

PURLEY PARISH NEWS

JANUARY 2006



It's Time!

35P

For the Church & Community of
PURLEY ON THAMES



ST. MARY THE VIRGIN PURLEY ON THAMES

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BAPTISMS, WEDDINGS AND FUNERALS

All enquiries should be made to the Rector

www.stmarythevirgin.fsnet.co.uk

FROM THE LOCAL MINISTER

Happy New Year!

When I was a lad we followed the Scottish traditions of Hogmanay. That included watching the programmes on BBC, culminating in the White Heather Club in the early hours of the morning, with Andy Stewart's crooning, Scottish country dancing, stand-up comics telling jokes I couldn't see the funny side of, and increasingly tired people being interviewed.

The interviews all tended to follow the same formula – "How was last year? How will this year be different?"

One of the highlights of 2005 for Christine and I was spending a fortnight in the USA, and particularly the weekends with our daughter, Linda, who is working in New York for six months. One Monday we all travelled by train from Providence, Rhode Island, to New Haven for Christine and I, then on to New York for Linda. The train was reasonably busy, so while Linda and Christine managed to find seats across the aisle from one another and chatted, I sat a few rows further forward and read.

As I often do on trains, as I read I made some notes on what struck me. Reading them again now, what has struck me most is this quotation: "What is taking place is the death of the culture that formerly conferred Christian identity upon the British people."

It was interesting reading these words in the USA, a country where half the population go to church on Sunday, making even the streets of New York notably quieter that day. In restaurants, stopping to give thanks before starting to eat is so common as to be almost the norm. In Reading, of course, as in many of the towns and cities of the UK, Sunday seems just as busy for the shops as every other day. Not only have I seldom seen others give thanks before eating in restaurants, I have often failed to do so myself.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not saying that everything about the USA is clearly more Christian – in my view they could do much more to support the poor and elderly, and I am not comfortable with some of the things I heard said, almost demonising people of other religions.

This morning I sat and read while waiting for my train. Tilehurst station may be less romantic, and is certainly less spectacular than Grand Central station, New York, but what I read was no less striking. "God rekindles burned-out lives with fresh hope."

In January the Parochial Church Council will spend time starting the process of considering how we can be re-energised as a church. That will be followed through with a programme called *Towards a Healthy Church* for the whole church during Lent. While I don't think it would be fair to call St. Mary's "burned out", hopefully the end result will be a church which is noticeably rekindled.

Perhaps as you look at aspects of your own life at the start of this new year, you might feel that some of them are in need of rekindling. Why not embark on this journey with us? You might find for yourself that Jesus really can reach the parts of life, nothing else can.

With best wishes,

Andrew



PARISH REGISTERS

BAPTISM

11 December Luke Mark Simmons
Tom William Simmons

FUNERALS

7 December Fidelia May Stanforth, aged 82 years (cremation)



CHURCH SERVICES

8 Jan	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
15 Jan	9.30am	Family Communion
	11.15am	Morning Worship
	6.00pm	Evening Worship
22 Jan	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion
29 Jan	9.30am	Family Worship
	11.15am	Holy Communion

ST. MARY THE VIRGIN PARISH CHURCH CHURCH OPEN DAYS

SATURDAY 25 FEBRUARY
10.30AM TO 4PM

SUNDAY 26 FEBRUARY
2PM TO 4.30PM

Historical display

Traidcraft

Bell-ringing

refreshments

Find our about weekday activities

Purley Tots

Hands of friendship

Baby Clinic

There has been a church here since the 12th century

Norman font and arch

14th century window

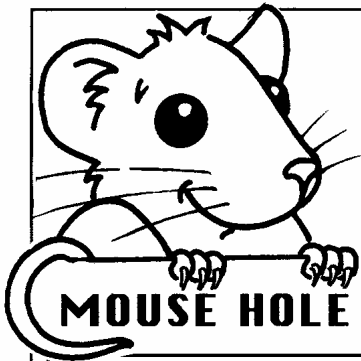
Seventeenth century tower



This is your church - come and see!

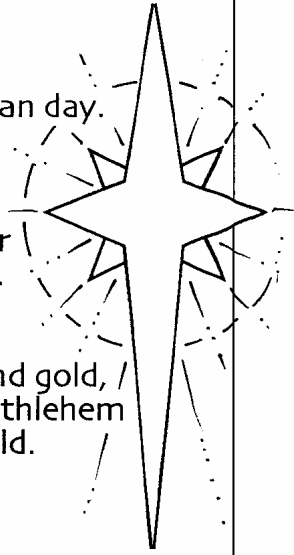
HOUSE BLESSING

Are you a new resident in Purley? If you would like one of the clergy to visit your home and to ask God's blessing on it, please contact the Rector – Roger Howell.



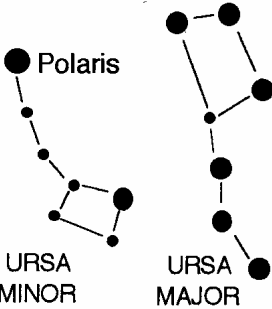
The wise men came
from a land far away,
They'd seen a great star
that shone brighter than day.

The star was a sign
of the birth of a king,
So they followed that star
to pay homage to him.



Star Facts

'Polaris', also known as 'The North Star' can be seen in the sky all year round. Look out for it in the night sky.



They carried three gifts:
myrrh, frankincense and gold,
and they found him in Bethlehem
as the Prophets foretold.

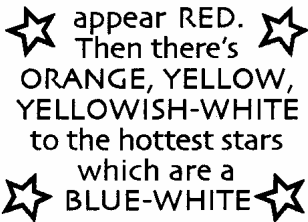
The star led to Jesus,
our Saviour and King,
So let's join with the wise men
and go, worship Him.



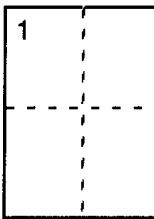
The closest star
to EARTH, is
our own SUN



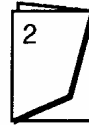
Stars are different
colours, the colour we
see depends on the
temperature of the
star. The coolest stars
appear RED. Then there's
ORANGE, YELLOW,
YELLOWISH-WHITE
to the hottest stars
which are a
BLUE-WHITE



Star Makes



- Fold a rectangle of shiny paper into half and half again (1). Then (2) cut to make a Star of Bethlehem.



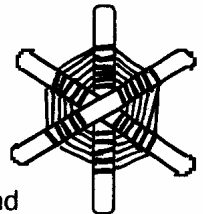
fold



- Glue 3 lolly sticks together. Starting from the centre, wind wool around each stick until about 2-3cm of stick is left.



Try painting the sticks gold, use gold thread and add sparkle with glitter.



CRIME PREVENTION ADVICE

Burglary levels tend to rise at this time of year as offenders take advantage of the dark afternoons to strike. Most burglary is still committed by opportunists and it is important that we all make life as difficult as possible for potential burglars. The following simple steps will help to prevent your property being targeted.

- When you leave your house, take the time to think about whether it will be dark when you return. Setting lights on timer-switches will make it look more like there is somebody at home.
- Use a radio programmed to a talking channel, such as Radio 4 or 5, and set this to a timer switch. Burglars are far less likely to target your house if they see lights and can hear voices inside.
- Please, please make sure that you lock all your doors and windows when you're out, as well as at night-time. Far too many burglaries are still occurring because people don't lock up. Don't forget that if you are in your own home and over 60, you may be eligible for the HandyVan scheme which will upgrade door and window locks free of charge.
- Don't leave house or car keys within sight or reach of windows or doors.
- With Christmas over, don't leave packaging from expensive presents (e.g. computers, iPods) outside your house for days waiting for rubbish collection, it just advertises to criminals what they would find if they burgled you. Put the packaging out the night before collection or take it to the rubbish tip yourself.
- Remember to property mark your valuables. West Berkshire Police Crime Reduction still has **free** forensic SmartWater and other post-coding kits available.
- Bogus callers are also on the increase at this time of year. If someone calls at your door that you don't know, don't forget to ask for and **thoroughly check** their identification. Don't feel obliged to let unknown people into your home, whatever their excuse. Why not ask them to write to you to make an appointment – this will get rid of the bogus caller and genuine callers won't mind a bit.

For further details on any of the information contained here, or any other crime reduction measures, please contact:

Ruth Hemingway at Newbury Police Station on 01635 264 624

PARKING IN READING

Off road car parking space within walking distance of Reading Town Centre, available to rent on a monthly basis. Please contact 0118 942 3159

PROJECT PURLEY

THE HISTORY OF WILSON ROAD SCHOOL

Liz Woodhouse, the guest speaker at Project Purley's meeting on 18 November, was the perfect person to talk about the history of Wilson School. Not only was she a pupil there from 1969 to 1975, her son Sam attended Wilson in recent years and Liz was a Parent Governor and member of the Parent-Staff Association.

Liz began by explaining that she was pleased to send Sam to Wilson, her catchment area school, even though it was in Special Measures at the time as a result of an Ofsted inspection. As an elected Parent Governor, she wanted to help raise the school's profile, and did so by organising a series of events to celebrate its centenary in 2005. This would have the advantage of involving the community as well as former pupils and, as an introduction to the centenary, a tea-party was held in Battle Library in September 2003. This was attended by more than 40 former pupils as well as the Reading West M.P., Martin Salter.

From that enjoyable occasion came enough reminiscences to provide material for a Centenary History of the school, though Liz also had to research old school logbooks, microfilm copies of the Berkshire Chronicle and make visits to Berkshire Record Office and the Central Library before she was sure she could do justice to all ten decades of the school's life. She also wrote to the Reading Evening Post letters page asking for memorabilia, pictures and memories from past and present staff, pupils and parents. Finally, she formed a five-strong editorial committee of current school bursar, Gill Brown and old pupils Irene Witts, Graham Holt and David Downs, plus herself to take responsibility for publication and marketing.

Other contemporary events taking place included the production of a commemorative centenary mug, a reunion of two hundred people at the school in February 2004, a centenary party for current Wilson Primary pupils in May 2004 and, perhaps most important of all, the school coming out of Special Measures and being recognised nationally as an improving school. The school's involvement was emphasised by the children hosting visitors by acting as waiters and waitresses, conducting guided tours of the building and the school choir providing entertainment.

Material for the publication arrived via fax, e-mail, letter and telephone as well as beautifully written and decorated poems and stories from present pupils. Included in the book will be copies of school reports (some better than others!), sports certificates, photographs of class and team groups, as well as contributions from those who attended Wilson School as far back as the 1930s with their own particular memories of the school as it was in their day. The early part of the twentieth century will be described by reference to logbooks and will cover the First World War period from 1914 to 1919 when the buildings were converted to a War Hospital for wounded and convalescing servicemen.

Liz said that editing had been an enjoyable but difficult task, as some contributors would be disappointed at seeing their entry rejected. Getting

funding was a problem too. Main funding would come from pre-sales or pledges, and a few local businesses had promised sponsorship. Ideally 200 copies need to be pre-sold to guarantee publication in the New Year. The scheduled launch date is 10 March 2006 when a reunion of pupils and staff will take place at the school.

Now that the content has been decided, all that remains is for the front and back cover design to be agreed, though this will be chosen from material submitted by present pupils. The editorial committee is also busy getting quotes from various printers, and a decision has to be taken by Christmas to ensure adherence to the March publication date.

At our meeting, there was an exhibition of artefacts, which Liz had brought along for members to view, and an invitation for anyone who wanted to reserve a copy of the book to do so. If you have a suggestion for a title for the centenary history, would like to order a copy, or have any questions or information for Liz, please contact her on 0118 959 6817.

The Project Purley meeting in January is entitled "The History of Your House, Then and Now." The meeting will be led by John Chapman and will be held at The Barn on 20 January commencing at 8pm. The Society would like to wish all residents of Purley on Thames a very Happy and Healthy New Year.

David Downs

ANXIOUS TIMES

We've had quite an anxious time in our road in recent weeks. There have been a series of attacks on cars and house windows, all of which have taken place around 1 o'clock in the morning. Stones are thrown or more recently, air rifles have been shot, resulting in broken windows and very upset owners.

It takes most of the following day to get windows repaired, the cost is considerable and a great deal of inconvenience is the result. But the worst effect of these acts has been the disquiet and anxiety we are all experiencing. Many people are sleeping less deeply and strangers passing by are viewed with suspicion. All of these incidents have been reported to the police but speaking to an officer, who is based many miles away, who just tells us "it will be logged" does not make us feel any safer.

So, we just hope that this will pass as the perpetrators of these acts move on or find some more worthy way to spend their time.

In the meantime, many of us are putting very bright sensor lights on our properties, which is very expensive. The positive side is that it looks like daylight out there sometimes and, by the time we get our Christmas lights up, it will look like Blackpool. Can we cope with the coach parties, we ask each other!

Happy New Year!

Name and address supplied

MESSAGE FROM HOME FARM

There is little doubt that the old jokes are still the best. The other day I was feeding the Angus cattle in Blounts meadow, when a lady came walking up the footpath from the river. Epic, our rather large bull stood menacingly in her way. "Is he safe?" she shouted. "Oh yes" I replied. "He is quite safe, but I can't say the same for you!"

Luckily the lady took my flippant aside in the way it was intended; however in this world of "P.C." it can be the simplest remark that lands you in trouble. The other evening at a *Select Committee Meeting*, we were deep into child alcohol/drug abuse when the Executive Member with responsibility for children rose to speak. With serious voice he recalled the time he had asked his seventeen year old son if there was a drug problem at school. "No Dad, certainly not", he replied. "Give us a fiver and I will get you whatever you want!"

Again the joke was taken in good heart although there are some Council Officers who just don't *do* jokes. They don't seem to realise that although we are dealing with important sensitive issues and even though much of it is serious, without a touch of humour we could not survive.

Here's to a Happy, Smiley New Year!!

Tim Metcalfe

PURLEY PLAYERS

*Friday and Saturday
3 and 4 February
at 7.30 pm
Saturday Matinee
at 2.30 pm*

*At The Barn
Purley on Thames*

ALADDIN 2006

*Matinee - £3.50 concessions for
children and senior citizens only*

Tickets £7.00

*Box Office Open
Tel: 0118 941 3259 or 0118 984 2563
or 0118 962 5760*



PURLEY ON THAMES PARISH COUNCIL



Hacker Young, appointed by the Audit Commission, have duly completed the audit of the Annual Return for the year ended 31 March 2005 and the required statutory notices have been placed on the Council notice boards. A copy of the Annual Accounts for this period is available on the website and a copy of the Annual Return itself may be obtained from this office for a nominal fee.

The Lord Lieutenant for the Royal County of Berkshire has asked me to publicise the chance for anyone who shares their date of birth with Her Majesty the Queen (21 April 1926) to attend a Reception and Luncheon at Buckingham Palace. I have posted further information on the notice boards but if there is anyone in Purley on Thames, or elsewhere, who is eligible please contact me without delay as all applications need to be in by 16 January 2006 at the latest.

Please note that although the office has been closed during the holiday period, it reopens on Monday 9 January at 5.45pm, as normal.

Brian J. Smith
Clerk to Purley on Thames Parish Council

The office, located near the tennis courts, opens:

Mondays (not BH): 5.45pm to 8.30pm
Including an opportunity to meet
Councillors between 6pm & 7pm
Thursdays: 9.00am to 3.15pm

Barn Manager: Jean Chudleigh 07917 453187

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Goosecroft Lane
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Reading
RG8 8DR
Tel/fax: 0118 984 4507
E-mail: clerk@purleypc.wanadoo.co.uk

www.purleyonthames.net

SPAM, SPAM AND MORE SPAM!

2006 marks the 70th birthday of SPAM – the much-loved canned luncheon meat which took the world by storm in the 1930s and 40s.

It was back in 1936 that an American company, Geo A Hormel, of Minnesota first created the tasty blend of chopped pork and ham. Having got the recipe and the canning process right, they had a problem: what should they call this new 'meat'?

It's said that the son of Geo Hormel, Jay Hormel, held a New Year's party for the purpose of naming his 'baby'. Guests were entitled to one drink for each name they came up with and, for the winner, a prize of \$100. The host said afterwards: 'by the fourth drink, people began to show some imagination'.

The names suggested are now lost in the mists of history, but the name SPAM was put forward by the brother of the Hormel vice-president – and approved

immediately. It was catchy enough for everyone to remember, and perfectly summed up the contents of shoulder of pork and ham!

And so SPAM was introduced to America in 1937 and to Britain in 1941. It was an immediate hit – it was such an inexpensive meat that even poor families could afford it. SPAM even featured on the first ever singing TV advert, to the tune of My Bonnie Lies Over the Ocean...

SPAM was highly nutritious and could be used cold in sandwiches and salads, or hot in stews, pies and omelettes. The 'meat miracle' as it was known, even helped Russia when Germany invaded. Nikitat Kruschev once said: 'Without SPAM, we would not have been able to feed our army.'

Today SPAM is still popular and sold in 50 countries throughout the world, with sales still growing. There are even SPAM fan clubs in both the USA and UK.

PURLEY HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

AGM

This will take place on Wednesday, 15 February, 2006 commencing at 7.45pm in Purley Memorial Hall. After the official business has been completed, Mr. Ben Viljeon will give a talk and show slides on Mauritius.



TRADING

The Shed is closed, but will re-open on Saturday, 4 February at 10am when your annual membership for the Society can be renewed. Seed potato forms should be returned to Bob Hawkins as soon as possible. If anyone else would like seed potatoes, please contact Bob for an order form or the Trading Shed when it re-opens. Bird seed may also be purchased from Alex Stott on 941 9186 (e-mail: vastott@aol.com) or Bob Hawkins on 984 2949 whilst the shed is closed. If you would like to order Suttons Seeds through the Horticultural Society, catalogues will be available when the trading store opens. Alternatively, if you would like to see a catalogue before then, you can get in touch with Margaret Rolfe on 0118 941 7247.

The Society had two successful outings in 2005 and we should be pleased to receive, at any of our meetings, suggestions for future trips.

Finally, a very happy New Year to everyone.

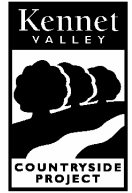
Marion Dabbs
942 2349



Before you criticise someone, you should walk a mile in their shoes. That way, when you criticise them, you're a mile away and you have their shoes.



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. For outdoor events please wear suitable footwear and clothing. Practical tasks start at 10am and usually finish around 4pm, unless otherwise stated, so bring a packed lunch. All tools are provided. For further details or booking of any the events, please contact the Project Office on 0118 930 5336.

Sun 15 Jan (9am-noon) Bird Walk Hosehill Lake LNR and the Lakes of Theale

Join the Theale Area Bird Conservation Group for a friendly, relaxed walk exploring the wetlands of the Theale area and observing the local birdlife. Please wear suitable clothing for walking outside all morning. Bring binoculars if you have them. Finish time dependant on weather. Meet at the Fox & Hounds Pub, Station Road, Theale.

Tue 17 Jan Introduction to Coppicing Rushall Manor Farm

Come and help cut binders and stakes for hedgelaying and restore and maintain Rushall Manor Farms Bluebell Woods. New volunteers are particularly welcome on this event. Meet at the Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm* at 10.00am.

Sun 22 Jan (10am-3pm) 'Working for Wildlife' Hosehill Lake LNR

This reserve needs your help! Turn up anytime and stay for as little or as long as you like and assist the Theale Area Bird Conservation Group with clearing scrub from part of the meadow. Wear sturdy shoes and suitable clothing for weather conditions. No booking required. Children must be accompanied by an adult. Tea & coffee provided. NB There are no facilities at this site

Tue 31 Jan Coppice Hazel Jennets Hill

Help Dennis Gower to restore semi-ancient woodland and cut stakes and binders for hedge laying. Meet at Black Barn, Rushall Manor Farm* at 10am or phone the Project office for details of meeting on site.

Tue 14 Feb 7.30pm Looking after the Lambourn Great Shefford Village Hall

A one-hour talk about the special nature of the River Lambourn and the problems and opportunities facing wildlife in the Lambourn Valley. Tea and coffee will be provided after the talk. 7.30pm Great Shefford Village Hall, Station Road, Great Shefford NGR. SU384753. Please phone the project office to book your place: 0118 930 5336

Wed 15 Feb Coppicing/scrub clearance Paices Wood

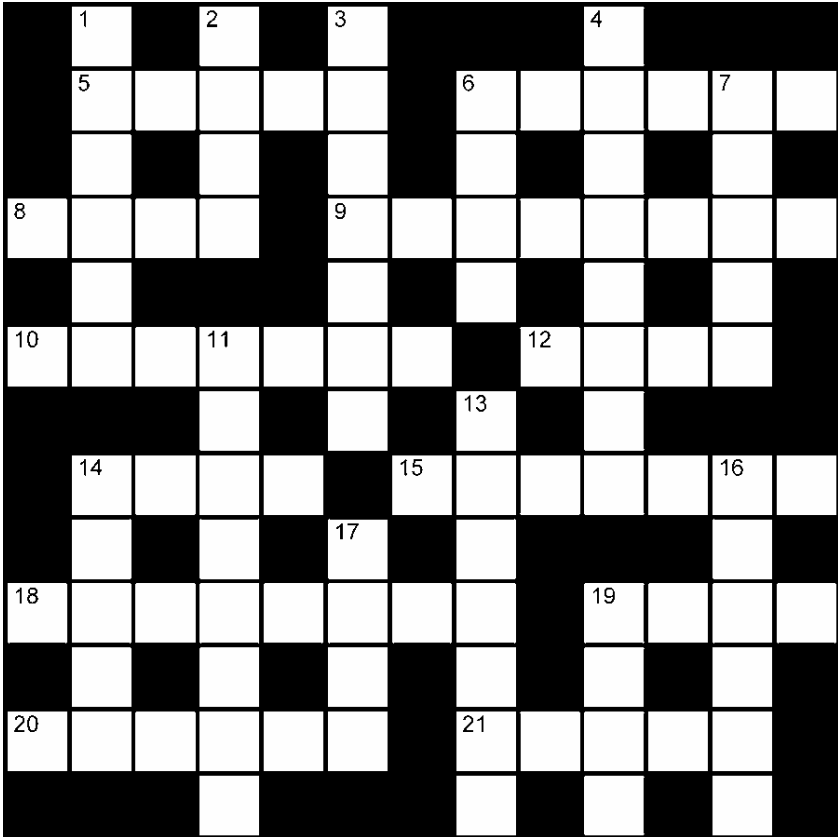
The woods in this country parkland are in need of some sympathetic management. Come and join the Reading CROW group restore these beautiful woodlands. Meet at 10am at Paices Hill (through Youngs Industrial Est.) Grid ref: SU586638. Please note this task is on a WEDNESDAY.

Fri 17 Feb 7.30-11pm Pang Valley Skittles Championship Upper Bucklebury

Join the volunteer group for the annual 'Pang Valley Skittles Championship'. Cost £8 per person. Tickets include a buffet meal (please bring own drink and glasses) - available from Project Office, numbers are strictly limited so please book early. Meet at Upper Bucklebury Memorial Hall (SU 545 684) for 7.30pm.

- Sat 18 Feb 10am-3pm Big Birding Bonanza! Hosehill Lake LNR**
 Get things ready for when the spring birds return by making them a bird box for the garden and a lardy seed cake. You can then brush up on your ID skills with a guided walk around this quiet lake with members of the Theale Area Bird Conservation Group. Suitable for everyone. Please wear suitable outdoor clothing. Bring binoculars if you have them. Drop in any time and leave when you like. All children must be accompanied by an adult. Park at the rear of the Fox & Hounds Pub, Station Road, Theale and walk across the road. There is no charge but donations towards the TABCG's work will be welcomed.
- Tue 21 Feb Coppicing Hampstead Norreys**
 Restoring a hazel copse by coppicing in the North Wessex Downs AONB. The coppice products will be used in the Hedge Laying in February. Meet off Wyld Court Hill NGR SU536762
- Tue 28 Feb Hedgelaying Hampstead Norreys**
 Come and have a go at hedgelaying in the picturesque Pang Valley. A trainer will be on hand to help develop and improve your hedgelaying skills. Meet off Wyld Court Hill NGR SU536762. Please call 0118 930 5336 to book a place. A small charge will be made to cover some of the costs either £10 or £5 for concessions.
- Sat 4 Mar 10am-3pm Veteran Trees Theale / Englefield Park**
 Workshop sponsored by NWD AONB on identifying and managing veteran trees led by Jill Butler (The Woodland Trust) and Ted Green (Ancient Tree Forum). Morning session at Theale Community Centre, Englefield Road, RG7 5AS followed by a practical session outdoors (so please bring suitable clothing) at Englefield Park by kind permission of the Englefield Estate. Meet at Theale Community Centre 10am. Booking is essential, as lunch will be provided.
- Sat 11 Mar River Clean up Shaw/Newbury**
 The Rivers and Environmental Spaces Clean-Up Event is back! Come and help clean up part of the River Lambourn at Shaw as part of the RESCUE event. Meet on bridge in Walton Way off Turnpike Road at 10.00am.
- Tue 14 Mar Coppicing / Scrub clearance Paices Wood**
 The woods in this country parkland are in need of some sympathetic management. Join John Lerpiniere in restoring these beautiful woodlands. Meet at 10.00am at Paices Hill (through Youngs Industrial Est.) Grid ref: SU586638
- w/e 18/19 Mar 11am-6pm Lambing Open Days Rushall Farm**
 Come and see the first lambs of the season at Rushall Farm, Bradfield*. The farm will be open from 11am to 6pm all proceeds go towards the Reading Multiple Sclerosis Society.
- Sun 26 Mar 1-3pm New Paths and Old Parks Eling Farm**
 A second chance to walk around a network of paths created at Eling Farm, with Dick Greenaway and farmer Brian Goodenough. The farm will be providing the popular Pang Valley Organics BBQ again. Meet at Eling Farm (SU523 749) from 12.30pm. There will be two walks at 1pm and 3pm Please phone 0118 930 5336 to book your place on either walk. Dogs on leads only. The walk is about 2.5 miles (4km) and includes a modest hill. A donation of £2 per person is suggested.
- *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 583723.

CROSSWORD



Across

- 5 An upward movement (5)
- 6 Glorify (6)
- 8 After the expected time (4)
- 9 Deciduous tree yielding edible nuts (8)
- 10 Periods of the year (7)
- 12 Lofty (4)
- 14 Entomb (4)
- 15 Bringing up (7)
- 18 A natural source of water (8)
- 19 A Tibetan or Mongolian priest (4)
- 20 Have faith or confidence in (6)
- 21 Rock (5)

Down

- 1 Expression (6)
- 2 Confront (4)
- 3 Protestant laymen who assist the minister (7)
- 4 Replacement for Judas (8)
- 6 A composition in verse (4)
- 7 In a southern direction (5)
- 11 A person that is unknown (8)
- 13 Sincere (7)
- 14 Lacking funds (5)
- 16 Count (6)
- 17 A group of people (4)
- 19 Courageous animal (4)

SUPPORT YOUR LOCAL POST OFFICE

PANGBOURNE & DISTRICT VOLUNTEER CENTRE



If you need help with transport, or know of anyone else who does, please contact us.

Volunteer drivers always needed! Do you have a few spare hours? Car drivers are needed to transport clients to hospitals, also for local journeys to doctors, etc. Help in the office is also required. Office opening hours: Mon/Wed/Thurs/Fri 9.30am to 11.30am. Please come and join us.

Call 984 4586 or pop into The Committee Room, Pangbourne Village Hall.

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. If specially preparing content, please set your page size to A5.

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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 either Steve Corrigan or Les Jamieson.

This edition published	Next edition copy deadline	Next edition published
7 January 2006	1 February 2006	4 February 2006

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