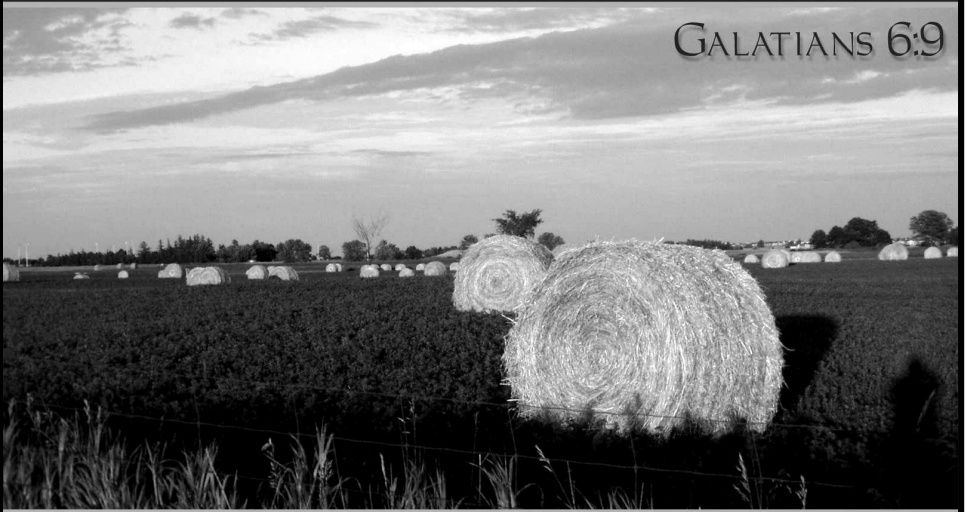


# PURLEY PARISH NEWS

**OCTOBER 2004**

GALATIANS 6:9



*Let us not become weary in doing good,  
for at the proper time we will reap a harvest if we do not give up*

\*Scripture taken from the HOLY BIBLE, NEW INTERNATIONAL VERSION. Copyright © 1973, 1978, 1984 by International Bible Society. Used by permission of Zondervan Publishing House. All rights reserved.

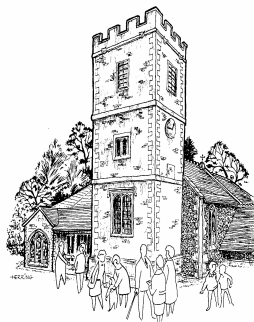
**35P**

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  
Tel: 0118 962 5978

Lorna Herring  
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)

## LET US KNOW WHAT YOU THINK

It would be really good if we could have a correspondence page in this magazine on a regular basis. It could provide some healthy interaction between different parts of the community, and the editor would welcome brief letters in response to anything that appears in the magazine. So how about this one?



## WHY DON'T YOU COME TO CHURCH?

This is not meant to be a criticism, but a genuine enquiry. In the last Census well over 70% of residents in Purley said they were Christians. On the face of it someone like me should be very encouraged by that, but it raises a number of questions in my mind. Quite apart from the question of what it means to be a Christian, my first thought is this – “Over 70% say they are Christians, but less than 2% have any recognizable connection with the Parish Church in terms of worship!”

Here are some of the questions that pass through my mind as I think about this:

- Why is St. Mary's Church so unattractive to people?
- What is it that puts them off from coming on Sundays?
- Is it the time of the Sunday services – morning and evening?
- Would a mid-week service have an appeal?
- Have they already tried it and vowed never to come again?
- Is the format of the services unhelpful and perhaps unintelligible?
- Are there hurts from the past about church that are still raw?
- Are there problems of belief that are being struggled with?

It is not that I think that St. Mary's is the only place for worship on Sundays. I know that some residents are members of churches elsewhere in the district, and that's OK. It would be good to know who you are though, and then I may well be very encouraged to know just how many active church members there are in the community. One of the ways we could get to know one another is to meet together to pray for the place where we live, and there is an item elsewhere in this issue about that.

So, how about putting pen to paper or fingers to keyboard and let us know why you don't come to church? You can write to the editor or direct to me if you wish (*contact details opposite*). If there is anything you would like to discuss in this matter you only have to contact me and I will do what I can.

*Roger Howell*

# PARISH REGISTERS

## FUNERALS

- 9 August Peggy Louise Slade (cremation) aged 82 years
  - 16 August Ronald George Jenkins (cremation) aged 80 years
  - 1 September Arthur Thomas Bint (cremation) aged 75 years
  - 3 September Patricia Heslop (cremation) aged 74 years
  - 10 September George Smith Hewit (cremation) aged 67 years
- 

**19 OCTOBER**

**29 NOVEMBER**

*Pray for Purley*



Don't miss the opportunity to pray with Christians from many denominations about issues which affect everyone living in Purley. We meet at St. Mary's church at 8 p.m.

Contact Sally Robertson (962 5978) for more details.

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## NEWSPAPER HEADLINES

Headlines in the press are pretty predictable aren't they! Bombs, terrorism, hatred, murder etc. But as hardly a week passes by, somewhere in the world Christians are threatened, persecuted and sometimes killed for their faith in Jesus Christ. Rarely, if ever, do such things get reported in the papers! St. Mary's Church has been concerned about this for a number of years now and we have given financial support and practical action to these beleaguered communities through the ministry of the Barnabas Fund. On Sunday 7 November 2004 we have a visiting speaker – Caroline Kerlake, at both morning services – 9.30 and 11.15 a.m. If you want to find out what the situation is for Christians in many parts of the world, come – you will be most welcome.



You can find out about the persecution of Christians and what the Barnabas Fund is doing to support them by looking up [www.barnabasfund.org.uk](http://www.barnabasfund.org.uk)

# CHURCH SERVICES

3 Oct	10.30 a.m. 6.00 p.m.	Harvest Thanksgiving Holy Communion
10 Oct	9.30 a.m. 11.15 a.m. 3.00 p.m.	Family Worship Holy Communion Community Memorial Service
17 Oct	9.30 a.m. 11.15 a.m. 6.00 p.m.	Family Communion Morning Worship Evening Worship
24 Oct	9.30 a.m. 11.15 a.m.	Family Worship Holy Communion
31 Oct	9.30 a.m. 11.15 a.m.	Family Worship Holy Communion
7 Nov	9.30 a.m. 11.15 a.m. 6.00 p.m.	Family Worship with visiting speaker Holy Communion with visiting speaker Holy Communion

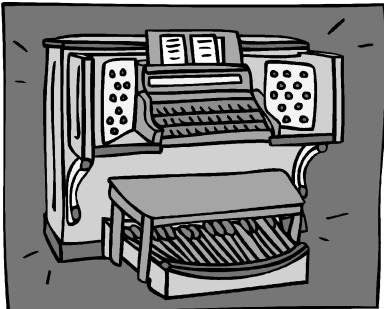
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## COMMUNITY MEMORIAL SERVICE

### SUNDAY 10 OCTOBER AT 3.00 P.M.

This annual service of remembrance is for all who have lost loved ones – particularly during the last twelve months, but also for those whose bereavement is more distant, but nonetheless real. Personal invitations have been sent to those with whom we are in touch, but all are welcome. The speaker is Revd. Douglas Loveridge, assistant Chaplain at the Royal Berkshire and Battle Hospitals.

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## DOES ANYBODY PLAY THE ORGAN OUT THERE?

St. Mary's Church could do with some help with accompaniment on Sundays. If anyone is a secret, proficient organ player and is willing to become involved, please contact the Rector - 941 7727.

## **ACCIDENTS WAITING TO HAPPEN!**

I wonder if you are alert to a number of situations where accidents are just waiting to happen in Purley.

- Children cycling up St. Mary's Avenue on the path and then suddenly without warning darting between parked cars into the road. Motorists have little chance of avoiding a collision!
- Young people with motor scooters towing cyclists behind them - another dangerous situation.
- Mini-scooters with engine power being driven on roads by young people - no crash helmets, and what about insurance where someone else gets injured?

Life can be full of hazards, but these are unnecessary, and others can so easily get caught up in them. Come on parents - help to avoid a tragedy please.

*Roger Howell*

## **MESSAGE FROM HOME FARM**

With harvest almost over I have joined most other farmers in doing the same exercise; 'what do we grow next year that might show a profit?' Sadly there is no easy answer, however we shall continue to make the best of what is fast becoming a more complex occupation. At least the cows are milking well, helped along by a good flush of autumn grass and almost a quarter of the herd calving in the last two months.

Now to cover a few queries: the brown cow in the milking herd (there may be two by the time you read this) is a Guernsey. We purchased two at a farm dispersal sale recently with a view to boosting our milk butterfat. Secondly, the Angus cows in the front field are also causing confusion. To set the records straight, the black calf goes with the orange cow whereas the orange calf goes with the black cow - honest! Breeding plays wonderful tricks!

Talking of tricks, the 'gypsies' are here to stay for at least the next 18 months. The vagaries of British law and the system of planning appeals mean that although we unanimously rejected their planning application they cannot be evicted. The site is already covered with debris, derelict caravans and dumped vehicles with the field above the site being used as an open loo. All the fears of the locals, unfortunately, are being confirmed as the 'Irish travellers' are certainly not trying to endear themselves to the inhabitants of the surrounding area.

I believe that the aerial that is to be built on the Beech Road playing field will also cause unrest. I have been obliged to keep quiet on this matter as I have a conflict of interest as the present mast has sat amongst my farm

buildings for some time. However it is to be re-sited next month, (Nov), to a place where it will not only be far more visible but also much closer to the public and playing children. Please don't get me wrong, I personally have no fears regarding the safety of these structures, or I would not have allowed it on my farm, but there is a perceived danger, which if blown up by some locals could cause a major embarrassment for the Parish Council. Even the hall at the Village School is not as straight forward as some think; its size and height will unfortunately block views from neighbouring properties. This has caused concern; but without this addition to the buildings I fear that the future of the school will certainly come into doubt.



One advantage of our wet summer, (or perhaps I should say disadvantage in my case), has been the abundant crop of blackberries. This has led to many blackberry and apple crumbles along with cream and custard which has led to an increase in my girth! The solution, according to my daughter, having noticed that Weight Watchers are now meeting at the Village School is to begin a new activity for the winter!

*Tim Metcalfe  
Parish and District Councillor*

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**PURLEY TOTS AUTUMN FAYRE**  
**Saturday 23 October 2004, 2 - 3.30pm**  
**St Mary's Church Hall, Purley on Thames**

**Attractions include:**  
**RAFFLE      CAKE STALL**  
**BOOKS & TOYS      TOMBOLA**

**SOMETHING FOR EVERYONE**

**Refreshments available**

**FREE ENTRY**

## **TEENAGERS ARE FROM MARS PARENTS ARE FROM VENUS**

This is the title of an event for all parents of children from 10-18 years at Wycliffe Baptist Church, Kings Road, Reading on Tuesday 26 October starting at 7.30 p.m.

“We’ll explore together how to better communicate with our teenagers, how to improve relationships within our families and how to live on the same planet.”

Rob Parsons and his son Lloyd look back on the teenage years and together with them we discover how to speak the same language as our teenagers. They will have everyone laughing, crying and yelling, 'it's not just us!' Most of all we will go home with a new understanding of how to communicate with our teenagers. Hosted by youth specialist Paul Francis and with live music from singer-songwriter Mal Pope, this will be a fun-packed and encouraging evening.

Further information from Roger Howell – Tel. 941 7727

To book tickets – 029 2033 7880 - [www.goingpublic.org.uk](http://www.goingpublic.org.uk)

## **PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL**

As authorised by West Berkshire Council the early September meeting of the Parish Council co-opted Mr Paul Coombes of 3 Marshall Close as a member to fill the casual vacancy caused by the resignation of Mr Miller. Subsequently another application was received and the name of the person concerned will be kept on file for future reference.

The audit for year ended 31 March 2004 has been completed and the Council received a complementary letter from the auditors, appointed by the Audit Commission, expressing their appreciation of the quality of the additional information provided for a sampled intermediate audit which is usually required from Councils larger than ours. The statutory notice has been displayed and interested parties may obtain copies of the accounts and the Annual return from the office for a nominal fee.

The Council have received a number of complaints regarding the illegal use of motorised scooters on the public highway by children and others. These have been passed to the Thames Valley Police at Pangbourne and if this problem continues we would urge residents to contact them direct.

Changes have been made to the children’s playground at the Goosecroft Recreation Ground, off Beech Road due to health and safety concerns. We regret that the sand pit has had to be filled in due to continuing vandalism as the Council felt they could no longer take the risk of young children harming themselves on broken bottles deliberately placed below the surface of the sand.

The roundabout has been replaced and a new safety surface constructed as the old roundabout which had provided many years valued service no longer met current standards and was again prone to vandalism. It is hoped to provide additional equipment when funding can be sourced.

Please assist the Parish Council by reporting any incidents of vandalism or anti-social behaviour on the Police non emergency number 0845 8 505505.

Finally a reminder that the Council hold surgery evenings every Monday evening in the office near the Tennis Courts between 6.00 and 8.00 p.m. Parish (and when available District) Councillors will be in attendance to assist with enquiries. As suggested on posters displayed on the notice boards we may be able to assist with the following topics:

Planning, Local Facilities, Sports & Recreation, Education, Highways & Footpaths, Electoral Register, Council Tax, Housing, Bus & Train Services, Social Services, Refuse Collection, Bus Tokens, Nuisances, Flooding, Disabled, Road Safety, Cycling, Recycling, Library, Local History, Burial Records, Grass Cutting & Food Inspection.

Residents of the Denefield Ward of Tilehurst will be welcome to contact their District Councillors.

*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

## **DON'T BELIEVE DOOM-MONGERS**

*Conditions for most of the world's population are improving, says Philip Yancey*

For a tribute edition, I am updating the book *Fearfully and Wonderfully Made*, which I co-wrote with the late Dr Paul Brand in 1980. During this process, I reviewed a passage spelling out the huge gap between developed countries and the developing world. I had recently seen an anonymous email floating around the internet indicating that little has changed since 1980. It reported that 80 per cent of the world's people still live in substandard housing, 70 per cent are unable to read, and 50 per cent suffer from malnutrition.

My curiosity piqued, I spent several days tracking down statistics from authoritative sources, only to find that the email is downright wrong. In fact, the world has made strides in the past few decades.

According to best estimates, 25 per cent - not 80 - of the world's population live in substandard housing. Thirty years ago, the global literacy rate was 53 per cent; now only 20 per cent of adults cannot read. The percentage of people suffering from malnutrition has dropped by more than half, to 20 per cent. Three out of four people used to have no access to clean water; now three out of four people have it.

Perhaps the most significant change has occurred in population growth. In 1968, Paul R. Ehrlich predicted in *The Population Bomb* that huge famines would occur in the 1970s and 1980s, hundreds of millions of people starving to death. This simply did not happen.

Population experts once forecast that world population would hit a high of 20 billion, causing an intolerable strain on the earth's resources. That prediction was lowered to 15 billion, then 11 billion, then nine billion. Some experts predict that the number will peak around 2050 and maybe even decline.

The birth rate has fallen so dramatically that in Western Europe, Russia and Japan, experts are now warning of the dire consequences of an ageing population unreplenished by younger generations. Worldwide, the average woman used to bear six children; now she bears three. As developing countries improve economically, the birth rate drops.

Thirty years ago, one in eight children died in his or her first year of life; now half that proportion dies. (Just over a century ago, four in five children died of disease before they reached the age of five.) AIDS currently presents a major health challenge, especially in Africa, and yet we dare not minimise health triumphs: smallpox, a disease that in the 19th century killed 500 million people, has been eradicated. The feared disease of polio has nearly disappeared, and leprosy has seen huge declines, in part thanks to dedicated Christian workers such as Dr Brand.

A huge economic gap remains between developed and developing countries. Half the world's citizens still get by on less than two dollars a day. Even so, the World Bank estimates that the percentage of those living in absolute poverty has been cut almost in half, and per-capita income has risen by 60 per cent. Ten million entrepreneurs have improved their lives through micro-enterprise loans.

According to the UN, overall conditions in the developing world improved more in the second half of the 20th century than in the previous 500 years. Repressive regimes dominate the news. Meanwhile, according to Freedom House, in recent years 71 more nations have become free or partly free.

Politicians and preachers decry the decline of sexual morality in the United States. But the Center for Disease Control and Prevention reports that the teenage birth rate has declined by 30 per cent in the past decade, while the US abortion rate declined by almost half. Many surveys show that on sexual issues teenagers are more conservative than their parents.

SUCH GOOD NEWS rarely captures the attention of the media, which continue to portray the world as teetering on the brink of cataclysm. Nor does it get much play from relief and development agencies, which have learned that donors respond best to crisis appeals.

As a journalist who often travels internationally, I am well aware of the major problems that face our planet: global warming, income disparity, terrorism and wars, SARS, AIDS and other diseases. At the same time, I find it genuinely heart-warming to learn of the progress that has occurred during my lifetime.

A century ago, theological liberals rightly complained that conservative Christians cared for souls but not bodies. Liberals led the way in social reform. Now, evangelical organisations such as World Vision, World Concern, and Opportunity International are among the most prominent and effective dispensers of "common grace" to a needy world.

After several days of research, I paused to give thanks for this remarkable progress. I have learned not to believe everything I read on the internet, and not to believe everything I hear from doomsayers.

*Philip Yancey is the author of many books, including When Life Hurts (Hodder & Stoughton) and What's So Amazing about Grace (Zondervan). This article first appeared in Christianity Today.*

## **FORGET DRACULA!**

### **PIPISTRELLES SAVE YOU FROM BEING EATEN**

This is the month when you are most likely to see 'bats' as part of a store decoration, flying around spooky castles in Halloween displays. Bats have a sinister image – with faces that only a mother could love, and their silent flitting about at night. But many species are now threatened with extinction, and their conservation has become a pressing cause for concern.

Did you know that there are only 4,500 species of mammals in the world, and 1,000 of them are bats! Even here in the UK, one third of our native mammals are bats. Yet they are among the least familiar and most misunderstood of all our wild creatures.

Bats are remarkable: worldwide, there are bats that catch fish, that eat fruit, and yes, there are even three species in Central and South American that do suck blood. But all European bats feed exclusively on a diet of insects.

Our most common bat, the pipistrelle, is known to eat as many as 3000 midges in an evening. That should make it a welcome visitor to any garden!

Yet sadly, most of our 16 species of native bat are in serious trouble. Just one example is that of the Greater Horseshoe Bat, whose numbers have declined by 99 per cent in the past 100 years. A few hundred individuals still survive in south-east England and south Wales, and they enjoy the highest level of protection that the law can offer.



## **PURLEY PATHFINDERS**

After our summer break, we were keen to get back into our walking boots for our first September walk – and to catch up on everyone’s news along the way! We headed for a new village for the group, Waltham St Lawrence, which proved to be full of pretty cottages with interesting names such as ‘Paradise Cottage’. Woodland paths took us out of the village and, on emerging from the trees, we were able to make out the buildings of Shottesbrooke Park, and soon we were walking past the entrance of the Landmark Trust. From Shurlock Row we climbed to the brow of a hill from where we enjoyed views all around over very pleasant countryside. Eventually we arrived back at Waltham St Lawrence, ready for lunch at The Sun.

Leaving the numerous swans to glide on the glistening Thames, or preen themselves on the sunny riverbank beside Caversham Bridge, we walked along the south side of the river on The Thames Path. Much activity was to be seen with boats manoeuvring through Caversham Lock, or mooring alongside Fry Island and View Island. Soon our walk took on a more calming atmosphere as we continued beside the river through the peaceful King’s Meadow. On reaching the confluence of the Thames and Kennet, we crossed the mouth of the river via the listed Horseshoe Bridge. Now following the Kennet, we headed towards Reading, enjoying its quiet, sleepy backwaters, amazingly just moments away from the hubbub of Reading town centre. We passed Fisherman’s Cottage Inn, more than 200 years old, and Blakes Lock Museum. At the lock, a notice board announced the Kennet & Avon Canal, as we continued beside it, passing the bronze statue of a local fisherman, poised at the ready on his little island. Canal boats created a colourful display as we walked along

Chestnut Walk beside Reading Gaol. Oscar Wilde, a former inmate, is remembered along this stretch with seats bearing inscriptions of some of his work. Railings declared within their ironwork, 'Oh beautiful world'. After crossing the noisy Reading Bridge, we marvelled at the peacefulness as we returned to the banks of the River Thames, this time on the northern side through Christchurch Meadows. The 'Three Men in a Boat' was opened especially for us to enjoy lunch, overlooking the famous Caversham Prom swans.

Our walks are often referred to as 'Coffee Mornings on foot!' With this in mind, the idea was born to make this year's charity walk a Macmillan Coffee Morning Walk. The route was chosen along the Kennet & Avon Canal from Theale. With its convenient proximity to the railway, this enabled the group to walk a variety of lengths with the option to return to Theale on foot or by train. The canal-side was a peaceful place to walk, with just the occasional fisherman's float, heron, or duck rippling the smooth surface of the water. Canal boats, either moored along the banks, or making effortlessly progress on the water, competed for colourfulness with the 'jewels', in the form of berries and hips, on the hedgerow plants

beside us. At Aldermaston Visitor's Centre (*see photo*) we sat in the garden to drink coffee, and to eat homemade biscuits or cake sold in aid of the charity. Our route took us along wilder stretches as we continued along the canal to reach Woolhampton. We stopped here for lunch, before returning to Theale. At the time of writing, not all the donations have been collected, but the total raised to date is nearly £250 for the Macmillan Nurses.



We will be back by the Thames for our next walk as we follow the Thames Path to Shiplake. Then, in October we

will head for woodlands where we will be able to appreciate the amazing palette of colours as summer turns to autumn. Our 'Autumn Special' takes place in October when we will be off to Hampton Court. Keeping to this year's theme of 'The River Thames', we will walk along the river as it loops around Home Park, returning to the Palace alongside the famous Long Water. The afternoon will be spent exploring the various 'gardens within the gardens' of Hampton Court Palace.

If any ladies would like to join us at this colourful time of year, then please ring for a programme. Walks are held on various weekday mornings and generally range from 4 to 6 miles. You will be made very welcome!

*Nicki Woodward*

**Please note my new 'phone number! 984 2112**

# PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

## 21<sup>ST</sup> LATE SUMMER SHOW

This was held in The Barn, Beech Road on 11 September and was probably the most successful show the society has held. The number of entries (229) was the highest since 1992. The judges in all sections commented on the good quality exhibits and in particular the very high standard of some exhibits. Despite the very wet weather of the last few weeks, the exhibitors put on a good display of vegetables, flowers and fruit and it was very pleasing to see the Floral Art Section so well supported. We wish to thank exhibitors, judges and all who helped as stewards and to set up and dismantle tables at the show and make it a success. It was also very pleasing to see many people viewing the exhibits. The trophies were presented by Mr. D. Betts, Chairman of Purley Parish Council and the winners were as follows:-

Reg Ayers Memorial Trophy for most points gained in the Spring and Summer Shows	Sybil Pryor
P.H.S. Perpetual Challenge Cup for most points in Vegetables, Fruit & Flower Sections	R. Stuart
Purley Women's Institute Cup for most points in the Cookery and Handicraft Sections	Mrs. Howell
Neil Buckle Trophy for Floral Art Section	Mrs. Howell
Purley Homecraft Salver for best exhibit in Cookery & Handicraft Section	Mrs. Venners& Mrs. Conquest
Purley Home & Garden Bowl for best exhibit in Flowers & Pot Plant Section	R. Stuart
Frankston Vase for best exhibit in Class 63 (article of knitting, needlework, or Crochet with a floral theme)	Mrs. Blanchard
Golden Jubilee Cup for most points in the Children's Section	Lucy Robertson & Nicole Cook
Fairfoull Cup for most points in the pot plant Section	R. Stuart
Berkshire Horticultural Federation Certificate of Merit for best flowers, Vegetables & pot plant	R. Stuart
Berkshire Horticultural Federation Certificate of Merit for best Fruit	J. Armstrong

## WINTER TALKS

Our first talk will be on Wednesday, 20 October in Purley Memorial Hall commencing at 8 p.m. Dr. M. Keith Lucas will give a slide show and talk on the "Natural History of the Shetland Islands". Please try and come along so that we have a good attendance for our speaker.

## TRADING

The Shed in the Memorial Hall car park will be closing on Sunday, 31 October for the winter and re-opening the first week-end in February 2005. We hope you have all purchased your bulbs and any other gardening requirements you may need whilst we are closed. The Shed now stocks bird food, so please make sure you have ample food for the birds during the winter months.

*Marion Dabbs*  
942 2349

# PURLEY PLAYERS

present a

## Murder Mystery Evening

### "A Show to Die For"

on Saturday, 20 November 2004

at 7.30 pm St Mary's Church Hall, Purley on Thames

Tickets: £12.50 to include a three course meal



Menu: Fancy leaf salad with salmon, capers and cherry tomatoes

Turkey with Marsala Cream Sauce, Duchess Potatoes, and a

Melange of green vegetables and carrots

Meringue with berry coulis

Coffee and mints

Vegetarian menu available

**Please bring your own drink**

Box Office opens: Monday, 11 October 2004

Tel: 0118 962 5760

Tickets on a first come first served basis

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



## **PURLEY CHURCH OF ENGLAND INFANT SCHOOL**

At Purley School we are all walking around with big smiles on our faces. In August we received the wonderful news that planning permission has been granted for our new building. This consists of a new hall, toilet facilities for pupils, Headteacher's office, secretary's office and staffroom. The start of a new academic year is always exciting but this news is really the icing on the cake. On behalf of the school, parents, pupils and governors I would like to say a huge thank-you to the many people in the village who helped support this project. Hopefully by the time you read this, the building will have started.

As part of our whole school curriculum each term we have a theme or school topic. This autumn the theme is "Food and Farming." As part of their studies pupils will be visiting "Home Farm". Tim and Vicki Metcalfe always make us very welcome. The pupils are given a guided tour where they learn about milk production, the purpose and use of farm buildings and of course spend time watching the farm animals. This is always a very enjoyable and informative visit.

National Poetry Day this year is on 7 October, the theme for the day is food. One of the suggestions for use with young children is to make a poem about a giant's dinner based on a poem called "What the giant had for dinner." by Ian McMillan and Martyn Wiley.

***First  
He ate  
A hive of bees.***

***Then  
He ate  
Some chestnut trees***

***Then  
He ate  
A house near me***

***Last  
Of all  
He drank the sea.***

If any Purley Poets would like to write a poem around this theme our children would certainly enjoy reading them. How about a wet dinner for a sea monster, or a cold feast for a snowman? We would love to hear from

past pupils and parents! Please have a go and send your poems to the school.

On Poetry Day an actor from the Watermill Theatre in Newbury will be working with our year 2 class for their literacy hour. They will be joining the class for their literacy lesson and helping the children read and understand a poem of their choice. Parents have been invited into school to listen to pupils read their favourite poems and to read their own favourites to small groups of children. One of the aims of National Poetry Day is to show how in schools we can help poetry to be a vibrant and an important part of education. I am sure at Purley School this will be the case.

Harvest Festival this term will take place on 21 October; the children will share Harvest songs, poems, writing and prayers with their families. We will give thanks for the Harvest and consider the needs of others around the world who may not have enough to eat. Parents send Harvest produce into school which is then taken to Purley Park Trust where it is much appreciated.

If you wish to visit the school please contact the Headteacher. We will then arrange a date for you to come and see the school at work.

*Jeannette Goddard*  
Headteacher  
0118 984 2384

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# **HARVEST FAIR**

at

**St. Mary the Virgin**

**SATURDAY 16TH OCTOBER**

**11.30 - 2.00pm**



**Light Lunches &  
Refreshments**

**Toys**

**Cakes**

**Plants**

**Tombola**

**Fancy Goods**

**Pie Stall**

**Books**

**White Elephant**

## **THE GENDER OF BABIES**

*In the first of two extracts from his book, **The Testament of a Doctor – A Life of Contrasts**, Dr Hofmeyr recalls his reputation amongst the expectant mothers-of Zululand.*

### **NKANDHLA, ZULULAND, IN THE LATE 1950'S**

The native women would first see me and then go to the mission midwives for antenatals and delivery, occasionally coming back to me for a check-up near term. They usually implored me that I should use my mtagati (magic spirits) to influence the gender they wanted, almost always a wish for a boy. My reply was that I was a Christian and did not believe in mtagati but I would pray that they would have their wishes fulfilled – yes, I would pray. (It was no use trying to explain that by the time they knew that they were pregnant the gender was already determined!) It came to pass that a whole series of a dozen or more were delighted that they had the babies of their desire. My reputation amongst the tribesmen and mothers-to-be was such that some merely wanted a laying on of my hands on their tummies.

Several sophisticated white women also believed they produced the sons that they had wanted thanks to my involvement. One, Mrs. Larkan, the wife of the hotel and bar proprietor, I remember well, but particularly the police sergeant's wife. As they already had two daughters, the sergeant especially was anxious for a son to continue his family name (which now escapes me). He was transferred to another district on promotion about 100 miles away to Kranskop, and the wife at about 32 weeks came back to stay in the little Larkan's hotel until her delivery. This was a planned pregnancy and I was asked to ensure a boy. I vehemently disclaimed any ability or influence in this choice of gender but was disbelieved. In due course I was delighted to deliver a nice robust son to each after easy, comfortable labours. Fortunately for me I had left before the spell was broken.

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## **ART AND CRAFT EXHIBITION**

We are holding our Annual Thames Valley Artists Art & Craft Exhibition at Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road, on Saturday 30 October, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., and Sunday 31 October, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Most of the artists are from the Purley on Thames and Tilehurst areas and their work is of a high standard. Admission is free and refreshments will be available during the weekend. There will be a wide variety of paintings and craft items for sale.

*Maggy Pickard*

## **PURLEY VILLAGERS SEE DOUBLE**

*Those magazine subscribers that live in the civil parish of Purley on Thames will be receiving two editions this month! To understand why, read this message from Village Plan committee member Tim Whitaker:*

"We're extremely pleased to announce that a copy of the Village Plan will be landing on your door step towards the end of October. This Plan will summarise what residents felt to be the most important issues in the Village and outline the main proposals for improvements. This will be distributed together with a special issue of the Purley Parish News to all households in Purley on Thames. We're attaching a copy of the parish news because one of the findings from the survey of residents was that many rated it as a main source of information about what's going on in the Village, but not all households will necessarily have seen a copy.

"And the Village Plan will be formally launched on Tuesday 2 November at 7.30 in the Barn in Goosecroft Lane by the recreation field. This will be your opportunity to ask questions and debate some of the plan's proposals for making Purley on Thames a better place to live. We look forward to seeing you all."

*There will be much in common between this and the special edition so if you are the lucky owner of both copies maybe you could pass your extra copy to someone that lives on the periphery of the village that may not receive a copy?*

*Matthew Slingsby  
Editor*

## **PURLEY TOTS**

As soon as September begins we at Purley Tots start the somewhat frantic task of organising our annual Autumn Fayre. The last few years have been hugely successful and we all hope that this year will be the same. We are always amazed by the generosity of those who donate to us and this year we have some great raffle prizes.

Another regular for us this season is our trip to Home Farm. This is an outing that the children really enjoy and everyone looks forward to the wonderful home-made biscuits provided!

Next year Purley Tots will be 20 years old. We feel very strongly that this is something to celebrate and hope next year to have some kind of party in honour of the last 20 years and all the parents and children who have kept it going. If you have been involved with Purley Tots at any point in the last 20 years and would be interested in helping to organise a celebration then please call Nicky Danbury on 0118 943 1317.



## **PURLEY ON THAMES CRICKET CLUB**

### **TRIPLE POLE ELECTRIC "FRIENDLY"**

On Friday 3 September Triple Pole Electrics played their annual "Friendly" against Purley on Thames CC.

After the game, Darren Thorpe (Triple Pole Electrics) presented Tony Brown, Captain of Purley on Thames Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> XI with a cheque, continuing their match ball sponsorship for 2004 season.

The Saturday 1<sup>st</sup> XI became champions of the Berkshire League Division 1, and the Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> XI became champions of the Border Sunday league Division 2.

Martin Bishop, Club Chairman said, "With the Junior U17 team becoming runners up in the Berkshire Colts League U17 competition, the Junior U11 team being invited to participate in a lunchtime demonstration at Lords, and these tremendous results for the Adult teams, Purley on Thames CC have had an excellent season all round and look forward to next year".

For further information about Purley on Thames CC, or if you are interested in playing cricket at any level, please contact Martin Bishop, Club Chairman on 0118 945 3117.

Or look at the club website: <http://purleyonthames.play-cricket.com>

### **PURLEY BEECHES RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION**

## **ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

The AGM of the PBRA will be held on Tuesday 9 November 2004

In the village at St. Mary's Church Hall

Starting at 7.30 for 8.00 p.m.

Members can enjoy drinks and nibbles from 7.30.

With an 8 p.m. start for the meeting.

Please come along meet your committee members and air your views.

## **PROJECT PURLEY**

The next meeting of Project Purley will be held on 15 October at 8 p.m. at The Barn, Goosecroft Lane off Beech Road. Lock-keeper, George Fielder will talk about 'Managing the River'

The time and venue for Project Purley's summer social gathering was 16 July in the beautiful tiered garden at Highveldt.

A total of forty-seven people attended, almost equivalent to the current membership. All the guests had brought a contribution towards the dinner, whilst John Chapman and Ben were on cookhouse duty underneath a metal structure which, if it had been on display in the Tate Gallery, could have been valued at several thousand pounds.

Guests were grouped under five mini-marquees around the garden and began to line up for their burgers, sausages and chicken, plus vegetables and salad at about 8.00 p.m. Conversation during the main course and dessert covered many topics, including recent Project Purley meetings and outings, the most profitable way of spending one's retirement, the value or otherwise of bringing back National Service, the village plan for Purley and Reading Football Club's chances of gaining promotion to the Premiership.

At a convenient lull in the evening, when the shadows were beginning to lengthen and people were refilling their glasses (and in several cases, their plates) Jean Debney proposed a vote of thanks to Ben and Dorothy for their hospitality, and this was heartily endorsed by all of us who had enjoyed such a pleasant occasion.

By 10.00 p.m. there was a distinct chill in the air, though the conversation and bonhomie was as warm and enthusiastic as ever. Guests gradually began to fold up their chairs, pack away their crockery and cutlery, and drift away into the night.

Our thanks to our hosts and caterers, and the icing on the cake was to learn that next summer's barbecue may take place to a musical accompaniment, with a cellist playing during the evening. Project Purley is going classical!

*David Downs*

## **PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT BOWLS CLUB**

It has not been a very successful season for Pangbourne Bowls Club I regret to say, apart from two noticeable successes. Pangbourne Ladies Triple won the Oddfellows Ladies Championship. This triple consisted of Eileen, Mary Joyce and Linda Tucker. Very well done ladies. What makes it even more poignant is that after this year the Oddfellows Bowling Club in Reading is closing down. This was the very last year of the competition, not only won by Pangbourne, but each time I look at the television set the gold trophy stands in pride of palace on top of it – rather interesting it

looked when the Union flag was raised so often at the recent Olympic Games! And I of course raised my glass on each occasion.

The other item of which we at Pangbourne can be justifiably proud is that Alan Blacklock's (Blackers to his drinking chums!) team were runners up in the Kennett League. Considering that Pangbourne was relegated last year it was great to see the club fight back. It is interesting that some of our ex-"stars" are now looking on and wondering whether they were right in leaving Pangbourne after all...

This is the time of the year when I'm juggling around trying to fix in the games on Finals Day. It is remarkable how many Purley people again feature in these Finals. Doreen Miller is playing in the Final of the Ladies Singles – and, patriotism apart, I hope you do well Doreen, you deserve it the way you have played your games this year. Her husband, Ralph, is playing in the Open Pairs against myself (I shan't say a word!) Alan Clarke is again in the Two Woods Final and Frank Lewendon is playing in the Novices Singles Trophy Final.

Pangbourne continues to be a very happy mixed club, I've had fourteen happy years as Secretary, but I wouldn't be sorry if somebody came along and said "Bill, old man, let me take the pressure off your shoulders and just enjoy your bowls!"

But, the leaves are still Green, the grass is still fresh and even though I'm not bowling anything like my best – due to my knee I've had to adopt a new stance and I'm just using the strength of my shoulders. This wasn't helped at the recent village fun day in Purley when my nephew and I entered the "throw the industrial welly" competition. He threw further than me and in retaliation I exerted all my strength, threw the blooming thing two metres according to the Simon's measure, and I crocked my shoulder and upper arm. I would like to blame Simon Robertson for letting elderly idiots take part, or, I think maybe Pam was to blame; it was Pam, who pointed out that there was no similarity in throwing a Welly and the "graceful action of bowling!" At least I have my excuse all ready if beaten in the Open Pairs in the forthcoming Finals.

I have enjoyed writing these little pieces for the Purley Parish Magazine, I hope they've given some little enjoyment to the readers and done perhaps a little "something" to get more people interested in what happens in Bowling the Wood!

*Bill Ayling*

**SATURDAY 16 OCTOBER - 10 A.M. UNTIL NOON**

**99 Devonshire Gardens (off Knowsley Road)**

The **Tilehurst, Purley and West Reading Branch** of the RNLi is holding a Coffee Morning where RNLi Christmas cards, calendars and souvenirs will also be on sale

## PURLEY W.I.

Welcome back, I trust you all enjoyed your holidays!

The speaker this month, Sandy Peacham, gave an emotional talk on her very human tale of trying to trace her G.I. father. With much support from her mum, dad and two daughters, she strove endlessly with telephone calls and letters. Remember in the 1960's there were no press button computers to contact an individual. At the age of sixteen Sandy felt the need to track down her natural father and armed with little knowledge, like his name and believing he lived in Birmingham, Alabama the long search began. Many rays of hope shone through only to be dashed or ignored. During the last twenty years Sandy joined a couple of organisations and took the US government to court. The case won under the Freedom of Privilege Act and this has enabled a number of G.I. babies to contact their fathers. In 1996 she finally acquired her adoption records, at last a breakthrough, along with her father's signature. Yes, he did live in Alabama! Like all good fairy stories we have a happy ending. Sandy finally found her father, the jigsaw is now complete.

Flower of the month      1<sup>st</sup> Pam Gilham and Phil Hasemore  
   2<sup>nd</sup> Lesley Honnor

Competition Photo:      1<sup>st</sup> Shirley Cooper and Angela Perry  
Know your committee    2<sup>nd</sup> Edna Bint

October's meeting will be on Wednesday 13 October, 7.30 Purley Memorial Hall, Glebe Road. The speaker is Sally Botwright on London Docks. Competition: Photo of London. **Visitors Welcome.**

*Sylvia Conquest*  
941 1936

## WEST BERKS SCRABBLE® CLUB

The club has been in summer recess, with members enjoying their summer holidays.

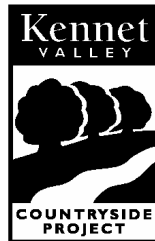
September brings normality, with the club opening for sessions every Tuesday evening and Thursday afternoon. We are delighted to announce that the Tuesday evening sessions are now held in The Barn, (Goosecroft Lane). The playing room is large and airy and there is ample car parking.

Would you like to take up a new leisure pursuit? Or perhaps you already play Scrabble and would like to join a club? Come along and see first hand what we are all about. We have members of all ages and both sexes. Friendships have been forged and a pleasant and enjoyable time can be had by all.

For further details contact Ian or Elizabeth on 984 5045.



## 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 10 a.m. and finish by 4 p.m. 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.

### FRIENDS DIARY

**Tues 5 Oct**

**Marsh Meadows**

**Meadow Raking**

The three hundred wildflower plugs that were planted by the Cubs will have finished flowering and seeding by the end of the summer. The meadow will then be cut and we will need some keen volunteers to join us in raking up the cuttings. Meet outside Alldays at 10am. Grid ref: SU525680.

**Sat 9 October**

**Bucklebury Common Heathland Management & Bucklebury Heathland Conservation Group AGM**

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.

**Sun 10 Oct**

**Ashampstead Common  
Boundaries and Bridleways. 1.00pm**

Join Dick Greenaway for about a 3½ mile walk to look at new paths and ancient boundaries in Ashampstead Common and Basildon parish. Meet at Childs Court Farm (SU 575 752) at 1.00pm. Well behaved dogs accepted. Please book your place.

**Sun 24 Oct**

**Compton**

**Bring Your Bike. 1.00pm**

A new venture for the Friends. An 8 mile, mainly off road, cycle ride to look at the Downland north of Compton. Mountain bikes advisable, helmets must be worn. Reading Cycle Touring Club has been invited to join us on this ride. Meet at Compton Downs Sports Centre (SU519 795) at 1.00pm. Ride leaders Tom Munro/Karen Davies. Please book your place.

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.

**Tues16 Nov**

**Paices Wood**

**Coppicing**

The woods in this country parkland are in need of some sympathetic management. Come and help start a coppicing programme in these beautiful woodlands. Meet at 10.00am at Paices Hill (through Youngs Industrial Est.) Grid ref: SU586638

**Sun 21 Nov Paices Wood Autumn Amble**  
Come and discover the history of Paices Wood, whilst on a leisurely walk. In particular, we will learn about the gravel extraction that occurred at the site and how the area has since been transformed into a country park with valuable wildlife habitats. Meet at 10.00 at Paices Hill (through Youngs Industrial Est.) Grid ref: SU586638

**Tues 23 Nov Marlston Hedge Planting**  
Help Dennis Gower plant a hedge in this attractive part of the Pang Valley. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm\* at 10.00am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site.

**Fri 26 Nov Brockhurst School Hermitage Christmas Wine Tasting Evening 7.30pm**  
The theme this year is Practical Tips for Christmas and Alan Montague Dennis will lead us through a number of value for money white and red wines followed up with a selection of ports from the House of Fonseca. Tickets are available from the office at £12.50 per person. Book early, as places are limited.

**Sun 28 Nov Stanford Dingley Lost Roads and Green Lanes. 1.00pm**  
Explore the medieval road system buried in the woods north of Stanford Dingley. Meet Dick Greenaway at Stanford Dingley church (SU576 717) at 1.00pm. About 5 miles. Well-behaved dogs accepted. Please book your place.

**Tues 30 Nov The Barn, West Woodhay Hedge Planting**  
Join Karen Davies in a beautiful part of the world planting a new hedge. Sausage rolls and soup will be provided! Meet at The Barn, West Woodhay at 10am, Grid ref: SU 399634

**Sat 11 Dec Hosehill Lake LNR 9-12 Scrub Clearance**  
Join Theale Area Bird Conservation Group and the Ranger to clear encroaching scrub from the reserve. Meet at the entrance opposite the Fox & Hounds Pub at 10.00. Grid ref: SU650697

**Sat 11 Dec Bucklebury Common 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.

**Tues 14 Dec Bucklebury Footpath Work**  
Improve access in the parish by helping to clear encroaching vegetation on its 45 miles of off-road rights of way – but not all of them! Meet Dennis Gower at the Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm \* at 10.00 am.

\*The Black Barn at Rushall Manor Farm is situated off Back Lane, between Stanford Dingley and Bradfield. Take the gravel track north off Back Lane to the west of Scratchface Lane. Grid ref. SU 583 723.

For more information, directions, etc.

See our Web site [www.pangandkennetvalleys.org.uk](http://www.pangandkennetvalleys.org.uk)

Or contact the Projects Office on 0118 930 5336.

## **THAMES VALLEY POLICE**

Well, it is October once again and I expect many of you, just like me, have spent the last few weeks settling back into work and school after a summer holiday. I am pleased to say that my team at Pangbourne have certainly not been resting during the past few months as the 19 per cent reduction in crime between April and August 2004, compared with the same period last year, surely demonstrates.

This autumn will see a lot more hard work both on crime reduction and detection and working even more closely with our local community. On September 29 representatives from the communities of Purley, Pangbourne, Basildon, Tilehurst and Calcot will have meet in their first session as the local Neighbourhood Action Group. This is the next step of a process I was talking about in my last article – making sure we involve local people in working together to solve issues that are affecting them.

At this first meeting we looked in more detail at what the group hopes to achieve, and how we will go about it. This Neighbourhood Action Group is the first in the Force to be set up independently of the National Reassurance Policing Programme. Our challenge will be to develop ideas and concepts from Burghfield and adapt them to this larger-scale project.

We will also remain focused on reducing crime in our area – and we need your help in achieving this. Over the summer, during the warm weather, there were burglaries at houses where windows and doors had been left open. Don't give criminals this kind of opportunity! I would urge all of you take simple steps to prevent your home being targeted – don't leave windows open while you are out or asleep at night, especially those on the ground floor.

You may have seen in the media that we recently seized a shotgun from a travellers' site on the outskirts of Pangbourne after reports of a firearm being discharged. We will continue to maintain regular contact with residents of the site to ensure effective engagement with the community.

Our community policing team prides itself on policing this area fairly and without any discrimination but crime will not tolerated and we will work hard to keep the sector safe for everyone who lives, works and visits here.

*Insp. Andy Talbot*

## **ADVANCE WARNING!**

On Sunday 7 November from 2.00 p.m. – 5.00 p.m. the bells at St Mary's church will be ringing continuously as some bell ringers from Reading are visiting in order to ring a full peal. If you live near the church and sometimes find the bells intrusive, you may wish to go out for the afternoon or keep your windows shut!

*Simon Robertson*

# PURLEY PARISH NEWS

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I welcome all contributions to this magazine, particularly on local issues and events. Contributions can either be delivered in writing or 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.

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