

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

MARCH 2004



Job 22:28
What you decide on will be done, and light will
shine on your ways.

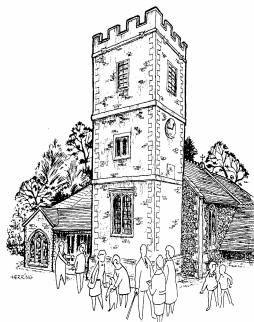
Scripture quotations marked "NIV" are taken from HOLY BIBLE: NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House.

35P

For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN

PURLEY ON THAMES



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

www.stmarythevirgin.fsnet.co.uk

FROM THE CURATE

Travel broadens the mind but does it stir the conscience?

My husband and I have just returned from an extended holiday travelling in South America. It has been a great privilege to have seen and done so much. Daily we were filled with wonderment at the beauty and variety of God's world.

The vast deserts, lush river meadows, magnificent mountains and rolling seas spoke so clearly of God's hand in creation. The uninhibited and trusting behaviour of the many animals and birds in the Galapagos Islands reminded us of how we as humans could be living more in harmony with each other.



It was easy in these surroundings to join in the words of the Psalmist who said *'The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it'* (psalm 24v1).

What was not so easy, was just how to equate this statement with the many disturbing scenes that we also witnessed.

The tugging of our clothes by adults and children, in order to get us to buy souvenirs, have our shoes cleaned or to have a photograph taken. (at a cost!) Or the city centres of Lima and Arequipa crowded with people who stayed there all day, in the hope that someone would hire them for some kind of day work for a pittance. Or the fact that while we stayed in a 5 star hotel with plenty of hot water and fluffy towels, in the same block the residential houses were having their water cut off for four hours a day. But even this was preferable to the inhabitants of a shanty town on an arid, desolate hillside just a mile away, who had no water or sanitation at all.

In Lima we met Pat Blanchard, St Mary's missionary link with the South American Missionary Society (SAMS) who works daily with the people from these areas. She told us that very often the first thing that people do when they come to church, is to use the bathroom facilities for the sheer joy of washing and flushing the lavatory. Perhaps something that we take all too much for granted.

The things that I have described are of course repeated in numerous places across the world. They are difficult to cope with when we want to enjoy ourselves. Very often we hurry along and try to put them out of our mind. We don't want to spoil our holiday by dwelling too much on the

unpleasant facts of life and anyway we say there is not much that we can do, give money to one cause and the next moment ten more take there place.

But if travel broadens the mind, then we should have our consciences stirred. We should return and ask ourselves how, after enjoying the best on offer, can we help share the earth's resources better.

At St. Mary's we support various charities in an attempt to do just that, in gratitude for all the good things God has allowed us to have. One of these charities is SAMS, but as you travel you may discover particular charities that are meaningful to you.

Many of you will be planning your future holidays at this time and I do hope that your experiences help you to say '*that the earth is the Lord's and all that is in it*' but even more so, that those experiences will make you want to share your privileges with others who have so much less than we do.

Happy Travelling,

Jean

PARISH REGISTERS FUNERAL

3 February Donald Wilson aged 70 years (Cremation)

KINGDOM COME - THE LIFE OF CHRIST

Performed by Eric Petrossian. Combining all four Gospels, Eric (a Christian actor) brings the Gospel to life by playing over 30 different characters.

Saturday 15 May at 7:30 p.m. in St. Mary's Church. Don't miss it!

Further information and tickets available shortly.

WELCOME REST

Each person as he or she is at rest is worthwhile – they don't become worthwhile by all they do when not at rest. It's from that point that God will move in them, create afresh, change.

Rowan Williams, Silence and Honey Cakes

CHURCH SERVICES

29 Feb	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
	6:00 p.m.	Deanery United Service
7 Mar	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
	6:00 p.m.	Holy Communion
14 Mar	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
21 Mar	9:30 a.m.	Family Communion
Mothering Sunday	11:15 a.m.	Morning Worship
	6:00 p.m.	Evening Worship
28 Mar	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship
	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
4 Apr	9:30 a.m.	Family Worship
Palm Sunday	11:15 a.m.	Holy Communion
	6:00 p.m.	Holy Communion

HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

8 APRIL (MAUNDY THURSDAY)

7:30 p.m. A remembrance of the Last Supper
(A Communion service in the context of supper*)

9 APRIL (GOOD FRIDAY)

10:00 a.m. Procession of Witness in Pangbourne
(An All Churches Together event)

2:00 p.m. The Last Hour (A quiet service of hymns and meditation,
reflecting on the crucifixion of Christ)

11 APRIL (EASTER DAY)

10:30 a.m. Family Communion

6:00 p.m. Songs of Praise

**Visit your parish church to think about
the most important festivals of the Christian Faith!**

ALL ARE WELCOME

*To book for the Supper please contact Roger Howell (941 7727)

Pray for Purley

Purley on Thames has many beautiful areas
and many caring people in its population,
but is it currently the place God intends it to be ?
If you live in Purley, or have a strong connection with the area
and you believe in the power of prayer to bring about God's will

Please join in praying for Purley

**Come along to a meeting at St Mary's Church, Purley
8 p.m. on Tuesday 16 March**

**Explore how we can encourage one another to
Pray for Purley**

**Contact Sally Robertson for further details:
Tel: 962 5978. E-mail: sallyrobertson@waitrose.com**

ANNUAL PAROCHIAL CHURCH MEETING

The Annual Parochial Church Meeting (APCM) for St. Mary's Church will be held on Tuesday 30 March at 8-00pm in the church. Consideration is given to the events of the previous year as well as looking forward to the coming twelve months together. Accounts for 2003 will also be available. Elections to the Parochial Church Council (PCC) are made as well as for the office of churchwarden for the coming year. All members of the Electoral Roll are encouraged to attend, and any resident of the ecclesiastical parish of Purley is welcome to attend the meeting, but you have to be on the Electoral Roll to take part in any voting required.

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY TALK



On Wednesday, 17 March, Mrs. E. Farrar will give a talk on "Learning from Ones Mistakes". I think we will all pick up some useful tips and this event will take place in Purley Memorial Hall, commencing at 8 p.m. Please try and come along in order that we have a good attendance for the speaker.

SPRING SHOW

This will be held in Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road on Saturday, 3 April. The Show will be open to members of the public from 2:30 p.m. until 4 p.m. Tea and biscuits will be available. Even if you are unable to enter, please come along to support the participants. Schedules will be available from the Trading Store from early March

TRADING

The Trading Store is open Saturday and Sunday from 10 a.m. until 11 a.m. Membership of Purley Horticultural Society, costing only £1.50 for a year is tremendous value; not only can you buy items at the Store (in Purley Memorial Hall car park) at lower prices than most other sources, but also you can make further savings on garden purchases at **Collins of Pangbourne, BSB Garden Machinery**, Sulham Lane for new mowers, **Englefield Garden Centre, Glenvale Nursery**, Bradfield Southend and **Newington Gardens**, Newington on the A329 road, north of Shillingford Please remember to show your membership card at the start of the transaction as tills have to be set to deduct discount in some outlets.

PLANT SALE

This will take place on Saturday 22 May. If there are any special plants you would particularly like to buy, please let us know at the trading Store and we will try to meet you request.

*Marion Dabbs
942 2349*

ALLEY MEETING

There will be a meeting at the Purley Club Beech Road on Tuesday 9 March at 7:30 p.m. to discuss the lighting in the alley way running from the Oxford Road to Simons Close, and the vandalism that has increased since installation. All are welcome. Representatives of the police and council will be there also.

Mike Furness

AVENUE A ENSEMBLE PRESENTS

A PERFORMANCE OF NEW MUSIC

Saturday 20 March 2004, 7:30 p.m.

Falkland Islands Memorial Chapel, Pangbourne College

The programme includes works by:

Tim Adnitt, Django Bates, Robert Broadley, Matthew King,
Andrew McBirnie, Barak Schmool and Pangbourne College students

Also featuring the Pangbourne College Junior School Choir

Tickets: Adults £6.00, Students £1.50

Contact: Darren Everhart, The Music School, Pangbourne College

Tel: 0118 976 7442

Avenue A is a 12-piece, UK-based ensemble dedicated to the performance, composition and commissioning of new music. The ensemble was established in 1999 by artistic director Tim Adnitt and musical director Anthony Weeden.

Avenue A performs a dynamic repertoire by some of the most interesting and innovative composers in the UK. The ensemble's programme will appeal to a wide variety of musical sensibilities including contemporary jazz, contemporary classical and others.

PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL

As well as statements made at the Eastern Area Forum the Parish Council received a letter from Ian Pearson, Head of the Education Service at West Berkshire Council, confirming that if the Denefield Campus proposal proceeds there will be an opportunity for local residents to comment on the plans. He also advises that there will be careful consideration of traffic issues and that all planning processes will be adhered to. He supports the development of public facilities, such as a swimming pool, in the East of the District and assures us that there is no proposal to close Long Lane School and that its identity would remain in any future changes. No doubt there will be further information, or indeed more questions, at the next scheduled meeting of the Eastern Area Forum in Burghfield Village Hall on 30 March at 6:30 p.m.

The Parish Council have again lodged objections to the revised plans for the construction of 98 houses on a site off Long Lane. It considered that the designs were unimaginative and environmentally unacceptable with poor proposals for the use of open space and play facilities. Of particular concern was the plan for a number of three storey houses which were considered to be both out of character with the area and a visual intrusion on the adjacent Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty. With a lack of

integration with other planning proposals in this area we have again called for a moratorium on approval of all development proposals pending the urgent development of an Area Action Plan.

At the January meeting the budget for 2004/2005 was considered and expenditure was estimated at £95,547. After reductions for probable income (£15,250) and transfers from balances (£16,597) it was agreed to precept West Berkshire for £63,700 for the coming year. This should mean that the Parish Council element of the Council Tax will be about £35.58 for band D properties. This relates to a 2.8% increase or just 70p per annum for a band D household. The increased funding includes an amount to enable the Council to adopt a proposal from the Flood Emergency Review Panel to provide the facility of a local emergency communications centre in times of need. However, there are of course concerns that the District Council and the Police Authority are proposing much larger increases which are outside our control.

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

SPRINGTIME IN THE GARDEN AT CHERRY ACRE

Come for a browse around the garden to see the spring blossom, and the results of planting thousands of spring bulbs over two successive autumns. Afterwards, relax with a cup of tea and a slice of cake. There will also be a plant stall to tempt you.

DATES :- Friday 2 April 11:00 a.m. – 2:30 p.m.
Sunday 4 April 1:30 p.m. – 4:30 p.m.

All Proceeds to St Mary's Church.

Nicki Woodward
984 1919

MESSAGE FROM HOME FARM

I have spent three hours today spreading some of the 'brown stuff'. The fact that it is a Sunday with the first England outing in the six nations being screened on the 'Beeb', there seemed an uncommon urgency in my work. However this time of the year with the evenings drawing out and the ground drying out, the workload suddenly increases. With hedge cutting almost complete, preparing the land for Spring barley, linseed and maize, fertilising and spraying the winter sown crops and fertilising, harrowing and rolling the grass land means many hours sitting in a tractor (Ouch my back!)

Accepting weather (and family) constraints, disappearing off the farm for one of the various meetings should not prove too much of a problem as I will make up the tractors hours at the weekends, early mornings or burning the mid-night oil. However I might become slightly more selective in the meetings I attend. For instance, I have spent two days at a farm management conference only to learn that those small individual cartons of milk that are served with a cup of coffee are called 'jiggers' and that only 4% of national dairy produce is globally traded. You see, now you know that as well and didn't give up two days and sixty pounds (D.E.F.R.A. subsidised of course) to learn such crucial facts.



There have been more interesting meetings, such as the affordable village house seminar held at Silchester (does Pikeshaw spring to mind?!) with the Princess Royal joining us for lunch. A member development session at West Berks with Sir Michael Lyons and another with the Chief Constable of Thames Valley Police were both enlightening. Meetings with regard to planning in the Eastern Area and with special emphasis on Purley (who mentioned Long Lane or the Village School!!) are proving controversial and talking to A-level students on Agri-Environment Schemes (stop yawning) along with the more routine Council meetings etc. have occupied many hours..

I was also the only dissident voice over the grants the Parish Council makes each year to outside bodies. I will not go into detail but I do believe the Parish Precept should be spent on the Parish. A battle lost I'm afraid, but there will be many more.

Tim Metcalfe
Parish and District Councillor

MOBILE PHONES FOR ALMOST ALL TEENAGERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE

96% of all 15 – 24 year olds in Britain now have a mobile phone, according to recent research. Indeed, they say their mobile phone has become essential if they are to function normally.

For young people, large mobile phone bills are the new status symbol (forget expensive hairstyles or special trainers). For large bills imply that you make - and receive - a lot of calls and text messages – which means you are popular. "You feel embarrassed if your bill is £20, and somebody else's is £100," admits one 21 year-old London man.

Video mobiles are not very popular with this age-group, but text messaging is. Young people said they can hide better behind text messaging, while anything visual makes them feel more pressured to tell the truth.

The Parish Pump

The poster features a dark background with two large, light-colored footprints. The text "Help people in the Third World stand on their own two feet." is written in white, bold, sans-serif font across the middle of the footprints. In the bottom right corner, there is a white rectangular box containing the text "Christian Aid Week 9-15 May" and the Christian Aid logo with the tagline "We believe in life before death." The website "www.caweek.org" is printed in small white text in the bottom left corner.

Each year a team of volunteers from St Mary's Church collect house-to-house in Purley for the Christian Aid Week appeal.

With finite resources we cannot cover all the roads within the parish and would sincerely appreciate any help that you may be able to give this year.

By supporting Christian Aid Week, you are among millions of people who think poverty is a scandal we do not have to accept. Your actions, commitment and contributions will bring about a better life for people in poor communities all over the world.

Please contact Pam or Matthew on 961 5585 for further details.

WEST BERKS SCRABBLE® CLUB

On January 17th, The Barn in Beech Road was again the venue for the 4th West Berks Scrabble Tournament. 96 participants attended the event on a fine winter's day.

Although 96 were there at the end, not everyone was there at the beginning, with 2 cars getting lost in Caversham and Earley before finding the correct venue.

The players were split into 3 divisions, each of 32 players, according to ability. In the A division, Helen Greenaway from the Leicester Club was triumphant, winning all 6 games. In winning the event she beat last year's winner, George Gruner from the London Scrabble League into second place. The other 2 divisions were less clear cut with the final outcome being decided by 'spread', which is the winning (or losing) margin and can be considered as similar to football's goal difference. In the B division the winner was Elizabeth Hull, who plays at the West Berks Club and in the C division the winner was Molly Lane from Bournemouth

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

Trophies were presented by Mr David Betts, Chairman of Purley on Thames Parish Council.

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, also a veritable banquet of home made cakes during the afternoon interval, the tournament was able to provide a donation of £610.57 to the Air Ambulance Trust.

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.



Elizabeth Hull receives the Best Of Berkshire trophy from David Betts
(photo Alan Waters)

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. For further information call Ian or Elizabeth Burn on 0118 984 5045.

PURLEY W.I.

Birthday posies of snowdrops were a delight – makes your heart miss a beat!

The Scrabble evening in January was successful, plus a profitable fashion show at Purley Hall.

Plans are being prepared for trips to Blue Bells at Bradfield, a visit to listen to David Battie (Antiques Roadshow) in April and Syon Park in June.

Our speaker Jennifer Lane, a lady with theatre in her blood, gave one of those cultured evenings. What a joy the English language is when well projected by a professional. Her title "Sleeping in Strange Beds" meant that her job took her here and there and when the acting gave way to Bed and Breakfast she was then on the receiving end of the "bed changing" act. She now works for the museum in Bath.

Jennifer Lane's family was very engrossed in amateur dramatics, so when Jennifer planned to study at RADA her father's advice was "get a proper job dear", so that squashed that idea – temporarily. At the age of nine she shone in Speech Festivals and a nod of approval from her mother was enough praise for her when she did well. Of course that chance meeting happened, she was spotted, given the opening and turned professional. This meant starting at the bottom again but due to many performances in many villages this gave her strength and flexibility and proved no problem. Photographs were circulated of her acting days and we recognised many actors and actresses. This year at the age of sixty (and looking very attractive) she hopes to start for the last time in Noel Coward's "Blithe Spirit". You'd have thought the play would be "And So To Bed"; never mind, we wished her well!

Competition: Theatre Poster

1st Sylvia Conquest

Flower Table

1st Kath Barker and Sylvia Conquest
2nd Pamela James

The A.G.M. will be held on Wednesday 10 March, 7:30 p.m.
Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Rd. **Visitors Welcome**

Sylvia Conquest
0118 941 1936

PROJECT PURLEY

The next meeting of Project Purley will be the Annual General Meeting to be held at The Barn, Goosecroft Lane, on March 19th at 7.30pm. This will be followed by a talk by Tony Corley entitled *Huntley and Palmer of Reading*.

On January 16th the Society held an evening of the WW2 memories of Society Members. A fascinating exhibition of memorabilia was soon on display from a collection of propaganda and instruction leaflets, ration books, army manuals and pay books and a scrapbook, to tin hats and forage caps. Others had souvenirs in the form of Air Ministry cutlery, uniforms a police whistle and truncheon.

There was also a lovely wedding dress. The marriage took place at the start of the blitz in 1940 and during the reception, held at the Crystal Palace Hotel, the pianist was requested to 'play up' to drown the sounds of bombing. The Groom, on leave from the Royal West Kent Regiment, and his Bride spent their wedding night in an air raid shelter.

The members who had personal memories were children in the war period. One member recalled a very happy childhood in Singapore. The daughter of an RSM in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders life was very good with the military social life. The unthinkable happened when the Japanese invaded the supposed impregnable fortress of Singapore, from Malaysia. Her father went to the front line, but returned sick with Malaria. Discharging himself from hospital he saw to the safe evacuation of his family to Australia. Returning to his army duties, he was captured and employed on the infamous railroad. When the Americans dropped the atomic bomb he was released.

The parents of another member fled nazi Germany taking their small son with them, and sought refuge in the comparative safety of southern Italy. Although he grew up in safety the fear of German soldiers never quite left the little boy and the sight of German Tanks thundering through his village reawakened the terror. The Germans in retreat stayed for one or two days and blew up the bridge as they left.

Nearer to home, wartime documents from the Ministry of Agriculture relating to a Purley farm, together with information about the employment of German Prisoners of War who were billeted at Basildon Park, were of great interest.

Living in the north of Scotland another childhood memory was of the unexpected fruits of the sea when crates of oranges and apples were washed ashore from the convoy routes. A poignant harvest of someone's tragedy.

It was found that many fathers of the wartime children didn't talk about, or want to remember their wartime experiences, and in some cases it wasn't until they had died that their stories and deprivations were discovered in the memorabilia they left to their families.

Rita Denman

BRIDGE DRIVE

Hosted by Soroptimist International of Reading, Wokingham & Bracknell

2 p.m. – 5 p.m. Thursday 15 April 2004

Reading Blue Coat School, Sonning-on-Thames

Tea will be served at 3:15 p.m.

Tables (limited to 20) at £24 per table

There will be a raffle

All proceeds to:

Macmillan Cancer Relief and Thames Valley and Chilterns Air Ambulance

Further details: 0118 942 9665

You are invited to the
PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT COMMUNITY LUNCH
16th March 12.30-2.00pm
DORMAN ROOMS, HORSESHOE ROAD, PANGBOURNE



IS A CITIZENS ADVICE BUREAU NEEDED FOR THE PANGBOURNE AREA?

Following our last meeting when we discussed Communication and Information we decided to invite **Laurian Tobin Manager of West Berkshire Citizens Advice Bureau** to the lunch. Laurian would like to discuss the feasibility of setting up a CAB outreach service for the Pangbourne area. Do come and join in with the discussion.

There will be the usual chance to exchange information. Anyone living or working in Pangbourne or surrounding villages is welcome to come along. Please spread the word. If you would like a bread, cheese and fruit lunch (cost £2) please ring Sheila Aris on 0118 942 7721 by 12th March.



PURLEY PATHFINDERS

With a weather forecast for freezing weather and possible snow showers, we were surprised but delighted to find ourselves setting out from Upper Basildon under a bright sky with sun on our faces! Soon, extra layers, put on for protection against the elements, were being peeled off as we wandered up and down the wide fields and pretty woodland within the boundary of 'Upper Basildon'. We enjoyed the lovely views stretching away on this clear day to Oxfordshire and across the Thames Valley. Signs of an early Spring were in evidence as the leaves of primroses lay like rosettes on the ground, and even bluebell shoots could be seen as bright green swords, poking up through the beech leaves. Promises of good things to see on future walks, but for now we were content to enjoy the pleasures of our walk on this lovely January day. Back at the Red Lion we were warmly welcomed with an excellent lunch.



Making our way through the picturesque, thatched village of Aston Tirrold, the gorgeous cottages, and the snowdrop and aconite strewn gardens set us in creative mood for our literary walk ahead. Eventually the Norman outline of Cholsey Church loomed on the horizon, and we made our way across fields towards it. Arriving in the churchyard we found the grave of authoress, Agatha Christie. The church and its graveyard lie in an isolated spot, and with excerpts from mysteries such as 'Murder at the Vicarage' coming to mind we decided to press on with our walk! We headed across more wide fields, with the odd train, (luckily, not the Orient Express!), sleekly moving through the countryside to disappear as quickly as they had appeared. Now we were in view of our next target – Lollingdon Farm. The Poet Laureate, John Masefield, lived here from 1914 until 1917. This centuries old, moated house gave him much pleasure, especially its position surrounded by the countryside which he loved and which gave him much inspiration for his poems. Today the house lay peacefully surrounded by snowdrops so we left it to climb up Lollingdon Hill. Masefield often walked here to 'sit and think, and see the big world in his imagination'. Indeed, it was possible to see much of the 'big world' from the top – a landscape little changed since Masefield's time – totally inspirational! We made our way back down to the village of Aston Tirrold, the route of our walk laid out before us, and our other literary landmark, Cholsey Church, a dominant landmark.

As we drove into the village of Echinswell, roadside verges smothered in the white pearls of snowdrops set us in expectant mood for our walk ahead. We were not disappointed, for as we climbed out into open countryside, snowdrops were dotted everywhere. Our view was across to

Watership Down and Cottington Hill. Pausing at the top of the climb, we removed some layers of clothes on this unexpectedly warm sunny February morning. As we approached Nuthangar Farm we found the banks on either side awash with snowdrops, crocuses and even some primroses in full flower. A sloping garden looked more like a ski slope, so dense were the snowdrops! On this clear day we could see Highclere Castle in the distance as we headed for Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber's Sydmonton Court Estate. About a dozen fine horses watched us from their field for a while before stampeding up the hillside in an unashamed display of pure muscle power. In the next fields we were delighted to hear the bleats from the first lambs of 2004, their pretty black faces peering at us inquisitively. Choosing a high point for our break above Watership Farm, we enjoyed the view across the fields to Watership Down. Several pheasants plumped up their technicoloured plumage in triumph, having survived 'the shoot', as we began the second part of our walk. With anticipation we approached a dear little thatched cottage. Each year we have passed this former home, sadly crying out in its dilapidated state for someone to take care of it in the way it has cared and protected generations of families over the past 400 years. We were delighted to see that, at last, work has begun to renovate it to its former glory, starting with a new thatched roof. We look forward to seeing the results in a year's time! Joyfully we wandered down the avenue leading from the cottage, surrounded on either side by two wonderful bands of snowdrops. We arrived back in Ecchinswell alongside its church, with a feeling of exhilaration after our sunny snowdrop walk.

As March approaches we look forward to discovering the unfurling delights of the countryside in Springtime. We will be on the trail of primroses and anemones around Hermitage, walking amongst the daffodils near Woodcote, and relishing the fresh green of the beech woods at Christmas Common and Harpsden. Also in March we will launch our theme for the year of 'The Thames – The Source to the Sea', with a trip to the Cotswolds. We will walk to the Source of the Thames before heading to Lechlade for a Thames-side walk, discovering the first navigatable point of the Thames, the first lock on the Thames, and the statue of Old Father Thames himself. We will finish what promises to be a wonderful day out, with a Cotswold Cream Tea at the Riverside.

Any ladies wishing to join us on our weekly, weekday morning walks are welcome to ring for a programme.

Nicki Woodward
984 1919

She took him for better or for worse,
but unfortunately he was worse than she took him for.

YOUR HELP NEEDED

The following two charitable organisations are supported by the King household in Purley and they would like to commend them to you. If you have material that could be donated to either organisation they would be happy to pass it on. Please call 0118 377 3522.

BOOK AID

BOOK AID aims to:

- Supply Christian books and Bibles to bookshops in areas of need so that the books can be sold at affordable prices to the local people and the bookshop ministries be maintained.
- Supply study books to Theological and Bible Colleges in needy areas.
- Ship "Ladybird" books to countries where few books are available for children.
- Ship at least 10 container loads of books/Bibles each year. That is approximately ONE MILLION books a year.

If you have Christian books or bibles that you could donate, please call the number above or contact BOOK AID on 020 8857 7794.

TOOLS WITH A MISSION

TOOLS WITH A MISSION is an independent interdenominational Christian charity sending new and refurbished tools all over the world to whoever needs them regardless of Nationality, Creed, colour or anything else providing they have a bona fide need. These tools are used for work which enables families to feed and clothe themselves.

If you would like to send a donation to help the work of TOOLS WITH A MISSION, they will do their best to make sure that it is spent helping others to earn a living. If you can give good quality tools so that someone can learn a trade, your gift will be put to good use.

For donations or further details please contact the number above or call TWAM on 01473 652029.

POPULATION EXPLOSION

Somewhere on this earth a woman is giving birth to a child every ten seconds. We must find this woman and stop her at once.

Sam Levenson

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

EDITOR: Matthew Slingsby
24 Skerritt Way, Purley on Thames, RG8 8DD
Tel: 0118 961 5585 Fax: 0118 961 5125
Email: purley.parishnews@ntlworld.com

ADVERTISING: Liane Southam
27 Waterside Drive, Purley on Thames, RG8 8AQ
Tel: 0118 942 8243
Email: adverts@stmarythevirgin.fsnet.co.uk

CIRCULATION: Les Jamieson
58a Wintringham Way, Purley on Thames
Tel: 0118 941 2342

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.

This magazine is published on the first Saturday of each month (except August). The price of each issue is 35p with a discounted annual subscription price of £3.50 for eleven issues.

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

This edition published	28 February 2004
Next edition paper copy to be received by	15 March 2004
Next edition "electronic" copy to be received by	22 March 2004
Next edition published	3 April 2004

Cover image © Jennifer Au, CrossDaily.com (used under licence)

Purley Parish News is printed by Richfield Graphics Limited