to the mobile library. I hope to publish more details next month but if anyone is particularly interested please get in touch with me (tel 0118-942-6999)

There is a food hazard alert for some tahini products manufactured by S H Yaman and Sons of Lebanon which have been contaminated by salmonella – see the website [www.food.gov.uk](http://www.food.gov.uk) for full details.

Along with a number of other residents I was upset to have had our refuse collection day moved back to Monday. I am told it is just a routine five yearly switch. As a matter of policy each year one of the collections Tuesday to Friday is switched with Monday and then the following year switched to another day which you keep for another four years. I have not been keeping records but it always seems to me that Purley gets moved to a Monday collection much more frequently. Is there anyone out there who has been keeping records so that I can challenge this?

I have been quite concerned by scare stories put out by some of the local press who have picked up on some of the problems some people have been having with insurance. I must apologise for having given some information to reporters but I regret I have been misrepresented on several occasions. We really need to put the record straight that only a very few houses in the village are vulnerable to serious flooding, these are easily recognised and it is quite wrong for insurance companies and estate agents to use post codes to set premiums. Purley is a great place to live.

*John Chapman*  
*West Berkshire Councillor*

## Christmas Fair



**Saturday  
6th December**

**11.30 to 2.00pm**

**St Mary the Virgin  
Parish Church  
St. Mary's Avenue,  
Purley**

Plants Refreshments & Light lunches Fancy Goods

White Elephant Cakes Tombola  
Raffles Books

**Please come and join in the fun**

## **OXFAM - READING**

The Oxfam bookshop in Reading has been holding a series of events this autumn, which conclude on 12 November.

BBC Radio Berkshire will broadcast their 3-hour morning show from the shop. There will be a variety of guests to discuss the titles on the BBC Big Read chart of the 100 favourite books in Britain.

In the evening, the acclaimed writer Francis Spufford will be reading from his new book, *The Backroom Boys*, a rapturous history of the amazing achievements of British boffins of the last 50 years.

For more information, phone the shop on 0118 939 3868.

The Reading Oxfam bookshop sells a huge range of high quality donated books, music and videos. All proceeds from the shop and events go towards Oxfam's mission to help alleviate poverty and suffering worldwide.

## **PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL**

The issue of West Berkshire Council travel tokens to anyone holding the required form (during office hours on Mondays & Thursdays) will be drawing to a close shortly. If you intend to visit please check by telephone first to see if they are still available. For any future queries please contact the Concessionary Fares Team on 01635 519800.

The Parish Council participated in the recent national *Anti Social Behaviour One Day Count* on 10<sup>th</sup> September at the request of government.

At a recent meeting the following resolution was agreed:

*This Council would welcome the construction of a viable, cost-effective flood prevention scheme for the lower part of Purley on Thames with minimal visual impact on our Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB). We are encouraged by the progress made by the Environment Agency with its pre-feasibility study and hope to see current proposals proceed to a full feasibility study. We will continue to provide support and encouragement for the process, initially through our participation in the Purley Flood Review Panel.*

West Berkshire Council have produced a leaflet on *Don't let your hedge be a hazard* and copies are available from the Parish Office. For further information contact the Streetcare Team on 01635 519080.

Concerned about the amount of litter in Bucknells Meadow the Council have provided additional bins and increased routine litter picking. However as this area is designated Children's Play Area action may need to be taken against those who are apparently continuing to bring rubbish such as timber there. The assistance of residents is sought in identifying those responsible for this anti-social behaviour. Similar problems are also

occurring at Pikeshaw which is a designated woodland amenity area, not a rubbish tip, and again the Council will be seeking evidence to enable them to take legal action against those responsible. They will be considering whether the *Friends of Pikeshaw* should be reformed and anyone interested in participating is invited to let us know.

The Mobile Library will be visiting on November 20, December 11 (double issue), January 22, February 12, March 4 & 25. Local timings are:

Orchard Close	2.15 – 2.30
Memorial Hall	2.35 – 2.50
Hazel Road	2.55 – 3.15
Farm Close	3.20 – 3.35
Purley Church	3.40 – 4.00

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

The office is located near the tennis courts and is open:

Mondays: 5.45 p.m. to 8.30 p.m.  
(except bank holidays)

Thursdays: 9.00 a.m. to 3.15 p.m.

Purley on Thames Parish Council  
Parish Office  
Goosecroft Lane  
off Beech Road  
Purley on Thames  
Reading  
RG8 8DR

Tel/fax: 0118 984 4507

## **PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY**

### **WINTER TALKS**

In October Mrs. Gwen Barton gave us a most enjoyable slide show and talk on the various places she had visited, including Madeira and The Floriade in Holland.

On Wednesday, 19<sup>th</sup> November, Dr. Michael Keith-Lucas will be talking to us about "Gardens of Cornwall". This meeting will take place in Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Rd, commencing at 8 p.m. Please try and come along so that we have a good attendance for this speaker.

### **TRADING**

The Shed is now closed until the first weekend in February 2004.

*Marion Dabbs*  
9422349

## **CHRISTMAS CAROLS**

Don't say HUMBUG! Let your hair down. Sing your heart out. Join in Carol Singing around the Parish.

On Tuesday 23 December 2003 singers from St. Mary's will be singing carols at various points around the streets of the village, and we hope lots more local people will join us to sing out the sheer joy of Christmas. Come along for the whole walk, singing at half a dozen or so places, join in the singing where it is closest to your home, or just come out to listen! Everything starts outside the Church at 6:45 p.m. and we will return to the church at about 8.30 p.m. for refreshments.

Look out for details of the route in December's magazine.

## **CHILDREN'S SOCIETY BOXES**

November is the month that I usually try to collect and count all of the Children's Society Boxes in Purley. If you have a box that I do not know about and would like it included, please let me know.

*S. Pryor*  
984 3589

## **YOUR VIEWS ABOUT PURLEY**

So far work on the Village Plan has been obtaining views about what local residents like and dislike about living in Purley. Drop-in events at the August Fun Day, the late summer show and harvest supper have provided lots of ideas, worries and suggestions for the future that are now being analysed. They provide an interesting snapshot of how Purley is viewed. These and other views will help the Village Plan steering group develop a questionnaire that will go out next Spring to all residents.

So what do local people think?

Not surprisingly Purley residents like living here, particularly the rural feel and the woods and the Thames. And you want to keep it that way!

One major concern is the lack of amenities locally – a GP surgery, more shops, a pharmacy and even a pub were all mentioned as desirables for Purley.

The local Post Office is regarded as vital to the village and needs to be kept at all cost. More recreational facilities for young people is regarded as important and so getting young peoples views included in the village plan will be important. Several people mentioned the difficulty of a village community since there is no "centre" to the village. One suggestion was using the Internet to keep people informed about what's going on in Purley.

Chief among the problems identified were vandalism, graffiti and litter. Virtually all mentioned the need for a more regular, more visible and more effective police presence.

Transport also figured in peoples concerns. Traffic calming was felt to be necessary in several roads in Purley. Buses (or the lack of them) were of concern, particularly the need for a more direct and quicker route into Reading.

These are just some of the thoughts and next year's survey will provide a complete picture of these and other issues. The Village Plan will be about trying to address these issues and concerns in very practical ways. One item it won't be able to help with is the little girl who stated that she liked living in Purley because Concorde flew over each day!

The Village Plan Group has a lot of work to do under its new Chairman, Penny Williams and new secretary Ben Viljoen. Richard McDonald is Treasurer.

The group is still on the look out for more helpers. Thanks to those who have offered their support so far. For further information about the Village Plan then please contact the Parish Council offices on 0118 984 4507 or Penny Williams on 0118 941 1310 or Tim Whitaker (0118 984 5553 or TimothyWht@aol.com.)



# Christmas Fayre

Long Lane School

Saturday 29<sup>th</sup> November 2003 11.30am to 2pm

**Santa's Grotto**  
Minced pies & Mulled wine  
Café, hot food/drinks  
Raffle  
Arts & Crafts

**Bath & Beauty**  
Bottle Tombola  
Cakes  
Sporting Lottery  
Toys, Books & games  
And lots, lots  
more.....





## PURLEY PATHFINDERS

Sunny Autumn days have been a real bonus for the ladies of Pathfinders. Dry paths underfoot, and the autumnal colours around us brought alive in the sun's rays. Magical!

It was a lovely bright morning when we started out along the winding banks of the River Kennet. We crossed a footbridge over a sparkling weir to continue our walk, now along the bank of the Kennet and Avon Canal. The canal looked particularly lovely in the sunshine and it seemed a shame to leave it, but our route took us away from its banks to pass through woodland with beautiful views of a lake. We continued through undulating farmland and meadows around Sulhampstead until we reached the burial ground of St Michael's Church at Sulhampstead Bannister. All that remains now of the flint-faced church is the porch. Our next lovely view opened up as we looked across the Kennet Valley to see Englefield House looking stunning in the sunshine. More rolling countryside and wonderful views were enjoyed on the rest of the walk. On the final leg we crossed the longest footbridge to be built in Berkshire, constructed by Reading Ramblers in 1977. Retracing our steps to our cars we felt refreshed by the scenery, weather, and good company.

The day of our 'Autumntime Special' dawned clear and bright, and with joyful anticipation we boarded our awaiting coach. Ian, our coach driver, did remarkably well to concentrate with the cacophony of 50 voices behind him! Arriving in good time at Alton station we were able to have cameras poised in readiness. We didn't have long to wait for our 'subject' to arrive, for down the track came a powerful, puffing steam engine. We watched with interest as it was uncoupled and driven to the water tower to take on water. We chatted to the Engine driver and I was the envy of many a small child as I was invited into the engine to stoke up the fire with a shovel full of coal! Soon the engine was coupled in readiness and we settled back in our comfortable, renovated, private carriage for the journey to Alresford, taking full advantage of the coffee and biscuits served on board! All the thrills of the Golden Age of Rail Travel was in evidence as we steamed through the glorious early Autumn Hampshire landscape, dotted here and there with sheep and the odd isolated cottage. Briefly we paused at Medstead and Four Marks, a perfect example of a country station, then we were off again to the next stop, Ropley Station. We admired the topiary trees around the platforms, and no fan of the Rev. W. Awdry's books could have been more excited on seeing Thomas The Tank Engine resting by his engine shed! Our trip ended all too soon, but we looked forward to the next stage of our day out – a walk around the interesting town of Alresford. After devastating fires it was rebuilt into the handsome Georgian town we were to explore. Indeed, a good starting point was to walk down the tree-lined Broad Street, a contender for the

South Chiltern Choral Society  
Conducted by Gwyn Arch

# Celtic Christmas

A concert of Celtic music  
including The Armed Man  
- A Mass for Peace  
by Karl Jenkins

20th December 7:30 pm  
21st December 2:30 pm

Chiltern Edge School  
Reades Lane  
Sonning Common

Tickets £7.00 (OAP/child £5.00)  
Tel: 01491 578641

[www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk](http://www.southchilternchoralsociety.org.uk)

Registered charity No. 297583



find a fridge full of freshly harvested watercress for just 50p a bunch. Needless to say, the fridge was soon empty and the 'honesty box' full! Clutching our bounty we continued beside the clear chalk stream past Town Mill, where the stream has been diverted, and now cascades in a waterfall beside it. Soon, as we wandered beside the trout-filled stream, the gorgeous old thatched Fulling Mill came into view. An ideal subject for a chocolate box lid! 'Alresford' is a Saxon name meaning 'a ford where the alder trees grow.' We had walked beneath the alders, and now we found the point at which the ford had once been, now a hive of activity with ducks, swans and young cygnets. Eventually we entered Arlebury Recreation Ground and some of the group chose this lovely spot to picnic, while others carried on to savour the temptations served in one of the local eating houses. After lunch there was time to browse inside some of Alresford's interesting shops before tea and cake. Then, back to the station where our steaming 'iron horse' was waiting to take us back to Alton, and our coach, for the journey home after our super Autumntime Special day out.

Back in Berkshire, a warm breeze rustled the rapidly changing leaves, and caused acorns to fall from some fine oak trees, as we left the church of St Peter at Ufton Nervet behind. However, often during our walk the tall spire rising from this 1861 building proved a dominant landmark. We crossed between the Medieval fishponds which would have been an important provider of fish for the table in Medieval times. Today we saw no fish, only

a good display of bulrushes growing happily at the water's edge. Soon we were walking along an avenue bordered on both sides by majestic oak trees, as the Elizabethan front of Ufton Court came into view. This 15th century house provided welcome sanctuary to many priests in the days of Elizabeth 1. Now it welcomes many children through its doors on educational visits. We passed an ancient oak, marvelling at its healthy looking canopy, despite the fact that its enormous trunk is hollow, and continued down a tree-lined track from where a deer shyly ran for cover. Our route now gave us splendid far-reaching views across the green valley of the River Kennet, interrupted now and then with autumn hues from trees and bushes. As we continued within the tranquil landscape, the church spire loomed ever nearer, and soon we were back in Ufton Nervet after our lovely autumnal walk.

Although 'London Snow' is probably the most famous poem written by Robert Bridges, we were more interested, at the start of our October walk, to hear an excerpt from a letter he had written in October 1887. 'The trees are better than I have ever known them. All is light golden browns and greens, the skies every day are cloudless blue, and the air sharp and brisk.' One hundred and sixteen years later we found ourselves passing the Manor House where he had once lived, in Yattendon, on a day which epitomized the October days which Bridges had witnessed all those years ago. Wonderful! As we walked across a field beside 'berried' hedges we disturbed a fox which stole away for cover in the copse ahead, the russet of its coat blending into the undergrowth. A hare and numerous pheasants – possibly the fox's quarry – scattered in all directions upon our approach. Obviously we were no match for the stealth of the fox! All the while our route took us on paths either within or surrounded by trees 'all light golden browns and light greens.' A very pretty bridleway led us eventually to Ashampstead Church which Robert Bridges visited often. After looking inside to admire the 13th century wall paintings we sat outside for our break, overlooking the resident hens! Refreshed, we continued on our way to Yattendon along tracks well known to Bridges on his frequent walks between the two villages. In the 'cloudless blue sky' two hawks called noisily to each other. Part of our route took us beside a plantation of Christmas trees, many of which were labelled ready for sale. We were reminded that Christmas is not far away but we put thoughts of Winter to the back of our minds as we enjoyed the beautiful Autumn scenery. Three deer bounded across a field, then Yattendon Church came into view. Entering the churchyard we noticed the large cross placed there by Bridges in memory of his mother. Inside the church, displays giving thanks for the Harvest were delightful. We found a framed dedication to his mother, written by Bridges, hanging near where he would have sat. Bridges served as choir master here for nine years and, no doubt, in that time he had led the choir in rousing Harvest choruses – 'All good things around us are sent from Heaven above.' And so, as the sun warmed the 'sharp and brisk' air, we ended our wonderful 'poetic' walk.

Climbing from Lower Basildon towards Upper Basildon we followed the outer wall of Basildon Park. The path around the wall was so pretty with the warm golden glow from yellow, orange and russet leaves surrounding us. After our break on the village green we made our way through Upper Basildon, enjoying the many fine houses and pretty gardens. Next our route took us down through wonderful 'yellow' woodland until we reached the A329. Crossing the road we took the path along the riverbank made famous by Kenneth Grahame in the delightful story, 'Wind in the Willows'. Like Ratty and Mole we enjoyed the activities on the river, spotting Toad – oh, sorry! – a young man, in his racing skiff. A kingfisher skimmed the water as we approached the river entrance to Child Beale. Narrow boats competed for colourfulness with the rich palette of 'The Wild Wood' on the Oxfordshire bank. A gaggle of geese noisily heralded our approach as we walked in a long line beside an equally long line of sheep! As St Bartholomew's Church came into view we left the riverbank and headed for The Crown where lunch was served in the conservatory, with a fine view over the glorious surrounding countryside.

We intend to enjoy the last of the Autumn hues to the full during our November programme as we walk within the wonderful scenery of the Chilterns with its magnificent beech woods. If any ladies would like to join us then do ring for a programme.

*Nicki Woodward*  
9841919

## **Purley School Christmas Fayre**

**Saturday 22nd November 2.00pm**

**At St Mary's Church Hall, Purley**



Attractions include  
Raffle, Father Christmas



Homemade Cakes, Biscuits & Sweets  
Tombola including a Chocolate Tombola  
and many more.

Refreshments available

# **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**

- Tues 18 Nov**                      **Glade Clearance**                      **Ashampstead**  
Spend the day in one of the valley's most attractive woodlands helping local resident Dick Greenaway create woodland glades. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm\* at 10.00am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site.
- Sun 23 Nov**                      **Hedge Planting**                      **Pangfield Farm**  
Contribute to the Pang Valley Landscape by helping to plant hedgerows around Pangfield Farm. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm\* at 10.00am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site.
- Sat 29 Nov, 10am**              **Ash Coppicing**                      **Hosehill**  
A large area of ash is growing behind the lake at Hosehill LNR. Come and help to start rotational coppicing of this area. Meet at the entrance opposite the Fox & Hounds pub at 10.00. Grid ref: SU650697
- Tues 2 Dec**                      **Pond Restoration**                      **Manor Farm**  
Join the PVCV coppicing trees, to help restore the pond at Manor Farm, Hampstead Norreys. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm\* at 10.00am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site.
- Tues 16 Dec**                      **Coppice Hazel**                      **Jennets Hill**  
A new task helping to restore coppice woodland and cut stakes and binders for hedge laying. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm\* at 10.00am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site.

## **Bucklebury Heathlands Conservation**

- Sun 9 Nov**                      **Heathland Management**  
**Sat 13 Dec**                      **Heathland Management**  
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 971 4830.

## **Walks and Talks**

**Sun 16 Nov, 11am Winter Tree identification**

**Paices Hill**

Discover the magnificent lakes and woodland at Paices Hill, in the first guided tour of the site, looking particularly at the many different trees to be found there. Meet at 11.00 at Paices Hill (through Youngs Industrial Est.) Grid ref: SU586638

**Tues 18 Nov, 7.30pm Julia's Dried Flowers**

**Bradfield**

Join Julia Walters a local producer of dried flowers, who will give a talk on homegrown dried flowers, the varieties available and the flowering seasons. Julia will be bringing along her large range of dried flowers and Christmas bits to sell at the end of the talk. To book a place contact the Project office 0118 930 5336. Meet at the Stables, Rushall Manor Farm\*.

**Sun 30 Nov, 1.30pm 'Harvesting Christmas Trees'**

**Yattendon**

A Three mile walk to see the Christmas Tree harvest at Yattendon with Dick Greenaway. Yattendon Estate's Farms Director will talk about the harvest. Meet at the Christmas Tree Yard SU 564 745. This will be an opportunity to buy your Christmas tree at source. To book a place contact the Project office 0118 930 5336

## **Events**

**Fri 5 Dec, 7.30pm Christmas Wine Tasting Evening Brockhurst School**

Following the success of last year's event we are staging a Wines for Christmas tasting on 5 December. Hayman Barwell Jones Ltd, independent shippers will be presenting around four flights of wine from champagne, whites, reds to desserts comparing prices and country of origin. Following the presentation there will be canapés and mince pies. Tickets available at £12.50 per head from the Project office by telephoning 0118 930 5336

*An experienced Classical Pianist*

***Musical Recital***

*by Brian Sturtridge*

*Classical Music - Refreshment Interval - Light Music*

*Saturday 29th November 2003, at 7.00pm*  
*United Reformed Church, Armour Road, Tilehurst*

*Tickets £3.50 in advance*  
*from Sonia Rooke 0118 942 6698*

# TURNING POINT

Free, confidential support services for drug and alcohol users, their families and friends.

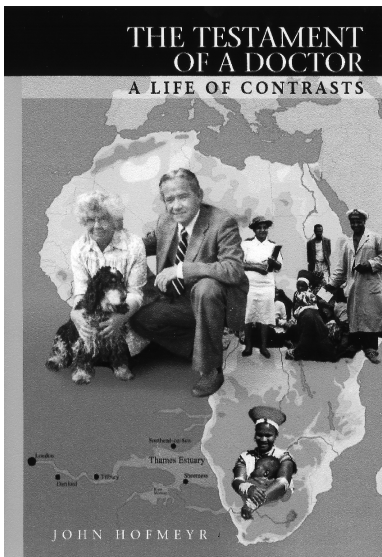
*The Gatehouse, Ampere Road, Newbury, RG14 2AE  
01635 237795 (infowestberks@turning-point.co.uk)*

## GRAVES IN ST. MARY'S CHURCHYARD

If you have a family grave in the churchyard, would you please be aware that there are regulations regarding what is allowed and what is not permitted. A copy of these can be seen near the new entrance to the church, but for your information, they are as follows:

- No monuments of any sort are to be erected without the prior permission of the Rector.
- No borders of any sort are to be fixed around grave perimeters.
- No chippings of any colour are to be placed on grave surfaces.

At the moment there are a few graves in breach of these regulations. The PCC is not trying to be awkward in asking for the rules to be observed, but is trying as best it can to keep the churchyard clean and tidy. Please contact the Rector if you have any problems about this.



John Adriaan Hofmeyr, born of an English speaking family in rural South Africa, in East Griqualand, had an impecunious upbringing by his mother widowed in the Great 'Flu Epidemic of 1918. Under-achieved at school but in WWII volunteered and saw service in Kenya, thence to war torn Europe, reaching Arnhem and beyond to Amersfoort and Gorinchem. Post-war qualified in London, later becoming mission doctor/surgeon in Zululand. Married, had son born 1955, returning to England to spend more than 25 years of fascinating experiences in the NHS, with life's personal joys and tragic sorrows at home.

John's book is published at the end of the month and will be available directly from John for £33 (plus £2 if by post) by cheque payable to "British Heart Foundation". Half the books printed are being distributed by the Red Cross Children's Memorial Hospital, Capetown, for their benefit.

*Dr J. A. Hofmeyr, 11 Roebuck Rise, Tilehurst, RG31 6TP*

## PURLEY W.I.

Dr Martin Parsons, the Chairman of War Child gave us a very interesting and enlightening insight into child evacuees during the 1939-45 World War. The operation was called Pied Piper and thousands of children were transported to areas considered safe from air raids etc. More than 44,000 went on GWR many of whom travelled in 3<sup>rd</sup> class compartments (which in those days were closed areas) with no facilities whatsoever and on journeys of more than 8 hours the mind boggles!

On arrival at their destination they were taken to town or village halls where they were selected by, unchecked for suitability, householders and many children from age 4 onwards were split up from their siblings as the numbers these "adoptive" families could house were limited.

All of this was a very traumatic experience which many in their 70's and 80's still vividly remember as letters Dr Parsons had received confirmed.

We all learnt a great deal from this talk and there were a few tear filled eyes in the hall at the conclusion.

If anyone reading this would like to know more, Dr Parsons has written a few books on this subject.

Competition: Wartime Memento

1<sup>st</sup> Bernadine Perry

2<sup>nd</sup> Marion Dabbs

Flower of the month

1<sup>st</sup> Kath Hodge

2<sup>nd</sup> Bernadine Perry, Angela Edwards

November Meeting: Christmas Wreaths Workshop  
(we will learn how to make these)

Competition: Tree decoration

Stall: Red/green Parcel

The meeting takes place at Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road on Wednesday 12 November at 7:30 p.m. **Visitors are always welcome**, however this time will be asked to pay £3 to cover costs of materials.

*Betty Hunter*

---

Opera, in English is, in the main, just about as sensible as cricket in Italian.

*anon*

## MESSAGE FROM HOME FARM

We drilled our winter wheat into a seedbed of dust this week. The variety, a milling wheat called Soisson, must not be put in too early for fear of it becoming winter proud. Fat chance this year; even if we had drilled it a month ago, it is far too dry for the seed to have germinated. Indeed the grass we put in 3 weeks ago after maize has not shown a whisker. Perhaps the rain promised next week will solve the problem.

Several folks have been concerned that our cattle have little grass to eat and that we must be getting through our forage – hay and silage. However, we cater for 200 days of winter usually the 180 days of October – March leaving 20 days spare either in the autumn or in spring. Therefore, we would normally be well into winter rations with the advantage that the cows are still wandering out without traipsing through muddy gateways.

One problem that has occurred is that the calves being born at the moment are very large therefore needing assistance and damaging their mothers. Usually back end grass is not much more than “fill belly”, keeping dry cows fit and well but not having much nutritious value. By supplementing their feed, cows and heifers have done too well as have their calves inside them. The decision whether to help is often difficult. We would obviously like the cows to give birth naturally but delay could risk the calf’s life whereas helping too soon could lead to increased maternal damage.

However, when a decision has to be made, we make it. This is in contrast to West Berks where decisions are often hard to come by, even when it is plainly obvious what the result should be. Decisions are deferred; allowing councillors more time to read through already circulated information and so that even more information can be gathered. This invariably increases costs by consuming more council officer’s time. In farming, as in most businesses, we don’t have this luxury and many decisions have to be made ‘on the hoof!’

I know that many people enjoy seeing our small herd of Aberdeen-Angus in the front field, especially the school children who have given all the calves different names. However, they will be moved for a few weeks while the cows enjoy the company of “Epic”, our rather large bull. He has been running with the dairy herd and when he joins the Angus, he will also have a group of 14 maiden heifers destined for the milking herd. What a life!!

*Tim Metcalfe  
Parish and District Councillor*

# A HARVEST FESTIVAL SUPPER

There is harvesting machinery,  
At the Chalk Pit Museum at Amberley  
With an old steam engine, silent and still,  
The one my Dad drove; he called it "Old Bill".  
How well I remember those days in September  
When Dad drove it down valley and hill.  
The chimney stack streaming  
The firebox gleaming  
And Dad's face a-beaming  
As he furiously spun the flywheel.

And in those large halls  
Fixed to the walls  
Were photographs I'd never seen  
Of Dad with his Harvesting Team.  
If I stepped in the frame I could give each a  
name.  
There was, Peter and Percy and Old Father  
Wack,  
Young Acker Taylor with a sack on his back,  
Probably containing a rabbit or two:  
For Acker was partial to a nice rabbit stew.  
There was Squince Hudson with his long  
shining beak,  
Looking as though he hadn't shaved for a  
week,  
There was Bert Booker, Len Hart and Young  
Bill,  
And old Mr Penfold standing quite still.  
And there, in the front, holding his cap,  
And looking straight at me, was my old chap.  
His sparse hair was untidy, blown in the  
breeze,  
His old corduroy trousers, tied at the knees.  
He left home each morning, twelve miles to  
walk  
He'd come home each evening covered in  
chalk.  
Dust in his clothes from thrashing the corn  
Working till evening from first crack of morn.  
Eleven pence three farthing was his hourly rate  
But for the others it wasn't so great.

They stood in their shirtsleeves their harvesting  
done;  
Toiling like slaves in the hot autumn sun.  
Their broad leather belts were studded with  
brass.  
Thongs round their ankles to keep out the  
grass.  
Most wore cloth caps, some crooked, some  
straight.  
Mr Penfold a trilby as befitted his state.  
They worked as a team

Sunburnt and lean.  
And stacked all around  
Laid on the ground  
Were large sacks full of corn - bulging and  
round

On Harvest Sunday, their work had been done  
The thanksgiving service in the church had  
begun,  
In colourful array  
Were fruits on display  
Flowers in water  
Were stacked round the altar.  
Onions, marrows and peas,  
Turnips and Swedes  
A plateful of next season's seeds.  
And stacked in the centre smelling so sweet,  
Was a sheaf of wonderful pure golden wheat  
Cut that same morn  
In the pinkness of dawn.  
Thus filled with God's grace  
It took pride of place.

And in the Church on the Down  
The Reverend Brown  
Looked for a while  
With a whimsical smile  
At his rustic congregation  
As he began the Harvest celebration:  
Ladies in bonnets, their husbands in black.  
The church was wide open, the doors shackled  
back.  
And through the glass windows the evening  
sun pours  
To lay coloured patterns on the ancient stone  
floors.

There was Dad and his harvesting team  
All looking neat all fresh and all clean.  
Dad was wearing his smart Sunday best  
With a gold coloured chain stretched cross his  
chest.  
The bell rang.  
The choir sang  
In soft and melodious voices;  
And at the first hymn  
My Dad gave a large grin  
For the first hymn of their choice is  
"Praise the Lord! All is safely gathered in"

*Bill Ayling*

*Read at the Community Supper  
(sorry if this is too small to read but  
I was short of space – Ed)*

# **PURLEY CRICKET CLUB**

## **BERKSHIRE LEAGUE AWARDS**

### **PAUL REBER**



PURLEY CRICKET CLUB

### **"YOUNG PLAYER OF THE YEAR 2003"**



Purley CC were delighted on Friday 3<sup>rd</sup> October to have 2 of their players rewarded at the Berkshire Cricket League presentation evening.

Paul Reber, aged 16, was the recipient of the "Young Player of the Year 2003" award, and Mark Nash was the "Division 3 Batsman of the Year 2003".

Club Chairman, Martin Bishop, said "It is a particular honour for Purley CC (Juniors) that Paul has been given this accolade for his progress and achievements throughout the season".

For further information regarding Purley CC, please contact Martin Bishop, Club Chairman on 0118 984 1726.

<http://purleyonthames.play-cricket.com>

## **IS IT BIG BROTHER OR THE ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY?**

More than half the public can't name any of the four gospels and they are more likely to know the name of the winner of Big Brother than the Archbishop of Canterbury. A recent BBC poll shows that while 60 per cent of people believe in God, less than a fifth are practising members of a religion. More than half believe in heaven and 32 per cent believe in hell.

Some 82 per cent of the public failed to name Dr Rowan Williams as Archbishop of Canterbury, according to the poll, commissioned by BBC1's Heaven and Earth Show.

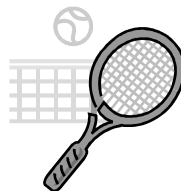
"I'm tired of this routine existence," said one university student to his friend. "Let's do something extraordinary, startling, magnificent; something that will make our brains whirl and our hearts leap."

"Okay," said his friend.

And so they studied.

# PURLEY (BERKS) TENNIS CLUB

## SENIOR TENNIS TOURNAMENT – 22 SEPT



The tournament was a most successful day assisted by the weather, with members participating in the various categories of the tournament. The results were as follows:

### Men's Singles

Winner – Colin Moses  
Runner up – Trevor Plowman

### Ladies' Singles

Winner – Catherine Ross  
Runner up – Victoria Ross

### Men's Doubles

Winner – Martin Dickins  
Tom Plowman  
Runner up – Trevor Plowman  
Jonny Khules

### Ladies' Doubles

Winner – Catherine Ross  
Mary Brooksbank  
Runner up – Victoria Ross  
Maggie Harvey

### Mixed Doubles

Winner – Tom Plowman  
Catherine Ross  
Runner up – Colin Moses  
Maureen Statham

## COURT AVAILABILITY – CLUB SESSIONS

- Wednesday afternoons Club session 1.30 pm > (all through the year)
- Saturday mornings 10.30 am - Club session adults and older juniors
- Informal free winter coaching for juniors the first Saturday of the month from 9.30 to 10.30 am. For further information ring Colin Moses on 0118 984 5429. 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 (Ladies' Match Secretary)*



## PERFECT?

I have met only one perfect man, and he was a perfect nuisance!

*CH Spurgeon*

# PROJECT PURLEY

The next meeting of Project Purley will be held at The Barn, Goosecroft Lane, on Friday November 21<sup>st</sup> at 8 p.m. Ben Viljoen will give a talk titled 'Fragments of the Garden History of Purley.'

On September 19<sup>th</sup> Ken Wells, Curator of the Police Museum at Sulhampstead gave a talk, which was full of information and humour about some of the holdings at the museum.

He began by introducing himself. Reading born and bred he commenced his career in the Police Force in 1962. However he was too short for the prestigious Royal Berkshire Constabulary as it was then titled, so he applied to the Metropolitan Police where he was accepted (having learned a trick or two to gain an extra inch in height) and trained at Hendon. He spent a memorable three months with the Mounted Police but this career came to a sudden end, when he inadvertently lost his horse. He eventually came back to Reading in 1965 when he became a Scene of Crime Officer. The Thames Valley Police was formed in 1968. Following his retirement he unexpectedly came across an advertisement for the post of Curator at the Police museum and was successful in his application. He has now been in post for three and half years, learning what is required of

a curator and becoming acquainted with the artefacts in the museum.

The museum is housed at Sulhampstead House, which was built in 1704 and was owned by Daniel May. In 1920 it came into the hands of the Thoytt family. Other occupants were George Watkins, and the Air Ministry. The general public can benefit from the extensive records that it holds. Popular with family historians the findings are not always what the enquirers hope to find, as the family who thought their ancestor was a Chief Constable discovered. Their ancestor turned out to be an officer who was continually in trouble. The Occurrence Book is a wonderful source of information as everything was

*The Spirit of*  
**Christmas**

Thames Vale Singers Present  
**An Evening of Carols, Christmas  
Spirituals and Readings**

Friday 19th December  
8.00pm Purley Memorial Hall

Saturday 20th December  
8.00pm Tilehurst Methodist Church Hall

Tickets  
£5 Adults  
£4 Senior Citizens & Children 12 & over  
£1 Children under 12

Available from Peter Farrow 0118 941 3887  
or  
Jenny Dimmock 0118 962 4651

**tvs**  
THAMES VALE SINGERS

Musical Director Alex Taylor  
Pianist Peter Bernard

entered into 'The Book.' Written by the Station Sergeant, all entries were made in a specific order. Ken spoke of the development of the Police Force from the first time the word 'constable' is used in 1215, and of the Bow Street Runners who had no uniform but carried a staff topped by a hollow crown which contained a bill of arrest. This gave rise to the expression, 'Here comes the old bill'. Sir Robert Peel inaugurated a paid police force. We learned a great deal of interest including the fact that the stove pipe hats worn in Victorian times were strong enough to stand on to give height to see above the crowd and could also hold a snack! We also learned that it was not until 1960 that officers were permitted to wear a beard on duty and that the whistles produced by the Hudson Company could be heard a mile away. In London a man was specially employed to trim the lamps which were carried at that time. During the evening one member was transformed into a Victorian police officer of the Royal Berkshire Constabulary when Ken produced the uniform and accoutrements of the period. On this occasion the Society members was not required to shave his beard.

It was a thoroughly enjoyable evening and the Society hopes to ask Ken Wells back to give another in his series of talks.

*Rita Denman.*



**Christmas**

**Craft Fayre**

**Presentation College**

61 – 63 Bath Road, Reading

Saturday 8<sup>th</sup> November

12.00 pm to 4.00pm

Mulled Wine and Teas

Book Stall and Bottle Tombola

Admission: £1.00 which includes a lucky Programme  
Children under 16 free

Free Car Parking

To book a craft table please 'phone 0118 957 2861



## SUNDAY 7 DEC

Purley Sports & Social Club are holding their **second** Indoor Boot Sale to raise money for charity. During 2003 the club successfully raised £5,000 for the Thames Valley Air Ambulance Fund and are now beginning fund raising for the **DEBRA** charity and also the **PURLEY PARK TRUST**.

Enquiries for tables to Roland and Sue on 984 4641.

## SCANNER

Free to anyone who can make use of it. Umax S-6E Scanner complete with SCSI card and software. It is 6 years old so fairly large and not USB.

942 9927



## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

In his excellent article 'Message from Home Farm' Tim Metcalfe refers to 'the explosion of badger numbers'. Sadly, the real position is just the opposite.

This Group, along with all other Badger Groups, is receiving calls from hundreds of householders saying that badgers are appearing in their gardens for the first time ever and digging their lawns and borders. The cause of the problem is not a rise in their numbers but rather that the prolonged dry weather has deprived badgers of earthworms – their staple diet- and they are being forced to dig for food wherever they can find it. This is taking them into 'new territory'. Groups are also receiving many calls about dehydrated or dying badgers.

The extremely dry conditions in 2002 and 2003 have also meant that almost no badger cubs have been raised for the last two years. The most convincing evidence comes from Wytham Woods in Oxfordshire where researchers from Oxford University have been monitoring around 50 badger setts over many years. The number of cubs born this year is the lowest for 28 years and situation next spring may be even worse.

I hope that this dispels the notion of an explosion in numbers and explains why many people are seeing badgers for the first time.

*Roger Whittle  
Chairman and Trustee  
Binfield Badger Group  
PO Box 3805, Bracknell, RG42 1HH*

## PURLEY PLAYERS

Nearly 60 people attended a party at St Mary's Church Hall on Saturday, 18 October to celebrate the Tenth Anniversary of Purley Players. Thank you to the guests who attended and to all who made the evening such a success.

Ron Denman has very kindly put together a "compilation" video of all the shows the Players have performed over the last ten years and these are on sale for £5 each. If you would like a copy, please telephone Michael Adnett on 0118 962 5760.

# 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 and to maintain consistency of style (font etc). Local event adverts can be accommodated but space is limited; landscape format copy is preferred in this case as it allows a ½ page entry to be published.

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 – nor is any endorsement of the products and services of our advertisers implied by their inclusion.

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If you are new to the area and would like to subscribe to Purley Parish News, please contact the Circulation Manager, Les Jamieson.

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